

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

VOL. XIII. December 1, 1930 No. 23

GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME

THE SECOND of the memorial Conventions arranged for Pittsburgh, Pa., is in the past -- October 31 to November 2; and probably quite a number of the readers of this journal have already had verbal reports from those privileged to attend it. Nevertheless, it is appropriate that we give the usual report here for the benefit of the many who could not be in attendance at Pittsburgh. We therefore set forth a summary of the prominent features.

Truly it is as we should expect, that as the time for the general assembly of the Church of the Firstborn draws near, the desire of the consecrated to meet and commune together, to build one another up in our most holy faith, should become more intense. This of course applies to the regular local gatherings of the brethren on Sundays and through the week, as well as to the larger gatherings, and general conventions. The Lord's faithful people rejoice that this is so and hail it as one of the proper signs of brotherly love and general growth in grace and knowledge. If at one time some were inclined to begrudge the railway fare and other expensed incidental to attending conventions, experience and observation have seemed to indicate that it is a good sign to find God's people spending their earnings for the spiritual welfare of themselves and others.

Commencing on October 31st, the anniversary of Brother Russell's death, and closing on Sunday, November 2nd, these convention days were one round of spiritual enjoyment, participated in by upwards of four hundred brethren, the majority of whom are readers of this journal; by far the majority of this number also were privileged to be in attendance during the entire convention, while some came and went at times better suiting their convenience, but always we believe with regret that they could not be more with the friends and with the Lord whose presence was precious realized throughout.

Bound with the Tie of the Spirit

We cannot here of course report the various discourses or indeed the many heartfelt testimonies given by the dear friends who came together from many of the States including Canada, but all may be fully assured that the ministry of the truth and the various exchanges in the way of testimonies were heart cheering. Very quickly those who had never met or even heard of each other were well acquainted and friends, bound with the tie of the Spirit, warmer and stronger than any tie of blood; others who had met previously had no less joy in renewing their fellowship and greetings. Indeed, recalling the very excellent time of communion with one another and with the Lord at the first memorial convention last year, a considerable number who were present on the first occasion were in attendance again this year. And as it was a year ago at Pittsburgh, so again some who met at this convention had not seen each other for many years and during the interim had been thrown widely apart in their respective places of communion and fellowship ; and the privilege again of looking into each other's faces and seeing there marks of faithfulness and of the Master's image, caused them to feel the impulse to new encouragement and new incentive to go forward toward the blessed goal. Verily the brethren testified to one another of the keeping power of

the Lord through the years, and of His grace and sustaining Spirit in the midst of all the turmoil and confusion incident to these last days.

"We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear."

In Sacred Memory

All sessions of the Convention were again held in the old Bible House chapel, for long years the place where Brother Russell addressed regularly a gathering of the Lord's people. The sweet and sacred memories associated with the faithful conduct of the ministry on the part of Brother Russell and his associates of former times, were again recalled, and the hearts of the brethren were stirred with deep and loving regard for the life-work of our dear Brother, and because he was faithful to the sacred trust committed to him. Loving hands had decorated the rostrum with beautiful floral pieces befitting the occasion for this convention, which was in the nature of a memorial.

Again the Pittsburgh Ecclesia made all of the visiting brethren feel most welcome in their midst and every provision was made for their comfortable entertainment. We are sure that the hearts of all these dear ones of the home Class were richly blessed in their labors of love, and their own spirits much strengthened and refreshed through the exercises of the convention. May our Heavenly Master who is not unmindful of their work and labor of love, richly reward their zeal and devotion in this faithful exemplification of His Spirit.

Brother George M. Wilson of the Board of Elders of the Pittsburgh Ecclesia, was once more chosen as chairman of the convention. The words of his message of greeting and welcome, opening the convention, were well chosen and his address warmly received. Again the words of the Savior were recalled, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." In keeping with this there was manifest throughout the convention a broad spirit of tolerance and of brotherly love; surely the love of Christ was the keynote throughout the entire conference. And though, as would be expected, there were minor differences of opinion upon one item or another that is comparatively unimportant, the general harmony of viewpoint and the recognition of our one Master and the great ideals represented in His teachings and example, furnished abundant grounds for the most profound harmony as well as for that sweet unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

Edified in the Things of the Spirit

Manifest then it was that the brethren at this time had again assembled having cast from them all sectarian barriers, to unite in the worship of the Lord according to Apostolic precedence, in sincerity and in the beauty of holiness. Throughout the various sessions of the convention, as testimonies were given and as there were opportunities for exchange of thought, it was evident that a considerable number of the friends throughout the country have more or less recently severed their connections with the former association and have realized their need for, as well as their privilege of, exercising their Christian liberty and of remaining steadfast in defense of the simplicity of the teachings and principles of the doctrines of Christ, in harmony with the order of the Church as it was instituted by Christ and the Apostles.

The program which was widely distributed prior to the convention was with few exceptions carried out; two or three of the brethren, being unable to meet their expectations and attend the conventions left vacant places that were quite readily filled by other brethren present who were apt in their handling of the things of the

Word of God. The discourses of those addressing the convention were generally of a character to appeal to and interest the brethren in a profitable manner. The speakers had evidently given careful consideration to those themes and items of truth that were of a character to encourage and edify in the things of the Spirit whereby the inner man was refreshed and nourished in those substantial truths of the Divine Word. And as would be logically anticipated, the brethren meeting various severe tests and trials of faith in these recent years, would naturally direct the attention of their hearers to the consideration of those themes that would tend to confirm their faith and renew their courage in pressing onward in the overcoming life and in seeking to fulfil all the terms and conditions necessary to the attainment of joint-heirship with Christ in His glorious Kingdom.

Arrangements had been made again for a special memorial service to be held at Brother Russell's grave; this was at 9.30 o'clock Sunday morning. Approximately one hundred of the friends gathered at this service held in the United Cemeteries, where the remains of our dear Brother were laid to rest some fourteen years ago. We believe that it was not in the spirit of man-worship, neither that of giving to our dear Brother the place belonging to Christ, but as honoring the Lord Himself, by this act of loving commemoration of our Brother on account of the valuable service which he performed in the ministry of the Divine truth for the people of God in these latter times. Similarly the Apostle Paul admonished some in his time, that they esteem certain ones highly for their work's sake, that is, on account of their loving, self-sacrificing zeal in ministering to the Church in spiritual things.

It is then the noble Christian life and the faithful adherence to the Word of God, together with the untiring zeal in the Divine service, that all who appreciate Present Truth, love to honor as they consider Brother Russell's ministry to the Church. Again, as we stood by the grave of our beloved Brother, familiar hymns were sung and prayers offered in which there was largely the spirit of thanksgiving and worship to the Eternal God that He has ever provided such faithful ministers in the Church and has exercised His supervising care over the faithful in all Ages. It seemed eminently appropriate also to have our minds refreshed with thoughts of the glorious promised regathering of all the saints when the sacrifices and ministry of this dispensation shall be ended and all the faithful assembled in the presence of the great King to go no more out forever.

For the Promotion of the Ministry

We shall not neglect to make mention of one session of the Convention not provided for on the program, which was devoted exclusively to a general conference and consideration of the outlook amongst the brethren in various parts of the country today; the object being to ascertain if possible how the ministry amongst the brethren might be encouraged and facilitated and the Lord's people in general assisted in their onward journey which, from the signs of the times about us, will soon come to a close. In this conference all were freely given the opportunity to express their thought, and many availed themselves of this opportunity; there were of course various viewpoints expressed and suggestions made as to how more might be accomplished in the service, and how still others who are in need today might be helped out of their perplexity and difficulty and the better enabled to understand the significance of the Lord's leading and providential overruling at this time. This conference resulted in a resolution being passed, authorizing the appointment of a committee of five brethren to be selected from the Pittsburgh Ecclesia, who were instructed to take under advisement the various suggestions made and make such provision for the

furtherance of the ministry as had been suggested and as would be thought to be in harmony with the providences and will of the Lord.

As the Convention came to a close about nine o'clock Sunday night, the spirit of joy and thanksgiving were surely in evidence among the brethren; there had been three days of sitting together in heavenly places and rejoicing in hope, as from one standpoint or another the friends were reminded of the significance of the Divine promises and were again assisted to visualize that heritage unspeakable and blessed, even life eternal -- immortality promised to all them that love Him supremely and His glorious appearing. Then as the parting moment came, there were many fervent expressions of loving sympathy and assurance of daily remembrance at the Throne of Heavenly Grace. Even these parting greetings were inspiring and were reminders once more of that glorious time promised and near at hand when all the faithful children of God shall be gathered at last to the place prepared for them in the Father's house of many mansions.

HALF HOUR MEDITATIONS ON ROMANS

No. 12

"Their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord." -- Isa. 54:17.

HAVING EXPRESSED his feelings with regard to the Gospel (that Gospel which he loved so dearly that elsewhere he writes "though we or an angel from heaven preach any other, let him be accursed," (Gal. 1:8), the Apostle proceeds to its fundamental theme, which he intends to unfold. Though many are ashamed of the Gospel, he has said that he is not, for he knows it to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Even his words "To the Jew first and also to the Greek" are not without their deep significance, for they suggest at once his recognition of the special covenant relationship which "for the fathers' sakes" (Rom. 11:28) the Jewish nation had enjoyed, as well as the fact that now a new era had dawned in which favor would no longer be to them only, but would be worldwide. Having thus in two lines indicated the source of the Gospel (God), its effect (salvation), its condition (faith), and its universal ity (to Jew and Greek), he proceeds to sum up its essence. "Therein" he says, "is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, The just shall live by faith." -- Verse 17.

Can we enter into the meaning of these words? Certainly it was "to make all see" (not to becloud and obscure their vision of) the glorious Gospel truth, that the Apostle wrote. Yet upon this text "volumes upon volumes have been written volumes of dreary exegesis, of drearier theology, of dreariest controversy Does it seem presumptuous then to say, in spite of all this controversy, that its meaning is perfectly clear? It is not presumptuous, if we take St. Paul as his own commentator." But in order that its meaning may be perfectly clear to us it .will be necessary for us to do precisely that. And, lest any should think to do so lightly, let it be remembered that even the mastermind of the Apostle, spirit-filled and spirit-led though it was, found it necessary to devote the whole of this Epistle for the adequate elucidation of this text.

The Righteousness of God . . . from Faith

To understand the meaning of the individual words in the text it is necessary only to study their derivation and usage. This we hope to do in our next meditation. To understand the meaning of the theme itself, however, which is contained in the phrase made up of those individual words, is another matter. Undoubtedly it will be best appreciated by those who study it in the light of the Apostle's personal experience. This we have to some extent considered in our previous meditations. (See especially "Herald," Nov. 1, 1929, page 331.)

In the Light of His Experience

"There are men of whom it is especially true that their teaching is the outcome of their own personal experience. If a man's teaching is to have any real force, this must be in a measure true in any case. But in some men the personal experience has set an exceptionally strong impress upon the intellectual convictions, and so upon the teaching. . . . Such an one was St. Paul. His intellectual theory is on fire with the emotions bred of a personal experience, both bitter and sweet, but always intense. And if there is professedly more of autobiography in the Epistle to the Galatians, yet in fact we know St. Paul's interior life, both before and after his 'conversion,' so far as we know it at all, mainly through the generalized account of it in the Epistle to the Romans. For the doctrine of justification by faith, not by works of the law, developed in this Epistle, is the record of his personal experience reduced to a general principle. St. Paul had, on the lines of his Pharisaic education, in the first half of his life zealously sought to be justified by works, and had found out his mistake.

Justification by Works What is It?

"What is the real meaning of this phrase? Ordinarily we . . . find it natural to appropriate St. James' 'common sense' language about justification rather than St. Paul's, and say that faith is surety of no moral value without works or good actions, and that we can be justified by nothing else except our conduct. Or if the Pharisees are pointed to with their rigid ecclesiastical observances as types of men seeking to be justified before God by the merits of their works, then, in this sense of works, we feel that the idea of justification by such means, apart from deeper moral effort, is one which has passed out of our horizon. Yet if we get to the moral essence of the Pharisaic idea, we may still find it lying very close at hand to us, even though we do not know what a phylactery means, and are at a safe distance from fasting twice in the week; or giving tithes of all that we acquire."

Phariseeism as It Exists Today

Most people have a strong sense of respectability. In, every walk of life men have a code of duty and honor which they are at pains to observe, and they "make really great sacrifices to fulfil the requirements of their respective codes. Their conscience requires this of them, and they would be miserable in falling short of it. But their conscience is also limited to it. They resent the claim of a progressive morality. Conscientious within the region of the traditional and the expected, they are often almost impenetrable to light from beyond. They are nervously afraid of the very idea of subjecting their life to a fundamental 'revision in the light of Christ's claim, or to the idea of surrender to the Divine light wherever it may lead. But this frame of mind conscientiousness within a limited and

well-established area accepted by public opinion, coupled with resentment at whatever completer and diviner claim may interfere to disconcert one's self-satisfaction, and bid one begin afresh on a truer basis-is that very attempt to be justified by works which appeared in the case of the Pharisees, only dressed in very different guise to that in which the conditions of modern . . . [life] clothe it.

"It is the characteristic of the Pharisaic attitude that a man holds by a strict code enforced by the public opinion of his church or circle; a code which he diligently and even painfully obeys. But it is characteristic of this attitude also that it resents new light, and tacitly claims independence even, of God, provided that 'the law' is kept or the accepted standard maintained. Thus the Pharisees resented the Christ; when renewing the voice of the old Prophets, without respect of persons, He exposed the moral weaknesses of these religious leaders, and bade them, in effect, begin again and think afresh what God's will really meant; when He warned them that the one unpardonable sin is to be self-satisfied in one's own eyes, and to repudiate as an impertinent intruder the fresh Divine light. The story is very familiar. They resented and rejected the Christ because He made the unlimited Divine claim upon them: because He spoke to them as God to the human soul, and not as the representative of 'the tradition.' 'Seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.' -- Rom. 10:3.

An Intolerable Yoke

"Now we understand what it is to seek to be justified by works. It is to have a social or ecclesiastical code, and to claim acceptance in God's sight because we perform it, meanwhile making 'the law' under which we act, believed to be Divine, a substitute for the living and personal God, and resenting any fresh and immediate claim of God on the human soul.

"In this mixture of subservience and independence, of religious humility and human pride, Saul of Tarsus had been brought up 'at the feet of Gamaliel in Jerusalem.' His was not one of those slack consciences which enable men to take the lowest line which respectable public opinion will allow. In every ecclesiastical system the strict law comes to be mitigated by various dispensations and compensations-generally substitutions of the easier ceremonial for the harder moral requirement. But young Saul no doubt took the law in its fullest sense as the thing to be kept, with all its accompanying traditions. So taken, it constituted no doubt what St. Peter calls it (Acts 15:10) an intolerable yoke. A strict Jew must have had a very difficult life of it. But it was not this yoke of specific outward requirements that staggered St. Paul. What he found crushing was the inward claim -- 'Thou shalt not covet.' (Rom. 7:7.) He who had determined to appear before God at the last with a clear record as one who had kept the law, found himself confronted by an inner and searching claim of the Divine righteousness, to which no blamelessness in outward conduct enabled him to correspond. He could not help feeling himself a sinner in the eye of God; and the sacrificial system plainly gave his conscience no relief at all. He does not even allude to it in this connection. Meanwhile, as he moved about in Jewish society of the empire at Tarsus and elsewhere, he found that it required no spiritual microscope to discover that the law in many of its plainest moral injunctions was in fact not being observed at all. He seemed to see that instead of the law being really the means of justification, it in effect put 'the righteous nation' simply in the position of condemned sinners, and himself among them, as fully as if they were simply without a divinely given law, like the 'sinners of the Gentiles.'

The Law a Schoolmaster to Bring Us to Christ

"We know well how, when the way of God had been learnt more perfectly, this earlier moral experience of the effect of the law on himself and others worked itself out in St. Paul's mind into a deep theory of the function, not of 'the law' only, that is the Mosaic law, but of law altogether -- of 'the letter' of any body of external enactments. Law, he found, could enlighten the conscience, but it could never reach deep enough to the springs of will to strengthen and purify them. God must become more intimate to man than any external law can make Him. A law of ordinances can only be a preparatory discipline, intended by the very falsity of the assumption on which it is based to teach men that they are not what they fancied themselves. They fancied themselves beings sufficiently independent to stand on their own basis and enter into a covenant with God, to make a compact with Him to observe a law and to abide by the result. It is the function of such a compact as between independent parties to convince men, that any such relation between God, the Creator and Giver; and man, the creature and simply the receiver -- still more between God the Holy and man the defiled and weakened -- is simply contrary to fundamental facts.

"As yet, however, St. Paul was only rendered miserable by his experience under the law. To feel himself a sinner alienated from God was a profound humiliation to his spiritual pride. He was fired no doubt by the lofty ideal of the righteous nation, standing before God in virtue of its righteousness, of its performance of the Divine law, and therefore making its claim on God to vindicate it before the whole world. He threw himself zealously into rigid observance; only, however, to find himself humiliated and perplexed.

In Christ's Teaching Paul's Restless Heart finds Repose

"Meanwhile, he was becoming conscious of the claim of Jesus of Nazareth to be the Christ. Under what conditions that claim began to confront him we do not in the least know. But he must have known in the period before his conversion that the severest attack on the spiritual position of the Pharisees ever delivered had been delivered by Him who claimed to be the Christ; that the Pharisees in consequence had thrown all their influence into the rejection of His claim, and if they had not been the most direct instruments of His death, yet had encouraged and sanctioned it. Thus the more dissatisfied he became in his own conscience, the more zealous he grew for the Pharisaic position, and the more fanatical, therefore, against the followers of the crucified Jesus. At what point it began to dawn upon his conscience that perhaps Jesus was right and not the Pharisees; that perhaps it was in His teaching that his own restless heart was to find repose, we can only wonder. Some struggle such as this dawning consciousness would involve he certainly passed through. 'It was hard for him to kick against the goad.' (Acts 26:14.) At last, and at a definite moment, God 'triumphed over him' in Christ, and he gave in his allegiance to Jesus as the Christ on the road to Damascus. Many a man has thus after a struggle surrendered to God at discretion; many a man has shown the will, as Faber calls it,

'To lose my will in His,
And by that loss be free.'

"But to no man can it ever have involved a complete sacrifice of his 'own pride and prejudice -- of his own personal comfort and safety -- than it did to St. Paul; and, therefore, in no man did it ever involve a vaster increase of spiritual illumination. Hitherto he had stood on the basis which his pride in his religious position gave him and, starting thence, had sought to erect the spiritual fabric of a

life acceptable to God. But the more he had known of God and the more he had struggled, the less satisfied he had become. God seemed to be in no other attitude towards him than that of a dissatisfied taskmaster. Now he had surrendered at discretion into God's hands. He had no position of his own to maintain. He had put himself in God's hands. In His sight he was content to be treated as a sinner, just like one of the Gentiles -- to be forgiven of His pure and unmerited love, and of His pure and unmerited love endued with a spiritual power for which he could take no credit to himself, for it was simply a gift. Once more, he had henceforth no prejudices and recognized no limitation on what he might be required to bear or do. His life was handed over to be controlled from above.

"Thus when St. Paul sets justification by faith and faith only in opposition to justification by works of the law, he is contrasting two different attitudes towards God and duty, which in the two Halves of his own sharply sundered life he had himself conspicuously represented. The contrast may be expressed perhaps in four ways.

Faith, Pregnant with good Works, Justifies Before They are Brought Forth

"1. The man under the law of works is mainly concerned about external conduct and observances -- the making clean of the outside of the cup and the platter: the man of faith is concerned almost altogether with the relation of his heart to God at the springs of action. Faith is a disposition of the heart which indeed results in a certain kind of outward conduct, but which has its value already, prior to the outward conduct, because of what it inwardly is. Faith, as Calvin said, pregnant with good works, justifies before they are brought forth.

Justification by Faith Worldwide in Scope

"2. Inasmuch as 'the law' was a national thing, so 'works of the law' were a supposed means of justification confined to Israel, and an occasion of contempt for other nations. Faith, on the other hand, the mere capacity to feel our own wants and to take God at His word, is a universal duality and belongs, or may belong, to all men. Thus justification by faith is opposed to justification by works of the law, as the universal or catholic to the merely Jewish or national, and in this aspect the contrast occupies a great place in St. Paul's thought and teaching.

Independence or Dependence, Which?

"3. But it is not in the things it is occupied about, or in the range of its activity, that faith is most centrally contrasted with works. It is in the attitude of man towards God which it represents. The 'worker' for justification always retains his own independence towards God. He works upon the basis of a definite covenant by which God is bound as well as himself. He has the right to resent additional claims. Faith, on the other hand, means an entire abandonment of independence. It is self-committal, self-surrender. 'I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day.' (2 Tim. 1 :12.) The man of faith throws all the responsibility for life on God, and says simply and continually, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.'

"It is of the utmost importance to notice that this is the only attitude of man towards God which corresponds with the ultimate facts of human nature, as science and philosophy are bound to represent them. Man is, in fact, an absolutely dependent being, physically and spiritually. His virtue must lie, not in originativeness, but in correspondence. Supposing him a free agent in God's

universe, his freedom can only consist in a power to correspond with Divine forces and laws intelligently and voluntarily; or on the other hand to disturb the Divine order of creation in a measure by wilfulness and sin. Now faith is simply the faculty of loving correspondence with God. 'Justification by faith' is the only conception of justification which is possible in the light of the root facts of human nature. But of course the practical appeal of this conclusion to the heart and will is immensely increased, if men can be shown to have acted as if they were independent and to have found it a failure; if life lived in independence of God, with God as it were withdrawn from the actual scene of life to its faroff horizon, is found to have resulted in havoc, weakness and despair. So, in fact, St. Paul's doctrine of the true means of justification is based on an appeal, not so much to the ultimate constitution of our human nature as to the experienced results of our independence of God, to the facts of sin, whether among Gentiles or Jews.

After This Manner therefore Pray Ye: Our Father

"4. Finally, the principle of justification by faith is contrasted with that of justification by works of the law in the view which it involves of the character of God. The law, as St. Paul interprets it, views God as a lord and taskmaster. Faith presents Him as the Father of our spirits, always waiting upon us with His eternal, unchangeable love; bearing with us; dealing with us even on a false basis which by our sins we have forced upon Him, in order to bring us to a recognition of the true; anyway acting or withholding action, if by any means we can be won to recognize His true character, and our true life.

The Faith of the Christian is the Faith of Abraham

"In what has just been said justifying faith has been treated as if it were simply, as it is really, faith in God; whereas in St. Paul's language the object of justifying faith is constantly 'Jesus' (Cf. iii. 22, 26, etc.) The explanation of this is that in Jesus Christ God has manifested His character as Father, and has come near to men, 'reconciling the world unto Himself,' by the atonement wrought through His . . . Son, and giving conspicuous evidence of His saving power by raising Him from the dead. (2 Cor. 5:19.) Thus, if Jesus is the proximate object of justifying faith, it is Jesus as manifesting the Father . . . ; and St. Peter is strictly interpreting St. Paul when he represents the object of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection in the phrase, 'that your faith and hope might be in God.' (1 Pet. 1 :21.) The faith of the Christian is the old faith of Abraham and Habakkuk, the faith in the Lord Jehovah only now made manifest in a new and completer manner, in a more intimate relation to human life, and with a more winning appeal to the human heart."

PROVIDENCE AND THE GREAT REFORMATION

Contributed-continued from last issue

AS EARLY as the third century, churches of the large and important cities had been held in special honor. The Council of Nice agreed that ancient, special authority over the provincial churches about them belonged to the Churches of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria. Then the patriarchate of Constantinople -- a new Rome, a second capital of the Empire -- was established. But when, under

the Mahomet invasions, the bishoprics of Antioch and Alexandria were swept away and later Constantinople fell away and separated from the West, Rome, alone, unrivaled, queen of all, surveyed the world about her from her throne of seven hills.

At the beginning of the seventh century, at the same point of time that the Mohammedan power arose in the East and spread over that particular part of the earth, barbarous hordes poured forth from the forests, of the North and settled in the West, which they had already invaded. These, but lately converts to Christianity, devoid of spiritual understanding, found all the external pomp and mysterious ceremonies their half-heathen souls required in the Church at Rome, and fell at the feet of its chief priest in something of savage adoration.

Then the Vandals, the Ostrogoths, the Burgundians, the Lombards, and the Anglo-Saxons came to mingle their idolatrous worship before the throne of the Roman Pontiff. Thus, "new and more powerful partisans than all the rest soon came to her assistance. Ignorance and superstition took possession of the Church, and delivered it up to Rome, blindfold and manacled."

Apostate Church Begins Her Reign

The Pope whose power had been from the beginning subordinate to political rulers now freed himself and assumed the place of an equal if not a superior. The Church, whose kingdom was to be not of this world, begins its reign! "The kingdoms and principalities of the earth were to be her domain; and kings were to tremble before the thunders of the Jupiter of New Rome," says D'Aubigne. "Woe to those who should resist her. Their subjects were released from their oaths of allegiance their whole country placed, under interdict -- public worship was to cease--the churches to be closed the bells mute -- the sacrament no longer administered -- and the malediction extended even to the dead, to whom, at the command of the proud pontiff, the earth refused the peace and shelter of the tomb.

"Thus everything was changed in the Church. At the beginning it was a society of brethren, and now an absolute monarchy is reared in the midst of them. All Christians were priests of the living God (1 Pet. 2:9), with humble pastors for their guidance. But a lofty head is uplifted from the midst of these pastors, a mysterious voice utters words full of pride; an iron hand compels all men, small and great, rich and poor, freemen and slaves, to take the mark of its power. The holy and primitive equality of souls before God is lost sight of. Christians are divided into two strangely unequal camps: on the one side a separate class of priests daring to usurp the name of the Church, and claiming to be possessed of peculiar privileges in the sight of the Lord; on the other, timid flocks reduced to a blind and passive submission -- a people gagged and silenced and delivered over to a proud caste. Every tribe, language, and nation of Christendom submitted to the dominion of this spiritual king who had received power to overcome."

The blessed doctrine of Salvation by Grace given to the early Church began to be dimmed by a prevailing error. St. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, had declared, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it, is the gift of God." But this all-embracing view of faith was forgotten. Soon it came to be regarded as a mere act of the understanding, and the fact that works naturally followed faith as its fruits, was lost sight of. Faith, robbed of its resulting works could no longer be said to save. Its practical character done away with, the Church was now taught that justification comes to the sinner by Faith and by Works.

Salvation in the Custody of Priests

St. Augustine had said that no action good in itself is worthy of approval unless the seat of the action, deep in the heart, is holy. But, more and more, the error of placing value in the external act rather than in the hidden affections gained favor and as a natural and following sequence, legal observances and acts of penance were emphasized, rather than inward holiness. "The more of such works the greater the reputed sanctity; heaven was to be obtained by means of them; and (extravagant as such a thought must appear to us) it was not long before certain persons were believed to have made attainments in holiness beyond that which was required of them.

"Thus did the proud heart of man refuse to give the glory to that God to whom all glory belongs. Thus did man claim to deserve, what God had decreed to give freely! He essayed to find in himself the salvation which the Gospel brought to him ready wrought out from heaven. He spread a veil over the saving truths of salvation which cometh from God, and not from man -- a salvation which God gives -- but barter not; and from that day all the other truths of religion were overclouded; darkness spread over the Church, and from this deep and deplorable gloom were seen to arise innumerable errors.

"As soon as salvation was taken out of the hands of God, it fell into the hands of the priests. The latter put themselves in the place of the Lord; and the souls of men thirsting for -- pardon were no longer taught to look to heaven, but to the Church, and especially to its pretended Head. The Roman Pontiff was in the place of God to the blinded minds of men. Hence all the grandeur and authority of the popes, and hence also unutterable abuses.

"Doubtless the doctrine of salvation by faith was not entirely lost to the Church. We meet with it in some of the most celebrated Fathers after the time of Constantine; and in the middle ages. The doctrine was not formally denied. Councils and popes did not hurl their bulls and decrees against it; but they set up beside it something which nullified it. Salvation by faith was received by many learned men, by many a humble and simple mind, but the multitude had something very different. Men had invented a complete system of forgiveness. The multitude flocked to it and joined with it, rather than with the Grace of Christ; and thus the system of man's devising prevailed over that of God."

À Controlling Mania

When the life of faith declines, then the moral conduct of man also declines. The sale of indulgences in itself was a stimulation to the ignorant masses towards greater immorality. When for a small sum of money or a contribution to the building of a church one can sin with all fear of future retribution erased from the mind, what crimes must follow! what eager reaching out for all the secretly coveted works of darkness!

The priests also shared in the general corruption as did the higher orders of the Church on lip to the very popes themselves. Dark indeed are some of the blots such as these have made on the pages of history. The higher the pretensions man makes before his God, the greater he sinks when he embraces evil. Yet at no time, no matter how "dark" may be described the ages, was there a lack on earth. of many of great piety and personal purity of conduct as the Reformation later disclosed. This particular evil, the sale of indulgences, had its beginning in the works of penance that had been substituted for the forgiveness of God. In Italy this doctrine of self-purification had become a controlling mania. "Nobles and peasants, old and young, even children of five years old, went in pairs, through

the villages, the towns, and the cities, by hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands, without any other covering than a cloth tied round the middle, and visiting the churches in procession in the very depth of winter. Armed with scourges, they lashed themselves without pity, and the streets resounded with cries and groans, which drew forth tears of compassion from all who heard them."

In time men became tired of all this priestly imposed suffering and the priests, fearful of losing power, began to look about for a remedy. "You are too weak to bear these necessary penances," they exclaimed to the people. "We are stronger than you and we will bear them for you. We will kneel for you and recite your psalms. We will fast for your sins. We will shoulder your heavy burdens. But in consideration for our services, you who are rich must pay twenty pence for a seven weeks' fast. You who are less wealthy shall pay ten pence. And the poor need pay but three pence."

Voices of Protest

Some voices were raised in protest against the traffic, but it offered to the Church an easy source of income and soon became a system. Philosophers of Alexandria had spoken of a purifying fire where men's sins, unforgiven on earth, might find expiation after death. The idea had gained some foothold in the church and the money-making idea was extended beyond the realms of the living to the supposed realms of the dead, and the doctrine of Purgatory was added to the pitiful list of defiling errors. Who now would hold back his gold when by the purchasing of an indulgence, the buying of a mass, the loved and departed might be saved that further pain and anguish beyond the bound of life? The pockets of the priests were now filled with the offers of the compassionate. **Wickedness had come to the full.**

"The evils," says the historian, "which then afflicted Christendom, namely superstition, incredulity, ignorance, unprofitable speculation, and corruption of morals -- evils naturally engendered in the hearts of men -- were not new on the earth. They had made a great figure in the history of nations. They had invaded, especially in the East, different religious systems, which had seen their times of glory. Those enervated systems had sunk under these evils, and not one of them had ever arisen. from its fall.

"And was Christianity now to undergo the same destiny? Was it to be lost like those old religions of the nations? Was the blow that doomed them to death to be of power to destroy it? Was there nothing to secure its preservation? And these opposing forces which overflowed it, and which had already dethroned so many various systems of worship, were they indeed to have power to seat themselves without resistance on the ruins of the Church of Jesus Christ?

"No! there is in Christianity that which there was not in any of these national systems. It does not, like them, offer certain general ideas, mixed with traditions and fables, destined, sooner or later, to, fall before the march of human reason; but it contains within it, pure Truth built upon facts which challenge the scrutiny of any upright and enlightened mind. Christianity has for its object not merely to excite in man certain vague religious feelings, of which the impression, once forgotten, can never be revived; its object is to satisfy, and it does in reality satisfy, all the religious wants in human nature, in whatever degree that nature may be developed. It is not the contrivance of man, whose works pass away and are forgotten, but it is the work of God, who upholds what He creates; and it has the promises of its Divine Author for the pledge of its duration.

Christianity in the Sixteenth Century,

"It is impossible that human nature can ever be above the need of Christianity. And if ever man has for a time fancied that he could do without it, it has soon appeared to him clothed in fresh youth and vigor, as the only cure for the human soul; and the degenerate nations have returned with new ardor to those ancient, simple, and powerful truths, which in the hour of their infatuation they despised.

"In fact, Christianity displayed, in the sixteenth century, the same regenerative power which it had exercised in the first. After the lapse of fifteen hundred years, the same truths produced the same effects. In the days of the Reformation, as in the days of Peter and Paul, the Gospel, with invincible energy, overcame mighty obstacles. The efficacy of its sovereign power was displayed from north to south, amidst nations differing most widely in manners, in character, and in civilization. Then, as in the times of Stephen and James, it kindled the fire of enthusiasm and devotion in the midst of the general deadness, and raised on all sides the spirit of martyrs."

At the time when the Reformation was about to break forth, all seemed quiet and safe for Rome. The knees of the common people bowed before her altar, and kings of earth dared utter not so much as a word against her lest they be held guilty of sacrilege. Not a cloud appeared on the horizon, the future looked peaceful and assured. But this appearance was but outward; inwardly, weakening forces had been at work. Often faint cries had been heard for a reformation in the Church. Temporal princes had resisted Rome. Men of literature had dared to assail her. Dante, the great Italian poet, had given the most powerful of the popes a very prominent seat in the vivid word picture of Hell his imagination had created. He described St. Peter in heaven sternly rebuking his unworthy successors. Others of learning and letters brought their talents to bear upon the weaknesses of the Church, but the pope with invitations and flatteries brought them abject and subdued to his feet.

Influences During the Reformation

With the nations of Christendom ranking low in intellectual and religious development, the many errors and superstitions that the Church had introduced did not endanger her. But she had stepped down from her high spiritual position and had become earthy. She had lain aside the Heaven allowed implements of her warfare and grasped the carnal. Her priests, who could stand in the eyes of the multitude only so long as the halo of illusion shone above their heads, had forsaken the spirit for the flesh. The glamour and charm of the Church had vanished, and with it must go her power. But as yet no loud voice had been raised against her. Men may have wished to retain what small faith in the visible Church they still possessed, or feared that at one large, reproachful breath the honey-combed edifice might collapse and destroy them and all Christianity with it.

Then sovereign heads, though bred themselves within the Church's walls, began to awaken to something of the real character of the Roman pontiffs. They saw in their dealings with them little of that Truth, whose representatives they set themselves up to be, but much of deceit, lying, dissimulation, and hypocrisy. First one and then another uttered complaint until the respected Maximilian of Austria, grieved at the treachery of Leo X, exclaimed, "This Pope, like the rest, is in my judgment a scoundrel. Henceforth I can say that in all my life no pope has kept his faith or word with me. I hope, if God be willing, that this one will be the last of them."

The effect of this began to be felt by the people. Rumors were heard far and wide of corrupt living that made even the dissolute Romans shudder, and the conviction grew that the Bishop of Rome was just a man after all, and rather a bad one at that. In fact, no better than their own local bishops, whose characters were most doubtful.

Human minds were also advancing. In many ways God was preparing the nations for the great change. Long shut eyes were opening and demanding a why and a wherefore from this boastful keeper of their souls. Credulity gave place to an intelligent curiosity. While some of the laity had advanced in intelligence, the priesthood had slipped behind, so busy were they in the pursuit of things of earth.

Printing, a recent invention, aided in the earnest protests against the corruption in the Church. A searching light was turned upon vain ceremonies and errors, and pointed the human intellect to brighter paths. In France and Italy, ridicule of everything now, even of things held sacred, made up the prevailing wit of the day. But in Germany the effects of awakening were quite different. The rays of light entered into and warmed hearts bringing a corresponding uplift to lives and habits. Where men of letters in Italy and in France were given over to levity and often immorality, in Germany this same class, with grave and thoughtful spirit, searched for truth. Gradually they endeavored to cleanse the "passages of the temple, hitherto obstructed by so many superstitions."

Doctrine of justification as a Factor

When the doctrine of all doctrines, justification through faith, was lost, the Church fell. The necessary condition then for her arising lay in the restoration of this precious truth. Restore this fundamental teaching and the long train of errors that had so defiled the sanctuary would in a great measure fade away in its blessed light. What need of penance, of indulgences, of masses, of the intercession of saints beside the pure truth -- "by grace are ye saved **through faith, and that not of yourselves.**"

At no time from the first hours of Rome's usurped power had the Light been entirely extinguished. In days so marked with error in doctrinal belief and with ignorant and superstitious fears that they are termed in history the **Dark Ages**, the torch once lighted by the Apostles burned with a steady flame here and there. "And," says one, "many eminent servants of Christ diffused through these ages a beneficent light; and in the humble convent -- the sequestered parish -- there were found poor monks and poor priests to alleviate bitter sufferings." Papacy, the oppressor, was not the church **Catholic**, the oppressed. The Reformation declared war against the former that the latter might be set free.

(To be Continued)

REPORT OF A RECENT PILGRIM TOUR

By BROTHER H. A. FRIESE

THE PRAYER of Moses, "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence," became our own prayer while earnestly looking to our Heavenly Father, in early July last, for an answer to the request to undertake a short Pilgrim trip, in His name. Will it be to His glory? What is His will? were chief among many questions. Watching for indications of the Lord's providence, we were led to begin our first pilgrimage, leaving Springfield Friday, August 29.

At Utica and Rochester, N. Y., well attended meetings were held, where sweet fellowship was enjoyed, and the Christlike spirit prevailed.

Rich blessings awaited us at the Buffalo Convention, to which we were taken with others from Rochester, by auto on Sunday morning. Here the dear friends of the Buffalo Class had provided lavishly. Between the services tables were spread bountifully with good things for the natural man. While the convention was not large, about 45 attending on Sunday afternoon, there was manifest that sweet spirit of Christ as in the earlier days -- the days of the small conventions, when we seemed to get closer together in the bonds of Christian love and unity. The addresses uniformly emphasized the importance of character development "putting on Christ Jesus," and the need of being made "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." It was good to be there! One speaker began his address by saying: "The fact that you are here today, though only a fraction of the number who used to gather here in former days, proves that when you made your consecration to the Lord years ago, you meant it."

Into the Glorious Sunlight

In the shakings through which the Church of Christ has passed in recent years, many have lost their anchor, clinging to very straws, as it were. We thank God that a goodly number of His dear "sheep," after groping in confusion and increasing darkness for a time, have lately found their bearings -- have heard the voice of the Good Shepherd again, and by His grace have received strength to come out of that darkness into the glorious sunlight of His love and from bondage into "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." (Gal. 5:1.) This cheering fact seemed much in evidence all along the way, and appears to our mind to mark a distinct and most encouraging awakening on the part of many of the Lord's children whose only desire is to do the will of God and to honor His dear name. May He assist us each and all to "held fast unto the end."

At the close of the Convention we were taken to Niagara Falls where our visit was exceedingly pleasant. Here on Tuesday evening we addressed a meeting of some 17 or 18 friends, some of whom had come over from Canada for that service. The Class at Niagara Falls had been without regular meetings for a time, but good interest was shown, and at the close of the service, on motion of one of the brethren, a business session was held and it was voted unanimously to meet on the following Friday for the purpose of again organizing the Class, thus heeding the Apostle's injunction to "forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

The next day, Wednesday, September 3, we took the long trip from Niagara Falls by the north shore of Lake Ontario to Belleville, Ont., where we arrived in the late afternoon. The meeting that evening was held in the large home of our dear Brother and Sister Bird, overlooking the lake. The service was well attended and we enjoyed a very precious season of fellowship with the friends here.

The following day we journeyed with other friends to Peterboro, Ont., in time for the evening meeting. Here we found a goodly number gathered at the home of one of the friends. The gathering included several who had come considerable distance for the meeting. One dear brother among them had been 45 years in the precious Truth, and appreciates the sweet ministry and comfort of the "Herald" so much that he has been taking several copies in order to circulate them among friends.

Our fellowship at Peterboro, though so brief, was precious. It was our privilege next day to have the companionship of some of these friends on our way to our

next appointment. We also met on the train a Presbyterian elder, who had come in contact with the Truth in the far Northwest, and who left us with a note of appreciation of our visit together, with his address.

At Orillia, Ont., a beautiful city up on Lake Simcoe, there were two meetings on Friday, September 5. Excellent interest was shown, and the greetings of the friends seemed very earnest.

A Deeper Spiritual Life

The following day we arrived at Toronto. Here we were kindly entertained by the friends and on Saturday evening a meeting at the home of one of the brethren was well attended; and on Sunday, September 7, we served at two meetings at the regular meeting place of the Toronto Class. Attendance was good, with some 45 at the afternoon service. At the close of our evening meeting the Chairman called for the hymn, "God be with you till we meet again," which was sung in the spirit. Here ended our visit among the dear Canadian friends, which had brought exceptional blessings to us. Some of these dear ones in Christ have suffered much in defense of the precious Truth and their Christian liberty, and we were impressed with their earnestness, and love to the Lord --- "The love of Christ constraineth us."

On Wednesday, September 10, we reached Cleveland, Ohio, and that evening spoke to a little gathering of the friends in Cleveland Heights.

On Thursday, September 11, we were met at Toledo by two of the brethren and hospitably entertained. That evening a meeting at the hall was attended by some 24 friends, many of whom had come out into the "liberty of Christ" within the year, while others are seeking with new vision a deeper spiritual life and fellowship in Christ. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." -- John 8:36.

The next day at Detroit, Mich., sweet fellowship was enjoyed during two meetings. Here we had the privilege once more of meeting, after many years, our dear Brother and former Pilgrim, Frank L. Draper, who was at both services. Brother Draper was the first Pilgrim who came to us in Springfield, Mass., back in 1899, and as a result of his ministry under the Lord, our Class was started at that time. Our dear Brother, now past the threescore and ten, assured us of his continued love for the Lord and the Truth, and of his earnest desire to be of those "called and chosen and faithful unto death." He sent love in Christ to all the dear ones who know him and asked an interest in their prayers specially.

Brother Draper feelingly recalled some of his experiences in the early days of the Pilgrim service, when many times only the Lord's "two or three" were present at an advertised meeting, some of which occasions we also personally remembered. Attendance at our two meetings at Detroit was 50.

Pass Through Bitter Experiences

At Bay City, Mich., a place "beautiful for situation," we arrived on September 13, where we were hospitably entertained. At the afternoon service 14 attended, and in the evening 20, some driving over from Saginaw, some 15 miles. Two services were held at Saginaw. A number of friends from Bay City also drove over. The visits at both Bay City and Saginaw were specially enjoyed.

After an all-day trip on Monday, we arrived in Cincinnati Ohio, that evening in a severe storm. But again self-sacrificing love was manifested, and a dear brother came through all the rain and took us to his home in Southgate, Ky., just across

the Ohio River, where we were again hospitably entertained. The next afternoon, Tuesday, a well attended meeting was held in this home. Between that and the evening meeting a season of precious fellowship was enjoyed with the friends. A good number attended the evening meeting in the hall and we rejoiced to meet again some dear brethren whom we had known at the conventions of Brother Russell's time.

The dear Cincinnati brethren have been permitted to pass through bitter experiences in their earnest efforts to be loyal to the Lord rather than to any organization of men, even to the extent of being denied admission to a meeting of the Church, except on condition of having signed a certain document drawn up by men. God gave these and other dear ones strength to come out of human bondage, and He will supply grace sufficient to each one, for "God is our refuge and strength" -- "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." Next morning we made a brief call on a dear "shut-in" -- a sister with whom we had prayer, and were ourselves inspired by her example of patience and Christian fortitude.

Our meeting with the friends in Dayton, Ohio, on Wednesday was a specially helpful occasion. There was good attendance at both meetings at the hall and the joy of our fellowship in Christ was enhanced by greetings from dear ones whom we had not met for several years.

On Thursday, September 18, we met with the brethren in Columbus for two services, both of which were well attended. Here, too, many dear ones have lately found sweet liberty in Christ, and others are earnestly meditating and searching to ascertain His will along these lines. These have special claim on our prayers as fellow pilgrims in the "narrow way."

The following day, Friday, we enjoyed a very precious season of fellowship with the Class at Newark, Ohio, which city had been added to our itinerary by special request. Two meetings were held in the home where we were entertained. The attendance at both was encouraging and the sweet spirit of our beloved Head was manifest. Among those we met here were some others with whom we could deeply sympathize, and also rejoice in the Lord, in having lately, like ourself, bid farewell to beloved ones passed beyond the veil. He alone giveth healing "balm." (2 Cor. 1:3-5.) Many expressions in loving memory of our dear Sister Friese along the way comforted our own heart with the comfort of Rev. 14:13.

That One Sweet Spirit

Reaching Pittsburgh, Pa., on Saturday afternoon and being made comfortable by the dear friends who entertained us, we rested until the hour of evening service. The meeting was at the home of a brother living some distance in the country-a beautiful location indeed. We were deeply thankful to be privileged to meet with so many of the dear ones of the Pittsburgh Ecclesia. Our fellowship was precious seemingly a participation in that, one sweet spirit which the dear Master bequeathed to all who love Him and the Father supremely, and which seemed' so obviously impending for the blessing of the friends who. should gather at the nearing Annual Convention to be held there.

Many tender memories came to mind as the brethren, showed us the dear old "Bible House" on Arch Street, where our beloved Brother Russell labored in the Lord so, faithfully through those early years of the Truth's unfolding. A prayer of thanksgiving was in our heart as we remembered those first labors of Brother Russell in proclaiming the precious Truth in the very first editions. of the "Watch Tower" ever published, which we as a high school boy in 1879 were privileged to

study with our dear father. The memories of those days seem almost sacred, and for their special blessings and those of later years when we met together in the early conventions, with a consuming zeal, we feel to praise the Lord, even though some times through tears. _

Riding all Saturday night and Sunday brought us home by Sunday evening, where one of the brethren, guessing our time of arrival, was waiting at the station to greet us and take us home. A song of gratitude fills our heart as we view in retrospect our brief Pilgrim trip, and we also thank God for the many dear ones we found who, though buffeted severely, have not let go of the "one hope of our calling;" but have taken fresh hold upon their anchor, looking unto Jesus, the Author who will also be. the Finisher of our precious faith.

REPORT OF A WESTERN PILGRIMAGE

By BROTHER I. F. HOSKINS

IT AFFORDS much pleasure at this time to review and to some extent record the details of the experiences of the past two months of the pilgrimage to the Pacific Coast and return, believing that many will be interested in reading a report of experiences, journeying, and meetings with brethren of many Classes, covering such a wide range of territory.

The experience of traveling from place to place and of finding assemblies of earnest souls devoted to the Lord and faithfully striving to do His will, deepens the conviction that the Lord still has a faithful representation on the earthy that there are unto this day those who are loyal followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene, brethren who have their eyes definitely fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ as their only guide and leader, and who are faithfully endeavoring to follow Him alone. The appointments were all at cities where there are regular Classes, and the warm spirit in which we were received and the expressed desire that we might return to them again were most encouraging.

Primarily an urgent invitation from the Seattle Class to attend a general convention of the friends in the Northwest, to be held in that city over Labor Day, became the occasion for our undertaking This pilgrimage to the Pacific Coast. Leaving Brooklyn on the evening of August the 15th, en route to the Northwest, Classes were visited at St. Louis, Kansas City, Topeka, Hutchinson, and Denver. The attendance at the meetings in these various places ranged between eight and twenty-five. In each place we found earnest souls ardently striving to walk the Narrow Way and eager to commune together with regard to the blessed hopes and promises of the Lord's Word, that thereby the inner man might be nourished, strengthened, and built up in the things that make for life eternal.

Nearly two days were spent on the train after leaving Denver, before we reached our first appointment in the Northwest. Some of the scenery was most beautiful, picturesque and interesting. The convulsions of nature which threw up these vast mountain ranges spoke to us of a power Divine, while beautiful mountain flowers told of the same Divine power exercised in more pacific manner.

With Brethren in the Northwest

The city of Spokane was our first stop in Eastern Washington; reaching there about 7:30 in the evening, we went directly to the hall where we found a little

gathering of earnest worshipers. The meeting Saturday evening, together with the three services on Sunday, gave splendid opportunity to become acquainted with these dear brethren, some twenty-eight at the largest meeting on Sunday. The warm response and the loving appreciation of the ministry as expressed by the friends, was most heart cheering. These dear brethren told of the sore trials and perplexities they had encountered in these recent years in maintaining their liberty in Christ and in remaining steadfast in the things appertaining to the Kingdom of God.

At Tacoma, Washington we were rejoiced to meet the brethren, a company of some thirty assembled. We are confident that our hearts were mutually encouraged as we considered together our spiritual heritage and the secret of abiding in the Lord's favor. The expressions of appreciation were again very cheering.

The Convention at Seattle, Wash., over Labor Day, was our next happy experience in meeting and fellowshiping with a goodly number of brethren in Christ. Here we met brethren from various sections of the Northwest, including British Columbia, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The three days of this convention were days of sweet fellowship, and the spirit of brotherly love and of a sound mind evidenced in the testimony meetings and discourses was truly gratifying. Several Elders of the various Classes in the Northwest served on the program and we were most favorably impressed in noting the unanimity of thought and viewpoint as each of these brethren dealt with the Truth in his characteristic manner and earnestly sought to impress the hearers with a sense of the present solemnity associated with walking the Narrow Way and the need for the utmost vigilance in the faithful fulfillment of our vows of consecration to God. Report of the Convention having already appeared in the Herald of October 15th, we need not repeat the details here.

Sound Together in that Love Divine

Our itinerary took us next to Vancouver, B. C.; several of the Vancouver friends having been in attendance at the Seattle Convention, we had the privilege of the companionship of these as we journeyed by bus to their city; the fellowship on the way, together with the most delightful and beautiful scenery over the mountains and by the sea, gave us indeed an inspiring and pleasurable experience we shall not soon forget. The two days at Vancouver furnished opportunity to become personally acquainted with the brethren, and the two meetings held in the evenings at which there were approximately sixty present at each meeting, proved to be occasions of fellowship that were edifying. Here again the warm appreciation expressed and loving zeal and devotion toward the Lord evidenced, was refreshing to our spirit. We thanked the Lord for that Spirit from above by which the true disciples of Christ are united and bound together in that Love Divine all love excelling. We had much reason also for gratitude toward the dear ones whose loving hospitality we accepted and whose thoughtful consideration made provision for us to be taken about the city of Vancouver and its environs during the day, to various points of interest.

Our next visit was at Victoria, B. C. We were warmly welcomed here, and again the loving hospitality and sweet spirit of fellowship in Christ was encouraging and uplifting. The one meeting held at this place was attended by upwards of fifty of the friends whose earnest attention to the message and whose appreciative response were truly gratifying. And as at the Classes we had previously visited in the Northwest, so here at Victoria, the brethren testified of the very trying and searching experiences through which they had passed during the recent years as

they had sought to avoid one entanglement or another and to be loyal to Christ the one and only Head of the Church.

Following the appointment at Victoria, our next engagement was at Portland, Ore., Saturday night and Sunday -in all, three meetings, which proved to be profitable and enjoyable seasons of spiritual communion. The largest attendance on Sunday was approximately sixty, and we had every evidence of the Divine blessing, in that many testified that they had been much encouraged and refreshed and were moved with a deep desire to be more faithful if possible in the days to come. The brethren here also were rejoicing in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free and earnestly desirous of being exercised unto more and more of the spirit of love and holiness. We may here properly add that we were repeatedly assured not only by friends in Portland but in all the other points in the Northwest, that our presentation of the Truth and our review of the general conditions and circumstances of our time, had resulted in clearing away many unfavorable impressions they had received concerning the brethren and the ministry in the East, and we were assured of wholehearted cooperation in the various branches of the ministry in the future.

Rejoicing in the Happier Outlook

Leaving Portland Sunday night en route for California, we reached Medford, Ore., about noon on Monday. After spending a few hours during which we had one meeting and privilege of fellowship with a little company of the friends at this place, we continued our journey down the Coast. Three days were spent with Classes of the friends at Sacramento and San Francisco which numbered approximately twelve and twenty respectively. These brethren also we found earnestly laboring to lay hold of the grace of God and to be faithful to their Lord in the things that concern the development of the character and image of Christ, that thereby they may be accounted worthy of His eternal glory.

Our sojourn of about ten days amongst the brethren in Southern California came up to our anticipations in every way. Here we found excellent Classes of friends having been formed more or less recently at Los Angeles, San Diego, Pasadena, Long Beach, Santa Ana, Pomona, and San Bernardino. Time and again we heard the same story of brethren who had been helped out of confusion, distress and bondage. These now rejoiced in seeing more clearly the way before them, and were the better enabled to understand the meaning of the crucial tests and trials of this time; they were glad to recognize the Lord's providential overruling amongst His faithful people for their protection and deliverance. The similarity of experience, communion and fellowship in the places above mentioned, make it unnecessary to repeat the details in each case. They were all happy seasons of sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We may however profitably make special reference to the meetings at Los Angeles on Sunday afternoon of September 21st. This Class of about 75 who assemble regularly was formed early this year and is largely composed of friends who have more or less recently recognized their privileges of enjoying a greater liberty of thought and study of the Lord's Word than they have realized for several years, and are rejoicing in the happier and brighter outlook realized as they inquire for the old paths. Two meetings were held, the larger being attended by soiree 210. The excellent attention given to the two addresses, together with the many expressions of warm appreciation of what was presented of the Lord's Word, was most encouraging, and again we thanked God for this evidence of His loving care over those who are the real sheep of His pasture, whom He ever causes to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, speaking the message of peace, of liberty, and of love. Our

earnest prayers, ascend for the dear brethren in Los Angeles, and we trust that by the Lord's grace they may each and all continue to be true light-bearers, letting their light shine for the benefit of others of their brethren who still do not quite clearly see the way before them and are therefore in a measure of difficulty and distress. Surely whoever has realized his own heart touched with the fires of love Divine, must feel that inward impulse to impart to his brethren that most desirable blessing of spiritual peace and joy that are realized in the fellowship of Christ.

Finished His Course

Two days on the train brought us far into the State of Texas. Four Classes were visited in this State-San Antonio, Galveston, Houston and Dallas; the attendance being from ten to twenty-five at the various meetings, which covered about five days. Again and again we had occasion for thanksgiving to the Giver of all good for His manifest love to His people in the impartation to them of His Spirit, by which they are enabled to discern His leadings and special care and to realize that blessed oneness that Jesus prayed might be the heritage of His true followers, even in the midst of all the trying and perplexing scenes of the Age. Time after time also our heart was touched with gratitude on account of the loving hospitality of the brethren in one place or another of the various points visited. The personal communion and exchange of thought was often found to be most profitable, as everywhere today there are various problems and questions before the minds of the brethren, and a frank discussion of these, often results in a clearer vision of our times and the general conditions and circumstances through which God's people are now passing.

We shall not omit to mention an impressive experience in connection with our visit to Galveston, Texas: Following the three o'clock meeting held in the home of one of the friends in that city, our dear Brother Paul Kaiser suggested that we visit some of the friends who because of age or other infirmities were unable to attend the meeting. We spent nearly two hours in this way, and our walk included a considerable distance over the great sea wall of Galveston. On reaching Brother Kaiser's home, our dear Brother fell over and immediately expired from heart failure. For many years both Brother and Sister Kaiser have been established in present Truth, and because of their noble and consistent Christian living and because of their faithful labors in Christ, they are well known and loved by the friends of that section of Texas. Responding to the earnest request of Sister Kaiser, we served at the funeral of our dear Brother two days later, which was attended by upwards of fifty persons. The deep sorrow expressed by not only the little Class of brethren in Galveston, but by other friends and relatives, spoke of the very high esteem in which he was held by all. Many references were made to Brother Kaiser's untiring zeal and faithful labors in the ministry. Most evident it was that the inspiring example of godly living on the part of our dear Brother has borne much fruit for the blessing of others and the glory of God.

The funeral service also furnished opportunity to witness to both the believers and unbelievers present, regarding the power of the truth. Considering the evidences that our dear Brother had "kept the faith," there was entertained for him that blessed hope expressed by the Apostle Paul in the close of his life -- the crown of righteousness which the Lord hath promised to all them that love Him and His appearing.

At each of the three places that remained on our itinerary on leaving Texas, namely St. Louis, Chicago, and Toledo, the meetings we believe were helpful and edifying, and the brethren gave repeated assurance of their renewed courage

and determination to go forward in the way of Him who has set us an example that we should us of our Master's words, "By this shall all men know walk in His steps.

On reaching home and loved ones on the morning of October 8th, we felt a deep sense of gratitude to God for the consciousness of His presence with us all of the way and for the privileges of the ministry and for the fellowship of kindred minds so like to that above. The messages of Christian love given to us along the way for the brethren we should meet further on, constantly reminded us of our Lord's words, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." Then envisioning that glorious time when the present pilgrimage will be ended, with all hindrances removed, what depth of joy shall we know in the exhibition of that love of Christ to one another and to all of God's creatures! Indeed,

"What heights of rapture shall we know
When in His throne we meet!"

A MESSAGE TO THE WATCHERS AND TO ALL WHO MOURN IN ZION

At this time we are bringing to the attention of our readers and to the brethren in general, an eight-page leaflet just off the press, entitled, "A Message to the Watchers and to All who Mourn in Zion." This leaflet contains a kindly and sympathetic word in season for our brethren of the association in which many of us formerly co-labored. It is well known that at this time many are waking to realize the unhappy circumstances in which they have been laboring; having been denied their Christian liberties and privileges they are distressed and perplexed and long to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd and to be assisted out of the confusion and discord with which they are surrounded.

Our leaflet, "A Message to the Watchers," is an appeal to reason together respecting the developments and general circumstances that have come about since Brother Russell's death, and directs the attention of all who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, to the Word of the Lord as it bears upon this time in which we are living. We therefore urge a very free distribution of this leaflet amongst our brethren in need, believing that it will be a means of assisting a goodly number at this. time. Lists of addresses may be sent us also and we will mail the leaflet direct. Order freely all you can use.

CONCERNING THE MINISTRY AND HOW ALL MAY SERVE

We are once more at that season of the year when many are renewing their subscriptions to the "Herald," and it is most gratifying to receive the response of so many who in connection with renewing their subscription, include a message of cheer, giving assurance that they have derived much blessing, encouragement, and assistance through the visits of our journal during the past year. Our list of subscribers has been holding up well with some increase, and we do therein rejoice that the larger number of brethren are thereby indicating their discernment and clearer vision on the present circumstances and recognition of the Lord's will concerning them at this time.

It seems appropriate now, when many are renewing their subscription, to again call attention to the offer that we made to all our subscribers earlier in the year, namely that we will include free an extra copy of each issue of the "Herald" to each and every. regular subscriber (whether paid for, or on credit, or on the free list) who will promise to pass on the extra copy to some one who may be thought to be susceptible to the Truth and who might become a regular subscriber. This will mean to those who enter into this arrangement that they will receive through the year thereafter two copies of the "Herald," instead of one; the extra copy to be used solely as a sample copy and passed on to a different person each time, with a brief word of explanation concerning the journal, the subscription price, etc., thus to encourage the person to subscribe.

Many during the past few months have availed themselves of this offer and have been receiving an extra copy of each issue of the "Herald," and passing it on to some neighbor, friend or interested inquirer, and this practice has added materially to our list of subscriptions. This offer still holds goods to any who are now renewing their subscription, or to any who are being enrolled as new subscribers; if you will advise that you will give out the extra copy, we shall gladly enclose one each time when we mail the regular issue.

This little missionary effort you will put forth in placing the extra copy in other hands twice a month, will surely react favorably on your own heart and who knows how much of a blessing may be brought to another by such ministry. We are confident that our subscription list can be still further enlarged by cooperating together in this plan.

We remind all again that we have printed an extra supply of each issue of our journal and are prepared to furnish these as sample copies to all who are in a position to distribute them where they will be read by the interested. These extra copies are sent out as samples, free, as long as the supply lasts; or if any choose, they may send us the names and we will mail sample "Heralds" to such addresses direct.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

VOL. XIII. December 15, 1930 No. 24

GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE

*"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.
Then shall ye remember your own evil ways,
and your doings that were not good." -- Ezek. 36:26, 31.*

THERE IS a profound significance in these words of the Lord to His typical people Israel. As the context shows, God had been grieved with them, because while enjoying His favor when they were dwelling in their own land, "they defiled it by their own way and by their own doings : . . . and when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned My holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of His land." But God is jealous for His own name and character, and through His Prophet shows that He will yet in the greatness of His mercy redeem Israel, and remove the reproach that their unfaithfulness has brought upon His honor: "And I will sanctify My great name, which was profaned among the heathen, and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord. saith the Lord God, when I shall be

sanctified in you before their eyes **Then shall ye remember** your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations." -- Ver. 17, 20, 23, 31.

The point to be specially noted here is that the order followed is somewhat remarkable in that it is not presented as first a loathing of their sin, and then repentance, followed by a wiping out of the transgression and a forgetting of the past on the part of the forgiven transgressor; on the contrary, it suggests that this loathing and regret will be deepest, long after they have been reinstated in Divine favor. In this we have the presentation of a fact that is worthy of our careful attention, for as we shall endeavor to show, it will be the test that all may apply who desire to know how nearly they are approximating the purity of heart necessary to see God. Restated, it means that the forgiven, restored and sanctified subject of God's mercy will experience a more abiding remorse, a greater humiliation, a deeper grief of heart for past sins, than could be possible when first he saw the evil of his ways. It is after Israel is restored to favor, prosperity, and purification, that they are to loathe themselves in their own sight, and be forever established in their hatred of sin. This is the only consistent interpretation of godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation, by giving it a permanency that will abide forever.

Love Provides a full Discharge

However, this does not mean that the only becoming attitude consistent with restoration to God's favor is that of perpetual lamentation in sackcloth and ashes. No, thank God, we may rejoice with joy and gladness because of the assurance that we have a Savior who is mighty to save, one who is able to save from the uttermost Adamic guilt, unto the uttermost deliverance, all who come unto God by Him. Indeed it would be displeasing to the Lord if our faith did not accept the full and complete cancellation of all our guilt. The promise made to fleshly Israel is equally precious and sure to us: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. 1:18.) Thus we do have a full discharge and acquittal. "The cross now covers my sin; the past is under the blood," and all the privileges of sonship are henceforth ours to enjoy.

Blessed Hunger for Righteousness

The harmony of these two thoughts, ability to rejoice in forgiveness and at the same time maintaining remorse for sin, lies in the fact that the nearer we come to a proper appreciation of God's holiness, the more we must recognize what a horrible thing sin is. Cultivating fellowship with God will ere long find our hearts crying out not only for deliverance from past guilt, but also for freedom from the power of sin in our mortal bodies. It becomes a very real witness of the Spirit when the failures of the past and the painful knowledge of present imperfections constrain us to fervently yearn for release from the hindering weaknesses that constantly beset us. This all serves to beget in us a longing for the purity which will make our hearts very sensitive to impurities within and without, and to the mistakes of the past and the present. Therefore, instead of always thinking of this matter in the usual way, namely first the sorrow, and then acceptance of forgiveness, forgetting the things which are behind, including our past sins, we may frequently just reverse it, much to our profit. It is not solely a matter of beginning our experience by repenting, then turning to follow in the right way and make our act of repentance chiefly a historical event of the past. Rather, it is our beginning and continuing to walk in the right way that deepens and

perpetuates repentance for having been in the wrong way and for being so incapable of more perfect separation from it.

It is our growing appreciation of righteousness that leads us to godly sorrow for the past, and to wish at times that we had much of life to live over again. Ah, yes,. it was when Job had seen the Lord that his approval of himself was utterly silenced, and he cried: "Now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Similarly affected also was the Prophet Isaiah when he beheld the holiness of God : "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. (Isa. 6:5.) So it is with those of us who have caught a true vision of the Lord. It is not "I have led an ignoble life, and now I want to fix my mind on Jesus and live like Him," but rather, "I have seen Christ, and therefore know that my life is far short of His example, and I entreat to be made like Him."

Compatible Joy and Sorrow

Thus we see that joy of heart for the complete forgiveness of sins that are past, is wholly compatible with a perpetual sorrow abiding in our souls for those same transgressions. Both will be found where true repentance obtains, even as both were conspicuous in the life of Paul. None could rejoice more than he in God's forgiving grace, but the more he thought on the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance, the more his feeling of regret and unworthiness grew, until he must classify himself the chief of sinners because in the now forgiven past he had persecuted the saints of God.

A story is told of a British miner at his work who, on one occasion, was urgently, summoned by Queen Victoria to appear before her in the royal palace, possibly for the bestowment of some reward for an act of bravery in a mine disaster. The urgency was emphasized, so the story goes, by the command, "Come at once, and come as you are." The man immediately set out on his journey with a deep realization of his uncouth appearance, but the urgency of the summons and the unexpected honor it conferred so filled his mind that other things were not so definitely forced upon his attention. However, as he neared the palace, he became painfully conscious of his shabby, apparel. As he passed through the outer gates, the incompatibility between himself and his surroundings deepened. The uniformed guards, and the immaculate cleanliness of his surroundings, as, well as the attire of the servants who were leading him into the presence of the Queen, awed him. Finally he collapsed in utter mortification, bemoaning his unfitness to appear in the royal presence. We are not attempting to verify the story, but we may assume that there is some historical fact around which it has been woven. But this will serve to illustrate the special lesson we have before us just now.

Blessed Shelter in the Rock of Ages

There is none righteous, no, not one; therefore, all may look back to the hole of the pit whence they were drawn by Divine love. Known only to God and ourselves may be the complete record of the past, and in His loving compassion He has kept secret many things of which we are now ashamed. With David we have recognized that there is forgiveness with God that He may be revered -- yea loved and adored. Or it may be that even since we came to know Him and received adoption into His family, our record is one of frequent relapses that pain us when memory turns back the pages to keep us humble and grateful. But notwithstanding all, our present condition is a most favorable one if we now

experience what restored Israel will yet experience, not before, but after God has given them a new heart and a new spirit.

It must be true that the nearer we come to the second veil, the more we must feel within ourselves the loathsomeness and hatefulness of sin. Like the man invited to an audience with the Queen, we will be given such visions of the unworthiness, unfitness, and separation of ourselves from the perfect holiness of God, that we must cry; "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee" And God will give His children these visions of themselves from time to time, if they have cultivated a real love of righteousness. This revelation, however, is never intended by our gracious God to bring discouragement into our minds. His purpose is our greater separation from the things that would hinder our full enjoyment of His grace. Hearken to His assurance of this: "For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Thrice happy is the man who has a conscience keen, quick as the apple of an eye, for he possesses three most essential qualities of character, namely contrition, true repentance, and an abiding hatred of sin. Contrition means broken in spirit because of a sense of sin; and a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise, provided it continues to be broken. True repentance has been defined by a little child as "being sorry enough to quit" -- a right about face, turning the back, once for all upon sin.

"The time past of our lives,
Sufficeth to have wrought
The fleshly will, which only ill
Has to us ever brought."

Beware lest the Light within become Darkness

What then must we think of those Who not only overlook this order of development, but who, while professing to be wholly in Divine favor, actually lose the impetus to a holy life that inevitably comes from a clear conception of God's own holiness? Are we not forced to conclude that they have removed themselves so, far away from Him that they can remain unaffected by the sin-revealing and sin-destroying light of His countenance? Let us hearken to God's Word to a people that did this very thing, and who very soon lost their vision of God so completely as to believe Him partner with them in their evil doings. "When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedest with him and hast been partaker with adulterers. [Margin, Thy portion was with adulterers]. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; [and because I did not immediately reprove] thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." (Psa. 50:18-21.) So deceitful is the fleshly mind, and so easily can the spiritual vision be darkened, that once the heart is turned away from an ardent admiration of God's holiness, very soon false conceptions of righteousness will take hold of the mind, and evil will very shortly appear as good, the conscience becoming seared as with a hot iron, and the filthy rags of self-righteousness preferred above that pure linen, which is the righteousness of saints.

Lust Conceived bringeth forth Sin

So debasing are the influences of spiritual infidelity that the mind, though once pure and happy in the things that are holy, can become so contaminated as to find satisfaction once more in fleshly lusts, returning like the sow to wallow in the mire of things utterly foreign to the mind of the Spirit. And how does this downward course begin? Perhaps it is safe to say it begins now as it has always done -- by losing the vision of God. Let us note well these words: "For this reason, in accordance with their own depraved cravings, God gave them up to uncleanness, allowing them to dishonor their bodies among themselves with impurity And just as they **refused to continue to have a full knowledge of God**, so it was to utterly worthless minds that, God gave them up, for them to do things which should not be done." (Rom. 1:24, 28, Weymouth.) Here again the lesson is emphasized. Let the vision of God be lost and His holiness be obscured by the idols which our naturally wayward hearts set up instead of Him, and nothing can save us from the downward pull of sin. The heart, "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," may endeavor to calm the conscience with assurances that all is well, but sooner or later, sin having been conceived and nursed into maturity will bring forth death. How disastrous are sin's small beginnings, and how dangerous it is to trifle with the principles of righteousness.

Persuaded Better Things of You

"But we are persuaded better things of you-and things that accompany salvation," writes the Apostle to the brethren of long ago, and we trust the same may be said of us. We fervently desire surely to be numbered among those today who are experiencing a decided longing to be perfect as God is perfect, to be wholly cleansed by the washing of the water of the Word, and purged from all the defilements that distress us. We long to have such clear visions of God's holiness that we find ourselves studiously gazing into the mirror of His Word, praying that we may all be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. If these are our real desires, we are experiencing what restored

Israel will yet experience a growing distaste for all evil, a loathing of all compromise with sin, and a determination never to return to its sway.

The Righteous Soul Seeks yet Higher Standards

Thus we find another method by which the true saints of God may be distinguished from all others. The lines are being clearly drawn in this our day. Iniquity abounds in increasing measure everywhere. Evil lurks in every quarter, and every man's work is being tried of what sort it is. Unconsciously all are taking their places on the one side or on the other in this day of testing. The world lowers its standard to meet the onrushing influences of evil, until life and property, morals and reputation, have taken on the aspect of secondary importance. Who shall stand when He appeareth? These influences are potent in their effect upon the professed people of God, and because iniquity abounds the love of the many grows cold. And then what? -- an onrush of the same influence, lowering the standards of purity, righteousness, and true holiness among God's people, until true piety is utterly at a discount.

From all such, those who are truly the Lord's will be separated by their distinguishing love of righteousness and abhorrence of evil. As the saints, the holy ones of God, they will be found growing their appreciation of God's character, and experiencing an impelling influence, drawing closer to Him in a longing desire to be made wholly clean. They will be devoutly praying to be "cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," and seeking that perfect holiness without which none hope to see the Lord. Their prayers will ever be:

"So was me, Thou, without, within,
Or purge with fire, if that must be,
No matter how, if only sin
Die out in me, die out in me."

Thus they will become constantly richer in the possession of a new heart and a new spirit, and will find themselves looking back to the hole of the pit with loathing and regret. But looking also into the love and greatness of the redeeming grace that has delivered them, they will never cease to move forward to gain the words of approval so sweet and precious: "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee" to abide in His holy presence.

TRAVELS AMONGST THE BRETHREN

By Brother C. P. Bridges

BELIEVING that some of the experiences of my recent trip may be of interest and encouragement to the brethren, I am submitting a brief report. If the friends whom I served, received as great a blessing as I did in serving, the trip was a pronounced success. Whatever good may result, the honor and praise all belong to the Father. If the choice of a trip had been left to me, I would have chosen differently; but I am glad that it was not left to me to choose, because this was evidently the best for me and I hope for those whom I visited.

The Atlantic City Convention was a rich blessing to me. I had anticipated a larger gathering, and felt a little disappointed when I found only a small company. But that feeling was soon dispelled by the fervent love and sweet fellowship that was manifested. Truly "the fellowship of kindred minds, is like to that above."

I shall not attempt to give a detailed account of the various visits, but rather, some of the impressions received. I found the dear ones hungering for the Bread of Life, and thirsting for the Water of Truth. Some of these friends have just recently been delivered from a sort of bondage and were so delighted to hear the "old story" as they had known it years ago. In some of the places the interested had not really formed a Class, and we tried to show them the advisability of having regular meetings for their own benefit and also for the benefit of others who were not satisfied and who very likely would be glad to meet with some who were really studying God's Word instead of giving heed to man. At one place I found the "Herald" subscribers were still meeting with their former associates because there was no other place to worship except they attended a nominal church. A few days before our visit, the Society held a local convention that consisted of "service meetings" and "drives." These friends were so thoroughly dissatisfied with what they saw and heard that they felt they never wanted to go there again. As a result of the services we had, these friends are going to meet regularly and have their studies and other worship.

At another place, there was no Class formed. A brother was present who had not withdrawn from the other association. We had opportunity for discussing many questions and the Brother expressed his delight at having had this season of fellowship, and agreed to meet with the friends in regular services and act as their leader. He was not satisfied with the things that were being served him, and was looking for some help in things that troubled him. Similar experiences were enjoyed in other places.

I was impressed with the great opportunities that we have today in ministering to those who are in need of help. The command that Jesus gave to Peter, "feed My sheep," is incumbent on us today, as much, perhaps even more; than in the day that it was spoken to Peter. Above all else this is the work that we should be engaged in. I wish that there might be a greater interest amongst the friends in this work. There is need of cooperation. If we might realize its importance I feel that the Institute could do a much larger work than it is doing at present. If we were able to send out more brethren as Pilgrims to minister to these dear ones, we would see a more marked growth. "Truly the fields are white unto the harvest," and we need reapers. If funds are available, I would suggest that a Brother be sent over this same territory I have covered, and that in the very near future. I would suggest also, if there are but two "Herald" subscribers in any city or town, that they meet regularly for study. We all need these services.

I am deeply grateful to my Father for the deliverance that has come to me. When I think of the terrible rendition that I had allowed myself to get into and the joy I now have in fellowship with Him and His people, my heart melts in gratitude. I have found others who, like myself, had tried to believe and teach these things of man; and yet all the while there were some doubts and misgivings. I was under the "channel" delusion, but thank God, through the influence of the Institute, my sight and hearing have been restored, and now I want to serve God in any way I can. I like to keep in mind the ideal that Paul had, "For me to live is Christ."

In closing, I want to thank you as I have thanked God, for the privilege of serving in this way. If it please Him, I shall also be glad to engage in this work in the future as He may present opportunities.

THE GLORIOUS PROCLAMATION

THE BIRTH OF THE SON OF GOD

*"There is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior,
Which is Christ the Lord." -- Luke 2:11.*

TO THE CHILDREN of God dwelling in the light of spiritual communion -- fellowship with God and with His blessed Son -- this sacred theme, the birth of the world's Redeemer, gathers fresh charm and interest as the years come and go, bringing deeper insight into that life and more profound appreciation of its vast importance to creation upon the earth.

Truly as the poet has expressed it, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!" To this all experienced followers of Christ agree. It is not to be wondered at that such realize an absorbing interest in everything pertaining to the life and conduct of this holy One and particularly in the occasion of His birth marking the commencement of His existence amongst humanity.

When it is remembered that this holy One whom the Scriptures repeatedly refer to as the Son of God, received a Divine appointment to be the Savior and Rescuer of mankind, to abolish sin and death, it is recognized that the pages of history contain no other name that for an instant can be placed along side of Jesus of Nazareth under any one single aspect of His marvelous character and career.

The birth of Jesus most surely marked the beginning of the fulfillment of all those prophecies that had been uttered for four thousand years prior to that time: As the Seed of the woman He is to crush the serpent's head; as the Seed of Abraham He is to bring blessings to all the families of the earth; as the Seed of David. He is to found a Kingdom that shall never be overthrown; as the Messiah of Israel He is to "finish transgression and make an end of sin," "and make reconciliation for iniquity" . and "bring in everlasting righteousness."

In carrying forward a mission of such stupendous character He is indeed proving Himself to be the Prophet of, whom Moses spake as the Great Deliverer for all people. Thus the writer to the Hebrew, in presenting a most interesting discussion of the truths of the Atonement, introduces the subject by eloquently referring to this glorious One: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds."

The Final Outburst of Prophetic Light

It has been most appropriately remarked that with the First Advent of Jesus Christ our Lord, came the final outburst of prophetic light as yet granted to our world. "Through Him personally, and through His Holy Spirit in the Apostles, were revealed things to come -- the closing section of the Divine program of the world's history as far as it is at present unfolded. What additions may be yet made to it in the Ages to come, who shall say? The infinitude and eternity of God forbid .the thought that the section we have now to consider is the last in any absolute sense, but it is the last at present published to mankind.

"Previously to the first century of our era, the voice of prophecy had for four hundred years been perfectly silent, and it has been similarly hushed ever since. The century of the First Advent stands thus as the only one in the course of twenty-three hundred years during which the Omniscient condescended to reveal the future, and exhibit His Divine presence for human consideration in future Ages. Prophecy has no more been granted lavishly and at all times than miracle. Both have been restricted to special eras when they were needed to attest Divine

intervention in the affairs of the human race, and when they could best subserve their all-important ends."

They Testified Beforehand

The prophecies concerning the birth of our Redeemer run like a golden thread through every Book of the Old Testament, describing in minute detail every feature relating to His person, His birth, His childhood, His character, His ministry, His miracles, His rejection by His own nation; and many details connected with His sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension to heaven, and with the outpouring by Him of the Holy Spirit. of God. From the predictions in Eden to those of Malachi, each succeeding Prophet added more and snore to the weighty facts of His coming until the plains of Judea trembled with the swelling music of angelic testimony -- "Unto you is born this clay in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." As another has stated, "The trend of thought upon this overwhelming subject accumulated in power and volume until the voice of the wilderness crier heralded the presence of the long expected Messiah."

How many have not seemed to realize that every prophecy from the first one in Genesis to the last one in Revelation relates either directly or indirectly to the Redeemer of the world. In so far as the Old Testament is concerned, this fact was not only stated, but strongly emphasized by our Lord, when He gave utterance to the words, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal, life; and they are they which testify of Me." His words after His' resurrection to the two disciples whom He met on the way to Emmaus, further establishes this thought: "O thoughtless and slow in your hearts to repose faith in all things which the Prophets spake! And beginning at Moses and through all the Prophets He thoroughly explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

The Common Hope of Israel

It was obviously because the Old Testament Scriptures contained so many predictions of the Prophets concerning the coming Messiah, that about the time of our Savior's birth, "all the people were in expectation of Him." In this connection Mr. Guinness interestingly observes further that "Wherever they dwelt, and however much they were Grecianized, the scattered Jews in east, west, north, and south, were all one in their expectation of a coming Messiah. This especially united them amid many diversities of language, custom, and thought. 'The links which bound them together were a common creed, a common life, a common center, and a common hope.' They all believed in the God of Abraham, in the law of Moses, in the observance of the Sabhath, and feasts and fasts of Leviticus; and they áll maintained a synagogue worship. Jerusalem was the center of the world tó the Jew, whether he lived on the Epphrates, the Nile, or the, Tiber; and thither, whenever possible, the pilgrim proceeded, at least once in his life. The advent of Messiah to deliver and restore them all to Palestine was the common hope of the Jews both in the East and in the West, and never was that hope stronger or so full of expectancy as the time of the First Advent. The unrest and expectancy were heightened by the fact that the chronological prophecy of the seventy weeks from Artaxerxes pointed to the near future as the time óf Messiah's manifestation. The hour at which the Great Deliverer was due would soon strike. Daniel's prophecy was, it was true, mysterious, and did not say much about the glorious Kingdom which they anticipated from other sacred promises and predictions. But still it fixed the time for Messiah's advent; and

when He was come, He would restore all things. This prophecy of the seventy weeks would not seem to have been generally understood, but it was influential with the pious few who looked for redemption like the godly Anna, and waited like Simeon for the consolation of Israel.

"Such then was the condition of the chosen people at the time when the last section of the prophetic program was published. There was a vast dispersion in all lands: the 'Hebrew,' or Eastern one, speaking Aramean, intensely conservative, ritualistic, and learned in Rabbinic and Talmudic lore; the Western one, progressive, liberal, Hellenized, and philosophic; and between the two the nation, in its own home, Palestine, gathered around its restored temple, yet oppressed by aliens and under tribute, hating its Gentile rulers, though unable to oppose them, and waiting impatiently for Messiah to deliver them and destroy their foes."

Because He was Born a Savior

Truly we do well in these days to heed the admonitions of the Apostle Peter to hearken to the more sure word of prophecy as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn. Most inspiring and reassuring to faith is such careful and sober consideration of the voice of prophecy in these days, as it speaks with regard to both the Advents and glorious offices of the Son of God. As is well known by all the informed, our day is one especially marked by decline in the Christian faith; comparatively few of the multitudes professing the Christian religion today and using the name of Jesus; really regard Him as a Savior as the Scriptures present Him to us. Yet it seems needless to say that the commemoration of the Savior's birth is for those only who believe the Divine testimony concerning Him, that He was supernaturally born and constituted to be a Redeemer and Savior in the sense of being capable of presenting to God a perfect sacrifice, the offset of the penalty -- death, which rests upon our race.

The question is a logical one, Why should those who do not accept the simple Bible statement concerning Jesus; pretend to join in the festivities of Christmas or in celebrating the Savior's birth? If Jesus, was not constituted of the Heavenly Father to be the world's Redeemer by virtue of a supernatural birth, and if Jesus came into the world as an imperfect man, the same as all others, and if this One designated the Son of God in the Bible is to be classed along with such as Confucius, Buddha, Plato, Socrates, and other great characters of history, then why celebrate the birth of such a one at all? Surely such a course is but mockery and a farce. Better far that such as reject the Bible teaching on the subject clearly state themselves and renounce the celebration of Christmas as being a commemoration of the birth of the world's Redeemer; such would be acting more in accordance with conscience and with the principle of honesty.

The Great Redemption

The message-of the angels to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains sounds more and more precious to each child of God in proportion as he grows in grace and knowledge. As his eyes and ears of understanding open more widely to the lengths and breadths of the Divine Plan of the Ages, that prophetic Message is the more highly esteemed as an epitome of the entire Gospel. Nor can our attention be too frequently called to the great event which lies at the foundation of that Message -- our Savior's birth.

It is for the true children of God today, as it was for the angels at that time, to assure men that God is better than all their fears -- that God so loved the world as

to redeem them from the just sentence of death, the curse that came upon all as inheritors of Adam's, imperfection and sentence.

As is well, known, "Good tidings," is another translation of our word Gospel. And how beautiful and significant the thought that the Gospel is really and truly Good Tidings, and as the angels declared, good tidings of great joy which should be unto all people. As every member of Adam's race shares in his fall and in the curse of death which came upon him as a result, so every member of the race was included in the great redemptive sacrifice which our Lord Jesus offered and which was finished at Calvary. , God's Plan in Christ as it is being worked out and shall ultimately be consummated, will mean great joy for all the people, and the tidings of this were given at the very moment of our Lord's birth because He was the One through whom all the glorious things of the Divine purpose and Plan shall ultimately be accomplished.

The Message took cognizance of the fact that it was to reasonable people, who would want to know why the unchangeable God who had once pronounced a curse should, at any time, so amend and alter matters as to supplant the curse with a blessing. The messengers state the philosophy of the Divine Plan "unto you is born this day a Savior which is Christ, the Lord." There we have the key to the entire Gospel statement of how God could be just and yet be the justifier of sinners who accept Jesus. The word Savior here signifies Life-giver and how beautiful and appropriate is the thought that as death is the wages of sin, the curse upon the race, this Messiah who was born is to be the One who will rescue the race from the sentence by giving them life again. The explanation of how He would give life was 'not stated nor was it necessary at that time; but now in the light of developments and with the explanation furnished through the Spirit in the New Testament, we recognize how our Lord's voluntary sacrifice of His life, dying the just for the unjust, settled the claims of Divine justice against Adam and thus incidentally, against all who share his sentence.

Our Salvation now by Hope

Truly the more we see of the Divine Plan for our salvation, which began to take place in the birth of Jesus, the more we feel like shouting with the angelic choir, praises to the God of heaven, in thankfulness for His mercies to the children of men. As the angels could sing and rejoice at the first, budding of the Divine Plan of Salvation, so also can all who have faith in the ultimate outcome rejoice with joy unspeakable and give praise to God in the highest and to His Son, our Lord.

It is manifest, however, that the great redemption which centers in the death of Christ has not yet progressed unto that fruition that is clearly implied, the coming forth out of the tomb, of all humanity with the offer before them of everlasting life. Indeed we may say that no message of the Lord Jesus has ever reached all people. Even today, after nineteen centuries of its proclamation, only a comparatively small portion of the human family have ever heard of the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved.'

But what then shall we say of the salvation which is come to those who have truly accepted Christ as their Savior, and who are today rejoicing in Him as such, and who by faith are seeing the salvation of God begun in their own hearts and yet to be fully accomplished in the whole heavens? This the Apostle calls the salvation by hope. The words are "We are saved by hope." We are not yet actually saved; we are still surrounded by sin, pain, crying, and death; the curse is not yet lifted. All that the best of the Lord's, people have received is salvation by hope, by faith. Yet this anticipation of the future salvation, of the resurrection

from the dead, of a participation in the glory, honor, and immortality of the Divine, nature, promised to the faithful is so strong, so clear, that those who possess it are enabled to- rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even in the midst of trials and sorrows and weaknesses and unfavorable conditions incident to the curse upon the race.

Present Sufferings and Future Glory

It will be during that coming reign of righteousness that the prophecy of the angels will have its fulfillment and the great Savior who has already laid down His life in sacrifice will stand forth as the King, the glorified Messiah, and establish His dominion of righteousness in the world for the blessing and uplift and restitution of all the willing and obedient of the human race. If the Lord had based the hope of the world upon some works or merits or righteousness of its own doings, then truly we might have fear -- indeed the more we know of the world, the less hope we would have. But on the contrary, the Lord has laid the entire proposition for the future blessing not upon men's worthiness, but upon the worthiness and sacrifice of His Son -- to you is born a Life-giver which is Messiah, the Lord.

How it adds to our enjoyment of the coming Age of blessing to know that the trials and reverses of this present Gospel time are subject to the Divine supervision in the interest of the Little Flock that is now being gathered in advance from amongst men, the Elect, the Church. It is then recognized that the trials and sufferings are the chiselings and polishings necessary to our development in the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, in the character-likeness of God's dear Son, our Lord, our hope, our Bridegroom. How precious the thought that at the end of this dispensation the sufferings will all be over and the faithful shall be privileged with their Lord and Master to extend the Divine favor of blessings and uplift to all men. What higher honor or privilege or blessing could possibly come to any! How joyful then the thought that soon the elect number called from the world to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, shall be completed and enter into her glory! and that then the Good Tidings of great joy will go forth to all the world.

PROVIDENCE AND THE GREAT REFORMATION

(Contributed - continued from last issue)

EVERY MOVEMENT that changes the current of history has back of its triumphant victories a long record of preparatory events. And back of the four great leaders of the Reformation -- Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and Knox, shine lights perhaps less brilliant but used of God to brighten a time when the daylight was all but obscured by the heavy vapor of error and the darkness of superstition. Many of these concerned themselves, however, with questionings of exacted tribute, of transubstantiation, of the adoration of saints and images -- endeavoring to prune away the false branches of a yellowing tree, but overlooking the great root error itself whose one healing remedy lay in the blessed doctrine of Salvation by Faith.

Pierre Vaud, or Peter Waldo, A. D. 1170, a rich merchant of Lyons, looking back to the simple ways of primitive Christianity, and desiring to copy in his own walk the way of the Master, sold his goods and gave all to the poor. Then he and his

followers, who became known as the Poor of Lyons, went forth preaching voluntary poverty. Divested of earthly comforts, like gentle Francis of Assisi and the kindly monk, Dominic, they went about doing good, although Peter Waldo, unlike the latter, believed the church to be utterly corrupt, and, with no intention of seceding, he strove to restore it to its original purity. Commanded to be silent by the first archbishop of Lyons and then the Pope himself, he and his followers continued to preach and were excommunicated. Yet he, as others, failed to note the transcendent importance of the underlying error regarding it as one of the many false branches.

The Waldenses

In the heights of the Alps of Piedmont, a well irrigated part today of northwestern Italy, lived men freer from the church than others. Something of the breeze-swept height of their earthly habitation above the seven hills of Rome seemed to have entered into their spiritual vision, and truth found in them successive witnesses. Their numbers were increased, and their doctrines were further cleansed, by disciples of Peter Waldo, and from the very mountain tops, these Waldenses, as they were known, protested for centuries against the superstitions of Rome, earnestly claiming for themselves, "the merits of Christ, and the all-sufficiency of His grace and righteousness." But this great and primal truth-justification through Christ alone-which should have formed the very burden of their plea, was not given a sufficiently important place in their system. Yet high above all other doctrines, as Mt. Blanc in towering heavenward outstrips the seven hills, stands that Divine declaration, "By grace are ye saved, . . . and not of yourselves."

In the 16th and 17th centuries the Waldenses of Piedmont were terribly persecuted. After French and Italian soldiers had slain 3,000 of their number, imprisoned 10,000 more, and carried off several thousand of their children to various Papal towns and villages, they were given the privilege of emigrating, which they accepted.

Their descendants form ten churches today in Wurtemberg, with more than 16,000 members. Italy having been thrown open to them in 1858, they established their headquarters in Florence, and they maintain there a theological school and a printing press.

It is to be noted with interest that, while these claim the Bible as their only guide, they hold their Confession of Faith, published in 1655, as the most correct interpretation of it. Thus it would seem that the light "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" has been sadly hindered from continuing the cleansing that was theirs in earlier days; and the measure of truth and light that their forefathers flung forth from the heights, and for which they stood ready to give even life itself, has been stifled and hindered from all further progress by the deadening, binding creed of their adoption. Down through the pages of history may be seen this same repetition in the annals of the church; content with the bright gems already unearthed from a deep and never-failing mine, the church settles down, satisfied with the comforting glitter of that already possessed, forgetful that the source from which the jewels came has never, can never, be exhausted.

Morning Star of the Reformation

In the latter half of the 14th century, John Wycliffe came forth using the Word of God as a reproof for Papal wrongs. But again the real malady was overlooked, and his efforts were directed against the many symptoms manifested. Many Papal decrees were issued against him and there came a special warning to him to be

careful what he preached. He then began the first English version of the Bible and sent copies of portions of it from village to village. Nearly a half century after his death it was ordered by the Council of Constance that his bones be taken up and burned and the ashes scattered into the river. But this burning of that which remained of his mortal body had no power to arrest the wave of his influence that swept on and aroused Huss in Bohemia and, through Huss, powerfully influenced the awakening monk, Martin Luther. Thus, historically, Wycliffe has been called "The Morning Star of the Reformation."

A century before Luther appeared in Saxony, a powerful preacher arose in Bohemia -- John Huss. "He seemed to enter more deeply than all who had gone before him into the essence of Christian truth. He besought Christ to grant him grace to glory only in His cross, and in the inestimable humiliation of His sufferings. But he attacked rather the lives of the clergy than the errors of the church. And yet he was, if we may be allowed the expression, the John the Baptist of the Reformation. The flames of his martyrdom kindled a fire which shed an extensive light in the midst of the general gloom, and was destined not to be speedily extinguished.

"John Huss did more: Prophetic words resounded from the depths of his dungeon. He foresaw that a real reformation of the Church was at hand. When driven from Prague, and compelled to wander in the fields of Bohemia, where he was followed by an immense crowd eager to catch his words, he exclaimed: 'The wicked have begun by laying treacherous snares for the **goose** (the word Huss in Bohemian signifying goose). But if even the goose, which is only a domestic fowl, a tame creature, and unable to rise high in the air, has yet broken their snares, other birds, whose flight carries them boldly toward heaven, will break them with much more power. Instead of a feeble goose; the truth will send forth eagles and keen-eyed falcons.' The Reformation fulfilled this prediction."

Sparks from the Ashes

In the great public square of Prague, formerly the capital of old Bohemia, but now of that new land, Czecho-Slovakia, which was born of the travail of the World War, stands a magnificent statue erected by a jubilant people at the first notes that proclaimed their freedom from Austria-Hungary. The traveler may pause for a moment in his admiration of this impressive memorial to reflect, perhaps in wonder, that a country, Catholic in character, has held in its heart the image of John Huss, and found no other emblem so fitting an expression of its rejoicing in and its love of liberty than the figure of the martyred Reformer.

And not only from its opposers, but now and then from those who were loyal and devout members of the Roman Church, came words pregnant with the spirit of truth and life-sparks, as it were, emitted from the blanket of ashes that had all but extinguished the primitive and holy fire enkindled by the Apostles. Let us listen to some of these voices, feeble, almost inarticulate, though they are

Anselm of Canterbury exhorted the dying in a work he had prepared for the purpose "to look solely to the merits of Jesus Christ."

Arnoldi, a monk, offered up in the seclusion of his cell this daily, earnest prayer, "Oh, Lord Jesus Christ! I believe that in Thee alone I have redemption and righteousness."

Untenheim, a bishop of Basle, had written around his name, which he had inscribed on a picture, these words which he kept always before him: "My hope is in the cross of Christ; I seek grace and not works."

On December 21, 1776, in tearing down a building which had been a part of the old Carthusian convent at Basle, a confession of faith was found in a wooden box enclosed in a hole made in the cell wall. It bore this explanation, "If I cannot confess these things with my tongue, I at least confess them with my pen and with my heart." In part it was this: "Oh, most merciful God! I know that I can only be saved, and satisfy Thy righteousness by the merit, the innocent suffering and death of Thy well beloved Son. Holy Jesus, my salvation is in Thy hands. Thou canst not withdraw the hands of Thy love from me; for they have created and formed, and redeemed me."

And there were those who, if the doctrine of salvation was not openly confessed to the world, at least boldly denounced the corruption within the church in which they stood; sometimes paying the extreme penalty for their bold faithfulness.

Vast Preparations for the Reformation

In Florence, Savonarola cried aloud against the vices of the Roman clergy and the Pope. Through the unholy power of the Inquisition he was condemned, to the stake. A large metal star set in the pavement at Florence today reminds all who pass that way of his martyrdom.

"If," says the historian, "in the time of St. Paul, or of Ambrose, of Austin, of Chrysostom, or even in the days of Anselm and Bernard, the question had been asked, what people or nation God would be likely to use to reform the church, the thought might have turned to the countries honored by the Apostle's ministry -- to Asia, to Greece, or to Rome, perhaps to Britain or to France, where men of great learning had preached; but none would have thought of the barbarous Germans, All other countries of Christendom had, in their turn, shone in the history of the Church; Germany alone had continued dark. Yet it was Germany that was chosen.

"God, who prepared during four thousand years the Advent of Messiah, and led through different dispensations, for many ages, the people among whom He was to be born, also prepared Germany in secret and unobserved, unknown indeed even to itself, to be the cradle of a Religious Regeneration, which, in a later day, should awaken the various nations of Christendom.

"As Judea, the birthplace of our religion, lay in the centre of the ancient world, so Germany was situated in the midst of Christian nations. She looked upon the Netherlands, England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, Denmark, and the whole of the north. It was fit that the principle of life should develop itself in the heart of Europe -- that its through all the arteries of the body the generous blood designed to vivify it

After reviewing the general circumstances throughout the European countries, especially of Germany, and noting those conditions peculiar to the days just prior to the Reformation -- conditions that were under Providence preparatory to the great and impending crisis, the historian continues:

"If man designs a shade or a shelter upon earth, we look to see preparations -- materials, scaffolding, and workmen. But God when He will give shade or shelter, takes the small seed which the new-born infant might clasp in its feeble hand, and deposits it in the bosom of the earth, and from that seed, imperceptible in its beginning, He produces the majestic tree, under whose spreading boughs the families' of men may find shelter. To achieve great results by imperceptible means is the law of the Divine dealings . . . that religion than which there is nothing nobler under the vault of heaven -- nay, in the very universe of creation

-- what was its commencement? -- a child born in the meanest town of the most despised country of the earth; a child whose mother had not even what falls to the lot of the most indigent and wretched woman of our cities--a room to bring forth in; a child born in a stable and placed in an ox's crib -- O God! I acknowledge Thee there, and I adore Thee,"

Reuchlin and Erasmus as Factors

And thus, not to the princes and bishops of earth, although, as we have noted, many of these had exerted a goodly influence, but to men of lower station was it given to become the chief instruments in God's great providence. Yea, He hath chosen the mean things, and things that are despised, to bring to nought things that are.

We have seen how the Lord had prepared the field for the coming battle. Silent forces had been at work, more or less unnoticed through the long years. And the bright weapon of warfare itself is ready, a weapon most necessary that the truth may triumph -- a two-edged sword, sharply pointed, yet not carnal -- the blessed Word of God.

The love and study of sacred Greek and Hebrew texts had been revived, and the instrument God had chosen to bring this about was John Reuchlin. To John Reuchlin, Luther penned these appreciative words, "The Lord has wrought in you, that the light of His Holy Word may again shine forth in Germany, where, for so many ages, it has been, alas! not only stifled, but extinct."

When Reuchlin was about twelve years old, a great genius was born, one of the greatest of the age -- Erasmus of Rotterdam. High in reputation among scholars, he denoted himself to the searching of truth and learning. He attacked the abuses in the church by brilliant satire and earned the hatred of the monks. He eloquently exhorted the Roman clergy to turn from the study of theology to the study of the Scriptures. He published his New Testament with corrections on the Vulgate and thus did for the New Testament what Reuchlin had done for the old. Scholars might now read the Word of God in the original language. It has been said that "Reuchlin and Erasmus gave the Scriptures to the learned -- Luther to the people."

Wavering Characters in Every Crisis

Erasmus though had not that courage of faith necessary to serve as the great instrument of the Reformation. He served rather as a stepping stone for others. "Erasmus knows very well how to expose error," said Luther, "but he does not know how to teach the truth." In him learning was paramount to Christianity. He weighed the effect each step might have on his own reputation., "A disadvantageous peace," Erasmus used to say, "is better than the most righteous war." He feared a Reformation which would shake the existing order of things, might overturn it -- that the mighty wave once on its way would sweep on, uncontrollable, and engulf all. And the historian adds, "How many Erasmuses have lived since and are living in our own days." There have been many such characters in religious crises, able, yet desiring to offend none, they in the end offend all and bring actual harm to the cause of truth.

"Ultimately Erasmus knew not what party, to adopt. None pleased him, and he feared all. 'It is dangerous to speak,' said he, 'and it is dangerous to be silent.' In every great religious movement there will be found these wavering charactersrespectable on many accounts, but injurious to the truth, and who, from their unwillingness to displease any, offend all.

"Such was Erasmus. He needed that inward emancipation which alone gives perfect liberty. How different would he have been had he abandoned **self**, and sacrificed all for truth! But after having endeavored to effect certain reforms with the approbation of the heads of the Church; after having deserted the Reformation for Rome, when he saw that these two things could not go hand in hand; he lost ground with all parties This at least seems to be indicated by those bitter tears, those painful vigils, that broken sleep, that tasteless food, that loathing of the study, of the Muses (formerly his only consolation); those saddened features, that pale face, those sorrowful and downcast eyes, that hatred of existence which he calls 'a cruel life,' and those longings after death, which he describes to his friends. Unhappy Erasmus! . . .

"Erasmus and Luther, viewed in connection with the Reformation, are the representatives of two great ideas -- of two great parties in their age, and indeed in every age. The one is composed of men of timid prudence; the other, of men of resolution and courage. These two parties were in existence at that epoch, and they are personified in their illustrious chiefs. The men of prudence thought that the study of theological science would gradually bring about a reformation of the Church, and that, too, without violence. The men of action thought that the diffusion of more correct ideas among the learned would not put an end to the superstitions of the people, and that the correction of this or of that abuse, so long as the whole life of the Church was not renewed, would be of little effect."

(To be continued)

ENCOURAGING MESSAGES

Dear Brethren in Christ:

You will find enclosed a Money Order to renew for another year the subscriptions of the "Herald" for _____ and also for myself. The rest you may use in the service of God as you think best. We do not know but this may be the last time. We know not the day nor the hour, when our Lord will appear. "Watch and pray" is my watchword. The signs about us indicate His appearing is near.

Our Class has just gone through the study of that wonderful chapter, 1 Cor. 15. It will be marvelous when the resurrection will have been accomplished. We have partly gone through the last verse -- "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Two questions were asked, "How are we to abound? and what work is spoken of here? We had a nice Scripture quotation in connection with same. Deep indeed are the things of God; nevertheless, He gives us grace whereby to understand something of His great Plan and purposes through His Spirit.

The Class is increasing in numbers and we have a nice and healthy spirit amongst us at present. It is a wonderful privilege, the fellowship of saints and of kindred minds. In fact we must have the "mind of Christ."

The depression is getting very sore; there seems to be a crisis coming. However, I believe --

"Precious thought -- our Father knoweth! In His love I rest,
For whate'er our Father doeth must be always best;
Well I know the heart that planneth naught but good for me;
Joy and sorrow interwoven, love in all I see.

"Precious thought -- our Father knoweth! careth for His child,
Bids me nestle closer to Him, when the storms beat wild;
Though my earthly hopes are shattered, and the teardrops fall,
Yet He is Himself my solace, yea, my all in all:

"Oh, to trust Him then more fully! Just to simply move
In the conscious calm enjoyment of the Father's love;
Knowing that life's checkered pathway leadeth to His rest,
Satisfied the way He taketh must be always best."

The message you gave in the last "Herald" re the battle is the Lord's and we as Christians must not stand in the way of Jehovah's chariots, gave me food for thought. . I asked myself the question, How could I stand in the way? The Scripture came to me, when Jesus said, "Not My will but Thine be done." We are in the world but not of it. We are pilgrims and strangers. Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus indeed we must, "stand still and see the salvation of our God." . . . May God's richest blessing abide with you all.

Your sister in the Beloved,

B. K. -- W. Aus.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Love and Greetings. I give thanks and praise to our dear Heavenly Father and our precious Redeemer for your labor of love and the assistance I have been receiving through the Heralds in the past and at the present time. I should have written you before; but have been prevented, as I have been passing through trying experiences sickness, bereavement, and trials on every side -- but through it all I have had comfort, strength, and encouragement from our loving Heavenly Father, through His precious promises. He hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and I give thanks and praise for all the experiences, for I know that all things are working together for my good, because, dear brethren, I love Him. I realize that "Earth hath no sorrow, that heaven cannot heal."

I cannot express to you as I would like, but I cannot refrain at this moment to tell you, with tears, how much I have been refreshed and strengthened by the November 1st "Herald," especially the article, "Ye have need of patience." When I had read it through, with a broken and contrite heart I thanked my Heavenly Father for renewing my mind and for the remembrance of how He had led me and brought me through my first Christian experience, and for the past forty-three years since, up to the present moment. So looking back at His love, and tender mercies with me, I can truly say, I praise the way He has led me day by day, with showers of blessing.

I am 86 years of age, and whether my days be few or many, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation, knowing His promises are sure and the Kingdom is near. He is assisting all of us who are waiting and hoping to see Him and be, with Him. I am aged and feeble, but still, in the School of Christ, willing and ready to learn all that is good, until I, by His grace, have finished my course in death.

I will ask you kindly to let me have the "Herald." My daughter, Sister Woodroff, was my only earthly dependence.' I have no other means. I give thanks to the Lord that He has taken her to rest from all labor and 'toil, realizing that the Great Provider still is near. His 'promises are sure,' and He will supply by His grace. I thank Him for the light that is shining brighter unto the perfect day. My earnest

prayer is that the dear Lord may continue to bless, comfort, and lead you on, and all of like precious faith.

Your sister in Christ,

Mrs. C. B. -- B. W. I.

My dear Brethren:

More than a year has passed since the Lord in His loving kindness led me forth into the light and liberty of Christ. Praise His name forever! Amongst the various agencies that He has employed in "uncrossing" my eyes, is the "Herald."

I came into the Truth at a time when the Pastor's Volumes were given their due weight as "Bible Keys" and now, I know "the spirit" when I meet it, and I find it in the "Herald." I meet it again, in the "Revelation" and "Daniel" books, even though I do not accept everything in them. Ah! now that the light is clear, how reasonable and loving comes St. John's advice: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

I indeed take pleasure in enclosing six shillings for another year's subscription to the "Herald," and pray God that He will continue to "keep from falling" all those dear ones who have to do with its preparation, and whose "labor of love" is very beautiful in the Father's eyes.

Commending you to the tender watch-care of Him "who neither slumbers nor sleeps," who has engraved His own upon the palms of His hands, and who is "silent" (Zeph. 3:17, margin) in His love.

With love in Christ Jesus our Lord,

A. C. R. -- Eng.