

OUR GENERAL CONVENTIONS.

OUR two Annual Conventions (one at Des Moines, Iowa, the other at Washington, D.C.) belong to the past. The first, held September 13-15, served a large western district, and was attended chiefly by friends residing in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Arkansas and Texas, – the attendance at the largest session being about 350. The interest of those present [R3100 : page 326] was both deep and fervent, as attested both by words and looks. God's blessing was with us, our cup of joy and sympathy ran over, and we trust continued to do so after our return to our homes, so that the convention's joys and blessings reached and is still refreshing many times the number privileged to be in attendance. Thirty symbolized their consecration by water immersion. The convention was addressed by a large number of speakers, of one heart and one mind. The Christian Church kindly put its meeting house at our disposal on the entire day of the baptism service, which was preceded by a discourse explanatory of its deep import from our standpoint.

Each Convention seems better than the one previous, which at the time seemed so full of divine favor as to leave nothing to be desired. The last convention, at Washington, was no exception to the general rule in this respect: it was the largest we have ever had in point of numbers, and so far as we were able to judge, a fuller measure of the holy spirit could not be looked for ever, in the earthen vessels. Over 800 attended; – about 550 to 600 of these being from abroad – from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Illinois, Kansas, California, Georgia, North and South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Ontario.

The Calvary Baptist Church edifice of Washington was kindly put at our disposal for a discourse on baptism, which was followed by the

immersion of 45 sisters and 42 brothers, amongst the latter being five formerly ministers, one Methodist, one a Second Adventist and three Baptists. Two of the latter remarked that they had immersed many without understanding the true significance of the ceremony or of the command back of it.

Like the Des Moines Convention, this one concluded with a Love Feast – though truth to tell the sessions throughout were love feasts with the Lord through his word and spirit and in prayer and praise. The "Pilgrim" brethren, supported by the Elders of the local congregation, and by the colporteurs to the number of about thirty, bade goodby to the convention visitors in general who (about 500) filed past them, led by such of the number as were the chosen Elders of various congregations, numbering about forty. Many eyes were dimmed with tears of joy and sympathy, and many lips expressed longing for the great Convention mentioned by the Apostle, when all the Elect shall meet in glory; – "the General Assembly and church of first-borns, whose names are written in heaven." Many too were the ejaculations of praise for divine blessings upon the eyes of our understanding, and of prayer for continued leading and instruction in the right ways of the Lord; and "The Lord bless thee and keep thee" seemed to be upon every lip.

In one way these Conventions are quite expensive, [R3100 : page 327] but in another way they are very inexpensive. Probably \$5500 or \$10 per head, would not be too high an average estimate as respects the visitors; and about the same amount per capita for the home congregation. But who can estimate the value of the knowledge and spiritual uplift thus secured, and carried to other hundreds in every direction? Good results have already been noted also from quartering the friends with Christian families of Washington. Several have already become interested and are reading; and we doubt not the Washington Church will have a blessing in numbers as well as in interest and love and zeal – tho in these last respects it is difficult to imagine any great improvement, above what was shown by their untiring efforts to serve

and please the brethren and in the careful preparations made beforehand.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

