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CONVENTIONS ACROSS THE SEA.

– *THE EDITOR ON HIS EUROPEAN JOURNEY.* –

DEAR WATCH TOWER READERS: –

I posted my previous letter just as our vessel, the *New York*, reached Southampton. As I stepped ashore I was met by Brother Hennings, and a little later, on arrival at London, by a delegation representing the London Church. Assuredly our greetings all around were most cordial, and unitedly we thanked God for a safe journey and asked divine blessing upon our mission.

Five meetings were held in London. The first on Saturday afternoon was a greeting and salutation meeting, and in the course of my remarks I mentioned the cordial greetings sent with me by the brethren of the Allegheny congregation; assuring the friends that those greetings well represented the sentiments of all the dear brethren and sisters of America. They in turn wished me to tell you all of their love and to give you their greetings in the Lord, and to testify to you that the Lord's people, though separated by oceans, are of one spirit – begotten of the one Father.

The evening session lasted from 7 to 9; the attendance being about 400 (about the same as in the afternoon). My text was Heb. 6:13-17 – respecting the *hope* that is an anchor to our soul and that is based upon God's promise to Abraham, which he confirmed with an oath; so that not only Abraham might have "strong consolation," but we also who look back to that oath-bound Covenant, expecting its fulfilment and trusting by God's grace that we may be heirs of that Covenant's provisions – as Abraham's spiritual "seed." Our hearts rejoiced in the Apostle's assurance, "If ye be Christ's (members or bride) then are ye Abraham's [R3206 : page 179] seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) We saw clearly that if we are heirs of that

promise it is still unfulfilled, and our faith laid fresh hold of the promise and oath of God, and we assured ourselves not only that it could not fail of fulfilment, but that our Lord's glorification as the Head of the "seed," as the antitypical Isaac, was an additional guarantee that soon the Church, as the antitypical Rebekah, would be united to him and the promise proceed to complete fulfilment – the blessing of all the families of the earth under the Millennial Kingdom.

On Sunday we had three sessions: at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. The attendance in the morning was estimated at 400, in the afternoon at 600 and in the evening at 800. The dear friends of the N. London congregation provided a bountiful luncheon at 6 p.m. on Saturday as well as Sunday: all were cordially invited to partake. The number participating on Sunday evening – about 300 – fairly represented the deeply interested of London and surrounding cities and towns.

Our text on Sunday morning was Phil. 4:8,7. The Church rather than the public was addressed, and the "way of the Lord" made as plain as possible: (1) The way in which we first saw ourselves to be sinners. (2) Our first view of Christ as our Savior, and our *justification* through Christ in his blood. (3) Our consecration, begetting to the new nature as members of the elect. (4) Our experiences after we thus as New Creatures entered the school of Christ. (5) The trials and polishings by the way to fit and prepare us for the Kingdom – to polish us as the Lord's jewels. (6) The assistance of the brethren in the good way by words and example – our Elder Brother's being first and Brother Paul's next.

The afternoon session was devoted to questions: this being deemed the most practical way of reaching topics in which the brethren were most deeply interested. Two hours were thus spent – profitably, we **[R3206 : page 180]** trust, to all. Many of the questions indicated deep thought on the subjects dear to us all.

The closing session of the London Convention was well attended – notwithstanding an all-day rain. The interest was excellent, as

indicated by the close attention given for two hours by people of whom nearly one-half had little or no previous knowledge of the truth.

Our topic on this occasion was: "Millennial Hopes and Prospects." At the close nearly an hour was spent giving and receiving cordial farewells and good wishes. Would that our pen were capable of delineating the words of earnest greeting – the loving glances of the eyes and the earnest pressure of the hand. We assured the dear friends that we accepted their warm words and many kind acts as first of all to the Lord, who has given us all the precious truths which so rejoice all who have the hearing ear of faith. That, secondly, I was welcomed and loved as a representative of the Lord's people rejoicing in present truth – not only in America but throughout the world. That, thirdly, I accepted a portion of their love and greetings personally – as a servant and representative of the Lord and his people. (And this is uniformly my course and view.)

On Tuesday (April 28) we took up our journey for Denmark and Sweden – a journey of over two thousand miles – to meet our dear Scandinavian friends, whom not having seen we loved as brethren in Christ. Representatives of the London assembly escorted us to the railway depot and bade us Godspeed, hoping to see us yet again before our return to America. Brother Henniges accompanies me and is a real comfort and true yokefellow in every way. The Lord reward him!

Our first stop was at Copenhagen: We were met at the depot with a most cordial welcome and escorted to comfortable lodgings. The notice of our coming had brought brethren and sisters from various directions who awaited our coming and, with the local brethren, almost overwhelmed us with the evidences of their love and fellowship. Although our communications were through a brother who served as interpreter, yet eyes and hand-clasps added emphasis.

We had three meetings in this great city – two of these were semi-public, including not only the friends of the truths represented by ZION'S WATCH TOWER publications, but their Christian friends

whom they had been endeavoring to interest. The largest attendance was about 200 – very good indeed for a mid-week meeting.

Continuing our journey we reached Stockholm on Sunday morning, May 3 – the dear leader of the Danish meetings accompanying us. As we alighted from the train we were met by about ten Swedish brethren – amongst them the two dear brethren who for some time past have been colporteur in these parts and whose efforts God is blessing. A hasty wash and we were off for the meeting place, where we found a crowded roomful of Swedish brethren and sisters singing most heartily an old and familiar tune in words which we could not understand. But the circumstances and earnestness and illuminated faces all told us that the unknown tongue gave praise to the same God, inspired by the same hopes built upon the same promises. We began at once our address – a dear brother (once a minister in the Swedish State Church) serving as interpreter, repeating our words in Swedish, sentence by sentence.

For two hours we discussed the oath-bound covenant, hope in which constitutes the anchor of our faith as the Lord's brethren and joint-heirs. The moist eyes and nods of assent told clearly that the truths were recognized and appreciated and that many of those present were sincerely desirous of making their calling and election sure as "heirs according to the promise," as joint-heirs with Christ Jesus our Lord. – Gal. 3:29.

Our second public meeting was at 5.30 p.m. Sunday, and lasted until nearly 8 o'clock. About 250 were present and the closest attention was given to our presentation of the "Millennial Hopes and Prospects." Some of the audience – about one-half – were outsiders not fully committed to present truth. They were seemingly sincere Christians, however, and we may reasonably hope that some of them may yet be blessed by the Lord through these or other instrumentalities; – that they may be enabled to "comprehend with all saints the lengths and

breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth all knowledge." – Eph. 3:18.

Monday's meetings at 11 a.m. to 1, and 3.30 to 6, were attended by about 100 each. These doubtless are all deeply interested, even though some may not as yet be fully committed. The topics of these meetings related to the steps of discipleship; the conditions for entering and continuance in the narrow way to "glory, honor and immortality." Our heart was much encouraged by hearing from two, who could speak English, that they had discerned the way they had long been seeking, and had made a full consecration of their all to the Lord and were rejoicing accordingly.

We may hope that there were more, for some of the dear friends spoke most eloquently with their eyes, and by all their actions indicated that they longed to talk with us. One dear brother caught our hand in both of his and looked us in the face with moist **[R3206 : page 181]** eyes, and then, pointing to his mouth, shook his head; then he pointed to his eyes and then to his forehead; – then he looked heavenward, then pressed our hand afresh in both of his. Thus he told us, as forcibly as could words in any language: I cannot speak to tell you of my joy of heart, but the eyes of my mind have been opened and now I can see our heavenly Father in his true light and can understand his wonderful plan, and I want to thank you because it was through your instrumentality that our Father sent me this priceless blessing.

We have just left these dear brethren and sisters on our return journey to fill appointments in Great Britain. About 25 or 30 came to the depot in the rain to see us off. Impressive were the handshakes of these dear friends who, though poor, purchased railway tickets so as to get on to the platform to see the last of us. Through the interpreter they said, We fear that we do not and cannot show you how much we love you in the Lord and how much we appreciate the privileges of this Convention.

One dear Swedish sister, a school teacher (able to speak English), who has had the truth for only about one year and a half, but during that time has done much to present it to others, came to meet us at Copenhagen, went with us to Stockholm and returned with us to Copenhagen and went home after seeing us off. As we finally parted, she handed us some flowers, saying, "These are not from me but from all the dear Swedish friends of the truth. I was the first of them to meet you and now I am the last of them to bid you farewell and Godspeed – so accept these flowers, please, as a token of our Christian love for you and the work the Lord has given you to do." This dear sister, a hard worker, traveled in all over 700 miles to enjoy and feast upon the truth and to show her love for it. Can it be wondered if I write now: I shall never forget my visit to Scandinavia, and shall ever pray and seek for the Lord's blessing upon his work there.

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Journeying from Stockholm by rail to Malmo (375 miles) and by sea (15 miles) brought us back to Copenhagen, where we again bade good-bye to our Danish friends. Thence by rail we reached Korsor (70 miles), where we again took ship for Kiel (100 miles). Here we saw the German Emperor's war yacht and about 24 German war vessels, and rejoiced in spirit that ere long they will be remelted, that their tons of metal may be used in peaceable pursuits under the administration of the great Prince of Peace. From Kiel a rail journey (500 miles) brought us to Flushing, **[R3207 : page 181]** where we again took steamer (115 miles) to Queensboro pier and were again on British soil. The rail journey to London (50 miles) was through the most highly cultivated country we saw on our entire journey or anywhere. It seemed a picture of what Paradise restored will shortly be.

On our first arrival in England we added to our itinerary several intermediate appointments. One of these was Leeds, our next stopping place, which we reached after a journey of 250 miles. The dear friends met us at the depot, greeting us most cordially; – our arrival was

delayed, and they had waited all afternoon. The weather was damp and chilly, but not so their ardor, nor ours. We felt at home with them at once. After tea we proceeded to the Y.M.C.A. hall and for an hour and a half addressed a very intelligent audience of about 125 on "The Oath-bound Covenant" of Heb. 6:17. A special supper had been arranged, at which a goodly company gathered, and after a refreshing night's rest we started for Glasgow (200 miles) – a happy party escorting us to the train and sending kindest greetings to the "brethren in America."

Glasgow was one of our stopping places in 1891, when we hunted up some six TOWER subscribers. Now, on the arrival of the train, 30 dear brethren and sisters were on the platform and greeted us most enthusiastically – assuring us of the love of others not able to be present. We had heard that the Scotch were undemonstrative, and very averse to "wearing their heart on their sleeve," but the warmth of our reception convinced us that the Scotch had been misrepresented, or else that the "love of the truth" had greatly transformed these dear friends, who, by their hands and faces, no less than by their words, so enthusiastically welcomed us. We were most hospitably entertained, and pray for the divine blessing upon our hosts and their families. This was Friday evening, and the Church's committee of arrangements (8) called on us to submit suggestions of details for the Convention, not previously arranged by mail. Our fellowship was most pleasant and both opened and closed with prayer.

The Saturday morning program consisted of interesting reports from various little companies of believers in Scotland presented by representatives. They were most interesting and showed clearly that not only in Glasgow, but in every direction thereabouts, the truth is extending and under God's blessing is finding the Israelites indeed. We addressed the dear friends briefly on this occasion, congratulating them on the many evidences of God's favor and blessing upon them, pointing out that the keynote of the present movement is, "Gather together my *saints* unto *me*: those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." We rally not around a sectarian standard or **[R3207 :**

page 182] name or creed, but to the Lord. We who are united to Christ need not creeds or other human bonds to unite us – our union with the Head means union with all united to him and love for all such in proportion as each has or attains the Lord's spirit. We assured the dear friends that we brought greetings to all of like precious faith from brethren in America, and that your thoughts and prayers were surely with us.

The afternoon discourse was on "The Oath-bound Covenant" (Heb. 6:13-17), and that of the evening on "The exceeding great and precious promises." (2 Pet. 1:4-11.) These we showed to be the Church's share in the Abrahamic Covenant. The attendance for a week-day was excellent – about 400 at each session.

Sunday was the great day of our spiritual feasting with our Lord (in prayer and praise and the study of his Word) and with each other as fellow-heirs of the promises. The opening session was a general testimony meeting. One after another told the story which we all know from experience, but which we are always glad to hear afresh – of God's grace and providential leading into the clearer light of present truth. Several of the dear Colporteurs were heard from at this meeting, and their testimony was like that of all others, – of their own blessing, and of their joy in the service notwithstanding occasional discouragements. We took occasion again to express our joy that the Lord had been pleased to use our humble efforts, but gave the glory to the Lord, pointing out that "of his fullness have all we received, and favor upon favor;" – that the due time had come for the fuller light to illuminate the divine Word and therefore it was sent of the Lord for all Israelites indeed; and that any little trials and sufferings and sacrifices which had come to us incidentally to the serving of the truth to the household of faith had been far more than compensated for in the blessings and favors and privileges granted us in the present time, besides the promised share in the Kingdom glories. The discourse following was on the greatness of God's power working in his saints. (Eph. 1:19.) We saw the divine power exercised through the Word of

promise and his grace sufficient for all trials and to bring off conquerors all his faithful. We saw also his power to do for us and with us in the future – raising us up to glory and using us then to bless the world.

At the Sunday afternoon session Brother Henniges addressed the Convention, his topic being "Consecration," from Prov. 23:26. Close attention was given while he pointed out the consecration of Abraham and the other worthies of the past, and then that of our Lord and his apostles, and brought home the lesson to all that only by full self-surrender to the Lord can any hope to attain divine favor and everlasting life.

The Sunday evening service (from 6.30 to 9 p.m.) was the most largely attended session of the Convention and its closing one. About 1,000 were present, and the close attention given by many for so long a session leads us to hope that some hearts and heads were reached by the truth. We cannot hope that all or even many of those who heard had an "ear to hear" or "an understanding heart"; but we do hope that audiences so remarkable for intelligence as were these of Glasgow received some thoughts respecting the divine plan of salvation which they will never forget, even though but few of them may be finally of the very elect who shall eventually as "overcomers" "make their calling and election sure." Quite a number of medical men were present, doubtless through respect to one of the brethren, who is a very prominent physician – a professor in the medical college here and one of the two chief surgeons in the Glasgow hospital.

Monday was spent with friends in the suburbs of Glasgow most delightfully, resting and attending to correspondence. In the evening we were joined by over sixty of the Glasgow Church, who spent three hours with us – a sociable and farewell visit which closed with prayer for the Lord's continued favor upon the Church here and upon us in our further journeying and ministering and upon all the dear Israel of God – known to us and unknown. The dear friends requested us to

extend their greetings and hearty good wishes to the Allegheny Church and to all the "brethren of like precious faith." About 28 of the Glasgow friends intend an (80 miles) excursion to Edinburgh to visit the Church there at the time of our visit – there to bid us a final goodbye. They urge, however, that we come again when the seventh volume of DAWN shall have been prepared, – for we assured them that we could not at present consider it the Lord's will that we should make so long a journey until the DAWN series is completed. Having a day at our disposal, we have accepted an invitation north, at Dundee, prior to our Edinburgh engagements – Wednesday and Thursday, May 13 and 14. *En route* to the railway depot we met "Aunt Sarah," who wished us to visit her "shop," in the rear portion of which the Glasgow Church had its start in a Dawn Circle of about four to six persons. We took a cup of tea there and ate some of a fruit cake baked for us by another sister upon the first TOWER announcement of our visit. Some who could not come to Edinburgh gathered at the depot to bid us farewell (30). As the train started they were still singing – "God be with you till we meet again." Our hearts [R3207 : page 183] and theirs were full. We remembered our Lord's promise in Matt. 19:29, and realized its fulfilment afresh. Praise his name!

At Dundee station we were met and heartily welcomed by six of the friends – just one-half of the total number interested. Sixty-one gathered for the one meeting which our time permitted there. Close attention was given us for two hours while we endeavored to show the exceeding riches of God's grace to usward, set forth in the Oath-bound Covenant. We hope later to know of some fruitage. We were most hospitably entertained and started early the following morning, May 13th, for Edinburgh.

We reached Edinburgh shortly after noon and were met at the station with a most cordial welcome by representatives of the Church. The grand city was in commotion and gala dress in honor of a state visit of the King; nevertheless our first evening session was well attended and close attention was given to our presentation of "The

Oath-bound Covenant." The meeting on Thursday at 3 p.m. was chiefly for the deeply interested. Our topic was, "The Losses and Gains of Christ's Followers," from Phil. 3:7-14. Then followed a luncheon – sandwiches, cakes and tea – served by the Edinburgh Church and shared by nearly a hundred. Next came our closing public service, the topic being "Millennial Hopes and Prospects." At 9.45 we were at the railway station with a delegation of the local church to bid farewell to the 34 visiting Glasgow brethren and sisters. This was a general farewell and again "God be with you till we meet again" was sung with zest. We will never forget our Scotch brethren and their urgent request that we come again. As evidencing the zeal of dear friends here we mention that quite a number came as much as 400 miles journey to attend this convention; [R3208 : page 183] and one dear sister (from Shetland Islands, north of Scotland) when bidding us good-bye, said, "I am sure that not many came so far to see the King as I have come to meet you; I have travelled by land and sea for two days and two nights to get here, and now it will take two days and two nights to reach home again." We assured the dear sister of our deep appreciation of her Christian love, and that we accepted the compliment not personally, but as a mark of her love for the great King of kings, who has honored us in permitting us to dispense present truth – the harvest message – now in its due time.

Faithfully, your brother and servant in the Lord,

CHARLES T. RUSSELL.
