

TAMPA CONVENTION AND EN ROUTE.

WE had a most auspicious start: About twenty-five of the Allegheny friends surprised us by appearing at the station and, as our train departed, singing "God be with you till we meet again." Their zeal cheered us greatly.

En route to Richmond, Va., we accepted an invitation to speak at the funeral of a dear brother in the Truth at Lonaconing, Md., where the Methodist chapel was placed at our disposal. An audience of about 250 gave closest attention to our review of Death and its cause, and our hope of a resurrection of the dead by virtue of our Lord's great sacrifice, "the Just for the unjust" – "a ransom for all."

Richmond, Va., was reached on time, Washington brethren joining us en route. The One Day Convention was pronounced quite a success. It drew friends of the Truth to the number of about sixty for the afternoon session, and afforded us sweet privileges in public and private communion with these in things concerning the Kingdom and its ransom-founded hopes.

The evening session for the public had been well advertised by the dear friends, with the result that the large Masonic Temple was crowded, about 900 being present. Our discourse on "To Hell and Back" was listened to with deep attention, and we hope some day to learn of good impressions and some fruitage to our Master's praise.

Columbia, S.C., was our next stop. We had a prolonged visit and private talk of several hours with interested friends of Columbia and vicinity – mainly a question meeting; and in the evening a public session with about 225 present – excellent for the size of the city and the fact that it was on a week night.

Jacksonville, Florida, was our fourth stop. The "Christian Church" edifice was placed at our disposal and we had an enjoyable time with a good attendance for a week-day afternoon, about 200 being present. The evening session was informal and brief at the home of one of the brethren. A goodly number saw us to the depot – some of them likewise bound for

THE TAMPA CONVENTION.

At Tampa, Florida, the city officials secured for us free the principal auditorium of the city – The Casino. The dear friends had put forth every effort and the Convention was a great success – although, as we had anticipated the attendance of friends was much smaller than we usually have at our General Conventions. That district is but sparsely settled, and thus far has comparatively few of "this way." In the sessions of the three days Brothers Owens, Moffatt, Bundy and the Editor were the speakers.

Our largest meeting, the one publicly advertised, was held on Sunday afternoon when about 500 to 600 were present. Some good was done, we feel sure, especially to the household of faith – the lack of numbers being made up for by the zeal of those in attendance. The wind-up was a Love-Feast.

St. Petersburg, the health resort, lies just across the Tampa Bay, and although it was not on our list we yielded to the requests of friends from there and spent Monday with them – a conference of the interested, from the time of the boat's arrival until its departure – from 10.30 to 4.30, with a half-hour's intermission for a luncheon served in the G.A.R. Hall, in which our session was held. We pray that love and zeal and fruits of the Spirit in us all may result.

Atlanta, Ga., was our next appointment, but unfortunately our train was nearly two hours late at Jacksonville and missed connections there. We greatly regretted the misfortune, and trust that

in some manner, as yet unknown to us, the disappointment of our dear friends at Atlanta may be overruled of the Lord to their profit.

Birmingham, Ala., was reached in due season. Friends met us at the depot and conducted us to a [R3680 : page 371] splendid dinner, after which we repaired to the place of meeting. About 300 were present, crowding the hall. We addressed them on the announced topic, "To Hell and Back." Excellent attention was given by the audience, which was a very intelligent one. The Lord alone knows the results. We trust that some now see the divine Word more clearly than before, and that in some hearts and minds the knowledge of the glory of God's character shines more brightly than previously.

The evening meeting was for the interested only and lasted until train time, almost all going with us to the train, where they joined in singing "God be with you till we meet again." Our visit to Birmingham will long be remembered with pleasure.

Nashville, Tenn., was reached the next morning. The Convention met in the principal hall of the city, [R3680 : page 372] Watkins' Hall. It was Thanksgiving Day, and that was the keynote of the opening session, which at first was a testimony meeting. Its closing hour was turned over to Bro. Russell, who rehearsed some of our special causes for thanksgiving.

The afternoon session was for the public and was well attended. The hall, seating nearly or quite 1000, was full, some standing, while some were unable to gain admittance. The friends surely labored hard for the gathering, and we know that they got part of their reward in seeing so many of their neighbors and friends present to hear the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people" in God's due time. The remainder of the reward waits for our Master's word – "Well done, good and faithful servants; enter into the joys of your Lord."

The evening meeting was for the interested only, the topic being, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear [reverence] him, and he will shew them his covenant." About a dozen of the dear friends accompanied us to the depot to exchange greetings, "Goodbye" and "God bless you."

Knoxville, Tenn., was our next stop. Our train arrived two hours later than schedule, but this did not prevent about a dozen dear brethren being at the depot to grasp our hand and bid us "Welcome to Knoxville!"

Soon we were at the Public Hall. About half an hour was spent as a testimony meeting; then we spoke for an hour or more on the freemasonry of the Bible, etc.

The afternoon session for the public drew an audience of about 300, some of whom expressed themselves as seeing more clearly than ever the goodness and justice of God – his severity in the weight of the curse and his mercy in providing through Jesus for its ultimate removal.

The evening meeting was held in the Park Street Christian Church: about 200 were present. Half an hour was devoted to the answering of questions, and then at 7.30 came the evening discourse on "The Oath-Bound Covenant." The service closed at nine o'clock, leaving time for us to reach our train bound for Allegheny. Ten brethren accompanied us to the depot, where we repeated our "goodbyes" and hopes for another meeting – soon or in the Kingdom. The attendance from suburban towns was good.

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