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GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME

AS THE TIME for the "general assembly of the Church of the Firstborn" draws nearer, the desire of the consecrated to meet together to "build one another up in the most holy faith" seems to increase. This applies to the little local gatherings in various parts, as well as to the "One Day Conventions" and to the "General Convention." We rejoice that this is so, and hail it as one of the proper signs of brotherly love and general growth in grace and knowledge. Once we inclined to begrudge the railway fares and other expenses, but now we are learning that there is a degree of economy in temporal matters, which fosters a money-loving disposition which is a foe to grace and tends to spiritual poverty. "The liberal soul shall be made fat." (Prov. 11:25.) It is a good sign to find God's people spending their earnings for the spiritual welfare of themselves and others.

The second of our General Conventions of the year [R3856 : page 293] (at St. Paul, Minn.) is in the past, and many of our readers have already had verbal reports from those privileged to attend it. Nevertheless it is appropriate that the TOWER also set forth a summary of its prominent features.

Opening August 13, and closing Sunday the 19th, the Convention week was one round of spiritual enjoyment, participated in by about one thousand WATCH TOWER readers – of whom probably 700 were privileged to be in attendance during the entire session, while the remainder 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.

We cannot report here the various heartfelt testimonies given by the dear friends who came together at their own expense from

twenty-eight States, including Canada and Scotland, but you have our word for it that they were heart-cheering. Very quickly those who had never met or even heard of each other were "well acquainted" and friends, bound with a 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. Perhaps a dozen of those who attended the Asbury Park Convention were so enthused thereby that they came also to St. Paul.

All of our sessions were in the Armory Auditorium, except the publicly advertised discourse of Sunday afternoon, which was held in the new "Peoples' Church" – the largest in St. Paul. Both auditoriums were secured to us free by the business men of St. Paul at a cost to themselves, we understand, of \$350. A vote of thanks was unanimously accorded them at our last session. "The Peoples' Church," we might remark, is known as very "liberal" in its religious tenets – how liberal may be judged from the fact that its beautiful and expensive stained glass windows represented donations from people of various denominations: Roman Catholics presented one representing a Pope, while the Presbyterians were represented by John Knox's features, the Methodists by Wesley, the Lutheran's by Luther, and the Free Thinkers of all shades of thought were represented by Huxley, Spencer and Confucius. And were not we represented? Yes! by a splendid ideal likeness of our Savior and Lord, the founder of our Church. The public service held in the People's Church had of course the largest attendance, the audience being estimated at 1800.

The addresses of the Convention were delivered by Brothers A. E. Williamson, John Edgar, A. E. Burgess, H. Samson, J. D. Wright, O. L. Sullivan, G. Draper, W. M. Hersey, W. E. Page, E. O. Loe, H. E. Hollister, J. A. Bohnet, G. LeFerry and C. T. Russell. They all discussed the old, old story – some emphasizing one feature, some another, each in his own style. It was the one "Song

of Moses and the Lamb," rendered in different parts, but all in the one key of "Love divine, all love excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down." There was not a discordant note, because all took their keynote and time from the great Master of all, of whom the Apostle declares, "This Salvation began to be spoken by our Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" – the apostles. Such oneness is quite unusual, and is generally secured in conventions held by others by having manuscripts of what the speakers will say examined by a committee beforehand. But we needed no such restriction, because more and more, as the Lord intimated it would be, we find, "Thy watchmen shall see eye to eye." (Isa. 52:8.) Nor should we fail to remember the word, "They shall be all taught of God." (John 6:45.) The fact that the Great Teacher is present superintending the "harvest" work is, we believe, a further assurance along this line. We comfort ourselves with the thought that his eye, his rod and his staff are guiding his sheep from grace to grace and from knowledge to knowledge. Hence it is not astonishing that we find, as was predicted, that "the path of the just is as a shining light – shining more and more unto the perfect day." Little details may, indeed should be, expected to grow clearer day by day, but all the fundamentals of our faith super-structure are unchangeable.

One of the interesting features of the Convention was the baptism service. The Baptists kindly granted us the use of their auditorium and pool, and 118 were immersed in symbolization of their full consecration of their all to the Lord – even unto death.

Two other items of general interest were: (1) The Chatauqua salute given Brother Russell on his arrival on Tuesday morning, followed by a hand-shaking reception in which about 600 participated; and (2) The Love Feast, which closed the Convention. In front of the platform, ranged in line, gathered all the speakers of the Convention, with them those who led Praise and Testimony services, and the Elders of the St. Paul and

Minneapolis class. Past these, shaking their hands and bidding good bye, came (1) the Colporteurs and intending Colporteurs; (2) The regularly chosen Elders present from various congregations; (3) "Bible House" assistants and others from Allegheny; (4) Those present of the St. Paul and Minneapolis Church; (5) All the remainder of the audience. It was a grand climax to a grand Convention.

A little later, when the Editor of this journal and others arrived at the R.R. depot, they found a company of about 50 brethren and sisters awaiting their departure. We parted, singing, "Blest be the tie that binds," and "God be with you till we meet again."

REPORT OF ONE DAY CONVENTIONS

En route to the St. Paul Convention, Sunday, Aug. 12, was spent as appointed, with the dear friends at Chatham, Ont. We had a delightful season. The afternoon meeting for the public was held in the Opera House, and was well attended – the audience being [R3857 : page 293] estimated at about 600. Excellent attention was given. The evening service was an address to the interested. The discourse many of our readers already have seen in public prints.

At Cumberland, Md., we had a splendid season of mutual refreshment on August 26. First came the opening rally 10 to 12 a.m., a splendid "Testimony and Praise" refreshment, participated in by nearly all present. In the afternoon the public service was the largest we ever had there. The Academy of Music was well filled – the estimate of numbers being 1,400, who gave close attention. Next morning we learned that a well-known infidel of the city was going about proclaiming that he had finally heard a reasonable gospel [R3857 : page 294] preached. The night subject was printed in the daily journals, and you have it.

The Terre Haute, Ind., One-Day Convention proved itself a blessing. The opening rally from 9.30 to 11 a.m. was truly a season of refreshing. Besides the local class there were delegations from various places within the circuit of one hundred miles; and their united testimonies to the Lord's goodness as well as their prayers and praises were comforting and encouraging every way and to all. Brother Russell addressed the gathering from 11 to 12.15 noon when we adjourned for refreshments. The topic of the discourse was "The grace of God that bringeth salvation." (Titus 2:11.) It was duly reported in the usual newspapers, which many of you receive regularly. The afternoon subject for the public, "A Cure for Infidelity – To Hell and Back," was given a very attentive hearing by about 1500 very intelligent looking people.

McKeesport, Pa., only about 15 miles from Allegheny and Pittsburg, was given a One-Day Convention from a desire to preach the truth to more of its citizens. The afternoon session for the public was attended by about 1200. The evening discourse to the interested, which was reported in the secular journals, was from the text, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23.) The earnest attention given by many leaves room for the hope that some of the Lord's jewels were brought in contact with Present Truth by these meetings.

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THE 1906 CONVENTIONS

Behold how they gather from East and from West,
From North and from South they come;
No visible emblems nor banners are theirs,
Nor loud rolling beat of the drum.
But with faces alight with the hope which is theirs,
With the love which sustains, and the promise which cheers,
They herald the kingdom to come.

Unknown to the world, as their "Head" was unknown,
And willingly sharing his cross;
Believing the kingdom long-promised is near,
Are parting from all earthly dross.
The "sun" fast arising now gladdens their eyes,
And just within reach seems the rich cherished prize,
For which they count all else but loss.

Yes, here they assemble, these uncrowned kings,
On the Master's business intent;
All humbly and meekly pursuing their way,
In his service willingly spent.
And the world knoweth not, as they knew not of Him,
What honors are theirs who are serving their King,
And full on his mission are bent.

And who shall say that they met there alone?
For were there not forms more fair,
Of those who have heard their Master's "Well done!"
Rejoicing with him "in the air"?
Invisible yet, our dim eyes can not see;
Still, hovering o'er us their presence may be,
And we shall soon be with them there.

Full soon shall that Greatest Convention be held,
The faithful ones all to be there;
Our Master presiding in glorious garb,
And we in his glory to share
There highly exalted to sit in his throne,
To lift up the billions down-trodden so long.
"Oh, what must it be to be there."

A. J. M.
