

## **THE INDIANAPOLIS CONVENTION**

OUR numerous Conventions for this year were designed to bring the Convention advantages within the reach of larger numbers – not only as to location but also as to time. The one at Indianapolis, Ind., being the first and at an earlier date than usual, we feared might be a comparative failure. In this, however, we were agreeably disappointed – both as respects interest and numbers. About six hundred attended, though not all of them from the opening, nor could all of them remain until the close.

The spirit of the Convention was excellent: we can scarcely imagine a better. All of the dear friends seemed to overflow with true love for our heavenly Father and our blessed Redeemer, and for "one another." Enemies were not in evidence, but had there been we believe that a broad spirit of charity and sympathy for their blindness would have hindered harsh or unkind words or actions. And if the crowd was smaller than at our last General Convention, it afforded all the better opportunity for personal fellowship.

The Convention was opened by an address of welcome by Brother Wise on behalf of the local Church, introducing Brother Herr as the Society's General Chairman of the Convention. Then followed a most interesting praise and testimony meeting, participated in by many.

At the afternoon session, following a praise service, Brother Draper was listened to with close attention. He gave an able address, which was much enjoyed. His topic was: "Bible Times and Seasons."

In the evening, after a service of praise and prayer, Brother Herr addressed the Convention.

Saturday's services opened with a prayer, praise and testimony meeting in which many with overflowing hearts participated. Some long in the way told that they were still following on to know the Lord more perfectly and were finding more and more of God's perfect [R4026 : page 214] peace and love as they sought more and more to heed the words and examples of the Lord and the apostles. Others told of how they had only recently learned the way of the Lord more perfectly and thanked the Lord that he had sent the knowledge through the DAWNS, and thanked the Colporteurs for their labor of love in bringing it to them and told of how they desired by God's grace to show their appreciation of the Truth by spreading it abroad as thoroughly and as wisely as possible, at any cost. One brother intimated that he had "*always believed these things*" and "got them out of the Bible *for himself*." He was gazed at rather incredulously, but not replied to publicly. In private one brother remarked: "I am glad that God did not give these Truths to Brother Russell *for himself*, but for the Church of God in every land and of every tongue."

Brother Russell arrived in time for a Question meeting which lasted from 10 to 11 a.m. As he came upon the platform the audience gave him the "Chatauqua salute" (waving their handkerchiefs), which he returned. This salutation had its start at the Asbury Park Convention, we know not how; but it seems to have come to stay, even though one person has discovered (?) that it is a positive sign of "idolatry" by the friends for Brother Russell, and of Brother Russell for the friends, because he responds. It is difficult to sympathize with dear friends who take such peculiar views of the little courtesies of life. True, the Bible does not commend the "Chatauqua salute," nor even a handshake; but who will doubt that either is as harmless as the "holy kiss" commended by the Apostle. If any one has by word and act cautioned against all forms of "idolatry" of leaders, "worshiping messengers," etc., surely that one is Brother Russell. Let us all,

however, seek "the spirit of a sound mind" and "moderation" on this and every subject and not run to foolish extremes.

Following the Question meeting came a splendid discourse by Brother McPhail on "Heavenly Wisdom." The address was an able one, and heard with great attention and we trust with profit.

The Saturday afternoon topic was "Baptism – Its Import and Necessity to the Church," by Brother Russell. It was followed by a symbolic baptism service in the First Baptist Church, at which sixty-five were symbolically buried in water.

The Saturday evening service opened with thirty minutes praise and prayer, after which Brother Sullivan gave an address on "The Preparedness of the Church." – Eph. 4:12. The attention was excellent, and some remarked the great profit they had derived from it. **[R4027 : page 214]**

Sunday was the principal day of the Convention – some attending just for that day, and very cheap excursions prevailing. The opening hour was devoted to praise and testimony, and then Brother Barton spoke on "Spiritual Sicknesses: their Causes and their Cure." The correspondency between the two kinds of sickness was graphically shown, and cures for the spiritual ailments suggested. It was thoroughly enjoyed.

In the afternoon the public service of the Convention drew the largest attendance – estimated at from 1500 to 2500. The topic was, "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire," and Brother Russell was the speaker. The audience gave close attention for nearly two hours.

Sunday evening closed the Convention for many who could not remain longer. It was a "Love Feast." Eight different speakers discussed Love from various standpoints. **(1) The Love**

of God. (2) The Love of Christ. (3) Love for the Father and the Son. (4) Love of the Brethren. (5) Love in the Home. (6) Love for our Neighbors. (7) Love for our Enemies. (8) Love the greatest of all Gifts. Brothers C. A. Owen, W. H. Lewellen, C. A. Wise, G. Draper, J. P. Martin, G. B. Raymond, L. W. Jones and S. J. Arnold were the speakers.

Then came one of the most interesting scenes. The friends filed up and down between the ranks of the visiting Pilgrims, local Elders and Colporteurs, singing, greeting and partaking of the broken loaves of bread held by Pilgrims Herr, Barton, McPhail, Sullivan and Draper. Many wept for joy, while some smiled.

Monday was Colporteur Day, but this did not make it a day of less interest to all the dear friends of the Truth. About 400 were in attendance, about one-fourth of whom were Colporteurs and intending Colporteurs. Brother Russell addressed them for an hour on "Our Ambassadorship" – showing the value of the time of all who have consecrated their all to divine service. He showed that the British Ambassador's services are valued by his government at \$60,000 per year or more than \$20 for every fifteen minutes of an eight-hour day, and that our services are valued by our still greater Government at a still higher valuation. He said that he did not wish to stimulate the self-esteem of the Lord's people, for that would spoil them for any part in the Lord's favor and service; but he did wish them to awaken to the value of their office as "ambassadors for God," so that each might strive daily to "redeem the time" from worldly, social, business and family affairs to be used in joyful service to the honor of our King. He pointed out that this redeeming or buying back of our time from the cares of this life does not mean the neglect of duty, but the wise ordering of life's interests so that no time will be wasted in frivolities and extravagances, after the manner of the

worldly, who are not "ambassadors" and have no such message to deliver by word and pen and printed page and living epistle.

In the afternoon Brother Cole gave some valuable instructions respecting the necessity of method in successful colporteur work. He graphically illustrated the proper methods of work, showing how the bicycle can be a valuable aid in delivering, and exhibiting attachments by which 60 books can be carried without inconvenience. Then followed assignments of territory – many new Colporteurs forming partnerships and entering the work in pairs.

The last session in the evening was a Colporteur testimony meeting and was replete with precious experiences [R4027 : page 215] of the joys of the service and appreciation of the privilege of self-denials in the cause swe love. The testimony of several was to the effect that they had seen more fruitage to their labors in the past six months than during several years preceding – an evidence possibly of what may be generally expected in every branch of the service for a little while. The zeal of the Colporteurs seems to be increasing, too.

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