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## THE FAR-WEST CONVENTION TOUR

THE Editor left Allegheny on June 29th, the friends of the neighborhood singing, as the train pulled out, "God be with you till we meet again." Our last mutual salute was with handkerchiefs, as we stood on the rear platform of the train. Truly no other tie so binds our hearts in Christian love as does the spirit of the Truth.

Sunday, June 30th: Dear friends awaited our arrival at the Chicago depot, and we were soon at Handel Hall. A praise and testimony meeting came first. It was truly a season of refreshing. At its close the Editor gave a brief address.

None of the sessions was for the public, nor advertised, except in the WATCH TOWER. There was a fine attendance nevertheless, not only of Chicago friends but from nearby places as well. The attendance at the [R4039 : page 237] afternoon session was the largest – about 550. Closest attention was given to a discourse on "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) This discourse has already been reported in the *Dispatch* and *News*.

The evening meeting was not quite so well attended, because some had home duties and our stay for a late train was not anticipated. About 300 stayed during a hot evening for a Question Meeting, which lasted two and a half hours. Then, accompanied by some of the dear brethren to the depot, we started for Denver, weary from the work but full of joy in our privileges of serving so grand a cause.

Denver, July 1st: Friends from Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Colorado, to the number of about 200,

had been in session two days before our arrival and seemingly had enjoyed themselves greatly.

As our stay was limited to the one day, a Question Meeting was considered one of the most desirable; and the questions themselves showed that the dear friends had been *thinking* quite a good deal along very important features of the divine plan. We have concluded to reproduce many of them for the general interest of all in the WATCH TOWER columns. Here also we spoke on the text, "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."

Again we were obliged to say, Good-bye! with the thought that we should never all meet again this side the veil, but hoping to meet many of the dear ones in the Kingdom, for the attainment of which hope we urged faithfulness even unto death.

At Ogden, Utah, some of the dear friends, having learned of our time of arrival, met us at the station. We had a pleasant interchange of greetings and good wishes and promises of prayers for one another, and soon were again speeding on our way to Los Angeles, *via* Salt Lake City. A wait of two hours at the latter place gave us a chance to see this thriving city, whose population now is about one-half Mormon.

Our train reached Los Angeles too late for the evening meeting of July 4th, but we had a most enjoyable season of refreshing on the 5th. We greeted the dear brethren from various cities and villages for miles about. These personal greetings seem to us and to many to be one of the chief blessings of these Conventions. In speaking we can add but little to what we have already published in the DAWNS and TOWERS and printed discourses, but as iron sharpeneth iron so doth the countenance and word of Christian fellowship and the hand-grasp cheer each other on the narrow way toward the heavenly Canaan.

The morning service for two hours was devoted to the answering of questions – this being esteemed the best way to serve the largest number, considering the brevity of our stay. In the afternoon for an hour and a half we discoursed to the dear friends along the lines of our mutual hopes and prospects and the imminence of the gathering of the last members to the Lord – beyond the veil. Incidentally we showed that our gathering must not be to human sects and parties, nor to human leaders, great or small – but to Christ, our Lord and Head; that the "harvest" work is his; that he is doing the gathering into his "garner," and that human helpers at very most are to be esteemed as his servants and channels and not otherwise heeded or honored. We left the dear friends still in session and took the 5.30 train for Oakland, Cal., where we arrived safely and on time the next morning.

Oakland, Cal., July 6: We were warmly received by Bros. W. and E. Bundy, Sexton and Andrews, and after cleaning up went to the Hamilton Auditorium, where services were already in progress – Bro. E. Bundy having just delivered an address as per the program. Bro. Russell spoke to the Colporteurs and Volunteers, setting forth how the Lord seems to be specially using these two branches of the service in the present "harvest" time for gathering his saints. He announced that Vol. I of DAWN-STUDIES had already reached the 2,000,000 mark and was advancing despite the efforts of preachers and others to misrepresent its teachings and hinder its circulation. Although they have influence to hinder its sale in book-stores and to hinder its advertisement in religious journals this opposition is evidently overruled by the Lord for the good of his people, for it opens the way to colporteurs, who are themselves being blessed both by the service and the consecration it inculcates, regardless of the number who are thus led to accept the Truth. The great blessing afforded by the Volunteers' distribution of the tracts was also pointed out.

The fact that these volunteer tract distributors include people of refinement and education and business standing gives weight to this literature which is going out this year more freely than ever. The subject matter this year is considered excellent, and more of the friends of the Truth are realizing that they consecrated to service and until death, and that the time is short in [R4040 : page 237] which they may labor in the vineyard. The fact that these tracts are supplied *free* and freight paid was also noted, and how this leaves no excuse for idleness on the part of those who are stewards of time and opportunity. To this *service* of the Lord and the Truth and the "Brethren" still in Babylon the speaker attributed much of the growth in grace and knowledge so noticeable in the gatherings of the past few years.

Brother Russell spoke again in the afternoon from 3 to 4.30 on, "Gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." And in the evening he conducted for two hours a Question Meeting.

The Sunday morning session opened with a praise and testimony service, following which Bro. R. preached from the text, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." This discourse many of you have already seen in the *Dispatch* and *News*.

The service for the public was held in the First M.E. Church – the topic being, "The Overthrow of Satan's [R4040 : page 238] Empire." An audience estimated at 1100 gave profound attention, and our hope is that some were blessed. Accompanied to the depot by a committee of the Church and with happy recollections and prayers we started northward for Portland. Delayed, we were two days and two nights in reaching Portland; but in the Lord's providence and by the forethought of the brethren in providing a cab we reached the First Christian Church edifice just in time for the appointed services, which had been widely

advertised. The Church was crowded with intelligent hearers (about 600 – probably one-third of whom were interested friends from the city, and some came 400 miles). The service lasted two hours, and following it we had an hour of very enjoyable greeting and fellowship with the friends.

At 11.45 p.m. we started for Seattle, Wash., where we arrived safely Wednesday morning, July 10 – two of the dear friends of the Portland Church accompanying us. The fact that the Christian Endeavor Society opened its session the same day in the same city did not hinder "the brethren" from having a blessed season of refreshing. First, last and all the time we exchanged greetings, and wished each other divine guidance to the end of the journey and our hoped-for reunion in "the General Assembly of the Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven."

Our opening service was a praise and testimony meeting led by Brother Acheson. It was good to be there. The testimonies as usual were from hearts full of praise to God for deliverance from darkness into his marvelous light. All of our hearts were surely encouraged. Those in attendance were chiefly from the surrounding country within a radius of 400 miles, also from points in British Columbia, and even Alaska had a representative.

The Seattle Church had provided a splendid dinner for the entire company – about 175. We feared at first that this meant that some of the dear sisters were deprived of the privileges of the meetings and fellowship; but were assured that the advice given in the TOWER that the spiritual privileges be considered paramount had been concurred in, and that six helpers not interested in the Truth had been secured for the day. An equally substantial supper was provided, and was enjoyed by all the dear friends, who thanked the Lord, the Giver of all good, and rejoiced in the fellowship of kindred minds, so like to that above.

At the afternoon session there was a discourse for the interested, and it was listened to by about 200, and following it for an hour we answered a number of interesting questions propounded by the audience. After the splendid supper already mentioned came the discourse to the public on "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire." Brother C. A. Wise, our companion in travel, opened the meeting and introduced Brother Russell, the speaker. This discourse had been well advertised and the attendance was estimated at more than nine hundred. Close attention was given to the end, a little after 9, when an automobile took us quickly to the 9.30 train of the N.P.R.R. En route ten dear friends met us at the Spokane depot and told us of others of their number who were not present owing to some misunderstanding respecting our train time. The loving greetings refreshed us, and we trust that the Spokane friends were also refreshed. We did not fail to send greetings to the disappointed ones.

A journey of three days and nights under divine Providence brought us safely to St. Paul on Saturday at 2.30 p.m. There Brother John Hoskins and others awaited our arrival and took us at once to the 3 p.m. meeting, for which the friends had already gathered. Our discourse was to the interested and dealt with our privileges and responsibilities as the Lord's stewards. We answered a number of very intelligent questions with profit, we trust, to some. After this service we had a delightful season of fellowship with the dear friends of St. Paul and Minneapolis as well as with about 60 from more or less distant points. We had supper with a party of forty as the guests of Brother J. Hoskins.

The evening session was for the public – and notwithstanding it was the busiest night of the week (Saturday) we had a fine audience numbering between 700 and 800 very intelligent people, who heard with closest attention what we had to tell regarding "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire."

We left St. Paul about 11 p.m. for our next appointment, and notwithstanding the rain a dozen or more of the friends sang us adieu in the words of the sweet hymn,

"Blest be the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above."

The night was stormy and our train lost time until we missed connections, obliging us to change our route and causing us to miss our appointment for a Sunday morning service in the First M.E. Church of Appleton. However, under divine providence we finally reached the Chatauqua grounds just fifteen minutes before the time appointed for our discourse on "To Hell and Back." A grand audience awaited us, large in numbers and very intelligent, estimated at between 2000 and 3000. For two hours we had profound attention, and hope that some blind eyes were anointed with the eyesalve of divine Truth, so that henceforth they will see more distinctly the Justice and the Love of our God, as revealed in his Word – rightly understood.

After the discourse we were cordially greeted by quite a large number, many of them TOWER readers from various adjacent localities. In the evening we had a most enjoyable season, and addressed the friends on "The True Vine and the False Vine." The next morning (Monday) about sixteen of the friends gathered at the depot and bade us goodbye; and then when we went aboard the train they sang, "God be with you till we meet again."

On arrival at Chicago Brother Jones, M.D., met us at the depot to urge that between trains we visit two dear brethren at the Home for Incurables. We did so and were well repaid for our trouble. The dear brethren, [R4040 : page 239] unable to walk, had shining faces and told of their joy in the Lord and in his glorious Truth. They even declared that notwithstanding pains

which they endeavored to forget in their joy in the Lord, they esteemed that their afflictions were blessings in disguise, because they thereby got time for study and prayer which they never had before. Our visit ended with a prayer and we returned to the depot, where others joined our company for goodby greetings – there were seven in all. Here we parted also with dear Brother Wise, whose company for the two weeks had been so helpful. We parted with mutual expressions of love and prayers and hopes for meeting at the Niagara Convention – and above all at "The General Assembly of the Church of the First-Borns."

Without further incidents of note we arrived safely at Allegheny on July 16 and had a joyous meeting once more with the Bible House family.

Looking back over our hasty journey of approximately 7,500 miles, and remembering the hundreds of dear friends greeted – many of them for the first time – we render fresh thanks to God for the wonderful possibilities of our day. How evidently the *wider* "harvesting" of this Gospel Age has made necessary the peculiar preparations of this time as compared with the "harvesting" of the Jewish Age – seeing that the same length of time is allotted to each.

The lasting impression of this trip as a whole, you may be glad to know, is this: that love amongst the brethren is broadening and deepening. Contrasting recent experiences with those of years ago, we note less of a spirit of boastfulness and belligerency as respects a knowledge of the Truth, and a greater humility and spirit of thankfulness to God for deliverance "out of darkness into *His* marvelous light," and a greater desire to render the service of love. Thus the various degrees of love are more clearly manifested and we trust will continue so to be until the end of the pilgrim journey to the heavenly city – meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, *Love*. As these graces more and



more abound and display themselves, they give evidence that larger and yet larger numbers are being polished and "made meet for the inheritance of the saints"; for an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto such into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior.

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