

## **CINCINNATI DEBATES AND CONVENTION**

ANOTHER splendid "Convention of Bible Students, believers in the Atonement of the Precious Blood, a 'Ransom for all,'" has just closed. It was very enjoyable. Many said it surpassed all previous ones, due to the debates, due to the sharp contrasts manifested between Truth and Error and their different spirits. About 600 attended – from Canada on the North to the Gulf on the South; from the Atlantic on the East to the Rocky mountains on the West. Some of those who came first could not stay until the close, but others got in at the finish who were unable to come earlier. Probably at no time were there less than 500. We heard excellent reports of the Convention discourses; and some told us that the Testimony meetings were up to the highest notch and filled with the spirit of love. Prayers were offered for both of the disputants – for Brother Russell that his mouth might be widely opened to declare the lengths and breadths of God's love, and for Brother White that his eyes of understanding might be opened to see the real plan of God and its harmony and beauty.

Elder White, on learning of our Convention, made objection to it. This surprised us. We assured him that we would have been glad to have a large convention of people of his faith present to hear the debates. We discovered finally that his fear was that we purposed running the debates like a political convention – to cheer our own side and to howl and hiss down our opponent. We assured him that he much misunderstood us all; that nothing would be farther from our sentiment and purpose; that he would be treated with the greatest courtesy by all of us, both in public and in private.

The last day of the Convention was a rainy one, nevertheless the enthusiasm continued and the last public session (Sunday afternoon, March 1) was attended by about 2100 to hear

concerning Life, Death and the Hereafter as portrayed [R4145 : page 71] in the Abrahamic Covenant. That a good impression was made on the minds of many was testified to personally, some saying, We came here fully in sympathy with Elder White's side of these questions, but we now see differently and rejoice accordingly. Some of these were immersed. On the day following the debate on Baptism 37 (18 males, 19 females, all adults) symbolized their consecration by water immersion, understanding clearly that it was not for "remission of sins" nor for admission into God's Kingdom or Church, but merely a symbolical testimony that their sins were already freely forgiven through faith in Christ's blood and that their heart consecration, whenever it occurred and was accepted of the Lord, admitted them to the Church of the living God whose names are written in heaven.

We opine that Elder White's course of boasting and misrepresentation during the debates did him little good. We understand that a part of his program and that of his fellow-believers was to "follow with a revival." We of course hope that they will not succeed in reviving their errors in the minds of the people. There is plenty of room for all the preachers of righteousness, but the poor world already has too many preachers of error. Elder White's meetings opened on Sunday, March 1, and the total attendance, as reported to us, was 31, including himself.

## **BELIEVING AND TEACHING**

Elder White's various statements respecting "sheol" and "hades" seemed so peculiarly inconsistent that one evening after the close of the debate Brother Johnson spoke to him on the subject, saying, What is your view of sheol and hades? I really do not understand you. Elder White, he says, answered rather vaguely and, being further pressed for a reply, his fellow-minister and assistant in the debate, Elder Kurfees, spoke up and said, We hold that "sheol" and "hades" refer to the tomb. Then Elder White said,

Never mind what I believe! What I have publicly uttered is what I teach!

## **ONE GENERAL CONVENTION AT PITTSBURG**

It was remarked incidentally that this year would probably witness one large Convention at Pittsburg, about the time of the G.A.R. Encampment at Toledo, Ohio, and and if possible be so arranged as to gain for us some of the advantages of their usually low railroad rates. This would bring it about September 1, but definite announcement may be looked for soon in these columns.

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