

## CONVENTION-TRAIN REPORT

BROTHER DR. JONES, with his Special Train of Conventioneers, starting from Chicago, stopping at St. Louis and at Hot Springs, received the Editor most cordially at Hot Springs, Ark. The conventioneers numbered 240 and represented thirty-four States. Some of them we had previously met, others we knew by correspondence; but almost without exception they were brethren in Christ and consecrated Bible Students. Nearly all of them paid their own way; while a few, we understand, have been financed by their friends or relatives in order to give them the spiritual opportunities of this Convention Tour, as well as physical rest.

From Hot Springs the party went south to Texas. The Editor saw them at the different meetings and greeted them there with others, and also had a nod or a word with some occasionally on the train. But his time was occupied with literary work, in which he was assisted by two brethren who are stenographers.

*Dallas, Texas*, June 8, was our next stop. Here, also, we had a hearty reception from the Bible Students' Class. The morning and evening services were for the Bible Students, and proved interesting. The Auditorium was well filled – capacity about 500. The afternoon service for the public at the Opera House was also well attended, notwithstanding hot weather and rain. Attendance 1,200, interest good, applications for more literature, 54.

*San Antonio, Texas*, June 9. – The entire morning was devoted to testimony, symposiums, etc. The Editor addressed the interested in the afternoon, to the number of about 500. In the evening his public address was heard by about 1,300, ninety-two of whom manifested interest and desired further reading matter. Altogether the Special Train Conventioneers had a happy day here, one long to be

remembered, and their number was increased by two at this place. Thence we sped onward to –

*El Paso, Texas*, June 11. – There are very few Bible Students here. We trust that the number will be greatly increased shortly. The public attendance was estimated [R5279 : page 219] at 1,700, of whom 156 left their addresses requesting more reading matter along the lines of the subject discussed, which was, "BEYOND THE GRAVE."

At *Tucson, Arizona*, June 12, by special request of the local Board of Trade, our Convention Committee had arranged for us to stay over one day at this thriving little city. When the invitation was extended, it was with the expectation that the local ministers would give us the "glad hand"; but when it was not forthcoming, and on the contrary, opposition was made, the business men advised us that they thought it unwise to have a public address. They did, however, treat us most cordially, and showed our entire party around the city in automobiles.

Meantime, also, the Conventioners, by a distribution of literature, got the Message all over the place; and the literature informed the public as to why the ministers were opposed; namely, because they feared the truth of the Bible coming in contact with the errors of their creeds. We have reason for believing that some good will come, having done our best. The results are with the Lord, and we left, well contented.

At *Los Angeles*, June 13, where a five-days' Convention of Bible Students had been arranged, the Convention was already in session when our party arrived. The People's Temple was overcrowded, capacity about 1,000. The Editor spoke twice, once to the Bible Students, numbering 1,000, and once to the public in general. The audience at the public service was estimated at 4,000. Splendid attention was given, and 475 requests for further literature were handed in. The local class of Bible Students has been growing

considerably within the last year. The old friends and the new gave our party a hearty welcome.

*San Diego, California*, June 14. – Here, as at Hot Springs, the ministers made an attack endeavoring to prevent our meeting; but here also the Lord raised up for us friends amongst the public, who reproved the ministers for their unchristian course and Dark Ages' methods. The Mayor and a company of business men received us cordially, and took us about their city in autocars. We appreciated their hospitality and cheerfully acknowledged that their city has fine prospects, amongst others one of the best harbors on the Pacific and their climate *par excellence*.

We had interesting meetings with the Bible Students here, and a fine public meeting, attendance at which was estimated at 2,000. There were 199 addresses handed in, expressing interest and desiring reading matter. We believe that some of the prejudice has been broken down. The public came out freely, notwithstanding an attack made by the ministers through a local newspaper. The Lord raised up a defender who answered the malicious slanders of the ministers, which were merely rehashes from the Eagle. This reply published in the same paper the next day, we trust offset the evil intended. Additionally, the Train Conventioneers circulated freely the special issue of the Bible Students Monthly which explains the attitude of the ministers, and which is circulated only in places where there are evidences of a concerted endeavor to prejudice the public.

*Santa Ana*, June 15, came next – a Sunday morning service. The principal Opera House here had been engaged for our use; but somebody had influence enough to have the building condemned as unsafe, although it had never previously been thought unsafe, even when crowded to the limit. The friends surmised that this was a strategic move on the part of the ministers to prevent our meeting – to prevent Bible Students from calling the attention of the public to the real teaching of God's Word. However, since the Lord was

pleased to allow the meeting, the Bible Students were quite content, and took the next best auditorium available. It was crowded beyond its capacity – 1,200 – while an overflow meeting of several hundred Bible Students was held in another building. There were 200 addresses handed in, expressing interest and requesting literature.

*Pasadena* was reached the same afternoon. Its theater capacity was crowded, 1,300 being present, with splendid interest. Here 183 addresses for literature were handed in.

*San Francisco* was our next stop. Here a three-days' Convention was in progress. The Train Conventioneers participated during the day of our stop, Monday, June 16. The Editor addressed the Bible Students in one semi-public service. Approximately, 700 were present. Then came the evening meeting for the public, with an estimated attendance of 4,000, and 408 requests for more literature.

Tuesday, June 17, was spent in journeying from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon. We had no opportunity for public service, but had the pleasure of meeting a goodly group of Bible Students at Ashland. The train remained there fifteen minutes. The friends were on the platform awaiting its arrival. They loaded us with flowers and good wishes. Some of their number journeyed with us to the next station, bidding us Godspeed. They sang to us and we to them, "God be with you till we meet again."

*Portland, Oregon*, June 18. – Here we found the Bible Students quite alert, and growing both in numbers and in spirituality. We had an enjoyable meeting with the Bible Students, exhorting them to love and loyalty, and held up before them the cross and the great reward promised to those who overcome. The attendance was approximately 500. Then came the evening service for the public. Notwithstanding a heavy rain storm, the audience numbered about 3,500 and gave good attention, 271 leaving their addresses, requesting further literature.

*Tacoma, Washington*, June 19. – More brethren, more fellowship, more encouragement, fresh manifestations of love and zeal, an excellent meeting with the interested, a splendidly attended public meeting – 1,800; 275 gave in their addresses, as indicating interest and a desire for further literature.

*Seattle*, June 20. – The Seattle class of Bible Students appear to be making good progress, not only in numbers, but also in development of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. Here, also, we had a very enjoyable season with the friends, giving them one address. The attendance at the public address in the afternoon represented the capacity of the theater, including the stage – 2,300. Requests for further literature from the interested numbered 283.

*Victoria, B.C.*, June 21. – Here we had more good times with the Bible Students with an attendance of 500. Then came the evening service, with an estimated attendance of 1,000. The Bible Students gave place to the public, and assembled in another building, as an overflow meeting. The interested strangers to the number of 156 left their addresses, requesting further literature.

*Vancouver, B.C.*, June 22. – We had a grand time here. The Spirit of the Lord operating in the Canadian mind gives blessed fruitage, similar to that found elsewhere. An all-day program had been arranged. We were met at the boat-landing and escorted to the place of meeting, where a public address of welcome was given. To this we responded, assuring the brethren of our appreciation of their cordial welcome and of our realization **[R5280 : page 220]** that by the same spirit all the Lord's people have been buried in the one Body – the Body of Christ, the "Church of the First-borns," whose names "are written in Heaven." Then came a testimony meeting with further addresses.

The afternoon service was for the public. The attendance was estimated at 4,500, but other hundreds of late-comers were turned away; for, owing to the construction of the building, the late-comers

would have disturbed the others by reason of the noise of their shoes. The audience was especially fine and the attention excellent. Addresses to the number of 224 were handed in requesting further literature.

When it is remembered that the majority of the meetings here noted were held on week-days, the attendance surely indicated that the people had not lost their interest in the Bible and in religion, and that the falling off in the general Church attendance is therefore properly chargeable to another cause. We believe that the decrease in Church attendance, of which we hear so much, is chargeable to the fact that the public have lost their faith, as well they might, in the creeds of the Dark Ages. They are receiving no spiritual food. When the ministers preach to them along the lines of sociology, or astronomy, or science, the *pews*, as well educated and as well informed along these lines as are the *pulpiteers*, care little for the minister's dissertation.

Oh, that the ministers of today, instead of feeling angry against the Truth and fighting it, would investigate it thoughtfully and prayerfully! Then indeed they would be a power in the earth, in this, our wonderful day, in which God is sending out His Light and Truth to be the guide of His people, to guide them to His Holy Hill – the Kingdom of Messiah! What a power these ministers might be, if backed by the truth of God's Word!

How pitiable it seems that men so well equipped would be not only useless as respects the advancement of Christ's cause, but be really the leaders of the opposition thereto – ignorantly serving the Prince of Darkness! All the more, however, the Truth must be spoken. The shackles of the creeds of error must be broken. The beauty of the Truth must be exhibited; for it is the Power of God for the calling and electing and perfecting of the Bride class to be the Lamb's Wife.

But while we must oppose the error, and must uncover its very foundations in our efforts to "show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light," nevertheless, let us all the more speak the Truth in love, without harshness, without personalities. Our dear brethren are deluded, deceived, not *intentionally* opposing the *Truth*, we believe. How glad we shall be for the day when the great Adversary, who deceived us all and is still deceiving so many, will be bound for a thousand years, as promised! – Rev. 20:1-3.

### WORDS OF CAUTION

This may be as good an opportunity as any for a few words of caution. We are all in danger of going to extremes, and all should remember the Apostle's words, "Let your moderation be known unto all." At one place we found that a spirit of antagonism had been aroused by means of immoderate statements on the part of a few. They had suggested that Brother Russell and his writings are divinely inspired, as were the Apostles of old. What a great mistake! No wonder such statements were resented! When asked if such were our opinion, we promptly assured the dear friends to the contrary.

The view we have always presented, and still hold, is that the Lord Jesus appointed only twelve Apostles, St. Paul being the one to take Judas' place. The words of these would be so supervised by Divine Power that whatsoever they would declare binding on earth, the Church would know would be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever they would declare on earth to be loosed or not binding, they might know would not be obligatory in the sight of Heaven. In other words, those twelve Apostles were the special mouthpieces of the Lord to His Church. They still speak to us. We need no others; we expect no others.

The most we have ever claimed for our own presentations, written or oral, is that they are in line with the words of the Apostles, that they harmonize with them – that we keep so close to the words

of the Apostles and the words of our Lord that our Message may be said to be their Message, except in respect to the particular words used and the arrangement of them. In the **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** we have classified the various presentations of Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets into different studies or topics; and this is what we meant when we declared in an old **WATCH TOWER** that, on this account, whoever reads the **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** is really reading the Bible in an arranged form – topically. In no case have we ever presented anything as of ourself. In every instance we have fastened our presentations to the Scriptures on which they depend and rest.

Our claim has been, and *is*, that because we are living in the dawn of the New Dispensation, it is the Divine will that the Mystery of God should now be finished, in the sense of reaching a completion, or unfolding. This we hold comes to us, not through special inspiration to speak or to write new things, but by the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, enlightening us and directing us to the Lord's Word, and assisting us to see the proper application of the same. The wonderful light of our day upon every subject undoubtedly inures to these ends.

Because it is due time, the Lord would send the light to His people, and as usual, would send it through some earthly instrumentality. If, in the Divine providence, we have been used or shall be used of the Lord, it will be in making clear the sayings of inspiration already written, and not in making any new revelations or prophecies.

We take this opportunity, also, to guard the dear friends against the report that we are making any different presentations by letter than we have made in **THE WATCH TOWER** and the **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**. If any claim to have such letter, ask to see the letter, and refuse to receive as from me anything contradictory to the **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** and **THE WATCH TOWER**. If



we ever see it necessary to make changes, we will preferably do this in public print rather than in private letters or in private conversation. Let us stick to the written Word in the Scriptures as well as THE WATCH TOWER publications.

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**[R5283 : page 220]**

"My soul be on thy guard;  
Ten thousand foes arise;  
The hosts of sin are pressing hard  
To draw thee from the prize.

"O! watch, and fight, and pray  
The battle ne'er give o'er;  
Renew it boldly every day,  
And help Divine implore.

"Ne'er think the vict'ry won,  
Nor once at ease sit down;  
Thine arduous work will not be done,  
Till thou hast gained thy crown."

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