

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

GROWING OLD  
W. Edmund Smith

"Grow old along with me; the best is yet to be." Thus sang a great poet. He must have been a good man, for only a good man could have taken such an optimistic view of old age. Robert Browning, who wrote the words was a good man and had learned the secret of growing old gracefully.

But his sentiment does violence to the generally accepted teaching, that old people live wholly in the past; with them life is all retrospective. They talk of the good old days gone by. They deplore the awfulness of the times; especially the moral and spiritual degeneration of the young folk. "It was not thus when I was a boy, or a girl," they are reported as saying.

I contend that this is a caricature of old age at its best; and this best is found only in those who live in the light of God's countenance and have the "joy of the Lord as their strength." They are singing of the "Sweet Now, Now," as well as "The Sweet By and By." They can look back with gratitude and recall the many mercies and blessings of God. They are glad that they were born, and struck this planet when they did. Not that their coming was anything extraordinary, or that they have achieved what the world calls "Success" in life. But these old pilgrims call the world's success only failure when it has had little or no place for God in the programme of life.

To these old folks, the past has been good, the present is better, and the best is in prospect, for they have a vision which is not intercepted by the horizon of earthly things. They may be in the sunset of life as far as time's calendar is concerned, and failing strength may remind them that this body must soon fall down; but, with Paul, they can say, "The outward man perisheth, but the inward man is renewed day by day." So they are thinking and singing more about the "SUN RISE" than they are about the "Setting Sun." They are more enamored with the thought of a mansion in the skies than they are with the house in which they live. Yes, oh yes! the true child of God thinks more of the future than he does of the past. He is not leaving his treasures behind him; he is going to receive with great dividends, the investment he made in laying up treasures above and not on the earth.

It is a trite saying that "the devil has no happy old men." The person who lives without Christ in his or her heart, is not truly living; they are only existing. They may fare as sumptuously as Dives, who no doubt was the envy of many in his city. He had "His Good Things." But Christ was accommodating that phrase to the standard by which Dives lived, and was judged by his associates. But those "Good Things" perished with the using; he died a pauper. A false religion may have given him a false hope which clung to him till he found himself in hell.

The devil finds that the carnal heart is ready to be inspired by a false hope, for it is gladly guided by the sophistries of men, rather than by the Word of God. "The hope of the hypocrite shall perish." But the hope of the aged pilgrim springs from his personal appropriation of the Blood of Jesus as the only ground of his acceptance with God. This must be his passport into heaven; saved and sanctified by the blood. Salvation comes to him not of merit but of free grace, which has made him fit to associate with all those who "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," and are welcomed to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Recently, I have had opportunity of seeing how God blesses those who have far passed the three score years and ten. I attended the other night a prayer meeting, held in the home of a brother, who was that day 89 years old. A number of us went there to celebrate the occasion. When we heard him shout and praise God for all His mercies, and the glorious prospect God had given him, we did not feel like sympathizing with him because he was so near the end; we felt like congratulating him that he was so near the GLORIOUS BEGINNING. He had seen much joy in this life, with many trials; but "the best was yet to be."

The very next day, as I was walking along a street in Somerville, I saw an old gentleman and lady sitting on their piazza. I went up and greeted them, for they were my old friends. I was told by the brother that he was 88, and that his wife was 84. They had recently celebrated the 64th anniversary of their marriage. They both enjoy comparatively good health and are on their way to heaven with joy and not with gloom. Brother and Sister Blair Charlton are well known to many readers of The Highway. I am sure that the forward look means much more to them than does the backward gaze. After so many years of walking together with God, and witnessing to his great salvation, spiritual things seem more real than ever before. Yes, "the best is yet to be."

Going from that piazza, I saw another octogenarian sitting in the sun on his porch. I found Brother Ramsay who is 86 years old, in failing health, but the spiritual man is triumphant. He cannot get to church, but he has a sanctuary in his heart. He is blessed by the Highway.

The other day I received a good letter from an aged preacher in N. B., just back from a trip to Michigan, and on around to Toronto, where he visited Brother Ziba Orser, who is praising God in expectation of a glorious resurrection. He had words of optimism for the work of the Lord, and appreciation for the blessing of God upon his own soul. I am sure that Brother Percy Trafton would say, while the past has been full of joy with some trials, yet the best is to come.

And today I received a letter from Brother William Carson, of Norton, N. B. It began and ended with a shout of praise. The old body is

growing weaker, "but faith springs as the eagle that soars to greet the sun." All these whom I have mentioned have for many years been identified with holiness churches, and have rejoiced in the reality of the experience of Perfect Love. Let me live the life of the righteous and let my testimony be like his. Old age has not developed sourness or bitterness in these hearts. They breathe out blessing and good will to all. Yes! thank God, "the best is yet to be."

## THEY DO MIX

A trite epigram anent drunken-driving accidents has it that gasoline and alcohol do not mix.

But they do mix, and as never before.

They mix at every intersection. They mix arms and legs with windshields, steering gears, doors, wheels, gadgets, hoods. They mix pedestrians up with the occupants of cars.

They mix victims in arguments, mix statements to police, give mixed accounts to the insurance companies and mixed testimony to the courts. They mix up everything they contact, including those who are trying to find a recipe for their unscrambling.

They mix minds and morals \* \* \* and sometimes mates.

If you are still unconvinced, listen in on the police radio "3-90" calls over the short wave. There are so many of their disastrous mixtures that the police have had to give them a number.—Los Angeles Times.

## RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin recently published a chart showing the numerical strength of the principal religions of the world. The population of the world is given as 1,828,000,000, of whom 639,000,000, or 34.8 per cent, are Christians. Of these, 318,000,000 are Roman Catholic and 130,000,000 Eastern Catholics. Protestants number 191,000,000, broadly classified as 81,000,000 Lutheran and 110,000,000 Reformed. Non-Christians total 1,189,000,000, or 65.2 per cent of the world's population. There are 15,000,000 Jews; 227,000,000 Mohammedans; 311,000,000 Confucianists; 215,000,000 Hindus; 161,000,000 Animists; 140,000,000 Buddhists; and 120,000,000 other non-Christians.—Methodist Protestant Recorder.

## The Anniversary Services

1888 - 1948

"Sixty Years of Spiritual Service"

Time: Nov. 3rd - 7th.

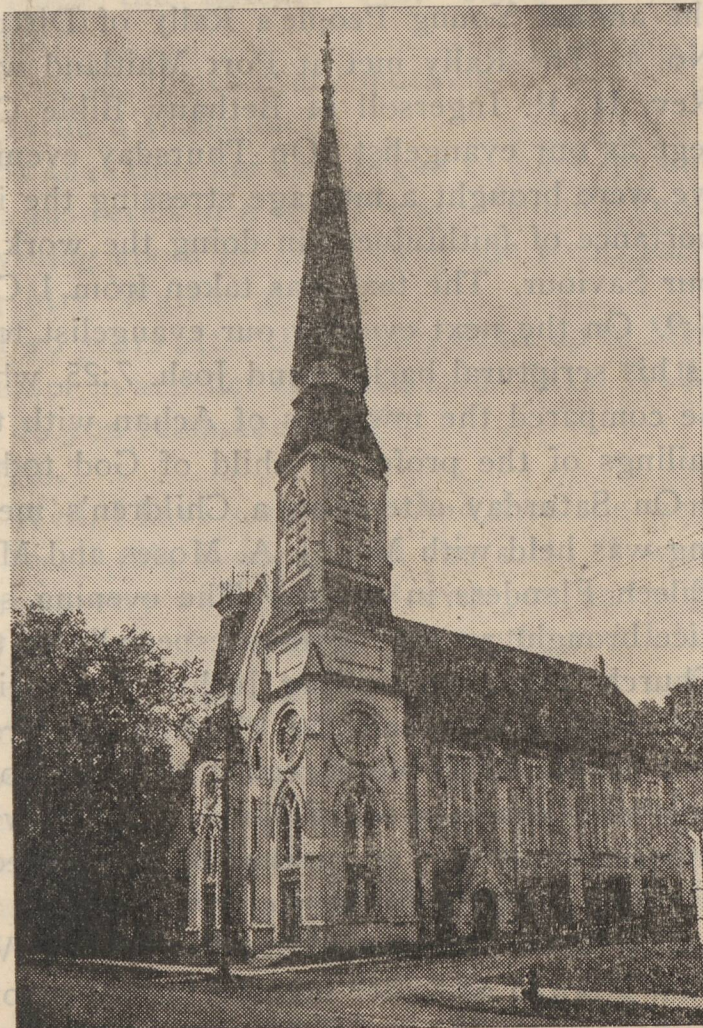
Place: Woodstock, N. B.

Speaker: Rev. G. B. Williamson, D. D., General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene.

Song Leader: Rev. N. E. Trafton.

First Service: Wednesday, Nov. 3rd, 7.30 p. m.

Ministers and delegates are requested to go directly to the Church on arrival in Woodstock. The ministers, their wives and two delegates from each church will be entertained free of charge. In addition, arrangements will be made for accommodations in private homes, rooming houses, etc., at standard rates.



Where Anniversary Services Will be Held