

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

By W. Edmund Smith

These and days in which unorthodox cults and sects seem to flourish. The bold and energetic way in which the devotees of these cults seek to propagate their faith is a stern rebuke to us who believe we hold the faith once delivered to the saints.

The Mormons are especially aggressive today. On my way to Beulah I met two young men from Utah, just out of college, on their way to fulfill a two-year mission, which every young man in the Mormon church is required to carry out. One was going to St. John and the other to Halifax.

One of these young men was about the finest specimen of physical manhood I have ever seen: Six feet three tall, weighing 235 lbs., built in splendid proportion. They took their seat almost directly opposite me. I was struck with their appearance and thought them to be theological students. Soon one of them took a Bible from his grip and began to read. I had the audacity to lean over and say, "Brother, I am glad to see you reading that good book; do you believe the teachings of that book?"

He replied: "I certainly do," and came across to talk with me. He was free to talk; had an open countenance and could look one steadily in the eye. A handsomer, cleaner looking young man I have seldom seen. He told me he was from Salt Lake City, and was out on missionary work. Had just graduated from the State University; after performing his mission he intended to study dentistry.

I asked him about what his religion could do for one, and when he asked about my religion I had the privilege of telling of the way of salvation which includes holiness of heart. He seemed a good deal perplexed, and when I quoted passages of Scripture to prove my belief he would ask, "Where do you find that in the Bible?"

He confessed that he did not know his Bible as he ought, but was studying it more and more.

While we were talking, another young man came along and said, "I heard you two talking about religion; may I listen in?" We invited him in. He said: "I am a Jew, or rather I was a Jew, but I have abandoned the Jewish faith; I am looking for reality—a firm foundation on which to stand."

I told him that all I could offer him was the New Testament, which tells of Jesus who came to save us from our sins. "Oh," he said, "that is only speculation." I could tell him "that if he would honestly seek to know the Truth, and put God's promise to the test he would experience the highest kind of reality."

He confessed that "he believed that Jesus was the finest Democrat the world has ever seen; he was always for the poor and the oppressed but he was only a good man." I had to quote to him many of the declarations Jesus had made concerning himself, "which proves that he was either the Son of God, possessing full-orbed divinity, or the most boastful egotist the world has ever seen."

I was greatly blessed in my soul as I testified to those young men of what salvation means to me. I think I got too hot for them, and so they drew off to another seat and I resumed my reading of my Testament. I could see that the Mormon was trying to persuade that Jewish agnostic of what he thought is the true faith.

These Mormons are going everywhere, and they cultivate most pleasing manners and attractive forms of address. Anything that may look like an insult they take good naturedly and put the laugh on themselves. E. G. They had invaded a back settlement called Durham, near my old home in N. B. An old lady heard they were coming and kept watch for them. When the two young men approached she put her head out the upstairs window and shouted, "You go right along; there ain't no wives for you in this house!" The boys told it at the next house they visited.

I have been told how they will pitch in and help a man with his farm work; when they found a member of a family they visited was in the hospital, they went with flowers and words of cheer.

Then, too, look at Jehovah's Witnesses offering their literature on the streets. "These are they who compass sea and land to make a proselyte, and after they have made him, he is ten times more the child of the devil than before." Because men do not love the TRUTH, God sends them strong delusion that they should believe a lie.

Riverside Camp Meeting closed on Sunday evening, Aug. 21st. The weather was good in spots, but at times very chilly. The writer experienced the only cold he ever contracted in more than fifty years of camp-meeting attendance. I left on Saturday night so instead of keeping the good camp-meeting folks awake with my violent coughing, I disturbed the occupants of a car coming to Boston.

Brother Toakley, the evangelist of the camp, did excellent preaching. It was sane, scriptural and searching. I have never known an evangelist to keep more closely to the Bible. Homiletical skill, exegetical accuracy and interesting delivery characterized Brother Toakley's preaching. But we must conclude his ignorance of some things that are very plain to many evangelists and preachers today: He doesn't seem to know when the Rapture of the saints will take place. His theme is ever holiness; get wholly sanctified and you will be ready for life, death, or the sudden appearing of Jesus.

I venture to give a little glance at two of the sermons which most impressed me.

He was preaching about Paul and Silas who had been jailed for preaching the Gospel. With backs torn and bleeding they sang praises to God in that Roman cell, and their feet fast in the stocks.

He told of that midnight song. The circumstances made it look like a valley situation, but it proved to me a mountain-top experience to Paul and Silas.

1st—They sang praises to God for He was good.

2nd—They proved they had no ill-will against those who had beaten them. That was real victory.

3rd—It brought great blessing to their souls. Have you ever had a midnight song?

Again, he referred to the anxiety on the part of Abraham and Sarah to have God's promise fulfilled towards them, so they brought in Hagar. That was to help God out. It proved to be a great failure. But do not holiness people do the same thing when they call in unsanctified folks to lead them in the way of success? The church does this when it adopts worldly and compromising methods to advance the cause of God. They call in Hagar.

Personally, I have grave doubts of the

depth and stability of a holiness work which has not been started on the basis of clear and strong holiness preaching. What if a man be popular and can draw a crowd, and apparently a great stir has taken place? Can you get the work really down on a foundation of holiness if it has not begun in a Scriptural manner? A true holiness preacher must suffer if he has to listen night after night to the first principles of the Gospel, knowing all the time that the preacher does not believe the truth which is dearer to him than his life. He will ultimately find the children of Hagar, the Israelites will scorn Isaac and his kind. But alas! We are inclined to accept so many things that promise superficial success.

We believe that more was accomplished at the camp than was visible. Our labor in the Spirit is never in vain.

We must give a little tribute to Sister MacPherson, of Presque Isle, who superintended the kitchen. We had a splendid variety of food, cooked in the best way and served most efficiently by a group of splendid young sisters.

During the cold, many swarmed into the kitchen to feel the warmth of the stove. But there never was a word of complaint on the part of those who were hustling to do their work.

Like in every true holiness camp-meeting, the spirit was good and all felt that it was blessed to be there.

A MINISTER'S SUCCESS

A certain minister of the gospel occupied a high place in a large city. He came from a small Canadian town. One who knew him well was asked: "How did he secure that prominent pulpit? What is the secret of his success? There are greater preachers than he—more scholarly and more eloquent."

The answer was: "He has always done what many other men knew ought to be done but neglected. He never failed to write notes of condolence to the afflicted, whether they belonged to his congregation or not. He would cross the street to speak to a burdened man. He would pen a sincere word of praise to the sheriff who did his duty; to the mayor who enforced the law; to the teacher in the public school who was faithful. Nothing that might properly receive a minister's notice escaped him. This is the real secret of his success."—Mississippi Advocate.

WATCH YOUR WORDS

Preachers there are, of all classes—wise and unwise, learned and unlearned, dull and dead; some of them are dead, others full of life and power. A little girl was asked, "Well, Mary, how did you enjoy the sermon?" "Not so grand," she said. "I took the wrong book with me." She did, as was her habit, take her Bible to Church, but she said, "It was a dictionary I needed this morning." Words! Words! How Paul feared that kind of preaching; "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" (I. Cor. 1:17).—Selected.

CONTENTMENT

Contentment is one's self rather than of one's condition. It depends not so much where one is, or what one has, or what one is doing or enduring, as upon one's personal view of his place, of his experiences, and of his possessions in relation to present duty and to his ultimate happiness and welfare.—Oliver G. Wilson.