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TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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CHURCH INTELLIGENCE

MISSION FIELDS.

FREAKS IN RELIGION.

Curious Views Among People in All Parts of the World.

Correspondence, May 1st, 1899.

To the Editor:

One of the peculiar conditions of the world is the religious freaks it produces. Some have strength to produce a marked impression upon its constituents, and sway upon communities and nations, while others are doomed to die in obscurity. In they widely known or not they are none the less interesting when met by one who interests himself in the social and religious concerns of the great human family.

In our wide awake America we have a home-made expression for all such; we name them "cranks." This because they are in the time and thought in one direction. They frequently become absorbing to associates, and sometimes very agreeable to persons who are not interested in their theories. Denied, if they know how to be more discreet with their views they would be more successful.

Some of these strange characters are known in history as reformers, because they have been able to combine necessary elements of success. Then there seems to have been placed here on earth just at the proper time to accomplish certain work for the benefit of the human race, and the term "crank" is no longer applicable to them, but they are styled saviors. When such men are ahead of thought there must have been in our preexistence, if this present life represents a state of probation, or a pre-existant state to a very large extent.

We sometimes use the homely expression that a child is "a chip of the old block." This may be true to a general name, but there are many exceptions.

The religious freaks are not confined to Christianity. They can be found in all other faiths. The Mohammedan world is as prolific as our, so far as the circumstances will permit. They produce circlets, which are a species of monks, who are held in the extreme veneration of the people, namely and worship. They combine some virtues which, when looked at exclusively are entitled to honor, but there are some blind to the ridiculous side, while others deride them because of the disagreeable or even dirty and filthy manner. They are all freaks. Some dance others stand in one place and whirl until a certain period of time, while others forming garments float round and round like a bubble. They will continue this for a period of a half hour, and those who behold them are dizzy looking at them. They claim wonderful healing powers because of their holiness. Others who are more barbarous, will stick knives or other sharp instruments into their bodies, while some will charm snakes and handle them in the most astonishing manner. All this is in the name of religion. Many laugh at them, but as great is the superstition that they would not like to offend one of them, lest he should by a supposed power have a curse instead of a blessing. Others are pretended reformers; others again claim to have something about for their events, that tradition has handed down. These, whether Christian or Mohammedan, are not the worst of the freaks, for some with good aims in life, but are not altogether susceptible to gospel influences, have taken up a cheer as the Lord said about the shaking, with whom there was much good, but also some things which Christ condemned in the way. These cannot be reached in this dark hour. They are as much in need of further gift from heaven light than our sinners humble and repentant. I have met many of these amiable people and found in them a desire to do what they believed themselves the pious and the great chosen instruments.

I am reminded of Mrs. Stafford's poem at Evanston. Mr. and Mrs. Stafford were from Chicago formerly, but they are now in Salt Lake City. Mr. Stafford is dead, but Mrs. Stafford is carrying on his spiritual work. Here is a combination of circumstances. Her brotherly love and unity based on a ray of that light which God has revealed to us. We sorrowed with Sister Stafford. They gather to fulfill prophecy, but how or what for they cannot tell. They only say that God has sent them, and that He requires all to overcome the flesh and to love one another. In this effort they excel. They have a community of about 18 members, male and female, who live as brothers and sisters, and really they have a good home and enforce some happy and content. At first one would say: What could induce these people to join the church? But wait! when approached on such matters, they are not even willing to hear. They consider the whole world fallen.

Mark the freak. Adam, they say, made the greatest mistake of his life by associating with his wife Eve, because he was not prepared by the principle of love. The result, said Mr. Baldwin, an elderly, earnest man, was that Cain was born and sin was introduced into the world. Afterward, if Adam had waited and seen they would have overcome the world first, but now the world overcame him and the rest of us. The Stafford society is found that this shall not be their mistake, so they refrain from marriage and all married people do not associate. They have many, now young men and women who are seeking Mr. Baldwin said give to answer how long they should wait, but it is clear that if not this one belief, so that all may find a home in the mansions for which we were created.

F. F. HINTZE.

In Wisconsin.

Janesville, Wis., May 15, 1899.

To the Editor:

It seems one year since I left my home in Salt Lake on the 12th of April, 1898, to take a mission into the world.

I had proved myself a faithful missionary in the past to be true to His promises, so I ventured to throw myself solely upon the promises of God, and I made it a matter of acquiring knowledge and attaining to requisite qualifications for the promulgation of the Holy Gospel.

After a few days' delay in Chicago I received my appointment in the Badger State, and was sent to Janesville, with Elder Thomas F. Thompson, found for my companion. We arrived here on the evening of April 14, 1898. Milwaukee is the city where I was to have spoken in the century work.

As the Elders stationed there had just previously arrived, not having as yet obtained a place to stay, we had secured permission to hold forth in meetings on main thoroughfares, we had some opportunity in opening up new fields for work, as well as renewing some practice in street preaching. We had some experience in this work made for some time, but by constant efforts the difficulties gradually faded away.

During the past year I have labored in the following cities: Milwaukee, Oshkosh and Janesville, where I am stationed at the present time. Much valuable experience has been gained. Some of the Elders have left their mark manifested to the restoration of the sick, of the Lord's harmess and preparation of the Elders. His wants in the spread of truth and His willingness to supply every want and need but will be the same as it was in the incident that occurred while I was traveling in Winnebago county with Elder O. S. Hansen. We had to visit and hold meeting in the small country villages where school buildings had been secured for the purpose, for about two weeks, and had had no trouble thus far in receiving accessory entertainment, and we felt quite free to mention to us partake of their hospitality. But arriving at Eureka, we found things a little different. It was a village we endeavored to secure a building for conducting a meeting had been vacant. But not permitting ourselves to be discouraged so easily, we tried for a meeting under the "blue canopy of heaven. When time for meeting arrived a fair crowd had gathered, listening intently to the words. No disturbance whatever. After the services, we told the people how we were traveling, and that we had been blessed with generosity for food and lodging. No one responded. This left us in a quandary. I started about with Elder Waldram, calling at doors as we passed, but to no avail. We knew in the morning we had to leave the town. We had no money done so, then we called at the door of the nearest residence. A lady answered our call. After telling him who we were and what we wanted, he replied, "I have some money in my pocket, I will do for you, put up at the hotel. We combined our way toward Waukesa, thinking to be free from such trials for some other occasion, but does were closed against us seemingly. Finally it seemed to be that the Elder was not sure, and that we would not obtain lodging as long as we intended staying in the town, we went to a hotel.

Thus we were taught two lessons, however small and simple they may seem: First, whatever the Lord promises, He will fulfill, if we be faithful and persistent; second, is not to be overtaken.

The Latter-day Saints of all people ought to rejoice for what God has done for them, for a knowledge of the truths of the Gospel which is able to lead us to salvation. I rejoice that I am in east with them, and that I am permitted to bear the Gospel truths unto the world in its behalf.

Before closing my article, I wish to make mention of the magnanimity of Elder Ezra Taft Benson, who at the time our arrival at Janesville have been a blessing to us. Most also mention Mrs. Hansen, the mother of Mrs. Brown, their parents and her husband.

After our March conference I was again stationed to Janesville with Elder Jos. E. Anderson, of Ogden, Utah. We feel a pleasure for the home and friends the Lord has given us.

JAS. E. KNOPP.

In Sweden.

Lund, Sweden, May 5, 1899.

To the Editor:

It was my privilege the last year, to labor in the Malmo district, Lund, where we have a small branch established, and while it may appear the work is slow, we feel that the seeds have been sown, and that the Lord will bring some harvest. Here are found the noble, generous and high minded, and here the sheep are educated for the ministry.

Most ancient places of interest are here to be found. Among the most prominent I may mention Charlemagne's tower, and the cathedral. The architectural skill on this magnificent church is astonishing to a wonderful degree, considering the fact that it was erected in 1000-1100, and was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the Roman Catholic church, the Roman Catholic. It is very massive and built of cut stone, with towers fore and aft, and the roof is made of solid oak, handsomely carved, and the interior wall and ceiling decorations are grand.

The climate in these parts is very damp and foggy, but as far as known the people are laboring hard to obtain health, and all are deeply interested in promulgating the principles of the Latter-day Saints gospel.

I saw the advice in a correspondence of your paper some time ago, that any young man contemplating a mission to this country should take walking exercises. This is highly commendable, for the Elders conference I understand there is not so much walking as formerly, but I find there is sufficient to furnish healthy exercise and a good appetite.

On Saturday and Sunday, the 15th and 16th of April, we held our semi-annual conference in Malmo at the new quarters. Per Wejerstrasse, 11, and there were twenty-two missionaries from Zion present, among whom I might mention Elder Platte D. Lyman of Liverpool, president of the European mission, and Elder Andreas Petersen of Copenhagen, president of the Scandinavian mission. Four meetings were held, the first at 9 o'clock on Saturday evening, and three on Sunday, namely: At 10, 2 and 6 o'clock, the attendance at all the meetings was good. The statistical report given at the Saturday conference, which was very flattering, was nevertheless encouraging, and showed that considerable had been made by the Elders in furthering the great cause. The report showed a membership of 49 with 2 Sunday schools, 1 Mutual Improvement association and 1 Relief society. There are now thirteen Elders laboring in the mission conference, and their appointments are as follows: Malmo branch, Elder Ohlsen, Assistant Minor and Alfred Hansen; Lund branch, Nephi J. Valentine, A. H. Berggren and Arvid Nelson; Helsingborg branch, Albert J. Johnson and John A. Peterson; Christianstad branch, James Jensen, Jeppe Jensen and Carl Olsen; Karlskrona branch, Eric Nelson and John Persson; Gustaf A. Anderson has been called to labor in the Scandinavian conference.

Elder Andrew Anderson, our conference president, has been released to return home, and his successor is Elder Ole Olsen.

Anyone having relatives or friends in these parts wishing the Elders to visit them, will please inform them.

Your brother in the Gospel,

ALBERT H. BERGMAN.

Healing of the Sick.

Philadelphia, Pa., May 17, 1899.

To the Editor:

There were at one time (3) months save eight Elders here, but as the Elders are for the most part released to return home, they have been removed to other fields of labor, leaving but two Elders in the city at present.

We have been tracting from door to door and we are still doing so, and by this means we have obtained a great deal of prejudice and made a great many friends.

The Lord has been with us and His power has been made manifest at different times as to healing the sick. Brother Hyrum Washburn, of Salt Lake City, who is now stationed in this city, a new "Mormon," who is one of our friends, was at our meeting last Sunday, the 14th inst., and he held at brother William Wallace's home.

We had a free attendance and the spirit of the Lord was in our midst. After we had closed our meeting "and were still standing," this lady asked if we could come to her residence the about two weeks, and had had no trouble thus far in receiving accessory entertainment, and we felt free to mention to us partake of their hospitality. But arriving at Eureka, we found things a little different. It was a village we endeavored to secure a building for conducting a meeting had been vacant. But not permitting ourselves to be discouraged so easily, we tried for a meeting under the "blue canopy of heaven. When time for meeting arrived a fair crowd had gathered, listening intently to the words. No disturbance whatever. After the services, we told the people how we were traveling, and that we had been blessed with generosity for food and lodging. No one responded. This left us in a quandary. I started about with Elder Waldram, calling at doors as we passed, but to no avail. We knew in the morning we had to leave the town. We had no money done so, then we called at the door of the nearest residence. A lady answered our call. After telling him who we were and what we wanted, he replied, "I have some money in my pocket, I will do for you, put up at the hotel. We combined our way toward Waukesa, thinking to be free from such trials for some other occasion, but doors were closed against us seemingly. Finally it seemed to be that the Elder was not sure, and that we would not obtain lodging as long as we intended staying in the town, we went to a hotel.

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