

**COLPORTEUR ADDRESSES  
PARTICIPATED IN BY THREE BRETHREN  
OPENING REMARKS BY BROTHER E. F. CRIST**

(From 1915 Convention Report, Supplement, starting on page 117.)

We will endeavor to make our remarks such as may be of assistance, not only to colporteurs, “would-be’s,” “has-beens” and volunteers, but also to those who are candidates for membership among those colporteurs who shall in due time carry the message we love to all of the families of the earth.

A proper appreciation of the beauty and harmony of the message we bear; and of the importance and dignity of our work as harvest laborers, will do much toward stimulating zeal and giving necessary impetus for carrying on our work successfully and effectively. With this thought in mind, let us notice the reading of James 5:7, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receives the early and latter rain.”

In the Scriptural account of creation, we are told that the earth brought forth grass, and the trees of various kinds. It also brought forth cattle and creeping things, including beasts of all kinds. Of all that the earth produced, man was the crowning fruitage, having been made from the dust of the earth. We might correctly say that the perfect man was THE FRUIT, in that he was superior to all else that the earth produced. That perfect fruit was stung by the serpent of sin. The virus there injected not only brought death to its first victim, but all the progeny down to the present time have suffered therefrom. We see no perfect fruit, no perfect man. God has been waiting for many centuries for THE PRECIOUS FRUIT OF THE EARTH, until He receive the early and latter (FRUIT, or HARVEST). From a suggestion from the Pastor we are helped to see that God waits not to receive some rain, but we know that He has patiently waited for an early and latter harvest. The word “rain” does not appear in the Vatican Mss., and the appropriateness of omitting it will be apparent to Bible students. God is looking forward to having this earth filled with a perfect FRUIT, namely, a perfect race. As a means to that end He is now gathering out a still more precious fruit, for which He has been waiting 1800 years. It becomes our precious privilege to co-labor with Him in gathering out this most precious fruit, as colporteurs, as volunteers, or in some other capacity. When we have faithfully performed our little part in this feature of the fruit gathering, we may also participate in the ingathering of that multitudinous crop that will include all mankind who are willing to be made perfect. For this grand consummation, God has waited patiently 6,000 years. May the thought that we may be associated with Him in carrying out this purpose fill our hearts with joyful anticipation; may it move us to earnest, persevering effort to that end. “Let us be patient brethren.”

We remember how Pharaoh, King of Egypt, placed Joseph in authority at his right hand, and during seven years of plenty he gathered together the wheat that was to be used later as a means for saving the lives of all Egyptians. Doubtless people scoffed at his prediction of a great time of trouble (a famine); we may readily suppose they said, "How foolish to spend time in gathering up wheat—how much better it would be if he would engage in some reform work." Joseph persevered, knowing what the result would be, according to God's word. What must have been his delight when later he could save the lives of these very ones who had looked with scorn upon his course.

Since we understand that Joseph was a type of Christ, the seven years of ingathering may well picture to us the entire harvest period, seven being suggestive of completeness. At any rate we know the Lord has been gathering the wheat (figurative wheat) during that time. He has raised the dead wheat (saints) and is now assembling the other grains, we believe, as one after another dies. This better wheat will be used for giving life to mankind as the antitypical Egyptians during the coming age. In the realization that we are spending time and energy in helping to gather this better wheat, may we not receive with equanimity the scoffings of our fellows who see not the glorious end to be thus made possible? What matter if they do say, "How foolish to spend time in such work; it would be better to do some slum work, or social reform work." Soon, if we faithfully perform the little part allotted to us in the wheat-gathering process, it will be our privilege to give life to these very ones who have misunderstood us. Truly, that will be sweet revenge. Surely we may take encouragement from this.

We read in Ephesians 6 about having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. To have one's feet shod would suggest putting on shoes. With good shoes, having thick soles, we would walk over sharp stones, or among thorns and briars, without inconvenience, or pain. However, the shoes would be of little assistance except they be worn. Would not the lesson be that we have in the Scriptures the Gospel of Peace. It is God's purpose to give to mankind, peace universal and eternal, but there's a special, prescribed way by which this is to be accomplished. A class is to be developed in gentleness, patience, humility, and love by passing through much difficulty and tribulation. "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the kingdom." If we have a proper grasp of this gospel of peace, so that we realize every disappointment, every conflict, every affliction, every rebuff, every opposition, every unkindness, received from others, is most surely working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; that they are all necessary to fit us for giving peace to the world by and by, then that knowledge will protect us from feeling the hurt of such experiences as thick soles would keep us from being hurt by the stones or briars. The knowledge must be so applied as to keep us from being hurt under such circumstances, otherwise it would afford us as little aid as shoes that were carried in the hand. Are we wearing these shoes? Are they protecting us so we can go unhurt over the rough places? If not, why not? Let the realization that we may help others to have such a valuable protection, spur us on to

diligent effort in the work, while we seek to appreciate deeply the privilege of wearing the blessed shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace.

The speakers have mentioned many precious promises. We wish to give a little illustration that may help to make these promises more real, and effective, to colporteurs and others. You have read of Sir Robert Bruce. When he was spending himself for the welfare of his country, there came a time when he had suffered defeat, he was forsaken by all and fled alone for his life. He came finally, in an exhausted condition, to the mouth of a cave, which he entered. He lay down to rest. There seemed to be little hope for him. As he looked toward the small opening through which he had entered, he saw a spider begin to weave its web. He watched with interest until the little insect had woven a network that completely spanned the opening. Soon he heard voices, and footsteps approaching the cave. At the opening his pursuers stopped, and one said, "I wonder if he may have taken refuge in there?" Another responded, "No; do you not see that spider's web across the mouth of the cave? If he had gone in there he would have broken down the web. There is no use looking for him there. Let us hurry on." Sir Robert Bruce was saved by a spider's web, frail and insignificant though it appears to be.

The web may appropriately illustrate to us God's promises. When pursued by the adversary, if we have a web of these promises covering us he will say, "No use trying to get him; see how he is protected by these promises." While the promises may seem to some to be as inadequate to afford protection as the spider's web, yet to those who place implicit confidence therein they afford absolute security. There can be no invasion by any foe. Let us see to it that we do not permit this web to be torn down, for therein lies our safety. "God is faithful who hath called you, who will also do it." Whatever He has called us to do He will also provide strength to perform, if we seek it in the proper way. "The God of all grace, who hath called you unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you."

### **FURTHER REMARKS BY BROTHER O. MAGNUSON**

I am so glad to see so many interested in the colporteur work. It has been my privilege for ten years to be engaged in that branch of the service. No portion of my life has been so much blessed as those ten years. It is a most wonderful way to show to the Lord that we love Him more than houses, lands, friends, or anything in the world.

Many years ago two colporteurs came to my home in Chicago. They were the first I had seen, and I never forgot them. We had the privilege of entertaining them for a year. They suggested that we go into the colporteur work. We said, "It is out of the question." But we prayed about it. We had a little girl about four years old, and we thought we must do the proper thing for her, so we were tied down to a certain extent. I was working for the

Pullman Company. The Lord so blessed my efforts among the men there that we were able to leave about 150 volumes in the shop. I said, "That is no real evidence that you can do colporteur work, because you are dealing with friends and acquaintances; it will be a different matter when you go from door to door where no one knows you." Brother Greig said to me, "You haven't much to do; why not go out with me and try the work?" My spirit was willing, but my flesh was weak. I said, "I will try." I remember very keenly the first call I made. I knocked at the door, and while I waited, I hoped that no one was at home. When I heard footsteps coming toward the door my heart went pit-a-pat. A lady opened the door, and I stumbled along trying to tell her about the books. I soon saw the necessity of having a method. The Society did not send out a method at that time. I made a botch of it, but managed to sell her some books. When I left her I thought, "what was the trouble with you anyway? Were you afraid of that woman? No. Are you ashamed of the message? No. What is the trouble? I do not know." Then I began to think of my wonderful privilege of carrying from door to door the message of great joy—something the angels may not do. After trying this work for a week I wrote Brother Russell, telling him how we were situated, and asking his advice. I said, "My heart is in the colporteur work, but I do not know whether it would be proper for me to enter the work." He wrote back, "Enter the colporteur work, and, if necessary, leave the little girl with friends for a week, or a month, at a time. I feel sure the Lord will be pleased to have you do so."

I took Brother Russell's advice, and we began to sell out the furniture. Someone asked the little girl, "What are they doing at your home?" She said, "They are smashing the house and going into the 'culture' work." Truly, it is culture work. We want to be developed for a great future work. We burned all the bridges, and we never regretted it. The friends in Chicago were concerned about the step we had taken, not knowing we had well considered the matter. They said, "Brother Magnuson, we admire your zeal, but you should not have sold your goods." I said, "We have considered the matter, and we are taking Brother Russell's advice." Every Sunday they would say, "How are you getting along, brother?" We told how the Lord was blessing us. After a month or six weeks they concluded that it was the Lord's will that we should go into the colporteur work.

In order to be successful you must have faith in your work, and be enthused with it. I met a brother who said he could not do colporteur work because he could not see chronology as Brother Russell does. He would make a failure in the work. We must have faith in the message we are carrying. There must be an entire consecration to the Lord of our time, our means, our talents, and everything. It has been said, "there is money in the colporteur work." I believe there is, for I know I put about \$500 into the work, and it is still there. Anybody is welcome to it if they can get it out. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." It is necessary to have zeal, or we will not sell any books. There must be faith, consecration, and a loving zeal prompted by right motives. One brother told how he planned to sell so many books a day to establish a record as a

colporteur. No doubt the Lord blessed his efforts somewhat in spreading the truth to a large extent. He says that he has found out now that one book sold where it gives the buyer the truth is better than a hundred sold elsewhere.

We believe the Lord is directing the harvest work. There was a time when we almost had to perform sleight-of-hand to keep the people from learning that we had Millennial Dawn. We used to put our finger over the words, "Millennial Dawn." We were deceivers, and yet true. I want to tell you a little incident right along this line, showing how Brother Dr. Moe, of Chicago, got the Scripture Studies, and became interested in the truth. He had no use for Dr. Jones' religion. Brother Jones said, "If possible I would like to have you get a set of books into the hands of Dr. Moe. I believe he is a consecrated child of God." I said, "If the Lord wants a set of books there, I have no objection. You pray for me." He lived on Washington Boulevard—a fashionable section. When I saw the place, I thought, "If I ever get the truth in there I will have to take it in the back door." I went to the back door, where I thought I would meet the wife, or perhaps a servant. He came to the door. His wife was standing at the stove stirring in a kettle. I got through my introduction and started to talk to him. While trying to press the canvass his wife said, "You don't want those books; you have more books now than you need." I thought, "as long as she is standing there I can never sell him the books." The door bell rang. He made no move, and she had to go and answer the front door bell. I offered a silent prayer to the Lord that He might assist me to do His will. She was gone long enough for me to complete the sale. Knowing that they were prejudiced against Dr. Jones' religion, I thought best to take the books to them right away. I took them after dinner. His wife said, "He didn't order them did he?" I said, "Yes, he knew a good thing when he saw it." She took the books.

A few days later, a friend called, and seeing the books lying on the table said, "Why that is Dr. Jones' religion; are you reading that?" Dr. Moe said, "If that is Dr. Jones' religion it is all right; I have entirely misunderstood his religion." The result was, after a little his wife came into the truth, also a servant girl. This friend also came into the truth, and wanted a set of the books. Dr. Moe said, "You go and get them from Dr. Jones." The friend had been living near Dr. Jones for years. It was a little hard, but brought its reward. The Lord is directing the harvest work, and we are glad it is so.

Of course we will not sell books at every door. Sometimes we will meet a reception such as my wife once had. A lady whom she was trying to interest said, "I have my God, and my church, and I do not want your books." My wife said, "Who is your God?" She replied, "the god of this world." My wife agreed with her. I once said to a lady, "We are calling to the Christian people of your section; are you Protestant or Catholic?" She said, "And what is that to you?" I said, "It is true that is not my business, but the Bible Society has requested me to bring to the attention of the people here a wonderful method of Bible

study, and I do not want to pass any by. I feel sure you will be interested in this if you will look into it.” In this way I overcame her resentment.

Never take the first no as an answer. When a lady begins to hesitate, and says, “I don’t know whether I want those books or not,” that is a sale. The old saying is, “To hesitate increases the power of temptation.” That is the time you want to give some good licks to get the books in. You will surely succeed.

Now a few words about delivering. I remember one instance where I had sold a set of books to a Lutheran minister, and when I came to deliver them there was a house full of ministers in conference. I thought, “If I get the books in here the Lord will have to help me.” He was sociable, and introduced me to the ministers. I told them how I appreciated anyone who was serving the Lord, etc. After it was all over I said, “Here are your books all wrapped up; my train is soon to leave.” He took the books and thanked me. The Lord is able to help us.

I want to say, if you have the opportunity to enter into the colporteur work, by all means do it. It is the most wonderful work you can get into. “He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal.”

### **REMARKS BY BROTHER GOODWIN**

I am very glad to have any share in the great harvest work, but I am especially glad to have a share in the colporteur department of that work. It has been my blessed privilege to be in line with the great harvest work for many years. My attention was directed to these things by “Food For Thinking Christians,” which was published as a forerunner for the Scripture Studies. I have followed the development of the work with great interest, from that day to this. Great and momentous events have taken place within that time. The great prophetic days of the Lord, with which we are all familiar—1874, 1878, 1881 and 1914 have all come and gone, but the great events that they marked the fulfillment of remain. I have received many blessings since I came to this convention. I have been repaid a hundredfold, and I want to mention particularly one thing that was presented from this platform that specially impressed me. That was the lesson from the type of Elijah, in connection with the glorification of the last members of the church. History has recorded the fulfillment of prophecy, but the worldly historians know it not.

The year 1914 did witness the close of Gentile Times. Who would ask for any better evidence of the end of the wonderful time in which we are living? The explanation of this type brought out so clearly that when the last members of the church are taken it will be a surprise to them, although they are expecting it. The harvest work has been growing more interesting as time goes on, and I believe the opportunities have increased with the

opposition. We have never had greater fruits than now. I think I can best illustrate the importance of taking advantage of our opportunities by a brief legend.

There was a statue in one of the ancient cities of Greece. A passing traveler addressed it in the following words; “Oh, statue, what is thy name?” “My name is Opportunity.” “Why art thou made standing on thy toe?” “Because I can stay but a moment.” “And why art thou made with the lock on thy forehead so long?” “That men may seize me as I pass by.” “Why is the back of thy head so bald?” “That when I am passed men can never grasp me.” How highly important that we improve these golden opportunities as they pass. We are nearing the end of the harvest day; the night cometh when no man can see to work. It was my privilege to be brought up on a farm, and I know something about harvest work. I remember that we used to rest a little during the heat of the day, and then in the cool of the day we would work hard again. When night came we would quit working, because we could not see to work. It seems to me we can see the night time settling down on certain portions of the world. While we know not how soon, yet we believe that very soon it will settle down on this land, as it has in other lands, so that no one can see to work.

It is not my intention to say much with reference to methods. I believe there are as many successful methods, or canvasses, as there are successful colporteurs. It is true we all begin with the excellent method placed in our hands by the Society, but as we proceed with the work, we change. The method used prior to 1914 would not be so successful today. I have changed my method greatly. We now have opportunity to call the attention of the people to the great Battle of Armageddon, in which all are interested at the present time. It is our privilege to tell them how these things breaking upon the world are in fulfillment of prophecy. We have the privilege and opportunity of reaching the ears of the people at the present time as we have never had before.

I want to tell you of a matter which I stumbled into. There is no credit to me. Rather, it reflected against me. I started out to work, and after a time I found I did not have my first volume with me, but I did have the prospectus. It had been my custom to carry the first volume. While at first I felt lost, I found later that this was one of the “all things that work together for good,” in my case. I am not saying that other colporteurs should follow this method of working with the prospectus only, but it helped me, and if any can derive benefit from it you are welcome. I do not want the first volume. Even the prospectus takes too much time. The shorter the canvass the better, if the right things are said. When the iron is hot is the best time to strike. If you do not strike then you must heat it up again, and the chances are that you may lose the sale. It is not the number of books we sell, as one of the brethren has said, that determines our success. We might fill the world with books, and if we did not have the spirit of devotion and love for the Master; if we did not develop the Christlike character, our work would be far from a success. Our success is measured by the manifestation of the spirit of love and devotion to the

Heavenly Father, which rises before Him as sweet incense, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I wish to mention some of the other opportunities that we have as colporteurs, and others who are otherwise engaged in the harvest work, may also take part in this way. It is in organizing classes where there are none. Also in helping to build up classes, where there are such, and thus we build up ourselves.

As we come in close touch with the people, we are enabled to locate those who have a special interest in Bible study, and in this way we can be a help. Another opportunity we have is to help arouse prejudiced persons who are still in Babylon. I remember one case which I will mention. We called attention to the Berean Study in the third volume on Babylon. It aroused her interest. She said, "If I believed that the nominal system is Babylon, I would not let any grass grow under my feet in getting out." She went to the Bible, and with the aid of the Bible Helps she satisfied herself that the great system there described is the Babylonish nominal church system. She got out of Babylon. I am glad to say that this sister is present at this convention. It is her first convention of this kind.

In closing I wish to refer to one other experience which I think may be of special interest to you. One evening I called to see a party who is somewhat of a Bible student, although he is in Babylon. He has an honest heart, and understands God's Word as well as we could expect one to understand who has not the valuable Helps that we have in our possession. When I began to speak to him in regard to Scripture Studies, he said, "I don't want them; I know enough about Pastor Russell." I said, "What do you know about Pastor Russell?" "Well so and so—." I asked, "Did he tell you; have you read any of his writings, or do you know just what you have read in some pamphlet written against him?" He acknowledged that such was the case. I said to him, "Brother, I would like you to take these books and see for yourself." He said, "I did not go to hear Pastor Russell when he was in Providence but some who heard him said that he knocked hell out of the Bible." I said, "Brother, doubtless they meant to report the matter correctly, but Pastor Russell believes in hell." "Why," he said, "Is that true?" "Yes, but he does not believe in eternal torment." He said, "It is plain to me from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus that there is a hell of torment." I said, "You will agree that it is a parable, or it is not. It is all literal or it is not. It will not do to mix the figurative and the literal." He agreed. I gave him Pastor Russell's explanation of the parable. He said to his wife, "I have never heard anything like that before. I have heard many explanations of it, but never anything like that." I had given him the explanation of one of the greatest Bible Students of the age.

We would say, dear friends, to those who are able to enter the colporteur work, it is a great opportunity. The colporteur work does not need you, but you need the colporteur work.