

William J. McClure

John Trew Dickson

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Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the word of God: and considering the issue of their life imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7, R.V.).

Acknowledgment

Although Mr. McClure did not keep a journal, written accounts of some incidents, found among his personal effects, seem to indicate that he expected something to be written about his life and service for the Lord. These bits of information have been added to that received from other reliable sources as well as from the author's knowledge gained from many years of personal acquaintance with him.

Wholly conscious of his inability to do justice to our departed brother, the author has attempted to keep Mr. McClure's life and labors before the reader, who, he trusts, will bear with any errors that may be found in this volume.

He desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to a number of the Lord's people who have helped in research work and contributed articles. He feels especially indebted to Dr. H. A. Cameron, who has given

much of his valuable time to the careful reading of manuscripts and friendly criticism of the work.

This volume is humbly presented to the readers with the earnest prayer that God may bless them in the reading of it.

J. T. Dickson

God is now pleased to set apart

Those vessels fashioned by His art

His wisdom, to declare;

And pleased to make the Gospel story

Bring many sons to Him in glory,

Who shall Christ's image bear.

—W. J. McClure

Foreword

“Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?”

That the Lord should select for His divine commendation such men as Job, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Daniel, is marvellous in our eyes, but it reveals to us that even here and now our Lord graciously anticipates that day when He shall say to His servants “Well done.”

W. J. McClure was one who faithfully served his own generation. Over sixty years ago he grasped with a firm grip the lighted torch extended to him by those who preceded him in the Christian relay race, and now, having finished his part of the course, he has handed intact that light which he received, to the generation following.

As a servant of Christ he was a living example of the Preacher in Ecclesiastes 12:9. By wise words, words of truth, and acceptable words, he taught the people knowledge. His oral and written ministry so commended itself to the conscience in the sight of God that we know its source to have been the One Shepherd. To those who aspire to public service for Christ we would urge a careful study of his “Word to Preachers,” with the hope that it will stimulate them to emulate him in faith and works, for thereby their testimony would be, like his, a hundredfold more in this present time, and fruit gathered to life eternal.

As one who listened to Mr. McClure’s ministry with deep appreciation, we can testify to its unique presentation,

its Scriptural accuracy and its wholesome edifying character. His preaching was not “spoonfuls of truth and bucketfuls of words” but the very opposite, for preeminently he could give “much in little,” a condensation of the essentials in the fewest necessary words, words withal easy to be understood.

Happily for us, he has left a rich heritage of sound doctrine by which in days to come we shall still hear Mm, though dead, yet speaking. May it be ours to listen, learn, obey, and thus adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

The volume now in our hands is the product of much labor—a labor of love—on the part of Mr. Dickson. His untiring efforts to fittingly put on record the life and service of “a brother beloved and faithful minister” have had a most estimable result, by means of which the people of God are greatly enriched, and thereby are correspondingly under deep obligation to him as a fellow-laborer of the one whose praise was throughout all the churches.

H. A. Cameron, M.D.

Detroit, Michigan

Preface

God was pleased in the beginning to take up human instruments to give us by inspired, or “God-breathed” words, the only reliable account of Creation, the origin of man, the fall through sin, God’s dealings with men, and by types, shadows, and prophecies, not only proved the guilt of the human race, but God’s great Redemption through the Coming One. Outstanding servants of God were later raised up to add to the testimonies already given in the earlier books of the Bible, foretelling the humble birth and suffering of the One who was to be called Emmanuel, and to tell of the glories of His coming Kingdom. The Old Testament closes with this all still unfulfilled, but during the four hundred years when the voice of inspiration was silent many events transpired which had been predicted in Daniel Chapter 8, especially the fall of Medo-Persia, the rise to power of the third great Gentile Kingdom—Greece—along with the awful persecution of the holy people, the godly among the Jews of that day. As the old dispensation closes with Rome the fourth world-power in evidence, we can easily see how Greece had arisen, shone, and passed into decay.

With the opening of the New Testament” once more the pen of inspiration is taken up to write the Book of the generation of Jesus Christ. That inspired history continued until the closing words of Revelation, in which the risen, glorified Lord proclaims, “Surely I come quickly”, and the Bride responds, “Amen, Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” The book closes thus and the Church still awaits the fulfillment of His promise.

It has pleased God to give in the Old Testament the biographies of a number of His honored servants, who obeyed and followed Him wholeheartedly at different times and under different circumstances. Some of these lives are summed up in a few verses, but others require chapters to describe their faithful testimonies and the victories they won for God. Moreover, their failures are not ignored, for mention is made of these and the grave consequences that followed. In Hebrews Chapter 11, where name after name is given of Old Testament worthies and what they accomplished through faith, we note that some did much, others did less, but all the recorded deeds were said to have been done by faith. Their failures however are not mentioned in that chapter and this is not without significance. God gives them their place in that great picture gallery so that they shine out in splendor in contrast to the darkness of their day. These honored servants of God are held up in the New Testament as a cloud of witnesses to encourage the saints of today to lay aside every weight and run with patience the race set before them. In 1 Corinthians 4:9, Paul refers to himself and his fellow laborers as “a spectacle (a theater) to the world, both to angels and to men” (Revised version), thus revealing to us the mighty conflict that is going on in the lives of saints, which angels as well as men can behold.

Although the canon of Holy Scripture is complete and the pen of inspiration has been laid down, the work of God has still gone on. Men down the centuries have been raised up who did exploits for God in their day and passed on to their reward, and some who knew them and their work have written accounts of their lives and labours. Inaccurate indeed may be the biographies

written by the most godly men and women, as there is always the desire to eulogize the servant of Christ and speak only of the bright side, while the days of darkness and apparent barrenness, which really were the means used by God to prepare His servant for His holy service, go unmentioned. But as Job said long ago, "My record is on high". These words of his should be very forceful to each of us for in that true record of our lives all the deeds are faithfully recorded, as they will be seen at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

With the passing of Mr. W. J. McClure into the presence of the Lord on December 6, 1941, a long and devoted life in the service of Christ was brought to a close. He was a very outstanding servant of God, a bright and a shining light, whose ministry, oral and written, has been highly esteemed by the Lord's people in many lands. We have known him intimately, have travelled with him, labored with him, and have been counselled by him. Yet, in undertaking this work of giving a condensed account of his life and labours, we feel much cast upon the Lord for guidance, so that the light which shone from God's workmanship, as seen in this servant, might not be dimmed by words directed only to the man, and that his Lord whom he sought to exalt might alone get the glory. The Gospel received in his early life, wrought so effectually in him throughout the many years which followed, that it made him an "epistle known and read of all men", and many through his godly testimony were stimulated and encouraged to pursue fellowship with God. If the Holy Spirit should graciously be pleased to use this little book, to the comfort and blessing of saints, and to the conversion of those still in darkness, it will

give us unspeakable joy, for the Name of our Lord Jesus
will be exalted thereby.

Chapter 1 Birth And Early Life

The beautiful green isle of Ireland has achieved an outstanding place in the annals of the past, and the inhabitants today take pleasure in pointing out to visitors its many places of great historical interest.

Kings reigned in that small territory and there are still abundant indications to prove that a high state of civilization existed there, many centuries ago. It is said that long before the Danes invaded the British Isles, students went from the continent of Europe, to the College of Armagh to finish their education. That invasion must have taken place early in the Seventh Century, for the Danes had possession of Ireland for four hundred years until they were defeated and driven out by an Irish King called Brian Boru at the battle at Clontarf, in the year 1014. The Gospel must therefore have reached its shores at an early date, resulting in law and order being established there while nearby countries were still in a very primitive state.

The natural beauty of the hills and glens, valleys and mountain ranges, especially in the early spring with its mantle of green, interspersed with an abundance of wild flowers of different colors, gives a very attractive appearance to the landscape, and no doubt it was because of all this that it received the name of the "Emerald Isle." But more interesting to us is another of its well-known titles, namely, "The Isle of Saints," for it was there that Saint Patrick and Columba proclaimed the glad tidings and, from its shores, there went forth as evangelists and teachers, some of the most noted preachers of by-gone days.

Among the many prosperous towns that are now seen in the valleys of County Down is one of note, named Banbridge. This town is beautifully situated and only a few miles from Hillsboro, the palatial residence of Lord Craigavon, the late Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. That ancient castle of Hillsboro has stood for centuries and is said to have sheltered William, Prince of Orange, shortly before he fought the renowned Battle of the Boyne, in 1690.

Here is the home of a hardy race of people with very strong religious convictions, and for the most part zealous for the doctrines of the Reformation. Some are Episcopalians, others Presbyterians, and a large number of them are descendants of the Scottish Covenanters, those men and women whose integrity was well tried and proven in the awful days when Claverhouse and his dragoons searched the hills of Scotland and persecuted to the death of martyrdom, a people whose only crime was worshiping the Lord as they believed they were taught in the Scriptures of truth.

A family named McClure lived in that peaceful town of Banbridge and were staunch Episcopalians. Of that family was one Simpson McClure, a blacksmith by trade, large of stature and possessed of unusual strength, whose name was known throughout the country far and near, because of his skill at plough-making.

One daughter, Mary Ann, had already been born bringing joy into the home, but on Christmas Day, December 25th, 1857 in the humble home of Simpson McClure and his wife there was more than the usual holiday excitement for then and there their eldest son first saw the light of day.

Thus on the anniversary held throughout Christendom as the date of the birth of the Prince of Peace, this infant son was born. While adults and children in the town and country were engaged in the usual festivities of that happy season, no outward scenes of joy attended the birth of Simpson McClure's son. He was just another added to the family circle. A few days later he was taken to the parish church of Seapatrick, and according to the custom, christened and given the name William John. As a boy he afterwards became a regular attendant at the Sunday School of Seapatrick, and its church services. His father at that time, and for years afterwards, was unsaved, a man of the world whose example in life was far from being helpful "in bringing up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," yet, like the blacksmith of whom the poet said: "His brow is wet with honest sweat, he earns whate'er he can," so with honest toil, Simpson McClure provided for his large family. Incidents that happened in later years, as his son was growing up, showed true marks of a father's care and wisdom, but best of all, was the time that he trusted Christ and gave evidence of the new birth, an event which afforded great relief to the son when the father was called home shortly before William John left for America in 1881.

The subject of this memoir soon became a familiar figure in the town of Banbridge. He went to school with the other boys, joined in the pastimes of that day, and grew and increased in stature above many.

He was a strong and robust boy and early learned to work in the forge with his father. For a time he was striker on the anvil, but his ambitions were for higher occupations than spending a lifetime in a smithy, for he

often had thoughts of going afar to make his fortune. However, something that he little expected would occur, took hold of him as he approached the age of sixteen. Thoughts of death, hell, and the judgment day occupied his mind causing deep spiritual anxiety. This came about in a rather singular way, but it can best be related in his own words written some sixty-two years later.

Chapter 2 The Story of His Conversion From His Own Pen

“1874 will long be remembered by many in the British Isles, but by none more gratefully than the writer. In that year the mighty power of God was seen in the awakening and conversion of young men, who afterwards devoted their lives to the gospel in the home and foreign fields. Moody and Sankey had come over from America, and were not only used directly in the salvation of thousands, but indirectly in the salvation of many more, through stirring believers up to greater activity in the gospel.

“I was then a lad in my sixteenth year, a regular attendant at church and Sunday School, but like most lads of my age, utterly unconcerned about eternity. I was in the fair way of getting into a life of vice and drunkenness, from the example of the men with whom I worked.

“My eldest sister was living in Belfast at the time, while our family was living in Banbridge. She was a church member, had been confirmed and took the communion. As the result of the visit of Moody and Sankey, many cottage meetings were held, addressed by working men. My sister attended one of these and the man who conducted it was evidently a faithful child of God. He spoke one night from the text, ‘And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire’ (Revelation 20:15). That text took a tremendous hold on her. She had been confirmed and her name was on Seapatrick Church roll, but she did not know if it was in the book of life. There had never been a time in her

experience when as a lost guilty sinner she had accepted Christ as her Saviour. Her peace was gone, and it was not until she came to Jesus and rested on His finished work that she did get peace, and the consciousness that her name was in the Lamb's book of life. (Revelation 21:27). Her letters home were used of God to awaken me, and for some weeks I was afraid I might die and go to hell. My one desire was to know my sins forgiven. There was then some little activity in the church I attended, and the weekly Lenten Lectures were somewhat different from what was customary. The subject one week would be 'A Word to the Anxious.' Next week it might be 'A Word to the Enquirer.' I listened most attentively, but never got anything. It was too long range for me, and I went on for weeks without peace. I had a little Testament, and I pored over its pages in my bedroom and when I got an opportunity during the day.

"Deliverance came at last. Through reading 1 Peter 2:24, 'Who his own self bare our sin in his own body on the tree,' and Isaiah 53:5-6, I got just what I needed. But such was my state of anxiety as I prayed for forgiveness in my bedroom, that I was looking for some sign to assure me I was saved. Had I looked to the sky, and had I seen, or thought that I had seen the words, 'W. J. McClure you are saved,' I would have been very happy. It would have been a sign such as I was looking for, and would have given me assurance. Thousands of times I thanked God that nothing like that occurred, as that assurance would not have lasted long, for very soon after my conversion I met another W. J. McClure. Instantly the question would have arisen in my mind: 'Did those words in the sky refer to you or to him?' And away would have gone my peace and assurance. But I

saw in John 3:16 a word which would take us both in and everybody else as well. It was that grand word 'whosoever.' The sixteenth verse of John 3 was not so well known sixty years ago as it is today, and it was not until after my conversion that I enjoyed its blessedness.

"About two months ago in Tokyo, Japan, a native believer put it in a way that struck me. He said that 'John 3:16 is the Fujiyama of the New Testament.' Fujiyama is the highest mountain in Japan. Now it happened that just then I was able to see how very appropriate was the simile. On my way a day or so before I was on the way between Peiping and Yokohama. Sitting one beautiful sunny morning looking about, all at once there stood out that majestic mountain, Fujiyama — grand and sublime, towering above the forests 12,341 feet, glistening white in the morning sun. It was a sight worth going far to see, as it illustrates the outstanding grandeur of John 3:16."

Chapter 3 Early Christian Life

The young convert was not favoured like many who have had the great blessing of being raised in a Christian home, or even under the influence of a godly Sunday School teacher, and who at the very start of their Christian life have been nourished by those who cared for their souls. But just as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, (whom God had called to be a chosen vessel to bear the name of Jesus before the Gentiles), the Lord had a “disciple named Ananias” at Damascus ready to be the first to call him “brother Saul” and to give him his earliest lesson in the school of God, so the Lord had also His servants ready to be used by Him in leading young W. J. McClure into the right ways of the Lord.

Little beginnings, some indeed that might seem out of the ordinary and of no importance, have often been the seed plot from which fruit has been gathered in later days. Such might be said of the early experiences of brother McClure.

During our visit to the British Isles together in 1927, one beautiful day early in June, as we motored along the road from Banbridge to Belfast which was very familiar to him, the peaceful countryside, the fragrance of wild flowers all around, the cattle grazing in the fields, the songsters of the grove sending forth sweet melodies, all together made a very pleasing and attractive appearance. But the mind of Mr. McClure seemed taken up with the past. His heart was evidently deeply stirred as he related to me his conversion and early Christian experiences. It was most interesting to hear him speak of these in his own graphic style, until I could almost see

it all portrayed before me. His first experience of leaving home, which became such a factor in his Christian life, seemed especially before him that day as certain localities and buildings along the way brought back memories of his first long walk along that very road over fifty years before. He told me that shortly after his conversion he and a Christian companion, James Ruddock, who had heard much about the good positions and wonderful opportunities for work in Belfast, conceived a great desire to go to the city with the laudable object of being able to make money to help their respective families. Neither had the courage to tell their parents what their intentions were, and so they decided to slip away and, after they had secured employment, write home and tell of their success.

One early morning the venture began. Their store of money gathered for the occasion amounted to only a few shillings, but they were sure they had an ample supply. The journey that day was over twenty miles, yet the long walk meant nothing to these ambitious boys who had visions of great achievements. With no special incidents occurring along the way, not even a ride in a wagon with a friendly farmer, these two strangers arrived in the city in the evening. There everything seemed so different from the country town they had left behind. Boys were calling out the evening papers, crowds of workmen were pouring from shipyards, foundries, and linen factories, scenes interesting to watch, for, of course, they expected soon themselves to join some of these crowds in the evening after their day's work was done. But the first great surprise in the big city for these boys was very startling. When they had paid the amount demanded for a night's lodging after what they had already spent

during the day for necessary food they were surprised at the great degree in which their savings were reduced. Still, of course they expected soon to have their little store replenished.

William had often heard his father speak of the great industrial plant called the "Barbour and Coombes Foundry" with its many employees and so early the next morning the two boys presented themselves to the foreman, and asked for work. He merely looked them over, shook his head, and said, "I have nothing that would suit you." Undaunted by this rebuff (for there were many other shops in the city), all day long they travelled from place to place, but only to hear the same words they had heard from the foreman at the foundry in the morning.

Bitter was their disappointment toward evening as homesick and tired, their money almost gone, in a big city and all alone, these two very discouraged boys wended their way back to their lodging place. Suddenly as he was passing a doorway W. J. recognized a blacksmith who had formerly worked in Banbridge for his father. "Hello, McClure, when did you come and where are you going?" were the questions asked and in getting the answers, the kindly Irishman took them in for the night.

Still another surprise awaited them on the following-day for as they set out once more on what seemed now a hopeless task—the getting of a job—on turning a corner they unexpectedly ran into Mr. Simpson McClure, who had followed them to the city. "What are you boys doing?" was the stern demand. "Looking for work," was the meek and confused reply. "Come with me," was the

next word, and as he started off, they followed, keeping a few steps behind. Up the street and around a corner they went, and then he marched them into a restaurant; to the boys, a very acceptable move especially as they heard him say, "Give these boys something to eat." After a good meal the word of command again sounded, "Come on." They walked a number of blocks, and into a large foundry yard, the very place they had visited the day before without success. There the foreman who had turned them down, greeted Mr. McClure, Sr., as an old friend, and soon he was asked, "Can you give these boys work?" "Surely," was the reply, "they can start at noon."

Again his father led the way, and the next stop was at a boarding house. "Can you give these boys board and lodging?" was the question put to the landlady. "Yes, indeed, I have a room that will just suit them." He paid for a week in advance, gave the boys a little pocket money, and departed leaving the dazed job seekers with hopes revived by the wise dealings the father had shown them.

Having now left the country town and his home associations behind, he was well satisfied with his employment, but being the eldest son in a large family he felt his responsibility. Life seemed to assume a new aspect and the outlook was very encouraging.

In the foundry he worked at a machine and soon acquired skill in the mechanical end of the business. He continued in the employment of Barbour and Coombes for a number of years.

Chapter 4 Belfast

Early in the nineteenth century, hand-loom weaving had become quite an industry in Northern Ireland as the soil was very suitable for growing flax, and thus began the manufacture of the far-famed homespun “Irish linen.”

With the invention of the power loom, linen factories sprang up in the towns, throughout Ulster, Belfast taking the lead, and this industry, along with the opening of two large shipyards, drew many working-class people from all over the country. The town of Belfast flourished and increased rapidly in population, spreading out into what was once farming districts. Foundries and other industries added to its prosperity and eventually the town of Belfast became a City.

But more important than its fine linen and shipbuilding industries, Belfast became a very fertile field for Gospel preaching, especially during the memorable year of 1859, when a mighty revival swept over Ulster. This work of grace began in a very simple manner. A saintly old woman spent her time visiting among the people of the Braid Valley, County Antrim, speaking of God’s great salvation as opportunity afforded. The Lord blessed the testimony of His handmaiden and among others three young Irish farmers were saved. Their new life in Christ became very evident, for these young men soon began to feel the spiritual dearth that existed all over, and, as a result, during the winter months of 1858, they came together for prayer in a little school room in the village of Kells.

Sincere and earnest were the prayers that ascended to the Throne of Grace from that little school room, the

burden of their petitions being that God would send an awakening into the hearts of the people. Early in 1859, these young men began to preach the Gospel with much simplicity, and yet with a power that gripped the heart and conscience, making it like a new message to the people. Very soon there were tokens of the Gospel's wonder-working power. Souls were saved and a sound of "abundance of rain" was heard all over the land.

Ministers who were born again and not prejudiced by "tradition" welcomed this visitation which was spreading like a breath of spring all over Ulster, and further afield. During all that summer, thousands of men and women, in every walk of life, flocked to hear the Word of God proclaimed, mostly in fields with platforms raised for the speakers, as buildings were far too small to hold the multitudes that gathered together. One rather strange feature attending this remarkable work was that during the service, men and women, old and young, many of whom had just attended the meetings through curiosity, would fall down "stricken" as it was called, and in bitter anguish of heart would cry out in despair, as they seemed to get a look into Eternity and saw the coming wrath of God upon the guilty, and their cries for mercy were heard all over the audience.

In many cases, the light of the Gospel broke in upon darkened hearts, and it became quite usual to see men who had never before spoken a word in a public gathering, rise up and with wonderful eloquence and power, tell out what the Lord had just done for them through the work of the Cross. Thousands were truly born again, while others, in the excitement then existing, made professions which soon faded like the

morning cloud. Many who witnessed these scenes were heard to say, "We have seen strange things today."

Belfast shared largely in this great Revival, multitudes coming together to listen to the Gospel, and all over the city the singing of the songs of Zion could be heard early and late. For many years following these events, God raised up earnest preachers, who kept the fire burning. In 1873 two evangelists came to Belfast, James W. Smith and James Campbell; who, although born and saved in Scotland, had been preaching in the United States of America. The Lord had greatly used them in the large field out West. Among the converts was a man from Northern Ireland who, in turn, became much exercised about his kinsmen in the homeland. This man took the long journey home, to accompany the preachers, believing the Lord would use them as He had done in the United States. These two servants of Christ, Smith and Campbell, were mightily used of God in Belfast and the surrounding district for three years, until in 1876, they made another visit to the United States, where again they were used of the Lord. But our present interest in speaking of Belfast, and of these two servants of Christ, is to show how God fulfills His purposes, and the many links in the chain of events that transpire, which lead up to the fulfilling of His Will.

It was in 1875 that young William J. McClure arrived in Belfast and for the first time met these two evangelists whose godly influence had a wonderful effect on his long life afterwards. These brethren, Smith and Campbell, like many others who were students of the Word, had learned the truth of the priesthood of all believers, and also of the gifts to the Church from the risen Lord for ministry to the members of the Body; that the Lord,

Himself, calls His servants, fits them and sends them forth as ambassadors for Christ, to be guided in their service by the Holy Spirit; that they needed no "Board" to direct them nor the promise of a salary for their temporal support. From the great commission of Matt. 28, they ascertained the command to preach the Gospel, to baptize believers, and to teach them to observe all things whatsoever the Lord had commanded. The result was that the plain, searching preaching and fearless manner of these two brethren, as they sought to set forth the verities of Eternity, marked them as men who sought not the favor of men, but whose sole object was to please God.

During the summer of 1875, a large canvas tent was pitched in Donegal Pass, near the center of Belfast. Crowds of people from all over the city and the surrounding country, flocked to the tent and heard the burning messages from these servants of Christ which effected the awakening of many who were dead in trespasses and sins, and the discovery by others, who were mere professors, that although they were looked upon as Christians, they had never been born again. It was a time of great rejoicing for souls were passing from death into life.

Soon after his arrival in Belfast, William McClure was attracted to the tent in Donegal Pass and attended some of the meetings. The preaching of Smith and Campbell was a revelation to him, for although he had been saved about one year, little progress had been made in the divine life and he was at times subject to doubts and fears. To use his own words, "My standing in Christ and His work to meet my failures and backslidings were quite unknown to me." So we can see the guiding hand

of God in all the experiences he passed through in leaving home and coming to Belfast, that through the ministry of brethren Smith and Campbell, he might be established in the faith, and taught the believer's acceptance in Christ, and his share in the heavenly calling. Speaking long years after of these heart-stirring days, and the spiritual help and blessing he received, he said, "It was like a new conversion. My salvation, however, was not in learning the truth of my safety, but was mine through Christ alone."

Young believers who have the privilege of a healthy spiritual atmosphere are very highly honored by the Lord. It gives them a real start, with spiritual vigor not only to overcome the great three-fold enemy that every Christian has to face, "The world, the flesh and the Devil," but also prepares them in turn to be used in the service of the Lord. How often young Christians, after professing to be saved, perhaps baptized and brought into the assembly, the truth having cost them little, seem so soon to settle down, giving little evidence of that divine nature and exercise as to vital godliness and separation from the world, but are content to go on without any definite object in view. Yet, there has come a crisis in many a young life when brought in contact with experiences as brother McClure enjoyed in that early day, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, and the Word ministered, they have seen things in the light of Eternity and the judgment seat of Christ, resulting in a complete change. The life is laid on the altar and used afterwards in happy and fruitful service for Christ.

I trust, my dear young reader, the heart-felt experience that Mr. McClure passed through so early in his Christian life, may prove a help and blessing to you. Very

precious indeed to all of us, saved by grace, is the great work of Calvary, through which we have been delivered from the penalty of sin, from hell and the lake of fire. In this we rejoice with joy unspeakable. But while this is included in God's great salvation, we also have been made heirs of God, given a new life to enjoy even the unsearchable riches of Christ. And the Epistle to the Hebrews especially unfolds a ministry that is going on for us in the presence of God, that of the Great High Priest, living for us by the power of an endless life, to maintain the saints in the enjoyment of the blessings secured by Redemption.

In later years, Mr. McClure often referred to that memorable year when he first met those two messengers of God. Although he had many difficulties to overcome and it took a good while for him to bow to all the truth they set forth from the New Testament, yet the time came when he owned the Lordship of Christ and he thanked God for the ministry he had heard in those days.

Chapter 5 Gathering To His Name

After learning from the Scriptures the blessed truth of the eternal security of the believer through God's great salvation, William J. McClure had much exercise of heart as to what denomination he should join. Having been brought up as an Episcopalian, he was still associated with that body, but he felt the need of spiritual food, and began to visit the different churches. As a result he eventually joined the Baptist Church, became quite energetic in Christian work and set himself to prepare for the ministry. With this object before him, he began to attend night school for the purpose of improving his education, and in this he made good progress. Still he was not satisfied with his ecclesiastical position and passed through times of heart exercise. The truth he had learned through brethren Campbell and Smith kept coming before him. About this time with another young believer, John Greer, afterwards of Long Island City, New York, he went to hear Mr. David Rea, who had left the Irish Evangelical Society going forth to serve the Lord, looking to Him alone for guidance and support. The truth presented by the fiery Irishman took great hold of the young man who was preparing for the ministry and this led to the next important event in his life.

At that time, there was an assembly of Christians gathering alone in the Name of the Lord in Old Lodge Road Gospel Hall. He was attracted by the simplicity of the order he there observed and was convinced when he saw what was preached in that gathering of Christians, that they were carrying out what the Lord had commanded. One Lord's Day morning, William J.

McClure was received into fellowship in Old Lodge Road assembly, taking his place at the Lord's table. This step led him to take special interest in the study of the Scriptures, which now opened up to him with new light, unlocking the precious storehouse of truth. He became much interested in the notes of C. H. Mackintosh, on the first five books of Moses, and like many other young Christians of that day he found much food for his soul in those very helpful volumes. The types given in the Pentateuch, along with the light thrown upon them by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, so richly brought out by C.H.M., presented a great field for the fertile mind of W. J. McClure. He was a deep digger and followed each new line of truth with the greatest care until it became part of himself. Consequently in after years he excelled in that line of teaching, and few were able to exalt as he did the person of Christ and His high priestly ministry as revealed through the types in the books of Moses.

The truth he then learned of gathering in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, was a stay and strength to him all through life. He never faltered, but lived in the power of it himself and taught it to others. Like Saul of Tarsus, who found a spiritual home with the saints at Jerusalem, in his early Christian life, it was true of W. J. McClure that "he was with them coming in and going out." He was with them wholeheartedly in the truths they taught and practiced and of these saints, he could say, as he often did, "They were in Christ before me."

For a few years, W. J. McClure was in fellowship with the assembly in Old Lodge Road, and there he found ample room for serving the Lord, and exercising the gift God had given him. Having a passion to win souls for Christ,

he developed ability to preach the Gospel, such as the brethren already mentioned, who had led him on in the ways of God, so manifestly possessed.

There was in those days, a band of energetic young men connected with the assemblies in and around Belfast, some of whom had been saved through Smith and Campbell, but all of them had come under their godly influence, and in turn were all used of God as preachers of the Gospel. William J. Matthews was a medical student in the Queen's University, and graduated, taking his M.D. degree, with high honors in 1880, but he went forth to preach Christ, as did Thomas Lough, James Meharg, David Oliver, William Matthews and J. K. McEwen. All these were earnest workers in and around Belfast, and W. J. McClure shared with them in their happy service. Every one of that band is now with the Lord, with the exception of J. K. McEwen, who at an advanced age is still active in the work of the Lord.

During the years W. J. McClure lived in Belfast, he had both joy and sorrow, so that he had by experience, a course of training that, in turn, was useful to him in his future labors for the Lord. He had the joy of seeing his father, mother and members of the family saved and this token of the Lord's seal upon his testimony, gave him great encouragement and strengthened his hands in God. But he was also to see the grim reaper, Death, enter the family circle, for his father, mother, two brothers Joseph and Richard, all passed away ere he left for America. One of his nearest relatives, writing recently, said, "It could be said of them, these all died in faith." To God be all the glory. His brother Simpson, and sister Elizabeth, had preceded him to the West, both going to California, but our present object is to trace the

path of this eldest son in the McClure family, whose name was destined to become a household word in many lands.

Chapter 6 Across The Ocean

In 1881 when W. J. McClure was twenty-four years old, after having become established in Assembly truths, and having spent a number of years coming in and going out among the saints in happy service with them in the Gospel work, he became exercised about going to the United States of America. His purpose was to continue working with his hands, and as much as possible make known what the Lord had taught him in the Gospel and in believer's truths which had become so precious to him. The brethren in commending him to the grace of God in Old Lodge Road Assembly, presented him with a Bible bearing the following inscription:

William J. McClure from his brethren in Christ on his leaving for America.

Belfast, 21 Oct. 1881

He crossed the ocean and arrived in the city of Chicago a complete stranger. He found an Assembly of Christians gathered to the Name of our Lord Jesus and meeting in a hall on May and Fulton Streets. Having been commended by letter from the Assembly in Belfast he was heartily received by the saints, and he soon found they were seeking to carry out the Word of God just as in the Assembly he had left in Ireland.

Mr. Donald Ross, from Scotland, had located in Chicago in 1879. His ministry was refreshing and stimulating to the Lord's people, and his energy in the Gospel was a great help and encouragement to the young men, exercising and stirring up the gift that God had given them. Among these young men was Robert Telfer, very

earnest and full of zeal in carrying the Gospel message. Mr. Kenneth J. Muir, a brother of Mr. T. D. W. Muir, had also arrived in Chicago early in 1880. The Assembly was at that time meeting in Desplains Street, but when Mr. Ross pitched his tent on May Street the Assembly moved into it. After the hot season was over they moved to the Union Park Hall, 517 West Madison Street, where the first Chicago Conference was held and later they removed to May and Fulton Streets.

Work was scarce in Chicago at that time and brother Muir advised some of the young men to go to Elgin where they could find employment in the Elgin Watch Company. In after years Mr. McClure often said: "If I had taken the advice of brother Muir I would have been a watch-maker instead of a preacher," but the Lord had his path marked out differently. He secured employment in Chicago and was thus highly favored by being much in contact with Mr. Ross.

Brother Telfer and he became much drawn to each other and were closely associated in gospel work. Happy days were spent as they sought to carry on an aggressive testimony in that large city. In later years while speaking of the preparation for the work of the Lord in broader fields Mr. McClure referred thus to the education he received for his life work: "We cannot read the Word of God without seeing that He believes in preparation, and so it pleased Him to give me such an education in Chicago where after standing all day before a wood lathe I devoted my evenings to Bible study and Gospel work. Another very important factor in my education was the May and Fulton Streets Assembly. Some of the men whom God used as my tutors were Donald Ross, Richard Sparks, Donald Munro, John Smith, and T. D. W.

Muir. The first two named brethren had the most to do with it. Donald Ross was an out-and-out evangelist and his faithful exhortations kept us from settling down, and fostered the desire in our souls to preach the simple gospel of Christ. Richard Sparks was a man very well taught in prophetic truths, and was used of the Lord to preserve me from the many deadly heresies that abounded then in Chicago, as they do to this day.”

This education continued over a period of two years and it left its impression, molding his life for the long and fruitful years stretching out before him. He valued much the help he received from those who were gifts from the risen Lord, and rejoiced to see the effect of such education in others. He has often said: “We could mention with much thanksgiving among those thus taught, the names of many of God’s dear servants, some already with the Lord, others nearing the journey’s end, grand men that reaped and are still reaping golden fruit; men who held, and still hold the truth of God in all its simplicity in spite of criticism and persecution. Both in the homeland and in the regions beyond, they served and continue to serve with no other training received.”

Mr. Donald Ross made mention of the young brethren of Chicago in “The Barley Cake,” September, 1882, and the work of the Lord carried on by them in the open air as most interesting, and during their holidays going hither and thither carrying the glad tidings of salvation all around. Tent meetings were also held in the city with William J. McClure as one of the helpers and at the time of writing, four precious souls had professed faith in Christ.

The fields of the West were large and assemblies few, and these young brethren, Telfer and McClure, were feeling the call of God to lay their all at Jesus' feet and to go forth in His name to make Christ known in the regions beyond. Deep was their exercise of heart with the result that Mr. McClure went out for His Name's sake, followed later by Mr. Telfer who meanwhile continued at his work for a little longer.

Chapter 7 Going Forth To Preach

The Church at Antioch was greatly privileged by having in its midst brethren with very definite gifts from the risen Head; and while these were gathered together, as they “ministered to the Lord and fasted,” the Holy Ghost made known to them the mind of God regarding two of their number who were already outstanding in gift and usefulness. “Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them” (Acts 13:2). And apparently they acted immediately upon the command, for the assembly fasted, prayed, laid their hands upon them, and sent them away, thus expressing their entire fellowship with them in the Lord’s work.

With this precedent in mind, the Assembly at May and Fulton Streets, Chicago, in 1883, commended W. J. McClure to the work of the Lord, and their prayers followed him as he left for service. A young North of Ireland man, by name Andrew McQuiston, who served in the Queen’s Life Guards in England, had come to Canada to preach the Gospel. He attended the Chicago conference on this occasion, became acquainted with Mr. McClure, and as the result of many conversations together, Mr. McClure decided to go with him to Ontario to labor for the Lord.

For two years previous to this Mr. McClure had been working with the Deering Harvester Company, earning a good salary, and, when he decided to travel to Canada with Mr. McQuiston, he had still in his possession the last two weeks’ wages that he had drawn from the firm, and with only that amount he started from Chicago for Toronto. They traveled second class in a car filled with

lumbermen, who were drinking and smoking, and making the air blue with their tobacco fumes. After a weary night they reached Toronto, and, at the Very outset, Mr. McClure met with disappointment, for he learned that special arrangements had been made for meetings to be conducted by Mr. McQuiston. These arrangements so upset their plans that it was necessary for Mr. McClure to go elsewhere and alone. Thus left without a fellow-laborer he was at once cast upon the Lord Himself.

At that time James Norman Case (afterwards well known as Dr. Case of China) was preaching in Canington, and Mr. McClure went thither to confer with him. Mr. Case received him most kindly, welcomed the new-comer as a fellow-helper, and they labored there together for a time. But again a previous arrangement interfered, for Mr. Case had already engaged to go to Orillia where Messrs. Alexander Marshall and Richard Irving were holding forth the Word of Life. Left at Canington without a companion, a feeling of loneliness took hold of him, but in this trial of faith the Lord was gracious to him, for just then Mr. W. P. Douglas, who had been in the Lord's work for two years, came along to Canington and they preached the Word together.

From the very first these two brethren became fast friends. Mr. McClure, speaking of that early experience, said, "I regarded W. P. Douglas as a veteran, for I was just starting out, and I counted it as very gracious indeed on his part to take notice of me." Thus these two young men were linked together in the bonds of the Gospel, and became true yoke-fellows sharing alike the trials as well as the joys that such a path brings to the servants of Christ.

Being fully consecrated to the Master's service their one burning desire was to win souls for Christ in that part of Northern Ontario. At that time it was a new country in every sense, not long inhabited and thus everything was very primitive. Roads in many cases were just tracks through the bush. Many of the settlers had come from the north of Scotland, where the Gaelic language was their mother tongue, and these people traveled far to hear the Word of God. Mr. McClure in later years, speaking of that field in Northern Ontario, said it might well have been termed "The Regions Beyond."

The accommodations were poor in those days, but these evangelists were prepared to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. At first they engaged in tent-work at Beaverton, but about the middle of July they decided to move to Kirkfield. One very hot day having packed the canvas, poles, and chairs on a farmer's wagon, they set off for the new site. Stopping near a village, Mr. McClure went to enquire the way. Mr. Douglas sat up on top of the load of chairs. When the stable man came along, he surveyed the strange looking load and the man sitting up on high. He called up, "How many chairs have you on this wagon?" "One hundred and fifty," said Mr. Douglas. "Where are you going?" was the next question. "To Heaven," was the very pronounced reply. With a look of amazement he ran to the saloon door, opened it and called to the men inside: "Come out here and see a man who is going to Heaven with a hundred and fifty chairs."

The tent was pitched in the village of Kirkfield and the fact that two strangers, not ordained according to the traditions of men were preaching from the Bible every night, caused a stir among the people. Crowds from far

and near attended the services and soon there were tokens of the Lord's favor and blessing, until a denominational preacher began to oppose the meetings and was bitter in his opposition. Evil reports were circulated over the country of what was preached and practiced, but amid all the persecution that arose a number of precious souls were saved by grace. During the ensuing winter months the Word of Life was held forth in Carson Schoolhouse and a good interest was created. Among those saved at that time was a young farmer called Donald Bell. After attending the meetings for some time, Mr. McClure spoke to him regarding Eternity, and the Word of God took hold of his heart and conscience. One night the message given was from Matthew 22:11-13: "And when the King came to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment and he said unto him, 'Friend, how earnest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?' and he was speechless. Then said the King to his servants, 'Bind him hand and foot and take him away and cast him into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'" As the truth was pressed home that night, the awful thought of being cast into outer darkness brought deep conviction of sin to Donald Bell, but a few nights later, the light of the glorious Gospel shone into his darkened heart.

Chapter 8 Breaking Up New Ground

Orillia, the largest town in that part of Northern Ontario and only 35 miles from Balsom Lake, Kirkfield and Victoria Road, had become an important center like Antioch of old, for Gospel activity. Mr. Alexander Marshall from Scotland and Mr. Richard Irving were prominent in the work. They were both young, vigorous men with one object before them, the salvation of the lost. No difficulties were too great, and no opposition was too strong to dampen the ardor of these enthusiastic evangelists. They pitched a tent in Orillia in June, 1881, and encountered bitter opposition, but the hand of the Lord was with them and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord. However, the new life so evident in these new-born souls, and the burning zeal of the preachers, disarmed much of the opposition and some have described those times as “days of heaven on earth.”

The young Christians were taught the truth of believers’ baptism, separation from all man-made systems and gathering alone in the Name of the Lord Jesus. As they were very eager to learn the mind of God from the Scriptures, anything they “found written” they were willing to obey at any cost. The result of that first season of labor in the Gospel was that many were baptized and a large assembly was formed. Foxmead, Warminster, Severn Bridge and other towns and rural districts all within a few miles of Orillia were visited, and there the Word of God was preached with fervor. Sinners old and young were broken down as the Gospel of God was proclaimed and there were very few homes in the

community that did not know of this visitation of God through some of their members rejoicing in Christ with the result that assemblies were planted in all the places named. All over that territory there is a great change now in its general appearance from those early days, when it was so primitive, a new country being opened up. A brother writing at that time of the existing conditions in the country said, "In midwinter the approaches to Orillia are dreary enough, and suggestive of back woods, bush, tangled forest, stumps, saw mills, and lumber all of which surely tells the tale of a new country broken up by active, restless men seeking earthly homes, yet here, amongst them all, the Lord is getting what He delights to see, namely, sinners to save and saints to shepherd where human wisdom would not look for it; while cities which are centers of so-called refinement, luxury, knowledge, riches and population are becoming more corrupt."

The description given would indicate that the Gospel preachers were called upon to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ and this they gladly did for His sake. Later on other laborers of like mind were attracted and came along to help in the work of the Lord.

These assemblies that sprang up all around were composed of young converts and much shepherd work and godly instruction were required among them. "All day" meetings were arranged in different places and the saints came together for prayer, praise, and ministry of the Word, and thereby much help and blessing was received and the assemblies were established in the faith.

In Orillia at New Year, 1883, a four-days convention was begun, and the first one proved such a source of spiritual profit, it was decided to make it an annual convention. The first four days of January, 1885, were looked forward to by many young converts, some of whom had never been to a convention since they were born again. The large Shaftsbury Hall was taken for the occasion. The preachers laboring in and around Orillia and who were present to give help in the ministry at the convention were brethren Marshall, Case, Irving, McClure, Douglas, Telfer, Faulkner, Gook and Benner.

The presence of the Lord was very manifest during the meetings, old and young receiving their portion from the Word. A brother who attended that conference and was much helped through the ministry, like Barnabas when he saw the grace of God was glad, wrote of what he witnessed in those days.

“It is only four or five years ago since this part of Canada was penetrated by the preachers of the simple Gospel of God’s grace, and doubtless the Lord has done a most gracious work since then. As in other places the enemy has been deceiving some by imitations of the reality, yet, after making allowances for these drawbacks, there is cause for deep hearty thanksgiving to God that so many children have been born in the family of God, and while some Christians are talking about the work others are doing it. To see team after team at the Hall door after hauling precious loads of God’s saints many miles from the country was to us truly cheering and refreshing; and the manifest appreciation by these dear children of God of their own Father’s Word was a great cause for thankfulness to God. The meetings were well attended and were profitable. Not a few of the

Lord's own dear ones thanked the Lord for blessing received."

In addition to the ordinary and usual ministry to one another, such gatherings annually, as the Orillia Conference meetings, are very desirable and a source of much blessing. "Iron sharpeneth iron, so doth a man the countenance of his friend" (Prov. 27:17).

This was the first convention in Orillia that Mr. McClure attended and to him it was like "a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul." While attending the conference Mr. McClure and Mr. Douglas were able to continue their meetings at Balsom Lake, and for quite a few weeks after, and they had the joy of seeing many more led to Christ.

For a whole year brethren McClure and Douglas had labored for the Lord in several places around Victoria Road, and just as we read of the work of God in New Testament days, "much people was added unto the Lord."

Chapter 9 Family Sorrow

Early in the spring word reached Mr. McClure that his favorite sister, Caroline, was dying in Belfast, Ireland. This news was a shock to him, and he longed to see her again, but ordinarily it seemed impossible. Pioneer preachers had usually very little money, but just then a cheap excursion fare was advertized by a Canadian Company—only a few dollars return traveling third class. After waiting on the Lord in prayer the way was opened, and the cheap fare became within his reach. Willing to avail himself of the accommodations such a trip afforded, he made arrangements to sail from New York.

Mr. Robert Telfer, who had also been commended by the assembly in Chicago, at that time came along to visit the brethren who were holding forth the Word of life in Kirkfield. Writing from that address on May 9, 1885 brother Telfer said: "Yesterday morning we bade good-bye to our dear brother W. J. McClure who left here for New York enroute for Belfast. For family reasons he decided to go home, purposing, if the Lord will, to come back again." Thus amid the prayers of fellowlaborers, fellowsaints and his children in the faith, he left to take that long journey by land and sea.

The ship left New York a few days later and sailed direct to Belfast. During the voyage his constant thought seemed to be, Shall I be in time to see dear Caroline alive?

When the ship dropped anchor in Belfast Lough the tender was there to bring the passengers ashore. It was only then a short distance to the home, and he found his

sister still alive and he spent much time with her to cheer and comfort her. It also gave the dying girl great joy to know that her beloved brother had traveled all those miles to see her in her last days, and their fellowship in the things of God was very sweet. But her work was done, the Lord had come down into His garden to gather lilies, and she was absent from the body and present with the Lord. Her brother followed the remains to the cemetery and then he laid away the precious body to await that fair resurrection morning; so while his sorrow was great, yet it was not like that of those who have no hope.

He then returned to Canada. Three months later he learned that his eldest sister Mary Ann, that he refers to as the means of his awakening, was also called home to glory leaving behind her a little girl and boy to miss a mother's love and care.

During the absence of Mr. McClure from Kirkfield, the work of the Lord went on. Mr. Douglas and Mr. Telfer pitched the tent in Victoria Road in the early summer and found a very good interest. The young converts were taught the truth of believers' baptism and many of them became anxious to follow the Lord in this ordinance. Arrangements were made to have their first baptism in Balsom Lake on July 1st, Dominion Day. This was something entirely new in that part of the country and long before the time appointed for the baptism crowds of people from all over, some in wagons and many walking were making their way to that part of the lake. The Gospel was preached to the assembled crowd that summer day and they listened with rapt attention and afterwards the baptism took place. Mr. Telfer writing of this event a few days later said, "We baptized

most of the young Christians who professed during the winter work. There were thirty-one 'buried with Christ' all of whom, I trust, have died with Him."

These were the firstfruits from the labors of brethren McClure and Douglas during that year of labor for the Lord. Mr James Law, afterwards Dr. Law of New York, paid a visit to Kirkfield during that summer when they had special all-day meetings and he wrote: "I had the privilege of being present. The greater part of those that attended were but babes in Christ. I rejoiced to see the grace of God in those parts where our brethren Douglas and McClure have labored so arduously for about a year, and truly their labor in the Lord has not been in vain. It was very refreshing to hear some of the converts tell what God had done for them."

On August 14th Mr. McClure was back again in Kirkfield, and joined Mr. Douglas in the tent while Mr. Telfer left to labor in Uphill. In September the "Fellowship Hall" was rented. An assembly was formed, and the believers began to remember the Lord in breaking bread on the first day of the week. From that day Victoria Road also became a center for Gospel activity.

Chapter 10 More Pioneering In Tent Work

The work grew and spread. The evangelists were always seeking out some new place to publish the good news of salvation, and many interesting and some amusing events took place. In one place they had secured a hall, and a brother had printed a large notice to the effect: "Two men who were convicted and pardoned will preach the Gospel in this hall." The notice was placed outside the door. Just as the people were gathering the first night, a tramp walked in, marched up to the front, sat down behind one of the evangelists, touched him on the shoulder saying, "What were you in for? I'm just out of 'the jug' myself." He thought, of course, from the notice that they had been in jail.

During that fall and early part of winter these brethren continued their pioneer work in schools and halls, and then they left for a visit to the United States. In April we find them busy in Harrisburg, and good and fruitful meetings were reported in that large city. Souls were saved and saints enriched by their ministry, but about the middle of May they were back again in their Canadian field and busy making preparations for the summer campaign.

It was like taking up house, not only getting the tent and seats in order in preparation for the meetings, but arranging their household utensils, as their living quarters were in the tent also. Before the end of May, all was in readiness and the tent was pitched and the preachers were established in this humble abode under

the canvas at Balsom Lake a few miles from Victoria Road.

An extract from a letter written to Mr. Ross who was editor of the "Barley Cake" will serve to show the conditions then and the work these young brethren were seeking to carry on for the Lord.

Gospel Tent, Balsom Lake, Ont.

July 24, 1886

"I have little to say in the way of conversions. That verse, "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," has been somewhat of my experience. Today will complete eight weeks in this place. From the first, in point of numbers, the meetings have been the best we have seen in this country.

The people listen well and some are troubled, yet at present, we can only speak of two cases of conversion! Our hearts were made glad by the second one of them telling us she was saved on Thursday.

Preaching here has been pretty easy. The Lord has helped us night after night, to speak the Word to the people. Yesterday we had a meeting on the opposite shore of the lake, in a farmer's home. He, like the man in the Acts, sent for us and gathered in his neighbors to hear. They are five and seven miles distant from the nearest kirk, and that may be a good thing for them.

On the first, we baptized eight brethren and seven sisters, most of them stray "ears" gleaned now and then. Praise God even for these. Tomorrow, we shall baptize a number more. I need not ask you to pray for us. We have

had some "cold spells" lately. Bro. Douglas stands it fully better than I do."

William J. McClure

The Gospel Tent stood there all that summer and well into the fall; and we extract another letter with the same address:—

Gospel Tent, Balsom Lake, Ont.

Sept. 9, 1886

"I suppose tent work is over with you for 1886, and it may be, ere 1887 comes, it will be something better with us than under canvas. It may be the City that hath foundations, in His own presence.

In about a week from now, we shall, D.V., strike our tent, and it will seem like breaking up home: for over three months we have prayed, preached, eaten, and slept in it in bad and in good weather. I do like living in it, for one then has an opportunity for reading the Word and waiting on the Lord more quietly than in most homes with such accommodations as usually are here.

Since I wrote you last, the Lord has saved quite a few, praise His Name, but we expect more saved through the Word preached here during the last three months.

Yesterday we baptized six in the lake. One feature of the work here that strikes one, is that all those who profess to be saved come right out. Before we begin to teach separation, they are in the place of it. Poor souls, where else should they go? If saved, there is nothing else for them in the kirks. Of the four so-called "ministers" around here, I hardly think one of them is saved. The best preacher of the four is reckoned, also, one of the

best sportsmen in the country. Remember us in this needy part of Canada in prayer.

William J. McClure

These letters are surely refreshing and give tone to the work accomplished for God in those days. Also they show the zeal of these workers who toiled on week after week all summer long and well into the fall, preaching Christ, seeing precious souls saved, visiting among them, and teaching the young in Christ the foundation truths of the faith, baptizing believers, and seeing them brought into the assembly already established.

While this work was going on in the tent with spiritual stones being quarried around Balsom Lake, only a few miles distant at Victoria Road the brethren were busily engaged working in the literal quarry getting out stones, and in preparing the lumber already taken from the bush to build a Gospel Hall, and at the end of the year they had the joy of seeing it finished and opened with all-day meetings. Brethren McClure and Douglas were again among those who ministered the Word and they had a series of Gospel meetings in the new hall.

Chapter 11 The Year of Jubilee

The year 1887 was very important in Canada as well as in the British Isles, being the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, marking the fiftieth year of her reign over the vast Empire of Great Britain. Much excitement prevailed and a spirit of holiday making was seen all over the land giving good opportunities to energetic young Christians for tract distribution and open air work for the Lord. These opportunities were embraced by the evangelists laboring in Northern Ontario.

In February, brethren McClure and Telfer were in Orillia ministering the word, but they left for Victoria Road accompanied by a number of Christians who were all present on the evening of March 4th on the happy occasion of the marriage of Mr. Douglas to Miss Hargraves of Kirkfield. A profitable time was spent, while words of instruction and counsel from the Scriptures were brought before them, after which the happy young couple left for a short honeymoon, amid the prayers and good wishes of fellow-saints.

During the summer months that followed brethren McClure and Douglas were busy scattering the good seed. The tent was pitched in Trenton Falls. Many tracts were distributed, while visiting from door to door and preaching in the tent every night. They found it very difficult to get an interest in the Gospel that summer and with the combined opposition from Catholic and Protestant leaders their efforts seemed rather discouraging. During the fall and winter there was more encouragement than in the summer, a number being saved.

The conference in Orillia at New Year, 1888, was a season of blessing and refreshing to saints old and young who gathered from places all around to sit under the ministry of the Word for three days. A special meeting was arranged to be held on the fourth day, when the laborers and brethren having a care for the saints came together to pray and to confer with each other over the Scriptures. New assemblies were springing up while the numbers in those already planted were increasing, and the leading brethren were feeling the great responsibility in exercising shepherd care among the Lord's people. This meeting proved a great help and the brethren were much cheered and refreshed.

Mr. McClure had just celebrated his thirtieth birthday, and early in the summer they were preparing for tent work again. The Lord provided them with a new tent which they pitched in Lindsay, the county seat. The preachers had a large supply of good Gospel literature which was distributed over the town and also in the country districts around. They spent much labor in preaching, visiting, and praying together. Yet Mr. Douglas described it as "hard pan," however, they continued for a number of weeks and at the end of July the tent was taken down.

For over four years these two workers had labored together breaking up fallow ground in Northern Ontario, the Lord working with them. They were true yoke fellows, and Eternity alone will tell the full results of their service together for the Lord Jesus. Trials of various kinds abounded in those days, especially as they were looked upon with suspicion. They belonged to no human organization, were supported by no board,

appealed for no funds, not even taking a collection in any of their meetings and refusing aid from any unless they had confessed faith in Christ; but they were the Lord's free men, guided by the Holy Spirit as to their movements and looking to the Lord alone for their support. And just as others who have gone forth in His Name, had to bear the slanderous reports circulated by the enemies of the Cross, and even by professing Christians whose minds were affected by human traditions, so they patiently endured, traveling on foot through the snows, preaching in halls and school rooms in the winter and in summer under canvas.

As to their support, they learned to be content with scanty fare. Here the words and example of the veteran, Mr. Donald Ross, was a stay and encouragement to them. Mr. McClure had often heard Mr. Ross say in Chicago that, in the Lord's work all they needed was bed, board and washing. Mr. McClure tells that the assembly that commended him had no practical fellowship with him for over a year after he left that city. A rich brother in the assembly shook his hand warmly when he was leaving Chicago, and said, "Willie, I am so glad you are going out," but that was the extent of his fellowship then and thereafter. However, the Lord taught him that no man goeth forth in His service at his own charges, and all their needs were supplied.

Relating some of his experiences in those days he told us: "At one time I was severely tested. I had just ten cents in my pocket, and at such a time the firm where I had been employed in Chicago wrote me offering my position to me again with an advance in wages; but ten cents would not pay my way six hundred miles, so I

simply went on. It may have looked brave, but I was just shut up to it.”

When the tent was taken down at Lindsay, Mr. Telfer had come along to help and from that time he and Mr. McClure became yoked together in the bonds of the Gospel.

They pitched the tent at Nesbit Corner, and on Lord’s Day, August 5th, they began with an attendance of 170. They carried the Gospel message from door to door through the day, and at night preached the good news of salvation. From the beginning there were signs of blessing and quite a number of precious souls were saved. They were greatly encouraged in this place and continued in the tent until early in October and when the tent was stored away they rented a house, pulled down a partition and made it suitable to continue the meetings.

Throughout the winter, Woodville, Islay and Trenton Falls were visited. Some of these places were tried in the tent before and had proved to be hard, yet the Lord gave the brethren to see His hand in power and there was an ingathering of souls to Christ.

On June 9th, 1889, they went out to Lang and continued there four weeks. There was good interest in the meetings and the evangelists became exercised about pitching the tent in that place, and on July 14 the tent services began and continued until September. Afterwards a place was secured for meetings and the work prospered. A rich harvest was gathered; young believers were baptized and an assembly was established in Lang.

During the spring of 1890, brethren McClure and Telfer paid their first visit to New England and had meetings in New Bedford, Mass.

Mr. W. H. Hunter, a young man who had lately been commended to the work of the Lord and whose father and mother lived in New Bedford, met these brethren there for the first time. He accompanied them back to Ontario and became very closely associated with Mr. McClure in Gospel work.

The next chapter written by Mr. Hunter gives an account of the few years that followed and their service together in several places in Ontario before Mr. McClure left for the Pacific Coast early in 1893.

Chapter 12 Reminiscences By W. H. Hunter

My first meeting with Brother McClure was in June, 1890, during a visit he and Brother Telfer made to New Bedford, Mass., on their way back to Peterboro, Ontario, to continue tent work in that neighborhood, where they had seen blessing the year before. I accompanied them to Ontario, having been three months along with brethren James Campbell and William Matthews in tent work in Providence, R. I. and being much exercised as to the Lord's work I was invited by Thomas Black and Cyril Bird to join them in tent work in Springbrook, Ontario, a country place where a few gathered to His Name alone and where God was pleased to save a number at our meetings and add them to the assembly. Brethren McClure and Telfer pitched their tent at Keen about thirty miles from Springbrook and thus we were able occasionally to exchange pulpits.

In those days we had many lessons in the art of cookery and housekeeping. Our beds consisted of four forked branches with cross limbs and good strong burlap bags full of straw. The Lord's dear people often brought a variety of food and so replenished our larder.

In June, 1891, I joined Brother McClure in tent work in Belleville where we had the joy of seeing souls saved, some of them still living. After a time in Belleville we were much exercised as to Campbellford, thirty miles north of Belleville, ten miles from Springbrook. The only Christians we knew there were two sisters. We pitched the tent that brethren McClure and Telfer had used in Lang and Keen, a large, round single-masted tent. Our

initial experience in Campbellford was unique. The river Trent flowed nearby. The day was extremely hot so we had occasionally to sit down and rest under the inviting shade of a nearby tree. At last we got the tent up and were engaged rearing a smaller tent inside the large one, our prospective sleeping room, when a rain storm that had been brewing broke upon us with terrific fury, tearing up the stakes and bringing down the tent. Fortunately part of the canvas rested on the small one that we were rearing so we were able to crawl under that meager hiding place. Being much younger than Mr. McClure I felt rather upset and discouraged. However he suggested a word of prayer, especially for strength to finish the job, and crawling out when the rain ceased we went at it again, but when we got the work done it looked a sorry affair and the news spread round the town that the tent the strange preachers pitched near the river, had been blown down. This was not a very encouraging report or advertisement, nevertheless we began meetings next day (Lord's Day) at 8:00 P.M. At that hour none of the townsfolk ventured inside, though we knew there were many outside, but soon one or two came in followed by others until about a hundred were listening to the gospel. We assured them that the tent was safe, explaining that when the storm came we had not driven the stakes deep enough owing to the heat but that now everything was secure. This was the beginning of many months' labors, first under canvas and then in a disused brick building that had been a tannery by the riverside. This old building became our lodging place and preaching place and the birthplace of many souls. No one seemed to own it and the authorities gave us the use of it. We fixed it up and made it as presentable as possible. We found three rooms upstairs and these we

made our parsonage for many months. The preaching room we fixed up with straw matting laid from the platform to the door, arranging our tent seats on either side, and on the walls we placed four large, beautiful texts painted by a brother in Belleville. Every Saturday evening we had good audiences in the open air. Thus we continued the meetings and God was pleased to save precious souls and an assembly was formed which continues to this day. A good number of the saved ones have gone home to heaven, but the testimony goes on in a nice commodious hall built by the Christians. The following year we pitched another tent in the same town and continued there until 1893 when Mr. McClure went to California, and after visiting San Francisco and other places he then went on to Portland, Oregon. Brother McClure began meetings there in a small hall with little encouragement at first. He often said that three seats would have held all who came in. Then he made another trial with a chart and had the meetings well advertised but with little success. One evening a man came in who belonged to a non-descript meeting and reported to the members of his cult that the meetings held by Mr. McClure were just like theirs and the people from that gathering came and others associated with them so that Mr. McClure had to take down two partitions to accommodate the crowd. They asked if Mr. McClure would come to their hall and preach. He replied that he would if they would let him control the meetings absolutely. They consented, so he put his chart up and began a series which was blessed of God. One rich lady, the wife of a millionaire in that city was saved and among others her two step-daughters. Mr. McClure then wrote for me to join him in tent work in Portland. I went and together we went at it all summer until the weather

was too cool for meetings in a tent. We then secured a store, continuing the meeting until it was needful to procure a more commodious building where the assembly met until they built a nice hall on East Stark Street. When we left Portland there were about seventy in fellowship, whereas when McClure came to Portland there were ten or twelve. During our stay there we hired a room near the meeting places and kept house and received our guests. So we had much cause, to praise God for His help, care and blessing.

From Portland we went on to Victoria, B. C. and began a series of meetings in what was known as the Omineka Hall which formerly had been a dance hall. It had two adjacent rooms where we took up our abode. A few Christians provided a bed in one of them, the other was our living room. We began by making it as comfortable as possible. Having procured soap and a scrubbing brush I had the honor of changing the color of the floor and the windows. It was also my duty to purchase the food, while Mr. McClure proved a splendid cook, especially of the "wholesome porridge chief of Scotia's food," as Robert Burns styled it. However, for many weeks we had the joy of preaching the gospel nightly in the open air and inside, and the Lord blessed the Word. The assembly was small and the only one at that time on the island. From there we went over to Vancouver where were three brethren and their wives gathered to remember the Lord's death according to the Word, the only such gathering at that time in Vancouver. From there we returned to Portland, and thence to California where he spent years along with our brother John Monypenny, God setting His seal upon their labors. I had the privilege of laboring with Mr. McClure on various

occasions, residing together in one of the many homes opened to him, but he always gravitated to his dear friends, the McIntyres of Oakland, whose home he considered his best and most beloved resting place. Now he and his dear friend, Mr. McIntyre, are at Home and at rest with the Lord.

Other Fellowlaborers

Apart from the brethren with whom Mr. McClure was linked in happy service for the Lord, there were others that he esteemed very highly in love for their works' sake. Mr. Donald Munro held a very special place in his heart and he looked up to Mr. Munro as a father during his years of service in Ontario. A strong bond of fellowship was formed between these two brethren which continued until Mr. Munro was called home in 1908.

Mr. Munro first visited the province of Ontario in 1871. He had labored for some years with Mr. Donald Ross in the East Coast Mission in Scotland and was mightily used of God in the salvation of souls, but seeing more light from the Word of God, he had just come out to the Name of the Lord before his visit to Canada.

This visit was partly for his health and also to visit his brothers who were in business in Parkhill, Ontario, but seeing the need of the plain gospel being preached in the towns and villages of Canada he returned in 1872. The Lord blessed the labors of Mr. Munro and his yoke-fellow, Mr. John Smith, formerly of the same mission in Scotland.

In Toronto, Hamilton, and other centers assemblies were planted through their ministry. There was much

opposition but God was with His servants and used them mightily. Mr. Munro took a deep interest in the work begun by these laborers in Orillia and Northern Ontario. He attended some of the early conferences in Orillia and gave ministry that established young Christians in the ways of the Lord. His was a very searching ministry especially in connection with assembly truths, and it is said he often spoke for two hours opening up some precious subject and yet he held the interest and attention of the Christians until the finish.

Mr. Munro, seeing very definite gift in his younger brother, W. J. McClure, gave him much encouragement to apply himself to study and to the opening up of the Scriptures. Mr. McClure often referred to him as one of the most godly men he ever knew, and spoke of the help and encouragement he had received through his life and ministry in those early days in Ontario.

A very helpful meeting was held in Orillia in 1886 to commend Mr. W. L. Faulkner, one of the early laborers in Northern Ontario, who was going forth as a missionary to Central Africa in connection with Mr. F. S. Arnot. Mr. Munro gave heart-searching ministry. Our brother was then commended to the Lord and to His work.

Chapter 13 Andrew Fraser

Mr. James W. Smith, whose ministry had been owned of God in the North of Ireland, was called home to Heaven in 1878 at the early age of thirty-one. In the nine short-years following his conversion he had woven much for God into his life. After his death, Mr. William Matthews of Belfast, in the spring of 1879, joined up in the gospel work with brother Smith's coworker, Mr. James Campbell, and was a true yokefellow. They labored together for eleven years and were much used of God both in Ireland and in America.

In 1879 these two brethren arrived in Cookstown, Northern Ireland. One of the ministers of that town had been preaching on the different religions for a number of Lord's Days. One Sunday it was the Episcopalians, another the Presbyterians, and so on, and one morning it was the "Plymouth Brethren." He spoke of them as a dangerous people, and added, "We may be very thankful that there are none of these people anywhere near us." That very week the preachers arrived and obtained permission from one of the elders of that church to erect their tent. A great work began—the tent was packed and hundreds of people listened outside. The townspeople attended well and the farmers came from all over as well. Soon the power of God was manifest in a wonderful way; sinners were broken down, and every night souls were getting saved. The news spread quickly about these meetings and "these men" as they were called. On market days (Saturdays) they had the side walk to themselves for the people left it as the preachers appeared each with a bundle of tracts, asking everyone

they met, "Is your soul saved?" One young man who saw them coming took refuge in the post office, but to his surprise, soon a hand was laid on his shoulder and the plain question put to him: "Young man, is your soul saved for eternity?" As he looked around and saw Mr. Campbell standing there awaiting his reply, conviction laid hold of his heart and soon he was rejoicing in Christ.

Coming into the tent one day, a very religious man asked Mr. Matthews, "What do you think of Mr. —?" "What do you think about yourself, Frank?" was the answer. The arrow went home and Frank took his place as a guilty sinner, trusted Christ for salvation, and became an earnest follower of the Lord Jesus. A large assembly of believers was formed and taught the ways of the Lord, so that from the very week the preacher spoke against the brethren until this day, Cookstown has had "these people" in their midst.

About seven miles from Cookstown a schoolmaster named Andrew Fraser was teaching in a National School. He had been saved a number of years before this, when Moody and Sankey were preaching in Dublin, while he was in college preparing to become a teacher. The life and testimony of Andrew Fraser had a telling effect on the community. He always kept Saturday free so that he might fast, pray, and read his Bible, and saw no visitors on that day. One Saturday brethren Campbell and Matthews went to see him and he broke his rule and gave them an interview with the result that he took his place with them in the assembly, and became a real Apollos to the saints in that community. He was later led out into the work of the Lord in which he was greatly used of God. After spending one Saturday all day in

fasting and prayer, he began an assembly the following morning in Killycurragh which continues to this day. For many years after Mr. Fraser was called home the saints around Cookstown and other parts of the North of Ireland where he labored, would speak of him with bated breath as they related how he prayed, and how fresh and helpful was his ministry. Mr. Fraser finally became very frail in body, and lung trouble having developed it was thought advisable for him to go to a drier climate, and in 1892 he and Mr. D. H. Oliver left Ireland for America. His rich ministry among the assemblies in the East was very helpful and much appreciated, but his objective was Los Angeles, California, and as Mr. McClure was at that time exercised about going to California, these two brethren left together for the West Coast.

Chapter 14 Pacific Coast (1893)

After about nine years of happy and fruitful service spent in Ontario, where a number of assemblies were planted through his activities, Mr. McClure became exercised about the Far West, his brother Simpson, and sister Elizabeth, the only surviving members of his immediate family, having gone to California. This was one reason why he felt constrained to go there, to meet them again, but stronger still was the desire to carry the gospel to those parts.

Starting West, he visited Chicago, from whence he had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which he fulfilled. He was heartily received by the saints in the assembly at May and Fulton Streets. Just as Paul and Barnabas, on a similar occasion, rehearsed all that God had done with them, so our Evangelist made the hearts of the Christians glad in Chicago, by telling them of what God had wrought in Ontario. He also visited Kansas City, where his old friend C. W. Baker lived, serving the Lord although making tents for necessary uses.

Mr. A. Fraser had arrived in Chicago and Kansas City and the brethren were helping him from place to place because of his frailty, and the saints were enriched as in the East, by his helpful ministry. The Lord seemed to guide in bringing Mr. McClure along; just then, and these two brethren, Mr. Fraser, weak and frail in body, and Mr. McClure, strong and robust, decided to travel together. Mr. McClure was pleased to serve the Lord in caring for Mr. Fraser on that long train journey;

speaking of it long after, he said, "To me fell the honor of being a help to Mr. Fraser, crossing the continent."

Traveling facilities in those days lacked much of the comforts afforded now in modern travel. The journey was long—about five days. They traveled second-class, or tourist sleeping car, and for a man like Mr. Fraser, who spent hours at a time on his knees before the Lord in prayer and in prayerful reading of the Scriptures, to be deprived of this opportunity was a most painful experience. Often during the day he would go out to pray, standing on the platform between the cars, a place at that time neither comfortable nor safe. As Mr. McClure put it, "Even a strong man was in danger of being jerked off at the curves," and often he had to go out and persuade him to come inside.

As the train reached the suburbs of Oakland, Mr. John McIntyre, who with his wife had lately come from Dumbarton, Scotland, got aboard the train to meet them. This was the first meeting of Mr. McClure and Mr. McIntyre and little did either one of them think that the close bond of love and fellowship begun on the train that day, was to continue and grow for almost fifty years. Mr. McIntyre had heard of their coming and so he boarded the train before its final arrival to meet them. They were made welcome to his home, and this kindness was a great cheer to the two laborers who had traveled so far.

Hitherto, the West had proven rather a hard field. Mr. Ross and Mr. Munro and others had faithfully preached the Word. In Oakland, there was a little assembly of about twenty-four, and across the river, in San Francisco, about half that number were gathering in His Name, and both needed help.

Years after the first arrival, Mr. McClure, in his own graphic style, was speaking of Mr. Fraser and his coming to California, and put it this way: "Had some of the religious leaders been told that they were going to meet two preachers, no doubt they would have thought that those are two distinguished men high up in the profession seeing they are coming to preach to such up-to-date folks as the Californians. If these were their thoughts, surprises awaited them when they saw us. Several years of the gypsy-like life, preaching and living in tents and vacant stores does not tend to give one a professional air, and we did not wear a clerical habit. As for dear Andrew Fraser, any one looking at him would be sure no so-called church in the country would consider extending him a call to fill their pulpit. He was in his late thirties, but would have passed for sixty, shrunken up, hollow-chested, round shouldered, quiet and retiring. In a word most would say he was odd looking. That this description of him is correct, will appear from the following incident:

"It was at the Easter Monday conference in Belfast. Two very close friends of mine were sitting together. A little insignificant looking man passed them on the way to the platform. He seemed to wish to get there without being seen as he slipped along with his head down. One brother said to another, 'Who is that craytur? He will spoil the meeting.' Dear brother Fraser had not spoken long until the brother was sorry he had made that remark. His message was so sweet and fresh and given in such power that the brother's heart was stirred as well as the hearts of the audience. Never again did he refer to dear Andrew Fraser as 'that craytur.' No, to him he was an honored servant of Christ."

But Mr. McClure looked upon Mr. Fraser as a mighty factor in bringing about such a change in California and expressed it thus: "Our desire in speaking of Andrew Fraser, and his part in bringing about the change, is that we may be led more to admire the grace of God, who links His might with human weakness, and fashions vessels for His blessed work out of very unpromising material."

After a few weeks, Mr. Fraser left for Los Angeles, about 500 miles south of Oakland, this having been his objective before leaving Ireland. Mr. McClure remained, having meetings in Oakland and San Francisco, and then went up north to Portland, Oregon, where there was a small assembly, about twelve in all, meeting in a small hall. Very few came in at first, but after several rather trying experiences, there was a moving of God and preaching from his chart, a good interest was created. He sent for W. H. Hunter to join him in a tent during the summer. They labored into the fall. When the tent was taken down, they secured a store and continued the meetings.

At the end of Mr. McClure's first tent season in the West, about seventy were in fellowship in Portland and he was encouraged by this token of blessing. After their visit to British Columbia, brethren McClure and Hunter journeyed south to California and Mr. Hunter left from there for the East.

Mr. McClure had the joy of meeting his brother and sister whom he had not seen for many years and they had a happy re-union.

Chapter 15 California

Of those associated with Mr. McClure in California were Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Foster. They were both born in his home town in Ireland. Shortly after their marriage, they were brought under the power of the gospel, and not only awakened to see their deep need of Christ, but also received the assurance of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins. The peace which they found through the atoning blood of Jesus made a wonderful change in their home and their lives. The Bible became their constant companion; having tasted that the Lord is gracious, they desired the sincere milk of the Word, and thus learned of Him who is meek and lowly in heart.

A few years after their conversion Mr. and Mrs. Foster became exercised about going to California, and early in 1893 the Lord's people in Banbridge, with whom they had spent many happy days, commended them to the Lord, and, after a journey of six thousand miles over sea and land, in due course they arrived safely in Los Angeles. There they started in the shoe business and their home was then opened for the Lord's people. Just then beloved Andrew Frazer arrived in Los Angeles, and at first he was entertained by brother Phyfer, but later was heartily received by the Foster's who had known him in Ireland, and in their hospitable home this honored servant of Christ spent the rest of his days.

Late in the fall of the same year Mr. McClure came to Los Angeles for the first time. After calling upon his kinsfolk, he paid a visit to the Fosters, whom he had known in the past. His coming was a great cheer to

them and their heart and home were open to him then and for the years that followed.

A little company of about sixteen was then gathering at 806 Temple Street, Los Angeles, and as there was not much gift among them, these saints rejoiced greatly to see two of the Lord's servants in their midst, and much prayer went up to heaven that a work of grace might be seen in that big city.

It had hitherto been very difficult to get strangers into the little hall, but the Christians prevailed upon Mr. McClure to stay and try it. For the new venture, a hall was rented on Jefferson Street, and the meetings began. Soon there were tokens of blessing and a number of precious souls were brought to Christ. Mr. Frazer, whose fame as a man of prayer had traveled far, watered the seed sown by supplication and prayer night and day. Christians from different denominations were attracted to the ministry of the Word of God, and as a result some had their eyes opened to the truth of gathering alone in His Name, while others, who had been backsliders, were restored to the Lord.

With this encouragement and blessing, some were exercised about establishing a testimony to the Name of the Lord in that place, and after waiting upon God for guidance, an assembly was planted, which has grown in numbers since then and is now known as West Jefferson Assembly.

Early in March, 1894, brother John Monypenny, who had gone forth two years before in Gospel work in Ontario, Canada, became much exercised about joining Mr. McClure in California, and he wrote brother McClure, telling him about his desire. At that very time Mr.

McClure had mentioned to the Christians the advisability of procuring a Gospel tent. Brother Frazer very whole-heartedly offered the first contribution, others followed generously and soon the needed amount was raised. Thus the order for the tent was sent to the firm of Baker and Lockwood, tent makers in Kansas City, Missouri, and a letter was dispatched to brother Monypenny, assuring him that his exercise as to the work in California was evidently of the Lord, and encouraging him to come with all speed.

He arrived on the 8th of June, the necessary arrangements were made, the new tent was pitched, and the meetings were started on the 17th. From the first they had a fairly good attendance, but not what they expected. It is interesting to read Mr. McClure's own account of the methods used to increase the attendance that summer, and their results:

"We concluded to put up some pictures of the Tabernacle. It was decided that I should speak upon these while brother Monypenny should go on with the Gospel. We made a number of boards, wrote upon them the subject for each night and placed them around. Los Angeles abounded with missions in which there was given out a mixture of holiness teaching and unintelligent Gospel preaching. 'Gospel Meetings' announcements on doors and windows greeted your eyes all over, and had ceased to appeal to the people, but soon it was different with notices of 'Lectures on the Tabernacle' and the announcement of a particular subject. This method proved quite a success and our tent was filled. But in reality we were just giving out the same truths that we were preaching in the Hall. I remember when I wrote to brother C. W. Ross, that in

his reply he recalled God allowing Israel to use a stratagem. They had been beaten by the enemy, so God said, 'Make an ambush.' He could have given them the victory in plain open warfare, but He chose to let them use strategy. And God could have given us the ear of the people by our just using the words 'Gospel Meetings,' but He blessed our tactics, for from that time on we saw blessing, sinners were saved, believers were led to see the truth of baptism, and were gathered to His Name. Soon we had to look for larger quarters for the gathering."

The tent meetings continued for three months, and God wrought wonderfully as night after night the Gospel was proclaimed in simplicity and power. A goodly number were added to the assembly, rejoicing the hearts of the few who had first gathered in His precious Name.

One outstanding case of conversion was that of an old Irish lady, Mrs. Barr, eighty-one years of age, who was awakened and saved at that season of blessing. She bore a clear testimony to the end of her days at the ripe old age of one hundred and three years. Her daughter also was gathered out and continued in fellowship until the age of eighty-nine, when she was called home in 1941.

Pomona and Los Angeles

The beautiful little town of Pomona, situated in the midst of orange groves forty miles from Los Angeles, was also a place of fruitful labor in that same year, 1894. When the tent was taken down in Los Angeles on September 12, it was shipped directly to Pomona, and a campaign was opened on September 16, the meetings continuing nightly until December of the same year. When the tent was first pitched in Pomona there were three who met in

a home to break bread in remembrance of the Lord, but as in Los Angeles, blessing followed, and fruit was gathered, so that when the tent was taken down there were eighteen gathering in the little Assembly. The McComa's Hall was rented and a testimony for the Lord was established there.

In December when the tent was stored away, Mr. McClure took a trip to Oakland and San Francisco giving valuable help to the small assemblies in these places.

Early in January Mr. McClure and Mr. Monypenny learned that Mr. Frazer was growing weaker in body and they went to see him and helped in caring for him until the end came. Ere the first month of the new year had come to a close, beloved Andrew Frazer was absent from the body and at home with the Lord, leaving a sweet savor of Christ behind. His fellow-laborers on the Pacific coast as well as his many friends all over who knew and loved him for his works' sake, mourned his loss. At the time Mr. McClure paid the following tribute to his memory:

"His life was most unique. What a power godliness is! Here was a poor weak man that the smart worldling would despise, and whose appearance was not prepossessing, and who made no attempt at being pleasant either in his preaching or conversation. He never made an attempt at entertaining, but really seemed so in God's presence as to be oblivious to his surroundings. The unsaved now speak of him with marked respect, and the Christians feel bereaved."

After the death of Mr. Frazer Mr. McClure made another visit to San Francisco and Oakland, and then in May the tent was pitched again in Pomona and meetings

continued with blessing for a number of weeks. In August the tent was moved back to Los Angeles and pitched at Washington Street. There the meetings continued until October. Once more the hand of God was seen in power, and a harvest was gathered in.

About this time the old Assembly in Temple Street, Los Angeles, had to move and thus the two companies came together as one Assembly with about sixty in fellowship. This precious fruit had been gathered as the result of two years of labor, apart from the ingathering at the same time in Pomona.

In 1896 Mr. McClure accompanied Mr. Ross on a trip East, but he was back in time for the summer's work; and he and Mr. Monypenny were again busy in the tent which they pitched on Grand Avenue, Los Angeles. Mr. McClure spoke from his dispensational chart. This line of teaching was quite new, and it became a great attraction, many flocking to hear him speak upon the special subjects. The power of the Holy Spirit was greatly manifested in these meetings, sinners were broken down under conviction of sin, and were saved, and saints were greatly blessed.

The tent season ended with much fruit gathered, and the coming day will declare what was accomplished for eternity in those meetings.

Mr. Monypenny who had spent two and one-half years laboring with Mr. McClure now left to visit his relatives in the East, and soon after sailed for Ireland where also he was used of the Lord.

1897

Mr. McClure was now in his fortieth year, strong in body, and for thirteen years he was fully engaged in gospel work. Yet he felt "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." He missed his fellow-laborer, but the Lord raised up another. A young man, John McFadyen, who had been laboring for the Lord a number of years, now linked up with brother McClure and they pitched the tent in the Boyle Heights district of Los Angeles.

The work took hold in that new part of the city, and the Lord wrought wonderfully through His servants that season. One who attended the meetings at that time and was a helper in the work thus wrote of those heart stirring days, "Some real souls were taken out of the quarry of nature and put in the new creation, and were added to the Assembly. To God be the glory."

At the close of this fruitful season the tent was removed to Grand Avenue where brethren McClure and Monypenny had seen many souls saved the year before. Again the Lord granted blessing through the Word preached. Brother McFadyen proved also to be a true yokefellow and they continued together. In 1899 they saw the hand of God with them in tent meetings in Oakland.

Monrovia

In 1900 Mr. McClure paid a short visit to his native land, the first in fifteen years. He visited his relatives in Belfast, and his ministry was much enjoyed by the Lord's people. Some of his old friends were there to welcome him back among them, but many had been called home.

He was guest at the wedding of his fellow laborer, brother John Monypenny, to Miss Wright of Temore, Ireland, and then returned to California exercised in heart about the tent season for 1901, when his attention was directed to Monrovia as a needy field. In this small foothill community, only one or two Christian families resided, with no assembly.

Mr. William Faulkner had returned from Africa, and was persuaded to join Mr. McClure in the Gospel effort in Monrovia. Thus, in the latter part of June, 1901, they pitched the first tent on a vacant lot on the main street, Myrtle Ave., of that city, "digging in for a siege" by fitting up living and sleeping quarters behind a partitioned part at the back of the tent.

The lie of the land in Monrovia, truly called forth "labor" both physical and spiritual, as they plodded on through the days and weeks; but they found encouragement from good attendance and awakened listeners in the meetings. Souls were saved there also; among them, a father and two daughters from a town about three miles away, who attended regularly, covering the distance with horse and buggy.

An incident connected with this family will serve to show the humble sterling qualities of this servant of Christ. The father, a man in his forties (about the same age as Mr. McClure), had been offered three good sized palm trees, which grew on an estate near the main road between Monrovia and Sierra Madre. He was busily digging them out one day, intending to carry them to his home for transplanting, when Mr. McClure happened along on his bicycle. Seeing that it was a very tough hot job for one man alone, Mr. McClure promptly stopped,

and got off to lend a helping hand. Between the two of them the trees were soon dug out and on to the buckboard wagon. These palms then planted are still standing in front of the home after forty years; silent monuments to the gracious man who in spite of his "high calling," was ever ready to help in countless little courtesies, thus leaving an example which might well be followed by the Lord's servants, as they travel from place to place. Nor is it any wonder, when the tent came down, that this family which had never heard before the truth of gathering to His Name alone, were among the first to take their place in the newly formed assembly. This little assembly had the joy of having their first conference at New Year of 1902, about three months after their coming together. To some of these newly saved ones such a gathering of Christians was a wonderful experience; especially when a goodly number arrived from Los Angeles, conveyed in state by a tally-ho, hired for the occasion and drawn by four gallant steeds which had covered the distance of over twenty-three miles in record time. Some still in the assembly today remember this notable event of years past. And more than one can testify of the fatherly attitude of this dear man of God as he stood at the door of the tent or hall, at the close of a meeting. While giving a warm handshake, some word of advice was added to carry home, given in the kindest tone; such as "Good night, George; remember to make straight paths for your feet"; or "Well, dear sister, hold fast that which thou hast"; or after a question to the unsaved, "Ah, my friend; it is not TRYING but trusting." These kindly words were given in such a way as never to be forgotten.

In the fall of 1901, Mr. McClure went up to Oakland. The conference that year was reported to be a season of special blessing, after which Mr. John Blair joined Mr. McClure in a series of meetings and they continued for several weeks. The hand of the Lord was seen and a number were saved, and later thirteen were baptized and added to the assembly bringing great joy and encouragement to the Lord's people.

Chapter 16 Texas (1902)

From 1893 to 1902 Mr. McClure labored with untiring zeal in California and as far north as Vancouver, British Columbia, preaching the Gospel and instructing the saints, both in public and in the homes. He was an evangelist who sought to make known the Gospel at every opportunity and watched for results. One who shared in the happy days in Monrovia in 1901 writes:

“Brother McClure shepherded those assemblies in California for many years, watching over and laboring among them; teaching and establishing by chart and ministry the wonderful truths of the Word of God; warning, praying and caring for the spiritual welfare of each one as a “faithful steward” who would render account to his Master in that Day. Many of those who remember the early years of Mr. McClure’s self-effacing love for the members of the body of Christ are looking forward with joy to that future day when they will see him crowned for faithful service.”

His ability as a teacher by this time was very marked and much help was given by his expositions on the Holy Scriptures. Abundant fruit had been gathered up and down the Pacific coast through his efforts and those of fellow-laborers, so that it could be said as of old, “And so were the churches established in the faith.”

Early in 1902 Mr. McClure became exercised about going east once more to visit Chicago from “whence he had been recommended to the grace of God.” Thither he went and after a profitable time spent in Chicago and Kansas City—enjoying the fellowship of the saints, and especially of such esteemed brethren as Mr. C. J. Baker

and Mr. C. W. Ross whose labors for the Lord in those parts had been blessed greatly— he set out with Mr. Baker to attend the conference to be held at Waxahachie, Texas.

Mr. T. C. Bush who has labored much in the large “Lone Star State” writes of the cheer and encouragement that the saints received through Mr. McClure’s first visit to Texas:

“The few of us who are left on the scene can never forget W. J. McClure as he came an unheralded stranger amongst us. In those early days the gifts were few, and so it was that at those gatherings we usually had one chief teacher.”

Mr. Joseph Jameson, a native of Northern Ireland, and brother of Mr. Samuel Jameson, Evangelist, had come to Houston in 1893. He was a man whose godliness was felt by those with whom he worked, and by all who knew him. He had a splendid gift for preaching the Gospel in the open air as well as indoors. His first pulpit was the street corner in that large city and his wife his only fellow-laborer. She held his hat while he proclaimed the glorious Gospel of Christ to those who gathered around. After a time the Word took effect, a hall was secured, and a little assembly was formed in Houston through the labors of Brother Jameson. Today it is a large assembly.

When Mr. McClure returned to Houston he joined Mr. Jameson in a series of meetings which continued for four weeks. A close link of friendship was formed between those two brethren that deepened until Mr. Jameson, after an active life in the Lord’s service in which he saw the work of God prosper in Houston, was called home in 1924.

From Houston Mr. McClure went to Waxahachie where Mr. Bush was laboring in the Gospel. Later they pitched a tent in Fort Worth, one of the leading cities of Texas. Soon an interest in the Word was manifested and precious souls were inquiring "What must I do to be saved?" All that summer they preached the Gospel and the Lord gave blessing. Souls were saved, and the foundation of the Fort Worth assembly was laid. Then as Brother Bush remarks: "Brother McClure returned north and soon began that tour that took him around the world, and brought his fruitful ministry to many lands, especially to South Africa."

In 1904 he set sail for the British Isles. Most of that summer and fall was spent in Ireland. He secured a bicycle which enabled him to get around, visiting homes, showing much interest in isolated saints and shut-ins, and contacting relatives of some whom he knew in the United States and Canada. In all places where he ministered the Word, he had large gatherings, and his ministry was spoken of as rich and instructive.

One very warm Saturday afternoon he was on his way to Belfast. In order to be more comfortable he rolled his coat up and tied it on the carrier on the back of the bicycle. Coming into the city, he got off to put his coat on when, alas, he discovered his coat was gone. He had no other with him nor in the city, but eventually after difficulty he got a substitute for the next day.

That same year was my first experience in tent work, and late in August we were moving the tent to another part. Having one night free I decided to visit a tent pitched in County Armagh where a brother from Scotland was conducting a series of meetings. Instead of

the preacher I had expected to see, a tall, dark, dignified-looking man was giving out the first hymn. After the hymn was sung, he prayed, then stepped on the platform and read Leviticus chapter 13 and part of 14. He preached on the cleansing of the leper and made the Gospel very clear and plain. Having seen and heard Mr. John Blair once before, (he had come from the colonies that same year also) I thought this surely was the same man. They looked so much alike. I walked up to the front of the tent, shook hands with him and said, "I heard you last at the Battleford Bridge Conference." He said, "I never was there." "But," I asked, "Are you not Mr. Blair? He was there." "No, my name is McClure." This was my first acquaintance with Mr. McClure, and I little thought then that the time would come when I would become so closely associated with him.

At the Lurgan Conference in October, he gave very valuable ministry. One afternoon he took up Timothy as his subject and spoke upon (1) Timothy, a disciple; (2) Timothy, serving as a son with a father in the Gospel — an evangelist; (3) Timothy, of whom the apostle could say, "I have no man likeminded who will naturally care for your state"—a shepherd. He said of Timothy: "Paul took him as a fellow-laborer and never was disappointed", adding, "I also have taken young men to the work of the Lord, and am thankful to say I have not been disappointed in them either. Timothy," he added, "is one of the few men in the Scriptures called 'a man of God.'"

During the conference, at a large Bible reading composed mostly of preachers and leading brethren, there was much discussion as to whether or not

preachers should have a subject studied and outlined in their minds before going to the platform, or whether they should rather depend alone on the Holy Spirit, as in the case when Peter opened his mouth and God filled it with the proper message. It became quite interesting as the two sides were being thrashed out with much enthusiasm. Mr. McClure took no part until the time was almost up and then he said, "Brethren, there is a scripture I should like to read," and he read Ecclesiastes 12:9-10, "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea he gave good heed and sought out and set in order many proverbs, and the preacher sought to find out acceptable words." He made no comment but just closed his Bible, and no one spoke again. A brother closed with prayer. The Scripture read seemed very timely, adding something most helpful to the Bible reading that day.

Beginning a series of meetings in Adam Street Gospel Hall, Belfast, Mr. McClure used a painting of the tabernacle. As he spoke upon its construction and furniture nightly, a great interest was created and much blessing resulted from the Word spoken. Even to this day there are those who tell of help received in their early Christian life at those meetings.

From Belfast he traveled South to County Cork. Here he was welcomed by Mr. McSeveney who became his host, and also by the assembly in Cork. Meetings were begun in that city where the greater part of the people belonged to the Church of Rome, and, despite the abounding darkness, the Spirit of God began to move in their midst, and a work was done for Eternity. This gave the assembly a fresh start and the saints were filled with joy. From there Brother McClure sailed for South Africa.

Chapter 17 South Africa (1905-1906)

The two years following Mr. McClure's visit to the British Isles were filled with busy service for the Lord in South Africa. He had often been exercised about visiting the Transvaal and Cape Colony; but for twenty years Ontario and British Columbia in Canada, and Washington, Oregon and California in the United States had been his special fields of labor, and in these fields a harvest of souls was reaped. Through his own ministry and associated with others of his fellow-laborers in these States and Provinces, many assemblies had been planted, and Brother McClure felt the need of keeping among them, teaching them and establishing them in the ways of the Lord. But now he saw the hand of the Lord guiding to more distant fields.

South Africa, taking in at that time Cape Colony, the Transvaal, and the Orange Free State, was settled chiefly by farmers from Holland, a strong and rugged race of people well suited to endure the disadvantages and toil of breaking up a new country. Apart from the vast territories of farm land, South Africa was rich in gold and diamonds, making that country a desirable one to immigrants from European countries including the British Isles.

The Boers, whose ancestors were noted for their loyalty to the Bible and the faith that marked the men and women of the Reformation, were much attached to the religion of their fathers and formed the largest part of the Dutch Reformed Church, but various other denominations were also represented among the people.

The Gospel and its accompanying New Testament truths had worked effectually and there were in the different large cities a number of assemblies composed of men of different nationalities, gathering in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A few years before Mr. McClure went to South Africa, the peace and prosperity which had been so long enjoyed were marred by the gathering clouds of strife between the British and the Boers and these clouds burst into a storm in October 1899, bringing with it untold suffering and sorrow to the formerly happy land. The eyes of the world were centered upon the conflict as it spread and increased until June 1902 when the good news was flashed over the wires that the Boer war was ended. But the joy was mingled with sorrow, both in Africa and in the British Isles, where fathers, mothers, wives and families mourned their awful losses and pondered the fate of loved ones who had fallen in battle, and had been buried in unknown graves.

The Lord's work suffered greatly during the years of war, many of the saints being driven from their homes and scattered to other parts; but like those in olden times they went everywhere preaching the Word. Following the war there was great activity in reconstruction with a more hopeful outlook, and, when early in 1905 Mr. McClure arrived in Capetown his visit was very opportune. He had just entered his forty-ninth year, strong in body, and with a wealth of experience attained in the Lord's service that fitted him for the work that lay before him. As an evangelist and a good soldier of Jesus Christ he had learned to endure hardness. He preached the gospel with no uncertain sound, and his ability to rightly divide the word of truth

was very marked. All this with a resolute mind, ready to undertake great things for God, made him a polished shaft fitted by the Master of assemblies to do a special work in the world and in the Church.

As the steamer entered Capetown, and he viewed for the first time the shores of the great land he had heard and read so much about, his heart was greatly stirred, and he was much cast upon the Lord.

He was heartily received by the brethren in Capetown and immediately he began making preparations for his first campaign. The effective methods he had used for some years in California, advertising special subjects, illustrating them by large charts, sparing no pains or cost to get these meetings and their subjects before the public, were the methods he again used, and these brought good results in South Africa as they had in California. He was well repaid for his labor by good audiences from the beginning. The subjects announced, typical and prophetic, proved to be very interesting to his hearers for Mr. McClure had the gift of making his subject lucid, interesting and convincing. To justify his method he often used the expression, as mentioned in another chapter—"Make an ambush." The chart and the announced subjects were only a means to an end, to get the ear of the people both for the Gospel and in opening up the scriptures of truth for believers in Christ. Interest in the meetings increased and the Lord's people soon realized that a man sent from God was in their midst. Attendance increased with the interest giving great encouragement to the saints who were being warmed by the messages. Some were saying, "There is a sound of abundance of rain." And they were not disappointed for the hand of God was seen and continued in their midst.

From Capetown Mr. McClure went up to Johannesburg and also into Southern Rhodesia. In all the important centers which he visited a great interest was created, especially among the members of the Dutch Reformed Church; in some instances whole families were reached. Not only were souls saved, but many were gathered out to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in assembly fellowship. Some who witnessed those stirring days of service and blessing were heard to say, "Mr. McClure has turned the place upside down."

Certain conditions existing in some of the assemblies in South Africa gave evidence that they were not fully delivered from the traditions of men. The clean-cut separation from the world, religiously, politically, and socially, preached by this servant of Christ, was not very palatable to some; but the Holy Spirit worked so mightily in the hearts of the people that these feelings were soon banished and the work of God went onward spreading far and near. A brother from South Africa when visiting his native land, Northern Ireland, in 1907, spoke in our hearing of the wonderful seasons of blessing which they had passed through in that land during the visit of the Lord's servant. He said, "Some of our assemblies were pretty cold and there was little activity among us; but the coming of Mr. McClure brought about a marvelous change. The Lord's people were restored and revived, and many were added to their numbers."

Thus after the years of war and discouragement, this visitation of God in many parts of that land was like the early and latter rain. Not only were the assemblies much cheered and increased in numbers, but the spiritual tone was raised, giving them fresh courage and a better hold

on the truth that God had taught them. Much thanksgiving went up to God for sending His servant, because that through his ministry such times of refreshing and blessing had come to them from the presence of the Lord.

At the end of 1906 Mr. McClure felt that the time had come when he should leave for New Zealand. He had found a large place in the hearts of the Lord's people, and this made his parting with them much like that of which we read in Acts 20, concerning the beloved apostle Paul then leaving the elders of Ephesus. After he had kneeled down and prayed with them, "They all wept sore and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him ... and they accompanied him into the ship." It was with sorrow and many a hearty invitation to return soon that the saints in South Africa waved goodbye to the messenger of God whose ministry had enriched them and made the Bible to them more like a living book than it had ever been before. And thus he sailed away for New Zealand.

Chapter 18 New Zealand (1907-1909)

The voyage from South Africa to New Zealand occupied considerable time, but Mr. McClure being a lover of the sea the trip was a pleasure to him, and it moreover gave him opportunity to rest and prepare for the work lying before him in another new sphere of labor.

He arrived in Wellington in time to attend the Easter conference meetings, at which his presence and ministry found great acceptance and appreciation among the believers. It was then that he made the acquaintance of Mr. Franklin Ferguson, editor of the "New Zealand Treasury," and a hearty bond of fellowship was formed between them.

Because of this close relationship we are able to present in this volume a tribute to the memory of Mr. McClure by Mr. Ferguson, with an account of his labors in the Colonies.

Mr. McClure was also glad to meet again beloved Mr. John Blair whom he had known years before and who had served the Lord in these Colonies for a number of years. During that visit Mr. McClure and Mr. Blair preached together occasionally and both were present on the happy occasion of Mr. Ferguson's wedding in Dunedin January 3, 1907, and ministered words of profit for the occasion.

Many doors were open for Mr. McClure in New Zealand and one of the places where he saw the hand of God in a marked way was Auckland the capital of the province bearing that name, embracing the North Island. There were two assemblies in that city and both shared richly

in the blessing at that time. His expositions began with lectures on the Tabernacle, illustrated by a large chart. Great interest was manifest and the audiences increased. Afterwards he took up "the Church," as the "Body of Christ," the "Spouse of Christ" and destined to be the sharer of the "Glory of Christ." The interest continued to grow and the power of God was with His servant as he brought out of his treasure things new and old.

Because of the manifest hunger for the Word our brother decided to put up his chart on "The Seven Churches of Asia" in which he traced the history of the church on earth. Christians from the various denominations were greatly stirred and came with open hearts to take in the wonderful truths that were being presented by the Spirit of God through His servant.

From the epistles to the seven churches (Revelation chapters 1, 2, and 3), he pointed out, first of all, that these were seven actual assemblies existing in Asia at that time, but that through the different conditions as set forth in these chapters as existing among them then, God brings before us a prophetic picture of the entire Christian dispensation, from the Apostle's days (and especially at the close of those days) until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At those meetings notes of each address were taken by the Christians, and later these were compiled and printed in book form, under the title, "The Seven Churches in Asia, by W. J. McClure." This book had had a large circulation and was read with appreciation and profit by the Lord's people in many lands, but as it is now not easily obtainable we think it wise to give

copious extracts for the benefit of those who do not possess the volume.

Having a remarkable grasp of ancient history, Mr. McClure used it to good advantage as he traced the path of the Church down through the last nineteen centuries setting it forth in the following order:

1. Ephesus a picture of the Church at the close of the Apostles' days.
2. Smyrna, foreshadowing the martyr days of the Church, ending at the close of the Emperor Diocletian's reign in A.D. 313.
3. Pergamos, portraying conditions from the reign of Constantine, 313 to 590.
4. Thyatira the prophetic description of Romanism, from 590 until this present hour.
5. Sardis, predicting Protestantism, from the Reformation in the 16th century to the present time.
6. Philadelphia, foretelling conditions prevailing in the early part of the 19th century.
7. Laodicea, the last stage describing the present lukewarm condition which now exists all over Christendom.

Our brother had given these same messages elsewhere to large and interested audiences just as he proclaimed them to the people in far-off Auckland during that memorable season, but, while each of the seven stages were enlarged upon yet the epistles to Sardis and Philadelphia seemed to grip the preacher himself with a mighty force, which carried him along as he portrayed

the awful bondage in which saints of God were held by the Church of Rome during the middle or dark ages.

The dawn of the Reformation, like the sunrise, brought liberty and untold blessing to multitudes in all walks of life. But the instrument principally used so mightily to shake the Church of Rome—as Mr. McClure expressed it, “from its center to its circumference”—was Martin Luther, a miner’s son, who, in the days of his youth, sang and begged on the streets of Eisenach to acquire an education, before taking the “holy orders” and becoming a monk.

The speaker pointed out that in Judges 10 Tola was raised up to be a saviour in Israel. The name Tola means a worm. Mr. McClure loved to trace that miner’s son through the different stages of his life, and dwelt especially upon two points of deep interest: 1. The unknown monk in the monastery; 2. That same monk at the Diet of Worms; until one would think Brother McClure must have stood by and witnessed Luther’s noble confession on that awful day. “Think,” he said, “of Luther standing before that assembly— Charles V, the ruler of half the world, kings, electors, counts, noblemen, bishops and archbishops—what an assembly, but, thank God, there he stood, God’s witness to His blessed truth. But I tell you, if you had access to the prayer that was wrung from his poor, anxious heart the night before that wonderful meeting, you will see how he is made to realize he is like Tola, a worm. That man, even though possessed of an indomitable spirit, that intrepid warrior, is made to feel the utter helplessness of man. He is in the power of the enemy, if God does not protect him. But, calmed by that wonderful night of wrestling with God, he stands in the presence of earthly

greatness, a worm! But God stood with him, and, thank God, from that flowed the blessings which we believe God has vouchsafed to us." Yes,—just as many centuries before that solemn scene, a remnant of Jews, held in captivity for 70 years in Babylon, went up to Jerusalem with hearts stirred by God to restore and rebuild the Temple and its worship, "and they set the altar upon its bases ... and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord" (Ezra 3:3), the fire, unlighted for seventy years, once more burned upon His altar, and that was their first act in that great movement in restoring the worship of the Lord in the place He had long before chosen to place His Name—so it was with Luther and others whose hearts God stirred while still in spiritual Babylon, and their simple plain message of the Gospel proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit, "justification by faith." This was the beginning of the great work of the Reformation. What a contrast to the man invented theories that had kept the people in darkness so long! Now all over Europe the Gospel, with a clear ring, was being preached, and the light shone as multitudes were saved and rejoiced in God's Salvation; many in turn, because of their unflinching faith in Christ, became martyrs for the truth, for in being burned to death, they laid down their lives for Christ's sake.

But the work that took such hold in those days, and had such a mighty influence, Mr. McClure pointed out, lacked much, as the churches of the Reformation made the fatal mistake of setting up an order of clergy and laity, and Protestantism was soon known by its many names and sects, called after doctrines or bearing the name of leaders. Thus the authority of the Scriptures was set aside upon these points. In his address on the

Church at Sardis, Mr. McClure having pointed out the awful guilt of the Church of Rome in withholding the Scriptures, showed how God graciously gave the Bible back as a precious heritage, and hence the call in that epistle, "Remember how thou hast heard and hold fast." He also dwelt upon the guilt of Protestantism, saying, "This precious book, purchased with the blood of countless martyrs, this Bible, is a neglected book, and as the years pass there is less and less use for it." But in closing his address that evening he struck a note that, after thirty-six years, is much more evident: namely that there is one deadly error in Protestantism, and it is growing rapidly—the denial of the Deity of the Son of God. He concluded by telling of a noted professor who differed with the Lord Jesus Christ as to what value we are to put on the law and the prophets. The question was put as to whether the professor would know better than the Lord about this. "Yes," was the answer, "he has access to information that Jesus had not," thus giving the Lord no better place than one of limited knowledge. Thus the inspiration of the Word of God is denied.

Chapter 19 Auckland

In Mr. McClure's exposition of the Church at Philadelphia he deals largely with the recovery of some precious truths at the beginning of the last century, the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ for His Church having a prominent place. This address brings out clearly just where Mr. McClure stood ecclesiastically, for he had a very strong conviction on this subject. The reader can easily discern why he was not a denominational preacher, nor yet an inter-denominational preacher, also the reason why a preacher with such outstanding gift and ability should spend his long life of service ministering in tents and little halls, and using all his energies in building up assemblies. Some were large in numbers, others consisting of only two or three, but none was too small for brother McClure and his fruitful ministry.

This message on the Church of Philadelphia, which was taken down as he gave it, will bring before the reader, that his path of separation from the different religious systems was not because of prejudice, nor a feeling against any particular denomination, but because he saw from the Scriptures that all denominationalism is opposed to the plain order of the New Testament. He believed the idea of clergy and laity was unknown in Paul's day, but that saints as a holy priesthood came together as such to worship by offering up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, and in ministry and service to exercise the different gifts from the risen Lord for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of all.

The following, then, are Brother McClure's own words on this subject, and "he being dead, yet speaketh."

Church of Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13)

The name Philadelphia is very precious, and it is as thoroughly in harmony with what follows in this epistle as any of the previous names were consistent with what followed in those epistles. Just as in each case there is Divine wisdom seen in the selection of the name, so here. Philadelphia means "brotherly love." Now we can easily understand that God is putting before us here a very precious truth as to the assembly which was largely lost sight of, and that is, that an assembly of God's people is gathered together and held together by a common life, rather than by agreement in doctrine. We do not say this to lead you to undervalue doctrine, nor for a moment to give any suggestion that certain doctrines could be tolerated, or that fellowship could be held with those holding them. No true believer could have any fellowship with anything that touches the person of Christ or the foundation of Christianity. The child of God must keep clear of these things. But the Church of God is not a company banded together because of agreement in certain tenets; the Church of God is composed of those who have been linked to Christ by faith in Him, and any company of God's people should illustrate this. They are together because they are members of one body. They have the same life. They are linked with the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we see how this very word suggests relationship with those who are gathered together according to the mind of God; are gathered together, because they are linked with Christ, and therefore with one another.

There is something in this epistle which I want you very particularly to notice and it is found in the tenth and eleventh verses of this chapter: "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from (or, out of) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

In this "dwell upon the earth," there is a reference to what we have in Pergamos. In Pergamos we have the Lord saying, "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest" i.e., the Church, which had been a pilgrim and a stranger upon the earth, had settled down to be an earth dweller; and this well suits the great mass of unconverted people. They profess to be part of the Church, but they are just earth dwellers. They never knew what it was to be taken out of the world, and then sent back because Jesus sent them; but they are in it and of it. They never knew what it was to be able to say, "Heaven is my Fatherland, Heaven is my Home." For these there is a dreadful time coming; for all unconverted professors. Far better for them that they had never made the Christian profession, seeing they never knew the Lord Jesus Christ.

So we read, "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

Next verse: "Behold, I come quickly." I want you to think of all these epistles. If you remember what we have sought to bring before you, you will remember that we have had but two mentions of the coming of the Lord previous to this. The first is Thyatira, and the second, Sardis. One very striking feature in which Philadelphia

differs from either Thyatira or Sardis is this: that the coming of the Lord is seen with a clearness that is not seen in those other epistles.

Let me compare what we have in Thyatira, and what we have in Sardis, with what we have in this epistle. In chapter 2, verse 25, in the epistle to Thyatira, we read, "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come"; nothing but the mere mention of the coming. Now look at what we have in Sardis, chapter 3, and the last part of the third verse, "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee." In the first instance, we have the bare mention of His coming. In Sardis we have His coming mentioned, but in such a way that you could not distinguish whether it is His coming to the air for His people or His coming to the earth with His people. Now the Lord does not come for His people as a thief; but we read, after He has come for His people, and Christendom has settled down, and they say, "Peace and safety" then shall sudden destruction come upon them like a thief in the night, and poor Christendom will get one dreadful alarm, and that will be the coming in judgment of the Son of Man. In Thyatira (Romanism) and Sardis (Protestantism) the coming of the Lord is mentioned; but just in the way in which it was known in those places, if known at all.

I know there are those of you who have been studying the coming of the Lord, and you are beginning to see that the subject that occupies one in every twenty-five verses of the New Testament has not had justice done to it. What are numbers in Protestantism looking for? A coming at the end of this world's history, when everything shall be burnt up, and there shall be an end of time; but not a coming like that in Philadelphia. Thank

God for the ever-widening circle who are receiving the truth of His coming; but all the same, they are but a small minority of the professing Christians.

Now take Philadelphia, and see how blessedly the coming is distinguished. "I also will keep them from (out of) the hour of temptation." It is here we get the clear teaching that the Church is not to be in the tribulation. Here we have the blessed hope shining out, that the Church is to be raptured out of this scene, leaving Christless professors to await that awful hour. This is the hope restored, which had been lost in the Ephesian time. "Behold, I come quickly." I say it is just grand to ponder those two references to that blessed coming.

You get first the fact that there is to be, what many are now sneering at, a secret rapture. We believe that the Church of God is going to be taken up; that the really saved that are living will be silently and swiftly taken out of this scene and the dead in Christ will be raised, and we shall all be caught up in the air, and leave behind the mere professors. Yes, that is the teaching of the Word of God, notwithstanding man's scoffing.

Secondly, the teaching on the coming of the Lord in the Philadelphia epistle is its imminence: "Behold, I come quickly." I want to make this point clear, as it has very much to do with our locating the Philadelphian period.

Another thing, in the epistle to Philadelphia we get the person of Christ standing out. Look at the seventh verse: "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth."

If you will mark, as I have, those previous pronouns, you will find I, Me, and My occurring with wondrous

frequency all through the Philadelphian epistle. The person of Christ stands out before the believer in His beauty and glory, as if He would step forward and fill the whole vision of the believer; and as He steps forward to fill the eye and heart of the Christian, He would say, "These things saith He that is holy." I am afraid we lose some of the meaning of the word "holy." Holy is the same word as sanctified or separated; it has the idea of being kept from pollution or defilement, and kept apart from what is contrary to the mind of God.

Now all the awful mixture of Thyatira and Sardis is, as it were, before the mind of Christ, and He would have all His people walk apart from the evils of that which is called by His name. And He says, "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true." He will never be false to His Word; He will always be what His Word has proclaimed Him to be. There is no failure in Him. The presence of Christ is the great thing in the epistle to Philadelphia, and if we get weakness (a little strength) in Philadelphia, we see power and authority in the One who has gathered them around Himself.

Now, the next thing, the Name of Christ: "Thou hast not denied My name." Could believers deny the name of Christ? Not as Saviour, not as Jesus. How many of the Lord's people are glad of His name as Jesus; but that is only a part of His name. His name is the Lord Jesus. He has bought us with His blood and as Lord we should consider ourselves as bound to Him, to carry out His will, no matter where it may lead us. The moment you enter into the blessedness of this thought you will see that it is yours to stand for Him, though you stand alone. Many a child of God, who blesses God for the name Jesus, has very little use for the name Lord.

So the blessings in the epistle to Philadelphia are not to those who would not deny His name Jesus; but to those who do not deny His full title, Lord Jesus. If we say "Lord," from the heart, we say it meaning, "I am Thy servant, and Thine alone; and I bow to Thy will, and Thine alone; and Thy will, my Lord, is my law. I cannot deny Thy Name." Shall we own that name and do His will?

Again, "Thou hast kept My word." What does it mean to keep the word? Philadelphia is distinguished not by extracting a faith out of the book, and holding it. Faiths that were taken, or presumably taken, from God's Word in days gone by, are regarded by many as like the clothes of their fathers—they have outgrown them, and they must be changed. While we thank God for creeds and confessions of the past which were sound (we have more confidence in the old faiths than in the new faiths) it is not for the Philadelphians to form a creed out of the Book, but to hold the Book. You say, "What is your faith?" I say, "This Book from Genesis to Revelation." God saw we needed the whole Bible; less would not do. He has given us that and the Holy Spirit to lead us into its teachings; may we thankfully use His gift.

Philadelphia is the Church that suggests the living linked with Christ, holding Him as the Head, and then the members—a church in which the coming of the Lord Jesus is held as the hope of the believer. There it is—the Church with the person of Christ as everything. Around Him they seek to gather. It is the Church that holds His name. It is the Church that is satisfied with His Word. The thing is to find that which corresponds with this, and when we have found it, may the Lord give us grace to be loyal to His Word.

Let us turn now to Nehemiah 8:13-17—

“And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law.

“And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month:

“And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.

“So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the House of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

“And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.”

This portion of the Word of God refers to the time just after the return from Babylon, when those captives came back to the city of their fathers. The first thing they did was to tell Ezra to bring the Book of the Law. Why? All their troubles grew out of the neglect of that book, for if that book had been allowed to speak, and its voice had been heard, they would have had nothing but peace and prosperity. That book was allowed to remain

unread, and if read, unpracticed, and the result was desolation, judgment, scattering. Now they are a feeble remnant, and they say, "Bring the book." So they brought the book, and it is very refreshing to turn back to that people reading that book. They were not sitting in a comfortable hall; but they were in the street. And as they stood there the reading continued, hour after hour (not interspersed with telling anecdotes); and as they read, they came to what we know as the 23rd of Leviticus, and they read of a feast called the Feast of Tabernacles, and that in that feast in the seventh month Israel was to go into the mountains and hills, and bring branches of trees and construct temporary shelters on the tops of their houses; and if they had not sufficient room on the tops of their houses, then after that in the streets, and under these booths they were to sit for seven days. They found they had neglected that feast—for how long? Just a matter of about one thousand years that feast had remained without being observed in that way. Suppose someone had said, "David did not do this": they would have said, "But we will do it. If David did not do it, he was wrong; we will do it." And they did, and God gave them great joy.

In the winter of 1826-27, a number of children of God belonging to different denominations used to meet together to read God's Word. These dear men were all in good social positions, some belonged to the aristocracy—one of them the Hon. John Parnell, afterward Lord Congleton. These men of like mind, all children of God, used to gather around their Bibles. It was after a long, dreary waste of years, stretching away back to the apostles; not a line had been written on the coming of the Lord, as many believers are now, thank God, looking

for it—His coming to the air for His people. That precious truth so early lost by the Church was recovered at the Bible readings, and has been to many thousands of God's people since then source of comfort.

When the hope of the coming was revived, it began to stir their hearts, and right along with it they found that the Lord's people in apostolic days assembled together for breaking of bread, and they gathered as members of one body, not as Presbyterians, Baptists, or any other sect, but as believers. And when they were gathered together, they found that they were gathered around the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus said, "I am in the midst," and the Holy Spirit was present to guide. So they needed no program, no liturgy, but simple dependence on an unseen Lord and the power of the Holy Ghost. And so these dear men's hearts were opened to the precious truth, the blessed truth of Jesus' coming, and of being gathered in His blessed name to show forth His death in the breaking of bread. So they began to do it in Fitzwilliam Square, in the City of Dublin (the first time we know of it in the British Isles). In the sixteenth century we find something similar in William Farell's life.

After a little while they thought they might meet in a more public place, so that others of God's people might join them. It was suggested that the poorer ones might not like coming to Mr. Hutchinson's house in Fitzwilliam Square, so they took a room, used by an auctioneer during the week, and on a Saturday evening some of those dear men would get that room in order and spread the table for the Lord's day morning.

So the truth spread all over Great Britain, and to India and other places, until now in no part of the earth will you go but there you will find companies of simple Christians — misunderstood, it is true, often maligned, and much about them that one would have different; but with all their failure they are seeking to know something of what the epistle to Philadelphia teaches.

A friend of mine, who was a bandsman of the infantry, was led to Christ while a soldier. He had formerly been a Roman Catholic, and after his conversion he made a grand resolve. He said: "I shall join nothing until I know from the Word of God what I should join, until I find it in this Book; then I will identify myself with it." In the regiment there were some men who were professors, and they said to him, "You take care of those people called the 'Plymouth Brethren'; they are a dangerous people; you take care of them." And my friend, just as really and as simply as a young believer could, began to pray, "Lord, deliver me from the 'Plymouth Brethren'." And he kept on praying until his regiment was drafted to —, where I met him.

As he was walking around —, he noticed a sign, "The Gospel of the Grace of God will be preached in this hall on Lord's Day," etc. He went and heard the Gospel preached. It was like the Gospel he had heard preached by the Major of his regiment when he was converted, and my friend turned up again and again. Then he heard that they had a morning meeting. They did not advertise it. Why? Because they did not want to just get in numbers; they were satisfied with whom the Lord was leading out. He came, and sat back. "There," he said, "that is the thing; I have read of it in the Word of God." They were the people, and on the table was the bread

and wine, and they were gathered around the table, the rich and the poor, and you could not tell which was which. One gave out a hymn, another led in prayer, and the thing moved as though going according to a pre-arranged program— a beautiful harmony, but no program. He thought, “That is what I have read: that is what I have been waiting for.” He asked could he be received. “Yes, if you are a believer, walking godly, and holding no fundamentally evil doctrine.”

The day he was received, my friend, Mr. —, asked him to dinner with him. He was still praying to be delivered from the “Plymouth Brethren.” At the dinner table he learned that he was now among the very people he had been praying to be delivered from But, thank God, God gave him what he required, not what he asked. The Lord knew what he wanted.

Get to God’s precious Book, and make a resolve, “I will do nothing that I have not got a plain ‘Thus saith the Lord’ for.” Then you will be able to say, “I have sought to carry out the Lord’s mind. I have not followed any man.”

I must stop now, but there are some more precious things we hope to speak about concerning this Church which we must leave until tomorrow night.

Read Matthew 25:1-13

The next thing in that epistle is that the coming is imminent: “Behold, I come quickly.” When an assembly was gathered out, it was “to wait for the Son from Heaven.” When those ten virgins went forth (and they figure the Church), they went forth to meet the bridegroom. The Thessalonian assembly was gathered out to wait for the Lord from Heaven, and that precious feast that believers observed weekly in those days,

linked together two things — the cross and the coming of the Lord. “Ye do show the Lord’s death till He come.” We need not tell you that for over one thousand years, yes, for almost fifteen hundred years, that hope was utterly lost—lost so far as believers entering into it and understanding it. It might just as well have not been in the Book of the Lord. Any believer whose heart God has stirred up to study the truth of the coming of Christ, will own what we are saying,—that for a long stretch of centuries there was nothing said about Christ coming to the air to catch away His people.

When that hope was let go, the Church, that was an outcalling, became an institution of the earth. Rome was such an institution, and at the Reformation the true character of the Church was not understood, because the truth of the Lord’s coming had not been recovered; but when we come to 1826-27 we find God linking these two things most blessedly together. With the discovery of the hope of the Lord’s coming, they discovered that the Church is simply a stranger upon the earth, and waiting to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. So linked up with the blessed feast is the thought that He is coming again—“Ye do show the Lord’s death till He come.”

Last night we also referred to the marvelous spread of this precious truth. Those dear men whom God honored to be the pioneers of this precious truth, to whom God gave grace to find in the Word of God what all believers should find there, scattered his blessed truth in their life-time. And now, all up and down the continents of America, Europe, Africa, go where you will, you will find believers seeking to carry out this simple scriptural order.

We hear some say that the day for collective testimony is passed, and that it is the day for individual testimony. Do they mean that the day is coming when there will be no companies of God's people gathered in that simple scriptural way we have pointed out? We do not believe that. Why? Because the Lord Jesus says, "I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it." And we believe that the door that God opened in the early quarter of the nineteenth century will remain open till He comes. It cannot fail. Why? "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David." In that I read a very blessed suggestion that He has power, and if in our weakness we cling to Him, then how can there be failure? Someone said to a very dear friend of mine, one of the most holy men I ever knew, a very peculiar, very quiet man—"Mr. —, I am afraid we shall break up." "Well," he said, "if we break up, what can we do but come together again?" How can you break up a thing like that?"

We have never known a little company of Christians failing through want of gift. We have known them to fail through want of godliness. But the little company that clings to the Lord Jesus has His power, and is simply invincible. It may not have appearances, it may not impress the unconverted.

What does the Philadelphian Church point out? It points out a small company; for, while we thank God for the marvellous spread of the precious truth, and that wherever we have gone we have seen companies gathered in His Name, let us not forget that this epistle gives us a feeble folk. But they are clinging to Christ.

"Thou hast not denied My Name" (verse 8). Where asked, "What are you?" "I am a Wesleyan," "I am a Baptist," "I, a Presbyterian," that, dear friends, is practically denying the Name. "Oh," you say, "what is in a name?" If there is anything I regret it is the time I fought against the truth, when I used to say, "What is in a name?" That which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet. I am sorry that my heart should have ever been so out of touch with Christ that I could have defended a thing so unscriptural in such a way. Would you like to give the Man yonder at God's right hand the name of Socrates? No, no, we love that precious name, "Jesus." So there is something in a name. Be consistent.

Remember Who gave you the name "Christian." It is a misinterpretation of Scripture to say that the World called God's people "Christians." The word rendered "called" is used about eight times in the New Testament, and there it means "Divinely called." They were called Christians at Antioch, the new center. Jerusalem is set aside, and Antioch became the new center. From Antioch the apostles went forth, and at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers, and one of the prophets got the message from God, "Call My people Christians." It was not the world.

Now, in the 18th chapter of Matthew here is another use of "in His Name"; in verse twenty we read, "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name." While we are individual Christians, as gathered together we glory still in that Name. If you pass by the door of a company of believers gathered together in His Name, and ask who is there? They are a company of believers. What are they gathered as? Just gathered as believers. Therefore,

you cannot say, The Baptist Church, The Church of England, etc. Every time these names go up over a door, it is a practical denial of the Name. In those buildings are saints as dear to God as you and I. We are not discussing those believers individually, but the principle. When we are gathered together, we must be gathered simply as God's children, and gathered in His Name to Himself. Some will meet us with, "We know what you mean; but do they not fail?"

In San Francisco some years ago a gentleman gave me a pamphlet, entitled, "The Failure of Brethren," by ——. I happened to know the author, and he was a most splendid failure, in almost everything. This gentleman, who was such a failure, undertook to write the "Failure of Brethren." When I got the pamphlet I said, "Oh, he is too late; God wrote the failures of brethren when He wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians. I am sure Mr. ———'s book is not so scathing as that." The failures unveiled in that epistle were to lead brethren to humble themselves, own their own sin, and seek to avoid those things. But this is no justification for a believer seeking to evade God's Word. You might as well bring the Bible back to Jesus, and say, "Here is the Bible: others have made such a failure in carrying it out, I am not going to try, so here is the Bible." The failures will not excuse us for not carrying out God's orders.

Brethren have failed. "Brethrenism," I have nothing to do with. I want to know the truth of God. If people say, "Oh, it has failed; it has been such a failure, we will not try to keep on meeting in Jesus' name." Well, be consistent. What do you mean? Let me put a question to you. Is Sardis a failure? Who would stand forth to be an apologist for the awful evils that are in Protestantism.

Who would declare that Protestantism is a success. God delivered souls from Rome and they have multiplied sects and gone into all the errors that could possibly be enumerated that have ever afflicted the Church of God. Denying the Divinity of Christ, denying eternal punishment, denying the inspiration of this Book—these are some of the failures As Protestantism is such a failure, shall we go back to Rome? Oh, no, we will not go back to Rome. We thank God for bringing us out of it, and, by His grace, we will not go back. Well, anyone who would discourage simple souls from carrying out the truth of God because of the failure of those who try, to be consistent in regard to Protestantism, should give it all up and get back to Rome.

Ere we close, just a word on verse 12—“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him My new name.” To some, carrying out God’s Word may mean losing a place in some denomination, a position of honor and supposed usefulness. Such will not be the losers by their faithfulness to Christ. He will give such a place of honor by-and-by and He will also see that obedience to His Word will not hinder their real usefulness now.

“Shall go no more out.” The days of going “outside the camp bearing His reproach” will then have passed forever. To “go out,” to some caused very real suffering; turning from associations where God’s Word could not be carried out, yet where there were many which were held dear as God’s children. All that separation will then be over.

“I will write upon him—mine own new name” (v. 12, R.V.). It was for His name’s sake they suffered misunderstanding and reproach. Now He will give them what they loved so well upon earth, His “Name,” answering to chapter 2:17, “a new name.”

What a fulness of manifestation of all He is awaits the saints. Like the Queen of Sheba, they will exclaim, “The half was not told me.” Thank God, that name is dear to our hearts now.

In the next chapter will be found an account of Mr. McClure’s travels in New Zealand and Australia continued until October 25, 1909. Those years had been filled with happy and very fruitful service. His ministry proved to be like the dew of Hermon to the children of God and many were able to thank God for this messenger of the Cross, who brought to them the Gospel message and through his ministry they were born of God.

The assemblies were edified and greatly enriched. His ministry was a mine of wealth, without fanciful or extreme interpretation, but the Word broken small and lucid in exposition. His ministry also had a steadying effect on some who were in danger of being taken up with theories that would lead them apart from the right ways of the Lord, and it was with much regret and yet, with deep thankfulness to God, the saints in the various places bade him farewell and in every place he received a hearty invitation to return.

Chapter 20 Particulars Of Visit To New Zealand And Australia

by Franklin Ferguson

In April, 1907, Mr. W. J. McClure arrived in Wellington, New Zealand from a visit to South Africa in time for a large Easter Conference. Afterward he gave a series of lectures on prophecy, illustrated with charts. The hall was filled nightly, a good proportion of the attenders being Christians from the various denominations. The blessing of God was upon these lectures, and many received much help and clearer understanding of the Word.

Leaving Wellington, Napier and Hastings were visited. He opened the new Gospel Hall in Carlyle Street, Napier, speaking from his chart, the ministry proving decidedly helpful.

Palmerston North and Wanganui were given a course of meetings and the saints were thankful for his profitable teaching.

In New Plymouth, meetings were held in the Chamber of Commerce rooms on Gospel and Prophetic subjects, with increasing interest for six weeks—attendances reaching two hundred. Never before had there been the same opportunity of hearing such helpful teaching. A number came under exercise of soul regarding baptism and church position.

Some weeks were spent in Auckland in the Howe Street and Parnell Halls. Subjects taken up were the Tabernacle, the Lord's Coming, the Great Tribulation,

the Millennium, and the Epistles to the Seven Churches. All were opened up in a masterly way, proving most interesting and constructive. Attendances were large and many people professed to receive blessing. The gathering together for worship and breaking bread was taught with power and in a way that was new to many.

Early in 1907 meetings were held in Dunedin, chiefly on the Seven Churches, and were largely attended. Afternoon meetings of a conversational nature were conducted in a private dwelling and many difficult points were elucidated.

Invercargill was the next call. The large Temperance Hall was packed and rapt attention was manifest throughout. For four weeks he ministered to believers on precious portions from the Gospel of John which refreshed and stirred up the hearts of saints, exalting God's beloved Son and seeking to lead His people into truer and more real separation to Christ alone. Addresses on the Seven Churches occupied a fortnight, the interest deepening each evening. Many never heard this line of things before and there was fruit seen from the faithful and uncompromising preaching. The truth was felt to be needed, seasonable and calculated to lead the assembly to more definite testimony to our Lord. On Sunday afternoons in the back hall, Mr. McClure addressed young believers upon truths set forth in the Epistles of Peter and the Parables of Matthew 13, proving most edifying. At this time, Invercargill was the largest single meeting in New Zealand.

Afterward, meetings were held in Timaru and Oamaru, with an apparent ear for the truth. Numbers increased and extra seats had to be obtained. Though the ministry

was mainly for believers, a number of soul professed at Oamaru and some were baptized and added to the assembly, one being a man 85 years old. There had been no such stir in this town for thirty years, so it was said.

A few other places received short visits that were in deed welcome.

New Zealand has been highly privileged by visits from such servants of Christ as W. J. McClure, James and Murdoch Campbell, William McLean, John Blair, Frank May, Robert Miller, etc., besides other good brethren raised up of God. The assemblies now number about 190, of varying sizes. Good foundations have been laid, and much pioneering Gospel Work has been and is being done.

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Early in 1908 Mr. McClure left New Zealand for Australia.

After about ten days in Melbourne (Victoria), he proceeded to Adelaide (South Australia), remaining four weeks. Here a considerable interest was awakened, with not a little blessing. Writing of it, he said, "We have no attactions — not even a fiddle. We have two hymns at the beginning and as a rule, speak right till the close, 9:00 P.M."

He returned to Melbourne for the Easter Conference and some meetings and then went up to Queensland. At Maryborough, large crowds from the places around came nightly to hear him; some believers were led into fellowship and others were seeking.

At the November conference in Brisbane, there gathered from 450 to 500 believers. His ministry was very

acceptable. Afterward, he gave a course of addresses on "The Tabernacle and Its Teachings," very timely and listened to with much attention.

In Sydney (New South Wales) his meetings were larger than anywhere else in Australia and New Zealand, accompanied with a good deal of blessing. Newcastle was also visited and a few more places.

Completing a very successful and greatly appreciated visitation of New Zealand and Australia, Mr. McClure left for San Francisco on October 25th 1909, fully intending to return again, if the Lord permitted, but his steps were never again directed thitherward; not that his desire to return had weakened, but he felt the claims of America outweighed the other. Though he came not again, his ministry has not lost its effect unto this day.

Chapter 21 His Return To U. S. A.

The long ocean trip from Australia to California was uneventful but much enjoyed by Mr. McClure. He arrived safely in San Francisco and received a royal welcome in the McIntyre home. He had now completed the journey around the world in about six years and was much encouraged by the Lord's favor to him.

His children in the faith and the assemblies in California rejoiced greatly at his return among them and soon he was busy as usual holding nightly meetings. At Christmas, the annual conference was held in Los Angeles; numbers were larger than usual and one who was present at that season wrote: "Good wholesome ministry was given by W. J. McClure, assisted by local brethren." They had a very profitable time together and it was very cheering to Brother McClure to see those gifts from the risen Lord being exercised, as he listened with pleasure to some of his younger brethren opening up the Word of God to the saints.

At New Year's in 1910 another conference was held in Monrovia and again Mr. McClure was the only preacher. A large company gathered. Many from Los Angeles, Pomona, and other places were present to hear what the Lord had to say to them.

His messages were reported as most helpful at both conferences, and there was a very happy spirit manifested and hearty fellowship was enjoyed among the Lord's people.

Leaving the south in February and going north, visiting Oakland, Portland and Everett, he found that in each

place there were hungry souls and an ear for the Word. His next stop was Vancouver where he attended the conference at Easter. The assemblies in that large city had grown during the past years and a large number were present at the conference. Seasonable ministry was reported to have been given by several well known servants of Christ, including Mr. McClure. After the conference, he began a series of meetings, continuing a few weeks. Good interest was manifested, which deepened and increased, with blessing following the ministry of the Word in the Gospel and to the saints. The hall was filled to capacity, the people coming from all parts of the city.

From Vancouver he went to the Canadian prairies, taking in a number of conferences and seeking to help little companies of saints at Moose Jaw, Wilbert, Edmonton, Calgary, Lethridge, and Coal Creek. He spent three months among these scattered saints in Western Canada and then returned to Vancouver.

Mr. McClure now left for the east and was present at the conference held in Dutch Kills, Long Island, New York on November 5. One writing of those meetings said, "It was good in every sense of the word, harmony prevailed from the kitchen to the platform." There Brother McClure met his old friend and fellow laborer of earlier days, Mr. W. P. Douglas, and they had part in the ministry together. Mr. John Smith and Mr. Stack were also present and all these brethren ministered the Word to edification. Mr. McClure gave an outstanding address that day on the Levites in their service in the Tabernacle, pointing out the work of the three families.

First, Merari, whose name means “bitter.” His work was concerned with the silver sockets, or the foundations, with the boards covered with gold, and their tenons fitting into the sockets making the walls of the Tabernacle. He referred to this as bringing before us the work of the Evangelist, for Paul spoke of himself “as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation.” (1 Cor. 3:10).

Second, Gershon, who had charge of the curtains, coverings and pins; his name means assembly, thus pointing out the nature of his services.

Third, Kohath, who had to carry the holy vessels of the sanctuary. Oxen were provided for the sons of Merari and Gershon to bear the burdens across the desert, but not so in the service of Kohath. They carried the vessels upon their shoulders and felt the weight of their precious load.

The preacher used these three sons of Levi as setting forth the three outstanding gifts from the risen Lord for the edifying of the body of Christ, the evangelist, the pastor, and the teacher.

The Lord’s people left that conference very much helped and for many days it was spoken of as a time of real blessing.

Although Mr. McClure had been absent from the sphere of his early labors in Ontario for about seventeen years, except for occasional visits as opportunity offered, yet his interest, prayers, and practical fellowship with his brethren laboring for the Lord there had never ceased, and he rejoiced greatly when new territories were being opened up for the gospel.

During those years the work of the Lord had prospered, spreading throughout the United States and Canada. New assemblies were planted and those already in existence increased in numbers.

The early conferences held at Hamilton, Toronto, Orillia, and some other places had proven to be such a help and blessing that in many other centers the Holiday Season began to be taken advantage of and three day conference meetings were arranged for, generally beginning or finishing on a holiday. These special meetings, were always preceded by a prayer meeting the night before.

Circulars were usually sent out to other assemblies inviting fellow saints to come and share the good things from the Word of God. Visitors attending were freely entertained in the homes of local Christians, and these were mostly taxed to their utmost capacity but the believers looked upon it as a great privilege to entertain the people of God.

Great simplicity marked these gatherings—no human arrangements, not even in the larger conferences when over one thousand believers would come together. The conveners often did not know what preachers were coming until they arrived for the prayer meeting. There was no chairman further than one of the brethren who gave out the announcements and read the requests for prayer. The meetings were generally at 10:00 A.M., 2:30 P.M., and 7:30 P.M. After a hymn was sung, requests for prayer were read, then a season of waiting on the Lord in prayer, for about half an hour, when a number of brethren poured out their hearts to God, after which two or three brethren upon whom God had laid the burden

of the message, rose up one after the other, sometimes with much fear and trembling, and gave searching ministry that often has the audience in tears. After each meeting was close meals were provided freely for all present and Christian fellowship was enjoyed.

On the Lord's day morning, visitors from other assemblies, with the local Christians, all remembered the Lord together at the remembrance feast. But while these conferences were convened especially for believers, the Gospel was a feature in each. From time to time and especially on Lord's day evening the glad tidings were heralded, and seldom did a conference pass with out souls being saved and backsliders restored. The ministry of such brethren as Mr. Donald Ross, Mr. Donald Munro, Mr. John Smith, Mr. James Campbell, and Mr. Wm. Matthews, and that of other well known servants of Christ, was long remembered for its searching, sanctifying character in edifying, exhorting, and comforting the people of God. This gave spiritual tone to the assemblies that kept them separate from the world.

This same simple order is still maintained in many places and while there is an acknowledged lack of the power and freshness that marked the conferences in those early days, yet the work of the Lord goes on and there is reason for thankfulness that the Shepherd's voice is still heard when His people gather to hear His Word.

Chapter 22 A Warning

A warning note was raised by the apostle Peter in his ministry to the saints of old, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). The history of the Church since then has been one marked by much failure, because of the assaults of that powerful adversary, called the “accuser of the brethren”—often devouring the fellowship of believers in their assembly testimony. That he has accomplished this sad condition by causing war in the camp, has been seen in the past as the Apostle warned the Galatians, “If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another” (Gal. 5:15). In all such conditions the Holy Spirit is grieved and the devil gets an advantage over God’s people.

Teaching had been introduced in some assemblies in Ontario to the effect that all who profess faith in Christ, irrespective of their ecclesiastical connections, should be received at the Lord’s table. This line of things met with much opposition by brethren having a care for the assemblies, and also from those giving themselves to the ministry of the Word.

They maintained that godly order should be exercised in God’s House and to secure this that those applying for fellowship in the local assembly should first be interviewed by the leading brethren of that assembly that when they were satisfied that the conversion of the applicant was real, and also that he had imbibed no false doctrine and that he was not guilty of even practice, then the assembly should receive him—not merely to

break bread, but into fellowship, sharing its joys and sorrows, and also its reproach for Christ's sake.

But some believed there was a tendency on the part of certain brethren to adopt a measure of what was known as Needed Truth principles in Church Government and discipline, having high ecclesiastical claims with a form of district oversight which was dictatorial to assemblies that did not fully agree with that order. Thus it was that strained relationships began to be manifested among those who had for years enjoyed happy fellowship together.

Such were the existing conditions when Mr. McClure arrived in Ontario in 1911, and he saw this spirit of unrest among some of the assemblies that he had helped to plant and establish in the ways of the Lord. One assembly had already divided. He viewed the situation with grave concern. In his wide experience he had seen the evil effects of division that had torn some assemblies asunder in the past and he knew if the devil had his way, a repetition of the same would be seen on this continent.

The reader can gather from the ministry of Mr. McClure given in this volume that he had very decided convictions regarding assembly order, and the definite stand he took at that time to avert a division was not a compromise between two extremes. Far from that, it was a seeking to maintain the truth he had learned many years before and which he believed to be Scriptural. He was a man well balanced in his interpretation of the truth, he had a great mind, never coming to decisions hastily, but weighing every aspect in the presence of God and, when convinced that he had

the mind of God, nothing would change him, for what he did not believe was also to him of vital importance.

He did not countenance infant springling because it was the means of blinding many, causing them to believe because they were baptized in infancy they had a good chance of Heaven, but most of all, because he perceived it was unscriptural. He did not believe in "household baptism" (unless it applied to householders of born again people) because it was manifestly an unwarranted doctrine but he held tenaciously to Matthew 28 as the Divine authority to baptize believers only, and the responsibility of preachers to teach believers God's ways.

He strongly opposed division in assemblies that were gathered to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, contending for the principle that unless an assembly has imbibed false doctrine connected with the foundations of the faith, or moral evil and a refusal to judge it, there was no authority from the Word of God for any assembly or company of assemblies to take upon themselves the awful responsibility to divide or to cut off another assembly that has been gathered in His Name.

He deplored the division among the early brethren in 1847 that has been handed down ever since; although its leaders were men of learning and ability, to some of whom we are indebted for the recovery of precious truths that we cherish. He pointed out that they had acted in a most unscriptural manner, and that a careful study of the messages from the risen Lord to the churches in Asia would have averted such a calamity and saved the assemblies of God's people much sorrow of heart, until this day. Mr. McClure pointed out that the

Lord charged some of these churches with serious error, but yet did not accuse anyone of the other churches as being denied by what the other one held. Yet, even to this present time some dear brethren are still talking about “the question” until it has become a tradition.

During the contention that arose in 1910 and subsequent years, Mr. McClure differed with some of his brethren but he was prepared to lose some of his dearest friends, rather than agree to anything for which he believed they had not a “thus saith the Lord.”

We would much rather pass over this experience through which this servant of the Lord was greatly tried but we are seeking to trace the life and labors of W. J. McClure, with its sweet and its bitter experiences. For just as Marah’s bitter waters are brought before us in the history of Israel, as well as Elim’s Springs, so also it is with servants of God. Moses’ face shone when he descended from Mount Sinai and was then held in high esteem; yet he later passed through deepest humiliation, was misunderstood, and spoken against even by his brethren. But he finished well. And David who was extolled as a mighty warrior, was afterwards persecuted so that he became a wanderer. His own son, with others who should have known better, raised rebellion and hunted for his life. These very unpleasant experiences are not hidden afterwards when the pen of inspiration is taken up to record their life’s history, but among the other examples, they are written for our admonition.

And we trust the days of trial that were the lot of beloved Brother McClure may have a very savoury effect on all who follow after, enabling them to walk softly, holding fast the faithful Word and seeking to be guided

in all matters of judgment by its holy precepts—not led by feelings nor even by leaders, but by a “thus saith the Lord” that will stand the test of all Scripture.

This phase of experience reminds us of the ancient quarrel recorded in Acts 15 of Paul and Barnabas, men of whom it is written that they had “hazarded their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus,” and who were joined together as true yoke fellows in the bonds of the Gospel and used mightily in the Lord’s service. Yet upon a point where earthly relationships were involved these brethren differed. Indeed it became contention, and was so sharp that they departed asunder one from the other each going in a different direction, nor do we read of their ever working together again, though Paul makes mention of Barnabas twice in 1 Corinthians 9. The parting of those servants of the Lord under strained circumstances must have had an effect upon the Lord’s people, but the Holy Spirit drops the curtain and gives no information to satisfy mere curiosity. We would do well to consider the omissions of Scripture, and so we leave this unhappy incident in the path of God’s servant and continue to trace his life of usefulness in the years that followed.

Chapter 23 T. D. W. Muir (1911-1916)

Mr. T. D. W. Muir, whose name is well known in the United States and Canada as a soul winner and devoted servant of Christ, and who was for many years editor of "Our Record," was a close friend of Mr. McClure.

During a mighty awakening in the city of Hamilton, Ontario, in 1875, under the ministry of Mr. Donald Munro and Mr. John Smith, two young men sat one night in the meeting under deep conviction of sin, and before they left the hall, both were rejoicing in the knowledge of sins forgiven through the atoning blood of Christ. One of these young men was W. L. Faulkner and the other one, T. D. W. Muir.

They began their pilgrim journey to Heaven on that memorable night and very soon both were actively engaged in seeking to win souls for Christ. Mr. Faulkner became a fellow-laborer of Mr. McClure in the pioneer days in Ontario, later spending some years in Africa as a missionary. After his return he was linked up with Mr. McClure in tent work in California. From that field, Brother Faulkner was called to higher service.

Mr. Muir, at the early age of 20, was giving his whole time to make known the Gospel, especially in the rural districts of Michigan, U.S.A. God used this earthen vessel greatly in the salvation of souls and in planting assemblies of believers.

In 1881 he made his home in Detroit, a city that flourished greatly when the automobile industry began. Here Mr. Muir labored in the Gospel in tents, open air, and from house to house. At the beginning of this work

his wife was his fellow laborer, helping him to sing on the street and holding his hat while her husband made known to the crowd that gathered around, the Gospel of God's grace. The Lord greatly blessed the labors of His servant in that city and soon there was an assembly gathering in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, which grew under Mr. Muir's helpful ministry and care to be the largest assembly in the United States.

A three-day conference was held in Saginaw in 1911. The Teutonia Opera House was hired for the occasion. The attendance was large and many assemblies in Michigan and Ontario, Canada, were represented. Mr. McClure and Mr. Muir were among the chief speakers and they gave helpful ministry. After the conference these brethren left together for Detroit. Mr. McClure began a campaign in Central Gospel Hall using his dispensational chart, and giving addresses on "Israel and the Church." The interest deepened, precious souls were saved, and Mr. Muir was overjoyed to see the hand of God so manifested in the assembly he had planted thirty years before, and had shepherded all those years. He wrote about the meetings: "The work has been healthful and hopeful. The Hall at times has been taxed to capacity to accommodate those who came, a large proportion of whom were strangers not seen in the meetings before. Some are exercised about baptism and taking their place gathered out to the Name of the Lord, as a result of the meetings." There was blessing to saved and unsaved. Ten were baptized and brought into the assembly, several of whom were saved during the meetings and others were to follow. This season of blessing was a great cheer to all in the assembly.

Mr. McClure then left for New Bedford, Massachusetts. He and Mr. Hunter pitched a tent in that city. He then sailed for a short visit to Ireland and on his return had meetings in the new Gospel Hall in Summit, New Jersey, where a little company had begun to remember the Lord each Lord's day. They were much helped by the ministry and the attendance was good throughout.

Our brother attended a conference in Boston at Christmas and then went on to Philadelphia, Penna. New Year's Day, 1912, he gave an address on "The Two Books" that has been remembered by some ever since. He read Psalm 19, and spoke first of the book of nature, and referred to the words of the Psalmist, "The Heavens declare the glory of God! and the firmament sheweth His handiwork," dwelling on this book at considerable length, and showing many proofs of the handiwork of God in creation. The second was the book of the law, or the Word of God, and from this book we are taught the mind of God. We remember how he spoke of verses 3 and 4. "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world"; referring to the sun, moon and stars which speak in every language; and then he read Romans 10:18, "But I say, have they not heard? Yes, verily their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Thus the Holy Spirit uses what we have read in the Psalm as a figure of the early preachers of the Cross who had carried the Gospel message to all the earth. While he was speaking, there was rapt attention and the presence of the Lord was felt by all.

Two young brethren, Greer and Hillis, who had come out from Ireland to California in 1910, and were being used

of God in the Gospel, had started a work in Fresno, a city in the San Joaquin Valley, half way between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Early in 1913 a new hall was built and Mr. McClure began meetings, using a painting of the Tabernacle. A number of Baptists from Mr. McClure's home town in Ireland had been received into the assembly and the meetings were a great blessing to them. A brother wrote of the work at that time, "W. J. McClure has been with us more than a month opening up the Word. God's people received much help. Our brother has gone north."

Coming back to Los Angeles early in 1914, Mr. McClure was best man at the wedding of Mr. S. Greer and Miss Rachel Porter of Belfast on May 5. He was also the preacher at that happy event. He gave an address on the bride and bridegroom, illustrating Christ and His Church from the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2, and enlarging on Ephesians 5. Many said that address would never be forgotten.

Mr. McClure and Mr. Greer linked up in tent work that summer. They first pitched in the east side of Los Angeles where they got a good interest, and a number were saved and added to the West Jefferson Street assembly. The next place was Garden, a town about 12 miles from Los Angeles, and they saw a good interest. During those meetings, World War No. 2 broke out and Mr. McClure was quick to take advantage of the current interest to further the Gospel, and he started to speak on "prophecy"—illustrated by a large chart.

The meetings were well advertised in the press, cards announced the subjects, and they had a large streamer across the street. It all worked as an "ambush," for the

people flocked from all around and from long distances to hear what would be said about the war and future events. But best of all, God wrought and souls were saved and a number were led into the assembly. Mr. Her, a young Baptist minister, attended the meetings and through the Word ministered, became deeply exercised about his position. Both he and his wife became burdened when the truth was so vividly revealed to them. He resigned his position, took up employment, and became a great help in the assembly.

After the tent season, Brother McClure continued in southern California until the spring of 1915 when when he left for British Columbia. He became much exercised about Waterloo, Iowa, and he wired his old friend, Mr. E. G. Matthews of that city, telling of his desire for meetings. A prompt reply was received: "Come on."

He arrived shortly after, and prepared for a series of meetings, putting up his chart. He found a ready ear with many of the townspeople coming nightly. Souls began to be awakened and soon a number were saved, giving the believers much encouragement and the ministry of the Word was a real feast. Oliver Smith, a young farmer living a number of miles out in the country, not long saved, attended the meetings and to this young believer the ministry was wonderful, giving him a real lift heavenward in his early Christian life, but he wanted others to hear the same precious truths. So Oliver rigged up an old hay wagon with seats, and appeared every night at the Gospel Hall with from twenty to thirty people packed in his home-made means of transportation. Soon after, brother Smith went forth to preach, especially to the farmers of Iowa. He has been wonderfully used of God in the salvation of souls.

Large assemblies are found throughout the country who owe their existence to the faithful, simple preaching of Oliver Smith. Thus precious fruit was gathered in. During the meetings Mr. McClure was quite sick and when they were over, he went to the hospital for an operation, and had a very good recovery.

He next went to Avondale in Chicago and a few other places around that great city and then went East. Mr. Hunter and I were working in a tent in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, when Mr. McClure came along and spent a few days with us, giving a helpful hand and his messages were good. Again he was back in Los Angeles and after the Christmas and New Year conference, he and Mr. T. H. Dempsey began a series of meetings in Jefferson Gospel Hall, continuing a few weeks and seeing the hand of God in salvation.

Chapter 24 Nova Scotia (1917)

In February, 1917, the United States entered into the World War, and great preparations were made for sending troops abroad.

Early in June of that year, Mr. McClure came to New Bedford, Mass., for a visit. He was much exercised about going to the yearly conference in Pugwash Junction, Nova Scotia, Canada. Although he had travelled far and had also spent much time in Canada, yet he had never been to the Maritime Provinces. Having heard much of what the Lord had wrought through one of his early companions, Mr. John Knox McEwen, he felt the Lord would have him pay them a visit.

But Mr. McClure wanted company for the journey of about 800 miles and he got his desire for since Nova Scotia was my old field of labor, I had already arranged to go to the Conference and, as the Lord might lead, labor in the Maritimes for the summer. Mr. McGill, an old friend of Mr. McClure's in New Bedford, also decided to come for the trip, and Mr. Sam McEwen, who had been preaching the Gospel for years, came along and joined us, as he was anxious to visit the scenes of his Uncle's former labors.

While it was possible to go all the way by train, we decided to go the first part of the trip by boat. We sailed from Boston, Mass., on a Monday morning, late in June, for St. John, N.B., Canada. It was a coastal trip and all day long the sailing was fine. The weather was splendid with good visibility. Mr. McClure was very much interested in everything connected with the ship, as well as the points of interest along the shore line and it was

also interesting to us as he related some of his earlier experiences in the Lord's work.

Next morning, he was on deck very early and while even on such a short voyage, some of our little company suffered from sea sickness, yet he was like a seasoned sailor.

The sea was calm and the shore line in the distance irregular, but a very pleasing sight. Eventually the shore disappeared and two of our company, suffering from sea-sickness, retired to their berths in an outside room on the upper deck, looking toward the shore. One climbed to the upper berth, while the other crawled into the lower. Everything was quiet, the only sounds heard being the rumbling of the engines below, and the noise of sea-gulls overhead.

Suddenly, there came what seemed an awful crash, which shook the ship from stem to stem. Of course, the thought immediately came to the sea-sick brethren who were half-asleep, "A torpedo from a submarine has struck the ship!" The brother who occupied the upper berth jumped down quickly and at the same time, the brother down below lost no time getting out and both came together rather suddenly. However, they appeared on deck very quickly and there stood Mr. McClure, at the railing of the ship, greatly amused as he took in the whole situation, for instead of a torpedo and the expected aftermath, everything looked in holiday form. The ship was passing a point on a short distance from land and at that particular spot was a fort, where it was the custom, every day at noon, to fire one of the large cannons toward the ocean. Our ship was directly under the gun and only a short distance from it when it was

fired, and this is what caused so much alarm to the passengers who were not on the deck.

After another pleasant day, we arrived at St. John. Passing the Customs officials took only a short time and then we had a few hours to wait before our train left, to take us further on our journey.

After having supper, we walked around to see the city. Coming to a well-kept park, we saw crowds of people moving about. The sun was setting in the western sky at the close of that beautiful summer day, and Mr. McClure suggested, "What a fine place for an open-air meeting." On account of war conditions we considered we had better ask permission from the authorities. When the four of us walked into the rooms of the officials and made known our business, these seemed to look upon us with suspicion for they called up some of the City Fathers, saying, "These men have come from the United States and they claim to be evangelists." After some discussion they came to us and said they were sorry but could not see their way to issue a permit, as they had to be careful under present conditions. We thanked them and left.

Again we walked around the park and there seemed more people than before, and at one end, the Salvation Army was holding forth, with a large crowd giving good attention. As the meeting finished, Mr. McClure went over to a policeman standing by and said to him, "What would you do if you saw a few men step out there and preach the Gospel to the people?" "I would do nothing," said the big Canadian, "but stand here and listen to them." Coming back to us, he said, "Brethren, we have missed one grand opportunity, but seeing we have been

refused by the authorities, we could not hold a service now. If we had just gone on without asking any questions, it would have been all right."

We had to be content with passing out some Gospel papers, which were readily received. About ten o'clock that night, we boarded the train going to Halifax. Leaving by the short line train, we arrived in Pugwash about ten o'clock and were all received in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Silver Allan.

Next morning, the Conference began and although it was July 1st, heavy rain had fallen, the roads were covered with red mud and full of deep ruts. Mr. Allan drove his automobile, taking as many as possible, and it fell my lot to drive the preachers, with his horse and buggy.

We set off a little before the others, and had only gone a short distance when the automobile passed us, plunging in and out of the ruts and making its way very slowly. Coming to the crossroads, I took the wrong turn and after going about half a mile, realized the mistake. Pulling up at a smith's forge, the sturdy blacksmith came out, sleeves rolled up and his leather apron on. "Are we on the right way for Pugwash Junction?" was the question we asked the smith. "Did you come from Pugwash?" was his reply. "Yes, we did." "Well, you took the wrong turn at the crossroads, but I'll put you on a road that will take you through." Giving us the necessary instructions, we gave him a tract and drove on. The road was now through the bush, and on a dry day it would have been fine, but it was only after considerable difficulty we arrived at the hall.

Many were wondering what had become of us, but the sequel was—the blacksmith, a man of the world said to his wife at lunch time, “I saw a load of preachers going to the conference at the Junction and they had lost themselves, but I put them on the right way.” In the evening, he again referred to the load of preachers and said, “I think I’ll go and hear those preachers that were lost.” He came that evening to the Gospel meeting, and as he put it afterwards, “The preachers showed me I was lost and pointed out the way to Heaven,” and ere the conference closed, Harry Mitchell and a few more were saved, and rejoicing in Christ. Two months later, on the night he was baptized, his wife also found peace at the Cross.

Mr. McClure shared largely in the ministry at the conference, and his word was much appreciated by old and young. His messages were food for the saints who had come from all over the Maritimes. Hungry souls had gathered and they had a “feast of fat things.” Mr. McEwen was also helped of the Lord at the conference, and received a hearty welcome, and many were the incidents he heard concerning his uncle, Mr. John Knox McEwen, and his work for the Lord in those parts, dating back for many years.

At the close of that conference, saints were much encouraged, and there was a number of new-born souls. Mr. Ansley Goodwin, the oldest laborer there, had pitched his tent in Sydney, Cape Breton, in 1916, and, although in poor health just then, had conducted a few weeks’ meetings with interest and blessing. He longed to go back in 1917, but he was far from strong and lived in Pugwash Junction, over 200 miles from Sydney. He

asked me to join him in the tent when he would be able to travel.

Mr. McClure decided to come with me to Cape Breton, and suggested we pitch the tent and have it ready when Mr. Goodwin would come. On our way, we called at New Glasgow, and spent a day or two at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Brennan and had one meeting. The hall was filled and good interest was manifested. The subject which our brother took up was the "three days" in the first two chapters of John. "The next day, John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). In speaking of this as the day of salvation, Mr. McClure drew attention to the expression "the next day" which indicated that there was a day before, which we might call the day of conviction and repentance.

"Again the next day after John stood and two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as he walked he saith, Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:35), and he spoke of the believer's walk.

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee" (John 2:1). He applied this to "the marriage of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:6-8) with all its splendor and glory. At the close of the message a boy of fifteen years, who had come with a number of others from a near-by mission, walked up to the preacher with an air of importance, shook his hand heartily and said, "The Lord bless you, brother, in your work for the Master." The venerable preacher, so large in comparison, looked down very earnestly on the youth who had pronounced such a blessing upon him. Turning to me after the hall was cleared, Mr. McClure said, "Well well, that is surely

the greater blessed by the lesser. He was referring to Heb. 7:7, and it brought home its truth to me as I had never seen it before.

Our next stop was Sydney Mines, where a little assembly had been in existence for a few years—the only one in the Island at that time. We were heartily received into the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ernst.

Having sent word ahead, arrangements were made for two meetings and when we arrived we found a large notice announcing, “Two Gospel meetings will be held in this Hall...” All the Christians who could possibly come, were there the first night. After I had opened the meeting, Mr. McClure stood up to speak and when he had read his scriptures, he said, “I noticed as I came to the Hall that these two meetings are advertised as Gospel meetings, but supposing I were a carpenter and some of you brethren, we shall say, are also carpenters with a business. I come along as a stranger; I have only about two hours to spare until I am on my way again, but I say, I have two hours to spare, and would like to help you during my visit. “Fine!” you say, and you get me some rough boards to plane and prepare for some building. “Oh,” I answer, “It would never be worth my while to start on that work. If I were staying indefinitely, that kind of work would just suit me, but seeing my time is so very limited, give me your tools and I shall sharpen and put them in order.” “So,” he said, “If we were staying a few weeks, the Gospel would be our delight. In the meantime, let us try and sharpen your appetites for the Word of God and the things of God.” Then he went on to minister the Word. At the close, a brother whispered to me, “He can surely sharpen the tools.”

Next day, we went over to Sydney, across the Bay, to make arrangements about the tent. We secured the same site that Mr. Goodwin had the year before, and remained there for Saturday night, and had a large open air meeting at which the people seemed interested. We came back to remember the Lord in Sydney Mines on the Lord's Day, and had an afternoon ministry meeting and preached the Gospel in the evening.

Mr. McClure, being tired, said, "We shall not go to the open air meeting tonight," but when we came out of the hall it was a lovely summer evening and the brethren were busy holding a gospel service at the corner and crowds were passing, coming from the different churches. "Oh," he said, "let us go down and we can listen," but when a few had spoken, Mr. McClure stood out. He was then in his sixtieth year with a very commanding appearance and a most melodious voice. He began by speaking of "the time when the Austrians held sway in Europe. One day, the news reached the peasants of Switzerland, who were a liberty-loving people, that their country was about to be invaded. The news spread and every possible preparation was made to oppose the invader. It was the day when they fought with short swords, and the Swiss army was equipped with these. The march down from their mountain homes began, but when they came to the plain, they faced a wall of steel, for the Austrians stood shoulder to shoulder, each man holding his long spear in readiness to meet them. The commander of that liberty-loving people, formed his men into a wedge or V-shape and gave the orders that when he shouted every man should do his duty. Nearer and nearer that wall of steel they came with their noble commander the first man in the

wedge. With a shout of command and calling, 'Hurray for liberty,' the faithful leader sprang upon the spears, gathering to his bosom as many as possible in his outstretched arms, and thus they pierced his body. It was only the work of a moment—he lay bleeding and dead, but that moment was enough. The wedge got in, hacking right and left, and won the victory that day."

By this time, hundreds were hanging on his words. "But stay," said the preacher, "I want to tell you another story about liberty," and for a long time he preached in the power of the Holy Spirit of the mighty work of Calvary. His clear, ringing voice was heard even beyond the large ever-increasing crowd, and as the people in that mining town listened they felt the power of his words.

I had always looked upon Mr. McClure as a teacher, having heard him preach the Gospel very few times before, but that night I changed my mind, not as to his teaching, but as to the fact that he had, above many, the gift of an evangelist.

We pitched the tent in Sydney and while busily engaged, an old lady came along and watched us. Then she ventured to say, "I thought Mr. Goodwin was coming back." "Yes," said Mr. McClure, "We expect Mr. Goodwin to come, but we are stronger than he and we are just getting the tent up and ready for him." She evidently thought Mr. McClure meant that we were stronger preachers, for she said very sharply, "I don't believe either of you could preach as well as Mr. Goodwin!" "Oh," said Mr. McClure, "I don't mean that at all. We would not take that place, but I mean we are stronger bodily than he, to pitch the tent," and the old lady was satisfied and went on. When the tent was complete,

seats in order and all fixed, we went off to have a prayer meeting in a Christian's home. We had secured a room near the tent and moved in that morning, but when we got back from the prayer meeting, we went to see the tent. Going inside, we found that the seats were piled up in one corner, everything in disorder and a big tear in the roof. We learned later that when we left, the boys had entered the tent, and one big fellow had climbed on the roof, and, as the canvas was old, he went down through and fell among the other boys, who were throwing the seats around.

Mr. McClure said, "We shall have to sleep in the tent," and this we did for weeks. Every night the tent was filled and on Saturday nights we preached in the open air, He spared no labor nor expense to make the tent comfortable for the audience and the Lord began to work and souls were saved. His physique appealed to the people and all around that neighborhood they called him "The General."

Chapter 25 Conferences (1917-1921)

The tent meetings were growing in attendance and interest in Sydney, and a number of precious souls were saved. Christians from Sydney Mines and Leitches Creek made every effort to be present at the tent; however, Mr. McClure had arranged to attend the New Bedford Conference on Labor Day. When Mr. Goodwin came along he bade us farewell and said, "I am real sorry at leaving." He had much enjoyed the work in the tent, the open air, and also in ministry, teaching the few saints in those parts. He was missed after he left and often I was asked "Is the General coming back?" His ministry laid a good foundation in that city, and later an assembly was formed in Sydney.

The Conference in New Bedford was larger than usual and the ministry was helpful, the key note being — "Now, therefore, why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back." 2 Sam. 19:10, and the coming of the Lord was the principal theme.

During the next few years Mr. McClure spent most of his time in the United States and Canada. It could be truly said of him, "In journeyings oft," but even when traveling by train from one center to another or by boat on the Pacific or Atlantic, his time was fully occupied in the Lord's service. He procured a portable typewriter and used it on the way not only to catch up on his large correspondence, but in writing articles that were published in several magazines, which proved bread for the saints in many other parts, while his ministry was also much appreciated in the places he visited.

After the Conference in Detroit, September, 1919, our brother had helpful meetings in Addison Road Gospel Hall, Cleveland, Ohio. A brother, writing at that time said, "We had Mr. McClure for meetings and we most thoroughly enjoyed him. He spoke on some pictures in the Book of Numbers and the meetings were very solemn and searching. There was a large attendance and blessing with the word spoken."

In Richmond Hill, Long Island, a suburb of New York City, there was a hearty little assembly of believers and at that time they held a yearly Conference on Election Day in November. Brother McClure having concluded his meetings in Cleveland, was present and helped in the ministry.

At New Year's, 1920, Mr. McClure attended the Conference at Philadelphia. One morning he read from Numbers 19, and began to speak on the "red heifer." He only spoke about fifteen minutes—then he closed his Bible, and said, "I am not getting help and there are other brethren present who can stir you more than I can and I shall leave room for them," and he sat down. However, in the afternoon he arose again, and in his usual way of beginning an address said, "Turn to the Book of Numbers, chapter nineteen." He read the same portion that he had in the morning, but what a difference! The unction of the Holy Spirit was very evident as he opened up that wonderful type, unfolding the great provision of God to meet His people's need for the wilderness journey. It was very striking to those of us who were younger and were privileged to hear this message. Although so long accustomed to speaking on such subjects, yet he felt natural ability was not enough; mere words do not feed and edify the saints of God. No

doubt, in between the meetings he had spent much time in prayer, with the result that he came forth from the presence of God with a message that reached many hearts, and has been remembered by some of us ever since.

From Philadelphia he went to New York City, putting up his chart in 125th Street Gospel Hall. He ministered nightly in the metropolis with growing interest. A brother who had not been favorable to charts wrote, saying, "Mr. McClure is here and has a chart, ministering from it, but he is like no other man I ever heard speaking from a chart. He uses it occasionally in reference to his subject, but he opens up the Word of God in a wonderful way, making it easy for old and young to see the precious truth before him." The meetings grew and the Lord gave a season of blessing at that time. Believers from all over the city attended and were edified through the spoken word.

When the meetings concluded, he paid very helpful and profitable visits to the Bronx, New York, Waterbury and Bridgeport, Connecticut, and everywhere he visited the saints felt enriched, helped, and encouraged.

Traveling west again our brother was at the Des Moines and Waterloo, Iowa, conferences where his ministry was much appreciated. He then returned East and he and Mr. Hunter pitched a tent in New Bedford, Mass. They had good meetings for a few weeks and he remained for the conference on Labor Day. In each meeting that he took part he opened up the Book of Ezra and gave very helpful ministry which was a great blessing to young believers.

Mr. McClure then left for the conference in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, which was held at the Canadian Thanksgiving time. During the three days, he gave helpful words on different subjects; but one address which we remember to this day, was given on Revelation 21:10. He referred especially to the foundation of the wall of "that great city" — garnished with all manner of precious stones. From verse 19, the stones and pearls are described and the preacher spoke with great power that day, lifting the hearts of God's people far above the din of earth, to behold the splendor and glory that is the portion of the saints in the coming day.

Benjamin Bradford (a well-known Gospel preacher throughout the United States and Canada) and Mr. McClure left Hamilton with the object of traveling to the Pacific Coast. They took in the conference at Houston, Texas, then went on to San Antonio where they had meetings for a few weeks. They also visited Phoenix, Arizona. This modern city, with its semi-tropical trees, roses and other flowers in abundance, was but a few years ago a barren desert. The miracle was accomplished by irrigation. The rivers running through the mountains were dammed to conserve water for the now fertile land. It reminds us of the words, "The desert shall blossom as the rose." The dry climate has made Phoenix a popular health resort.

A little company of saints had begun to gather in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in Phoenix, and as they were far away from any other assemblies, our brethren were anxious to see them. It gave great joy to these few believers when the brethren paid them visit, and their ministry was a great help and cheer to all.

Arriving in California, they visited Fresno for a week of meetings and then attended the Oakland Conference at Thanksgiving time. Going south again our brethren were at the conference, in Los Angeles a Christmas time and in Monrovia at New Year's 1921. A brother who was present at these conference meetings wrote, "The Lord gave help to our brethren W. J. McClure, B. Bradford, and John Blair to minister the old time truths of separation from the world and the individual responsibility to be out and out for God. These precious truths were emphasized, stirring up our minds by way of remembrance. Halls were crowded and the Word was given with power."

During 1921 Mr. McClure was busy in different parts of British Columbia and at Christmas was back in time for the conferences in Los Angeles and Monrovia at the New Year. The Lord gave a season of blessing in both places. A brother wrote of the special help that was given to the brethren who ministered the word at the meetings, "They were helped of the Lord; the ministry was edifying, sanctifying and separating, and should produce holiness in our lives. We had to go fifteen miles out of our way because of a broken bridge, but it was well worth it."

Chapter 26 A Visit To London (1922-1923)

Mr. Frank Hunter, whom Mr. McClure had known in Australia, paid a visit to California on his way to Ireland. After a few months' preaching on the Pacific Coast, they both traveled together to the East. They were present at the conferences in Waterloo and Des Moines in June, at which their ministry was much appreciated by the Lord's people.

Having made a number of visits to different assemblies they arrived in New England and were present at the New Bedford Conference on Labor Day, and then went on to New York. Mr. John Knox McEwen, who was on a visit from England, met them in New York, and they had hearty fellowship together as all three had known each other in the Lord's service many years before. It so happened that Mr. McEwen and Mr. Hunter were going on the same ship to England and a large crowd of Christians gathered at the dock to bid them farewell.

After the tent season that year I took my first trip to the West Coast and met Mr. McClure at the conference in Fort Worth, Texas. Mr. C. W. Ross and Mr. W. H. Hunter were also present. The first meeting was rather small, and just before it began Mr. McClure said to me, "Now you cannot look to your audience for inspiration, so get loaded up and look to the Lord to give you help to minister His Word."

From Fort Worth we went to Houston where the meetings were much larger. Then we all journeyed west and were heartily received in the Fosters' home in Los

Angeles, California. We traveled north to attend the Oakland Conference at Thanksgiving time. Mr. Muir had also arrived and we had a helpful season. One address given by brother McClure was from Luke 1 and especially verse 6, "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." This is the testimony that the Holy Spirit gives of that aged couple Zacharias and Elizabeth, and Mr. McClure expounded it and made it a living message to our hearts.

At Christmas time the conference was held in Jefferson Street, Los Angeles, with a large crowd from many places around, some traveling from far distances. Mr. McClure spoke one afternoon on the young Levite in Judges 17, going over his dark history and that of his mother, and then a very solemn application to our day and the danger of trading eternal things for earthly gain.

One day before leaving the Pacific Coast we were walking down a street and I said, "I am going into this drug store." Mr. McClure decided to wait outside. I was getting a package at the other end of the store, and the clerk attending me seemed very much interested in watching the door. At last he said to me, "I beg your pardon, but is that gentleman the British Consul?" Looking around I saw that Mr. McClure had come inside and was walking around looking at the show cases. I said, "No, he is not, but you are not far mistaken. He is an ambassador." "Oh, really! I thought so," said the clerk, "of what country? Is it Britain?" "No, but he has been an ambassador for forty years for the King of Kings." It gave a good opportunity to speak to the young man about the One who is the only Potentate.

In May the saints in Los Angeles had a little farewell meeting to commend Mr. McClure and Mr. Foster to the Lord. They were starting on a long journey across the continent and then a long sea voyage to Ireland. A very happy season was spent among them. When they arrived in the East, we had the pleasure of entertaining them and seeing them off for their native land. Their stay in the old country was short but they both enjoyed visiting the places which had very pleasant memories of former days, and had the joy of meeting many friends and relatives.

They visited the city of London, England, where Mr. McClure ministered the Word in some of the assemblies. One day they visited the most interesting Museum of Madame Tussaud. Having never seen this place before it was rather amusing to the visitors. As they passed in, a policeman stood at the door and looked as if he were waiting to be asked a question, but they discovered this was only a wax figure. All over that large room the wax figures sat in rows each one on a dais, with the name and a little about the history of the person represented in the figure. These figures appeared so very life-like that it was difficult to believe they were not alive.

When the brethren had taken in all that was to be seen, the guide informed them that there was a room downstairs where the images of many noted criminals were to be seen and some of their victims as well. Mr. McClure chose to remain upstairs while the others visited the basement. When they left him he looked for a seat, but the only place available was a pedestal with a name upon it from which the effigy had been removed. Taking this seat and leaning his hand on his umbrella he sat watching the visitors as they looked with amazement

at the different figures. Coming his way were two young ladies with pencils and notebooks, deeply interested in all they saw, looking at the name on each dais, and then closely scanning the figure. Nearer they came to where brother McClure sat. They were examining the figure beside him, carefully noting down the name and the inscription as well. One of the ladies looked at the figure, walked around it, then stood a little piece off, as if she could hardly believe that this was only a figure. Then to make sure, she went over and gave it a poke with her finger, and left it apparently satisfied.

Both ladies came over to view Mr. McClure next, and he could hear them saying, "I wonder who this is?" and in relating the story to us when he returned to America he said, "I thought I had better change my position so they would know I was not an effigy but a living man, and save myself a poke." We said, "Mr. McClure, what a picture! Many people who profess to be saved would need a poke to know if they really have life in their souls."

Chapter 27 Journeying (1924-1927)

The usual conference meetings were held in Los Angeles at Christmas and in Monrovia at New Year, 1924, at which brother McClure was present. He then had a long series of meetings in Jefferson Street Hall, Los Angeles, and next a series in Fresno. After this he began in Bethany Hall, Oakland, where he continued for seven weeks, ministering the word to saints and the gospel to the unsaved. In all three places he saw precious fruit gathered in. Our brother then went to San Diego for a needed rest but was anxious to get started in tent work for the summer.

Mr. Andrew Ruddock joined up with Mr. McClure and they pitched the tent in "Highland Park," Los Angeles. A good interest was seen and they continued for weeks. Christians from the denominations were attracted and quite a number of souls were saved. This work was very encouraging and it was kept up after the tent was taken down. The following year there was another gospel effort and after much exercise on the part of the Lord's people a commodious hall was built and a new assembly was planted with the hearty fellowship of the other assemblies in Los Angeles. It is known as York Blvd. assembly and there were soon over a hundred in fellowship. The planting of this assembly was the last special gospel effort of our brother McClure in Southern California. His ministry afterwards was mostly to believers, and his heart interest in the welfare of the assemblies in California continued until the end.

Once more at New Year, 1926, Mr. McClure attended the conference in Philadelphia and ministered the Word to

large audiences. He spoke one afternoon on Moses inspecting the work of making the tabernacle, Exodus 3:43—“And Moses did look upon all the work and behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded even so had they done it; and Moses blessed them.” He used this solemn scene as a figure of the Judgment Seat of Christ, pointing out that our service will be brought into review in that coming reckoning day, and warning of the danger of one suffering loss, instead of the commendation, “Well done,” with the reward for faithfulness to our trust.

Mr. McClure and Mr. Bradford began a series of meetings in 125th Hall, New York, and then they went to Washington, D.C. where the assembly was greatly cheered by the ministry of the Word.

From Washington they traveled south and had a few meetings in Matoaca, Virginia. While there brethren W. J. McClure, Sam McEwen, H. G. McEwen, W. G. Smith and B. Bradford all felt exercised about going to Miami, Florida, and, as the Lord might guide them, labor in a number of places in that extremely southern State. The distance was about 1,000 miles and at that time some of the roads were very primitive. Mr. S. McEwen had a Model T Ford, and the five brethren decided to use this means of transportation. Such a trip was very pleasing to brother McClure, and they made brother H. G. McEwen treasurer for the journey, each contributing \$20.00 to the expense of the trip. The treasurer felt he had an ample supply on hand and expected to have a surplus left when they would arrive. Everything was in readiness, and the brethren, with belongings packed around the car, started south. They had only proceeded a short distance when car trouble began which

increased as they journeyed on, and most of the money already contributed was spent in repairs at garages. However, after difficulties of various kinds they arrived safely in the balmy climate of Florida.

The assembly in Miami was quite young and therefore Mr. McClure's ministry was very helpful. He put up his chart on the "Seven Churches" and continued there for a month with increasing numbers and interest. Among many others who were greatly interested was the widow of the late Mr. William Jennings Bryan, who was present at some of the services. After the Miami meetings our brother went to Tampa for a week. The other brethren found open doors and continued in the south while Mr. McClure returned to Petersburg and attended the Easter conference at which he gave very valuable help.

Early in the fall of 1926, Mr. McClure began a series of meetings in the Gospel Hall, Lonsdale Ave., Pawtucket, Rhode Island, speaking nightly from his chart, "The Seven Days of Creation." From the first, there was deep interest—the large hall was filled on week nights, and on the Lord's Day its capacity was taxed. To the Christians the ministry of Mr. McClure was unique, for he brought from his treasure things new and old, with freshness and power, and his opening up of the Holy Scriptures, made many feel that therein were unsearchable riches they had never hither known.

The Christians in the assembly were much stirred by the visit, and the study of the Scriptures was greatly revived. Believers from other assemblies attended the services and shared in the blessing and many who were not associated with any assembly came regularly. While the meetings were mostly for ministry to Christians yet

there was always a word for the unsaved and at the close of the meetings, a few precious souls had been won for Christ.

During these meetings, Mr. McClure visited my home only a few miles distant, and one day, he told me he was much exercised about another trip to the British Isles, at the same time enquiring if I had any thought in that direction. "Of course," he said, "I always consider I am more free to take long journeys than brethren who have family responsibilities, but," he added, "the Lord is able to make your way clear." I told him I also had some exercise, as it was eleven years since I visited the land of my first and second birth, but as yet I had gone no further than to make it a matter of prayer.

After leaving Pawtucket, Mr. McClure went to Philadelphia and began meetings in Bryn Mawr Gospel Hall, ministering the Word and illustrating his addresses by the use of a painting of the Tabernacle. There also his ministry had good results. By arrangement I met Mr. McClure in Philadelphia on my way home from Pittsburgh Conference. As I arrived early in the morning, he took me to a restaurant for breakfast and while there, he again mentioned the trip to the Old Country. He asked some questions regarding my exercise as to going to Ireland, and whether my wife would be willing that I should take such a long trip. After some further conversation, and seeing I had come to a decision in the matter, he said, "Well, the Lord has put me in a position to purchase the tickets," and he handed me the amount that would cover my fare.

We began to make the necessary arrangements, as to tickets, passports, permits to return, etc., with the

intention of starting at the end of December after the Boston Conference at which Mr. McClure was expected to be present. But, when everything was in readiness for us to leave, about two weeks before Christmas, our youngest girl took very ill, and her case proved to be scarlet fever. In about a week we had five all sick with that disease, and the house quarantined. I wrote Mr. McClure, telling of my position, and saying he had better go alone, but he replied immediately, saying, "No, I shall wait until you are ready to come!" He wrote very feelingly, and at the end of the letter he said, "Now that you are under quarantine, you will have more time to read the Word and pray." That part seemed rather amusing, as with five patients and only two of us to do night and day duty it did not seem likely I would have much extra time. Writing next day to a sister in Boston, I said, "I had a letter from Mr. McClure this morning and he thinks I shall have lots of time to read and pray in quietness, seeing I am under quarantine, but I can hardly get time to pray the publican's prayer." Mr. McClure was visiting her when the letter arrived and she read it all over to him. He was greatly amused and said, "You can easily see I am not a family man."

It was not until the early part of February, 1927, that the quarantine was lifted, for all the children recovered and none had any ill effects. Soon everything was in readiness again and we arranged to sail from Boston on the old S. S. Devonian, for Liverpool, England. On February 10th, Mr. McClure came along and we had a baptism in Pawtucket hall. He gave an address that night, his subject being "The children of Israel going through the Jordan," shewing in type the truth of believers' baptism; the twelve stones from the desert

buried in the river, and the other twelve stones taken from the bed of the river and erected upon its bank, which would cause the children later to ask, "What mean ye by these stones?" He opened up the teaching from Romans 6 and Colossians 3, showing the true meaning of the ordinance, "The stones covered in the river, representing the old man buried, and the stones that were visible, the new Israel, the new life, as seen risen with Christ." One or two souls were saved that night.

We sailed from Boston the following afternoon. The ship carried one class of passengers only. We gave out some Gospel tracts, whereupon the doctor of the ship called out, with a sneer, "We are going to have a bad trip seeing these things are being given out." However, a few were more favorably inclined. The next day, we docked at Halifax, Canada, where we were to take on cattle. We were there about twenty-four hours and early next morning, about five hundred head of Western Canadian steers were brought aboard. The men in charge of the cattle and the veterinary surgeon gladly received Gospel papers and we had many interesting conversations with them. Although it was midwinter, we had a very uneventful voyage.

We arrived in Liverpool on Feb. 22 and went to a hotel, intending to cross to Ireland that night, but while taking a walk down one of the principal streets after lunch, we heard some one call our names. Looking around, there stood Mr. A. Allen, from one of the assemblies. He said, "I heard you brethren were coming, and last week I wrote Mr. J. K. McEwen to find out what ship you were on. Where are your belongings?" "In the hotel." "Well, you are leaving there at once and coming to my home,

and you have a meeting tonight in Wallacy, and tomorrow night in another hall." In a short time, we were settled in his hospitable home, and Mr. McClure ministered the Word for two nights to interested audiences.

Thursday night we crossed to Belfast and in the morning, Mr. William McCracken met us at the dock and we both received a hearty welcome at his home.

After visiting around a few weeks, on March 17th, we went to a believers' meeting in Ballyshiel, near Markethill, my home town. A work of grace had gone on there for some time, through Mr. McCracken and Mr. Poots, and this was the first believers' meeting. The place was filled with Christians, mostly new converts, and Mr. McClure spoke to them that day from the Pearl of Great Price. He also referred to "the nameless place" of John 1. To the question "Where dwellest thou?" the Lord answered, "Come and see." The name of the place was not given, and Mr. McClure brought before the audience, the place, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).

Mr. Mateer, from Ballyshiel was at the meeting and he took us to his home, and in that town we had a week of meetings. Arrangements were then made to commence a series in Banbridge, where Mr. McClure was raised. The assembly had built a lovely hall and he was greatly pleased when he saw it. He decided to put up his picture of the Tabernacle; my part was to have a short Gospel word each night.

Crowds came night after night and Mr. McClure's ministry from the Tabernacle and its vessels was both

refreshing and edifying to them. He visited many of the old residents, some of whom had known him from boyhood days, and many were their words of appreciation because he had remembered them and called to see them. They told him incidents in his own life and also his father's, until I almost thought I knew his father, Simpson McClure. Mr. McClure felt very much at home, and was led to relate many interesting events that happened when he was a boy. One aged brother attended every night, and he was greatly attached to Brother McClure, and delighted at the degree in which he had grown in the things of God. This brother was the companion of long ago who had taken that long, venturesome walk to Belfast with him, when they were boys together.

During our stay, we were entertained by a brother and his wife. As well as being engaged in farming this brother had a business in the town, and his wife was therefore a very busy woman. It was yet early spring and fires were needed in the different rooms. Mr. McClure said to our hostess, "I shall look after the lighting of the fire in our room every day." Accordingly, next morning I came down and saw Mr. McClure down on his knees trying to light a fire in the grate, and he seemed to be laboring under difficulties. It took him quite a while to complete the task. I felt a strong desire to take some part in the procedure, but not being an expert, I felt I had better keep out of it. Next morning, it seemed no easier, and I could see he had quite a job on his hand, and it was anything but pleasant for him, as the days passed.

In about two weeks, a few brethren visited us one day, and in the course of conversation, one of them said,

"How are you brethren getting along?" Very eagerly and quickly Mr. McClure replied, "Splendidly." I wondered why he was so pronounced about it, but learned immediately when he said, "Since we came here, I have been very much reminded of an American farmer who bought two mules for team work. After a time a friend met him and asked, 'How are your mules doing?' 'The very best,' said the farmer. 'They are the best mules I ever owned. One mule is willing to do all the work, and the other is just as willing to let him.'"

Mr. McClure was very human and his apt illustrations, either on the platform or off it, had a very telling effect. It was very easy for me, in this case, to see the point.

We had a little automobile to get around in, and he was very particular about keeping it well filled with gas. The gas stations were few and far between at that time over there and one day he said, "We had better keep two gallons of petrol (gas) in a tin in the car." I thought there was no need of that, as five gallons lasted a long time, but he put the two-gallon tin inside the open car. Some weeks after, we were on our way to Belfast with rain coming down. When almost at the city, the car stopped. "Now," he says, "no gas! I told you what would happen! What would you do now, if we had no extra gas in the car?" He got out, and taking his little measuring stick that he carried in the car, he measured the gas, and while it was very low, yet there was still some left, but he was sure that was the whole trouble. He impresses upon me again the fix we would be in now if we had had no gas with us. He got the funnel, opened the tin and poured the contents into the tank. All being ready, I cranked it and it went off at the first pull. "Now that is what I told you!" And once more I was reminded of the

good fortune that we had gas with us, but as soon as we got in and attempted to move on, the car went dead. I got out and cranked for a good while with no response. At last we got a garage man. He tried it but it remained dead. Lifting the hood, he took out the carburetor, cleaned it out, replaced it and tried again to start the motor but not a move. He looked as the carburetor filled up. "Why," said the mechanic, "this is pure water." Then we learned that our two gallons of gas had been stolen, and two gallons of water left instead, and hence our trouble that day.

The Belfast Conference began at Easter, and we closed our meetings in time to attend. Mr. McClure shared largely in the ministry of the Word. What an inspiring sight it was to gaze upon three thousand Christians from all walks of life, sitting under the wholesome ministry of the Word of God; and at the close it was like a foretaste of heaven to see that multitude arise and sing:

All hail the power of Jesus' Name,

Let angels prostrate fall,

Bring forth the royal diadem,

And crown Him Lord of all.

After the conference, our next visit was to Ballymena. Here was a large assembly, one of the oldest in Northern Ireland, with its commodious hall built by Mr. J. G. McVicker, a godly and able minister of the Word in the last century. Near that town he had preached for years as a Presbyterian minister but when he saw the truth of believer's baptism and gathering in His Name, he separated himself and became well known as a teacher and preacher.

In Ballymena Mr. McClure put up his chart on "The Lord's Coming." Large crowds gathered to hear him for about five weeks. During the summer many visits were made to other assemblies and we had invitations both for conferences and special meetings in Scotland and England.

The brethren in Belfast decided to rent the auditorium of the Y.M.C.A., in the center of the city, for a month's meetings in the fall. It so happened that we had promised to attend some conferences in Scotland at that time. However, instead, Mr. Hawthorne Bailey came with me to Scotland, while Mr. McClure remained for the special series in Belfast. Preparations were made for the campaign; thousands of handbills were printed; large notices appeared in the newspaper, when, just about a week or less before the meetings were to begin, he became quite ill and suffered from a lapse of memory. This caused great anxiety and much prayer went up to God on his behalf. By God's good hand upon him he recovered, and on Saturday, brethren literally covered the city with handbills. The first news to reach us in Scotland was that the auditorium of the Y.M.C.A. which held about 2,100 people, "was well filled and Mr. McClure seemed himself. Indeed he looked like a prince on the platform and spoke like a prince as he delivered his first address on the Tabernacle." He was then in his seventieth year, and still very alert and keen.

Mr. R. Hawthorne opened the meeting each night and the interest deepened and increased to the end. A great number took a train journey every night and from far and near the crowds were going to the Y.M.C.A. Many arrived early waiting a whole hour or more to secure a

seat and would then gladly give it up to some old lady who would otherwise have had to stand.

At that time, there was a great stir among the denominations in Ireland because of what was called “The Davy Heresy.” Mr. Davy, a moderator of the Presbyterian Church, had embraced and was teaching what is described as “Modernism,” denying many of the vital truths of the Bible dearly held by all evangelical Christians.

The subjects discussed in Mr. McClure’s addresses on the Tabernacle—such as the Inspiration of the Scriptures, the Deity and Humanity of the Lord Jesus, His Vicarious Sacrifice, His Bodily Resurrection, The High Priestly Ministry—were delivered in the power of the Holy Spirit. His discourses not only brought much enlightenment to the Christians in the religious systems, but they were moreover very opportune for they dealt a terrible blow to the false and wicked modernistic teachings that had been gaining supporters. A business man of high standing in the city, who was a Christian, ran up to Mr. McClure one night after he left the platform and shook his hand warmly, saying, “Mr. McClure, if ever God sent a man to Belfast, He has sent you.” Eternity alone will reveal the full value to saints and sinners in that series of meetings.

Mr. McClure had an invitation to attend the conference in Cardiff, Wales. He went and ministered the Word with much appreciation, after which he left for Londonderry where the Y.M.C.A. hall was taken to accommodate the crowds that came to hear his expositions of the Word.

Meanwhile Mr. Bailey and I began Gospel meetings in Ebenezer Hall, Belfast, early in October, and found after

the stir created by Mr. McClure's meetings, that there was still good interest. My beloved father had never missed a night when Mr. McClure was in the Y.M.C.A., and had been greatly helped in soul. He also attended our meetings every night for three weeks. On Thursday night, the 21st, Mr. Bailey made a most solemn appeal to the unsaved, saying, "It's very possible some sitting here tonight will be in their 'winding sheet' while the meeting is going on tomorrow night." My father went home, complained of not feeling well, and fell dead on the floor. The words of the preacher came true.

I sent Mr. McClure a telegram to Londonderry, telling him of the funeral and that the interment would take place in the old graveyard at Markethill. Mr. T. Campbell and Mr. McCracken spoke at the house in Belfast, and we left by motor hearse, for the burial place a distance of thirty-five miles. When about halfway, another car swung around a corner and came into line, and in it I could see Mr. McClure who had taken all that long journey from Londonderry. He preached the Word in the old Meeting House, and we placed the body in the newly-opened grave in the spot where we had buried our mother, thirty-nine years before, almost to a week. Mr. McClure went back to Londonderry that same day.

Before Christmas, Mr. McClure arrived in Belfast again. He was invited to take part in an afternoon meeting on Christmas Day, which marked his seventieth milestone, but he became ill and it was with difficulty that he was able even to attend the meeting. In a few days he recovered and we left for Scotland again. On New Year's Day, 1928, we were at the large conference in Kilmarnock where he ministered the Word, and next day attended the conference in City Hall, Glasgow. Three

thousand Christians were present on that occasion and listened to Mr. McClure's memorable message on the subject of "Stewardship."

Next day in the home of a Christian where we were entertained, Mr. McClure became deathly ill, but he recovered and in a few days we left for Edinburgh. After some meetings in different assemblies I left him to return to Belfast, to make preparations to sail for the United States. Mr. McClure decided however to remain for a little longer and he made a number of appreciated visits to assemblies in England, Scotland and Ireland, and was in Belfast again for the Easter Conference. Early in May, after I had left for home, he decided to return to the United States. He wrote me, saying he had arranged to sail on a certain date and that two preachers, Mr. William McCracken and Mr. George Gould, Jr., were to accompany him.

Chapter 28 Boston (1928-1930)

Mr. McClure often enjoyed visiting the city of Boston, Mass. In that vicinity there are many places of note and special interest to the American people— places which have been preserved and their history handed down from one generation to another. “The Boston Tea Party” commemorates the fateful occasion when the colonists threw a cargo of tea into the harbor because of the tax levied by the King of England. There is also “Bunker Hill,” and the road where Paul Revere took that renowned midnight ride to warn the people of the British invasion back in 1775; the town of Lexington where the historic battle was fought in 1776, and the spot where the village blacksmith had his forge “under the spreading chestnut tree” concerning which Longfellow (whose home is only a short distance from it, and open for visitors to inspect) wrote the far-famed poem which many of us learned to repeat in our school days. Mr. McClure took special interest in viewing such scenes, but there was one place he had longed for years to visit. This was the city of Newburyport about thirty miles from Boston where the world renowned evangelist George Whitefield died in 1775. This eminent servant of Christ, a fellow-laborer of John Wesley, was a most eloquent preacher and soul-winner in the British Isles and in America.

One day Mr. W. H. Marshall drove Mr. McClure Mr. H. G. McEwen and some other brethren to Newburyport where they went to see the ancient church building in which Whitefield preached his last sermon. The guide took them through the building pointing out some

unique and interesting things that were reminders of by-gone days. Ascending the pulpit he unlocked a little door, took a box and from it he drew a package carefully wrapped up from which he removed an old worn Bible. The guide opened it at 2 Cor. 5 and said, "This is the Bible Mr. Whitefield used" and pointing to verse 17 he said, "This was his last text that Sunday evening."

He then took the visitors down to the basement and directly under the pulpit in a glass case lay the skeleton of that once mighty preacher. The brethren were moved by that sight and Mr. McClure stood with bowed head for a good while looking at the silent reminder of that noble witness of the Gospel of Christ. Then turning to leave he said, "Well, goodbye George. When I see you again you will be worth looking at." His words came true for this was his first and last visit, and now the preacher of the twentieth century as well as the preacher of the eighteenth century together rest from their labors waiting for the coming of the Lord, when their bodies, now corruptible, shall be raised and fashioned like His glorious body.

After our brethren McCracken and Gould left Rhode Island for the west in May, 1928, Mr. McClure went to Boston and began a series of meetings in the Gospel Hall on Cliff St. As on former occasions his ministry was much appreciated by the Lord's people of that large city.

At the end of June our brother left Boston for Pugwash Junction, Nova Scotia, for their conference at which his presence and ministry proved a great cheer to the saints.

Following a brief visit to Cape Breton he returned to the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Brennan in New Glasgow

where he came down with “shingles” suffering much from a very painful attack of that disease. When he recovered sufficiently to travel he left for Hamilton, Ontario, where he was heartily received by Mr. and Mrs. John Moreland and during his stay there he improved slowly. It was suggested by his doctor in New York that a sea voyage might help his recovery, so our brother decided to travel to Oakland, California, by way of the Panama Canal.

Arrangements were made for him to sail on the S. S. California, and one Saturday morning at the end of August a large company of Christians accompanied him to the ship at the pier in New York to bid him God-speed.

The journey down the Atlantic coast was very interesting, but the great attraction to Mr. McClure on that voyage was passing through the canal. As the ship proceeded slowly through the great locks he was able to observe much of the stupendous engineering feat that made such a passage through Central America possible. Entering the Pacific Ocean they had still a long distance north, but the vessel docked for a few hours at the port in San Diego in Southern California. While there Mr. McClure was greatly surprised and cheered by a number of the Lord’s people coming on board to greet him, a very pleasant visit which was enjoyed by them all. The ship was soon on its way again and the next stop was San Francisco, and in Oakland as usual a hearty welcome awaited brother McClure after an absence of about two years.

During the summer of 1929, I decided to pitch a tent in Providence, Rhode Island, and to hold evangelistic services. Early in July, according to arrangement Mr.

McClure arrived to share in the meetings. Already a site for the tent had been secured and it gave us joy to see our brother improved in health and with old time vigor and energy starting a tent season. We began with a full tent and interest was manifest throughout the series. The meetings were well advertised in the papers and one editor in giving a write-up referred to Mr. McClure as "a well known traveler who in size and bearing would remind you of an admiral of the British fleet."

On Sunday evenings especially there were large audiences, for crowds came from far and near, and many from the near-by churches filed in after their services were over, and as a result of these meetings a few souls were saved.

Leaving Providence, our brother went to New York where he had a very fruitful season in 125th St. Gospel Hall, after which he planned a visit to Canada.

Many years had passed since Mr. McClure had had special meetings in Toronto where his name was a household word in many homes throughout the city. However, during that fall he paid them a long promised visit. In the east end of the city, interested crowds attended his meetings, after which he began on the west side. The old Central Gospel Hall on Brunswick Avenue was taxed to capacity on week nights, and it soon became necessary to hire a larger building for Lord's Days. A theater holding 1200 on Bloor St. was secured and this was filled afternoon and evening.

Our brother enjoyed much help from God at that season. It could be truly said that his ministry was edifying, exhorting and comforting, and the fellowship he enjoyed with the Lord's people was very cheering to him.

During the summer of 1930 he visited some places in Ontario where he had labored long and faithfully in the Gospel with other fellow-laborers in the early years of his service in the Gospel.

Many changes had occurred during that long interval. The majority of the older generation of saints had been called home and of those remaining with a new generation he had both joy and sorrow, but he counted it a great privilege to minister to them again.

Chapter 29 Second Visit To South Africa (1931-1933)

For some years Mr. McClure had a strong desire to make a return visit to South Africa, and also to see other foreign lands with the object of imparting to the Lord's people what he had gleaned from the fields of Holy Scripture. Although he kept busy with nightly meetings, yet since the attack of "shingles" his health was not very good and the doctor advised a long sea journey as a means of recuperating. Such a voyage was no affliction to brother McClure for he loved ocean trips and he felt that this would be an opportune time to have a complete rest, and that the Lord might use this means to restore his health and fit him for future work.

During the fall of 1931 our brother had labored in the eastern states, ministering to the assemblies, and when he decided to leave for Africa, the assembly in 125th Street, New York had a farewell meeting for him December 30. Several brethren gave helpful messages and Mr. McClure took up Psalm 133 speaking to the heart and conscience of all present on that precious outstanding truth of "brethren dwelling together in unity." He dwelt upon the power for God such a testimony becomes, contrasting this with the weakness and defeat when such unity is lacking.

He then left for California and sailed from San Francisco to Capetown, South Africa, January 31, 1932 on board the S. S. Chinha. The vessel carried much cargo and was rather slow in travel, but this feature was one he desired as it meant a longer voyage.

An extract from a letter to me written just before he landed in Africa will give the reader an idea of the deep heart exercise through which this aged servant of Christ was passing, and of how much he felt his dependence on God in entering alone upon this large and needy field:

“We have just had the first glimpse of Africa and we hope to anchor at Capetown about midnight.

We have been two or three days longer on this trip than usual owing to rough weather. But I was quite satisfied that it should be so. I have been entirely free from sea sickness, headache, or indigestion, and have had the best opportunity in years to catch up on some articles for the magazines and have got a little ahead. As it comes nearer the time of landing, I begin to wonder at my coming here at my time of life. It seems tackling a big thing and I feel very much my weakness and could wish someone were along.

It is twenty-five years since I was there, and I am wondering if I shall get the same ear for the old truths which I got then. It will be a new generation now, and we do not usually find that they have the same taste for plain things that those who have gone before had.

Well, sink or swim, we will give what we believe the dear souls need, not what they want.

Away back twenty-five years ago we had to stand up against what was coming in then, that which would in time bring assemblies to the level of missions. It may be harder now, but God is able and the battle is His.”

From later communication his fears in some cases were sustained, but he received a very hearty welcome from the assemblies.

His meetings in Capetown were large and fruitful. One night five precious souls passed from death into life and afterwards proved that they were truly new born souls. The Lord's people were enriched by the ministry of the Word and were greatly encouraged.

He made his home with Mr. and Mrs. Kerr. Before leaving Capetown he became ill with the flu, and in writing of this experience he said, "Mr. and Mrs. Kerr nursed me like a baby." Also he made mention frequently of Mr. and Mrs. Fish whose labors for the Lord in Africa among the lepers are well known.

When Mr. McClure left Capetown he sailed on the U. S. C. Carnarvon Castle for Durban, but stopped off! at Port Elizabeth for two weeks. During this time he conducted nightly meetings which were well attended and he felt sorry he had to leave so soon.

The services were held in the "show yard dining hall" and the numbers so increased that the platform had to be used to get the people seated.

Writing to some young friends in Oakland about conditions in Port Elizabeth, Mr. McClure gave a graphic description of some primitive practices. "Every time you look out, you will see a woman with a baby down low on her back in a shawl, a most uncomfortable position for the child, more especially in hot weather. But they are born to that, and I never heard one of them cry. In addition to the child, the woman may have on her head a bundle, some article of household furniture or a bundle of washing, small or large. I have seen one with a bed-mattress on her head, walking like a queen as straight as you please and hardly ever putting her hands to it."

In describing the tender coming along to the side of the ship to take off passengers, he wrote, "They had a large wicker basket about six feet deep that could hold about eight people. When the basket is full the crane hoists it up into the air, over the side of the ship, and down onto the deck of the little tender. So Paul was not the only preacher let down in a basket."

Arriving in Durban May 22, our brother was met at the dock by a young man whose father had entertained him in Sydney many years before.

Mr. McClure remained in Durban for some time ministering the Word and then left for Johannesburg. But in those gold mining towns he found it very hard to stir up an interest. He met Mr. W. J. Scott for the first time and a very close bond of fellowship sprang up between them.

During that time Mr. Scott was going on a business trip that would take him to the Belgian Congo, and he invited Mr. McClure to join him as he was going by automobile. To Mr. McClure this was a golden opportunity of getting his heart's desire to see some of the wild parts of Africa.

The letters and pictures he sent to many friends in the United States and Canada, fully describing that eventful trip, told how much he enjoyed it, even though difficulties in car trouble mounted up so much that most people would have lost heart and given up the journey. Yet he went on and saw the great Victoria Falls and many other places of interest in Northern Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo. He gave a very colorful description of a night spent in the wilds. His palace was a straw thatched cabin without windows or door to keep out

invaders. Yet he said, "I slept for hours and when I awoke in the morning I could not get my mind off the open door and the possibility of a night visit from lions or snakes."

The two brethren returned safely and had some wonderful experiences to relate. Many were the pressing invitations our brother McClure received to remain in South Africa permanently and give his time to ministering the Word among the assemblies, and offers were made by some brethren so that he would have no anxious care as to temporal things. But while our brother valued the love and thoughtfulness of his brethren, yet he felt that he should return to the United States, and, as of old, when the brethren who sought to persuade the Apostle Paul as to his course and found it impossible, they "ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done'" (Acts 21:14). But just as in 1906 when our brother bade farewell to the saints in South Africa, so once more although the weight of years was now upon him, yet they insisted on his return.

It was early in 1933 when Mr. McClure arranged to sail from Durban for San Francisco by way of Japan. This proved to be a most interesting and helpful voyage, for when he returned to the States he told us of conditions in Japan at that time and of the Lord's work being carried on by a few lonely workers. The visit of our brother was a great cheer to those servants of Christ who were holding up the banner of the Cross in the midst of darkness and idolatry.

One Saturday morning the ship drew nigh to the land for its first stop. They were a day late, but they docked before noon, and were not to leave until Lord's Day

afternoon. This made him feel thankful as there might be an opportunity of finding some believers and of attending a meeting.

This hope was made stronger when he learned they were in Singapore, but he had no address of Christians or of meetings with him as he did not expect the ship to call there. However, he set out to look for an assembly—walking quite a distance. The weather was hot and humid, which made walking very difficult and unpleasant and eventually he hired a rickshaw. He was rewarded for his diligent search by finding the Bethesda Gospel Hall and also one of the brethren who lived there.

This brother took Mr. McClure around that afternoon to many places of interest among which was the Temple of Buddha with its two great idols.

Brother McClure went back to the ship for the night and was at the Hall next morning for the breaking of bread at 9 o'clock.

There were about 150 believers present, many of them Chinese, but as the meeting was conducted in English, he was able to take part and he later said, "It was a treat to me." After the meeting he much enjoyed conversing with these Christians ere he left for the ship. At noon all were aboard and the ship was on its way. They had a brief stop at Moji, Japan, then after twenty-four hours sailing they docked at Kobe, a city of seventy-five thousand people.

Our brother found himself in difficulty again. He expected to be in Kobe for some time and had written brother Wright of his coming but had not received his reply before leaving Africa.

Starting off in that big city to look him up he was again rewarded as he found his place of business. Of this young Irishman living in Japan, Mr. McClure said, "I found him a very godly lad, who came out to a position in a drug store, so as to acquire the language with a view to giving himself to the work in Japan.

He also mentioned meeting Mr. and Mrs. Hay from England who were busy studying Japanese so they also could labor for the Lord in that land, and they were a help to Mr. McClure during his brief visit. Sunday morning five of them sat down together to remember the Lord and it was a precious session to all. In the afternoon they had a Bible reading and a number of Christians who were connected with denominations were present. Mr. McClure took up the last clause of Acts 11:26: "...and the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch," and the Lord gave His servant help to bring before them some foundation truths.

Mr. McClure had a very unique experience in the evening. He attended a gospel meeting conducted by dentist brother from another part of the city. The meeting was held in a dwelling house, and as it is the custom in Japan that no one can enter a home with shoes on, he left his at the door. They would have supplied him with a pair of slippers, but none could be found large enough. Even later in Tokio, a city of five million people, he went from store to store but could not purchase a pair of slippers to fit.

They gathered in a large room without seats or furniture. All round were cushions on the floor and our brother squatted down with the rest, minus his shoes. It was bitterly cold and a little stove with half dead embers

was the only means of heating. To make his seat more comfortable Mr. McClure took his cushion to the partition wall, sat upon it and was about to lean back against the wall, when as he put it, "Brother Hay saved me from being in two rooms at one time." The walls were merely paper. Mr. McClure said, "I thought what a scene of wreck and ruin it would be if some families we have known lived for a week in such houses."

As brother McClure wanted to see rural Japan the S. S. Co. gave him a ticket to go by train to Tokio about ten hours ride. Mr. Hay accompanied him part of the way.

After seeing some wonderful sights in the land of the Rising Sun, Mr. Hay went back and Mr. McClure decided to wait over until the next morning and resume his journey in daylight.

He described the trip as much like going through the Rockies in Canada. Brother Hay gave Mr. McClure a card to present to a taxi driver and he delivered him at the Y.M.C.A. Also he had the address of a doctor who had a little meeting in his home. Arriving there, he said, "I could not speak a word of Japanese nor they one word of English, but knowing Mr. Hay they made me welcome." Off went his shoes at the door again. The meeting room was a large one with a single piece of furniture in it, a large table nine inches high. About 20 were present, all squatting on cushions and one brother evidently gave them all the contents of the card from Mr. Hay as all looked at Mr. McClure and bowed. The meeting lasted two hours.

About March 1, 1933, Brother McClure somewhat improved in health, arrived back safely in Oakland feeling that he had been guided by the Lord in his

travels to many countries and in his ministry to so many nationalities. Soon he was on his way again preaching and teaching, and in October he was in Toronto, Canada. One address he gave in Central Hall is still remembered by some who were young believers at that time and is cherished by them to this day. He spoke on “the River of God” and traced that river from Genesis to Revelation. He said the river is a figure in which Christ is introduced and brought out as the embodiment of the grace of God. “You can measure the ocean, with its hundreds of thousands of square miles, but there is this thought as to a river—it cannot be measured, for like the Niagara Falls, hundreds of tons of water are going over every minute of every day, and that away back to the beginning of the Creation.”

He dwelt upon the river in Ezekiel 47. “The waters issued out from under the threshold of the house” (Christ’s lowly birth), “at the south side of the altar” (His death), “going out into the desert,” getting wider and deeper and giving life and healing wherever they go (Pentecost). “But the miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt” (v. 11). Concerning this he said, “A miry place or marsh was a place where the water flowed in, but did not flow out again, so the water evaporated and left the salt. There are many miry Christians today. They receive all and give out nothing, with the result that they are barren and unfruitful. The only way to be a happy and fruitful Christian is to let the living water flow out to others as in John 7:38.”

He finished up with the river in Revelation 22, flowing out of the throne of God and of the Lamb—“the fixed eternal state.” “That in the ages to come He might show

the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

Chapter 30 Third Visit To Africa (1934-1935)

In 1934 Mr. McClure passed through a very trying experience—cataracts had formed in both eyes and after consulting a number of doctors, some of whom were his brethren in Christ and took a deep interest in his case, he was advised by all to have an operation performed. This was arranged for and the operation was partly successful. To him the time he was kept in darkness seemed long. However, he sought grace to be subject to the will of God. Usually he loved to pore over the Word of God taking in for his own spiritual nourishment that which was opened up to his heart of the unsearchable riches of Christ. He would then get busy with his typewriter and put in order some of the precious truths freshly gleaned from the holy Scripture and prepare his papers for some magazine for help and profit of the Lord's people. This had been his practice for years and to be suddenly deprived of his usual routine when he otherwise felt very well, was a great trial.

When discharged from the hospital he was welcomed in the home of his old friends Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Trimble of New York, where he was tenderly cared for and everything possible was done to hasten his recovery.

The first Old Orchard Conference in Maine was commencing in August and Mr. McClure was anxious to be present. It was a great cheer to those who convened the conference to see him accompanied by a number of friends from New York arrive in time for the beginning of the meetings.

There was a large gathering of Christians from New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Canada, some thirty-five assemblies being represented. Many believers from the different denominations attended most of the meetings and Mr. McClure felt very much at home giving very helpful ministry, and all through that week a spirit of love and fellowship prevailed. The Gospel was proclaimed especially in the evening meetings and hundreds listened to the message of grace resulting in the salvation of souls.

After a very profitable season at the conference, Mr. McClure seemed to be gaining in health and could see very well. At the beginning of September he attended the Boston Conference and again ministered the Word profitably. He then paid us a short visit to Rhode Island. We had the joy of entertaining him and some of the friends from New York. One morning he proposed that we all visit the town of Plymouth, Massachusetts, which was about fifty miles distance. The weather was beautiful and the cities, towns, and rural districts we passed through were all very interesting. At last the town of Plymouth on the Atlantic Coast came into view. It derived its name from the city of Plymouth, England, and is of great historical fame because it was the place where the Pilgrim Fathers landed from the renowned sailing ship "The Mayflower" in 1620.

The Pilgrims were a godly people in England who were suffering religious persecution which they sought to escape by setting out for the new world beyond the sea. When all the passengers from "The Mayflower" had landed that day, they kneeled down on the shore and prayed, giving thanks to God for a safe voyage across

the ocean, and commending their future to Him who rules in the kingdom of men.

The large, flat stone on which they stepped as they left the ship is now carefully fenced not far from its original place. On the hill overlooking the bay and ocean is a large statue of Massasoit, an Indian Chief, who made peace with the white man and gave them privileges as strangers in his country. These evidences of days long past when the country was in a very primitive condition were very interesting to Mr. McClure who loved history. He had known it all in theory and this visit made it all the more valuable to him.

In the museum there were many relics. Even the chairs and furniture of "The Mayflower" could be seen, but the sight that overshadowed all else to Mr. McClure was the large, ancient, well-marked Bible as it lay open in a glass case.

Governor Bradford, who was among those early settlers and was made Governor of the new colony, was the owner of this Bible and carefully read it. To Mr. McClure this was a silent yet powerful proof of the integrity and godly sincerity of the men who had laid the foundation of the new country now known as the United States of America.

When Mr. McClure returned to New York, he was much exercised about paying a third visit to So. Africa and taking in the long cherished hope of seeing the land of Palestine. Many friends tried hard to persuade him otherwise, but he seemed to show the spirit and energy of Caleb of long ago, and still felt able for the battle. The necessary preparations were accordingly made and a

large number of the Lord's people from New York and vicinity were at the ship to see him off as he set sail.

The morning of his arrival in Belfast Lough was cold and dreary but some brethren had come to meet him and he received a hearty welcome. He remained in Ireland a few months ministering the Word and writing articles for publication. The time was well used in the Lord's service.

Mr. McClure learned that Mr. Bunting, a young Irish evangelist, was exercised about going to South Africa, and this purpose of his was very suitable to Mr. McClure who looked upon it as the Lord's provision for him on the long journey. Brother Bunting proved a good companion and was very helpful to his aged brother in the many months that followed.

Mr. Bunting's article giving an account of their travels together with letters written by Mr. McClure will give the reader a detailed account of the journey and how he was impressed by the different places that were visited.

By W. Bunting

Although he was in his 77th year, and felt that with advancing old age his physical abilities were on the decline, Mr. McClure in 1934 undertook an extensive preaching trip, such as would have daunted the courage of many a younger man. In the fall of that year he crossed to Ireland on what proved to be his last visit to his native land, and, as on former occasions, he was the welcome guest of Mr. and Mrs. W. McCracken, Belfast, and of Mr. and Mrs. T. H. McCabe, Banbridge. Here for a number of months he found many open doors for his rich, Christ-exalting ministry. As always, his teaching was lucid, forceful, and with such a depth of conviction

that his hearers could not easily forget it, and not a few to this day speak of the profound and permanent impression his messages at that time made upon their hearts.

But more distant fields of service filled the vision of the veteran servant of Christ. For a long season it had been his cherished hope to visit the Bible Lands, not merely to see for himself sites and customs of sacred association, of which he had so often read and spoken, but that he might be a blessing to the Assemblies of the Lord's people in those parts where, in Apostolic days such gatherings first had their inception. This in the will of the Lord he now planned to undertake; and moreover from Palestine he purposed to revisit the scenes of earlier labors in South Africa. It was in vain, therefore, that Irish friends besought him to spend the remaining years of his life in their midst. With so much upon his heart he was impatient to be on his way. Accordingly, the necessary arrangements were made, and on the 18th of February, 1935, he took his final leave of the country of his birth; and three days later embarked at Tilbury Docks, London, upon the "Llandaff Castle," en route for Egypt, accompanied by the present writer.

Mr. McClure was an experienced sailor. He seemed to know the name of almost every part of the ship and to be well acquainted with the rules of navigation, so that it was a great pleasure to be his fellow-passenger and companion. Above all, one enjoyed his fellowship in the things of God. Whether ashore or afloat the Bible was his constant companion, and from that mine of spiritual wealth what golden nuggets of truth he turned up! He also had a great heart for the souls of men, and was soon busy with the distribution of well-chosen gospel

booklets. By this means he made personal contact with many of the other passengers and found opportunities for speaking about the Saviour.

After a delightful, and uneventful voyage, during which we called at a few Mediterranean ports, the Egyptian coast line arose above the horizon on the morning of March 7th, and that afternoon we disembarked at Port Said where we took the train for Cairo. Traveling through the land of Goshen, it was interesting to see file after file of camels moving across the fertile plains.

On arriving at Cairo we were welcomed to the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. N. Aboud. Mr. Aboud who is engaged in whole-time Gospel work, and has seen many souls saved and a number of assemblies planted along the Nile Valley in Upper Egypt, resides in Heliopolis, a city adjoining Cairo. He lost no time in arranging special meetings, and in both the Cairo and Heliopolis Assembly Halls, Mr. McClure was heard by appreciative and growing audiences of God's people.

Our stay in Cairo continued until March 22, when we boarded the evening train to begin our journey to Jerusalem. It could not be said of our exodus, as was said of Israel's of old, "Egypt was glad when they departed," for the friends who saw us off showed visible signs of sorrow that we were leaving them. About midnight we reached Kantara, one of the ancient entrances to the land of the Pharaohs, crossed the Canal by ferry and took our seats in the Palestinian train on the opposite side. As we sped northwards that morning we witnessed for the first time the beauty of an Eastern sunrise. Slowly the light grew in the east, and then the great orb of day appeared from behind the distant hills

of Moab and mounted into the sky, bathing all nature in its warmth and glory. At length, after passing many stations, which included Gaza, Ashdod, and Lydda, and gaining a transient view of the Plain of Sharon, our train steamed into Jerusalem in time for late breakfast.

There we were kindly entertained by Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Cooper, who for years have been serving the Lord in Palestine. Their home is over the Gospel Hall, and its roof commands an excellent view of the city. It was with obvious emotion that Mr. McClure, on the morning of our arrival, gazed from this point of vantage upon the objects of interest which lay before us. There was the gorgeous "Dome of the Rock," commonly called The Mosque of Omar. Behind it arose a mount which was easily recognized as Olivet, over the summit of which a narrow path, once hallowed by the footsteps of Christ, ran directly to Bethany. To the north was Mount Scopus, where the Roman General pitched his tent on the occasion of the fatal siege of the Jewish capital, and where the Hebrew University now stands; while in the more immediate prospect could be seen the most sacred spot of all—the "green hill far away" which, we believe, witnessed the closing scenes of our Saviour's Passion.

During the two weeks spent in Jerusalem Mr. McClure was a busy man. Daily we explored the narrow streets, the sites and ancient monuments of the Holy City, and its environs, and made excursions into the country to such places as Hebron, Bethlehem, Bethany, Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea; while almost every evening he conducted a meeting. For it was his ambition, above all else, to stimulate the saints to a closer walk with God.

On our first Lord's Day we broke bread with the assembly in Jerusalem, in what proved to be one of the most blessed meetings at which we had ever been present. From the beginning a deep solemnity and sense of our Saviour's presence filled our hearts, as we sat there, almost beneath the shadow of Golgotha and not far from where Christ Himself had instituted the Feast. We sang Sir Edward Denny's hymn, "To Calvary, Lord," and then "with sweetest sadness" partook of the emblems of His death. It was a most impressive occasion.

Our next Lord's Day was spent in Jaffa, where we were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. S. Ostrovsky, a worthy pair of Jewish birth. By profession our brother had been a teacher but he now devotes all his time to the Lord's work. At Jaffa, as elsewhere, Mr. McClure was not idle. He ministered in both the Russian and Armenian assemblies, speaking by interpretation, as he usually had to do in Palestine. From Jaffa we visited the neighboring city of Tell-Aviv, which is said to be the only all-Jewish city in the world, and then returned to Jerusalem.

It was of the Lord, that the time of our visit to Palestine coincided with the season of the two annual Assembly Conferences convened in that land. The first of these was to be held at Haifa, a modern city situated at the foot of Mount Carmel and the other at Beyrout which is the capital of Syria and over one hundred miles farther north. Since Mr. McClure was feeling much fatigued as the result of his exertions, the Haifa brethren kindly arranged suitable accommodations for us to spend a quiet week there before the Conference began. So on the morning of April 9 we looked for the last time upon

Jerusalem's temples and towers glistening in the sun, and traveled by bus to Haifa, a journey that gave us an excellent view of the country, which at this season of the year is seen at its best.

The Conferences at Haifa and Beyrout, each of which lasted four days, were, I feel certain, the most cosmopolitan at which Mr. McClure in all his long experience had ever been present. For those attending them were drawn, not, only from all the Near East, but from other more distant parts as well. Here, too, he had the great joy of meeting a number of servants of Christ. Brethren J. W. Clapham, F. E. Cooper, G. Knowles, A. L. Goold, N. Aboud, S. Ostrovsky, all of them laborers in the Bible Lands; J. Newton, an English preacher who had spent the winter evangelizing in Upper Egypt, G. Menzies from New Zealand, and Dr. Martzinkovsky, author of *With Christ in Soviet Russia*, were also present. Most, if not all of these shared in the ministry of the Word, but throughout both Conferences Mr. McClure was the principal speaker. An interesting feature at many of the meetings was that the addresses, to be intelligible to all present, had to be interpreted in three languages. Two interpreters stood upon the platform and translated (one after the other) each sentence as the speaker uttered it; while the third sat among his own nationals in a corner of the building and in an undertone made his translation. Thus simultaneously the English, the Armenian, the Arabic, and the Russian Christian, heard in his own tongue the message of God. It was a unique experience for Mr. McClure; and when his age is considered, and his partial deafness, it will be appreciated that he labored under a great disadvantage. Yet it was remarkable how he

overcame this and adapted himself to the new circumstances, so that his addresses retained their characteristic orderliness, clarity of expression, and spiritual vigor.

When we were at Haifa Mr. McClure expressed a desire to visit Galilee, which we accordingly did by car after the Conference there had concluded. This was one of our most interesting trips. It led us through Nazareth, where our Saviour was "brought up," Cana, where "the modest water saw its God and blushed," Magdala, the home of Mary Magdalene and as far as the ruins of Capernaum, "His own city."

The Sea of Galilee, nestling in the bosom of the surrounding hills, its sparkling water reflecting the azure of heaven, is one of nature's most beautiful sights. When, as the tourist travels along the Tiberias road from Nazareth, it first suddenly bursts upon his view, a thousand feet below, it presents a charming picture, and one that makes an ineffaceable imprint upon his heart.

With mingled feelings of wonder and joy Mr. McClure walked along the shores of Gennesaret, sailed upon the tranquil waters of the Lake, and heard the Arab boys sing, in the best English they could muster, "O Galilee, sweet Galilee, Where Jesus loved so much to be."

Having spent almost two months in the Bible Lands, we joined the "Llandonery Castle" at Port Said on May 2, our port of destination now being Beira, in Portuguese East Africa. During this voyage Mr. McClure suffered much from bodily weakness, caused probably by the intense equatorial heat through which we passed. We landed at Beira on May 21 and next day arrived by train in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia where our friends, Mr.

and Mrs. W. J. Bothwell, extended to us a hearty welcome.

Mr. McClure needed no introduction to the assemblies in South Africa. It was not long, therefore, before the old warrior was again in active service. For three weeks he conducted a series of meetings on prophetic subjects in Salisbury. Then for a time he carried on Bible Readings, and ministered the Word on many Assembly platforms, in and around Johannesburg.

Mr. McClure always evinced a great care for younger servants of Christ, especially those who had left the beaten track to labor on virgin soil. It was not surprising, therefore, that when, early in 1936, he decided to return to America, he should arrange to travel by the circuitous route of China and Japan, in order to visit isolated brethren serving the Lord in those lands. It seemed, however, a hazardous undertaking for one so aged and infirm as he, particularly since it meant traveling unaccompanied, but no remonstrance was of any avail. He was a strong believer in the maxim of Whitefield, who said, "We are immortal till our work is done." In this confidence he again set forth, followed by the prayers of many who owed him much, and God honored His beloved servant by enabling him to accomplish that which had long been upon his heart.

Mr. McClure's Itinerary

Port Said, Egypt, March 8th, 1935

Beloved Brother in the Lord:

We arrived here yesterday after a good voyage, and both brother Bunting and I were kept in the best of health. When we anchored in the harbor, the water just

swarmed with red turbaned men skimming about in small boats, making a clamor in their native tongue. I need not tell you that we felt a bit strange. Here we were, sent by no one (save God) and sent for by no one. How were we to get through this babel, and the excessive red tape connected with custom and entry into the country, the exchange of money and so forth? Well, God had seen to all that. A Christian Greek, who because of the difficulty of his name, we call, "Brother John," sought us out on the deck telling us that Mr. Clapham had asked him to meet us. From that moment we had no concern, as to language, difference of money, getting our baggage through the customs, and finding a place for the night. The Custom's officer who examined our baggage, was also a Christian Greek, and he used his authority as to examination. Then our other Greek friend had them carted off to this place where we stay.

There is no assembly in Port Said, but there are a few nice Christians, mostly Greeks, and "John" told us that he had announced a meeting for that night. We went—there was a dozen present; they sang in Greek. Brother B—— went first, speaking a few sentences, which our brother, the Custom's officer, interpreted. I followed and spoke on Nicodemus. It was a very happy time; bad as the ship company was, this repaid us. Leaving they shook hands again and again, wishing we could stay a few days. A letter from a brother in Cairo asked us to stay with him there as long as we wish. "He is faithful."

"So I wandered on not knowing,

And I would not if I might,

I'd rather walk in the dark with God,

Than go alone in the light.

I'd rather walk with Him by faith,
Than go alone by sight."

After the Easter meetings in Jerusalem, we'll resume our journey to Southern Rhodesia, via the Red Sea and Persian Gulf to Indian Ocean, on to Beira.

Pray for us, and ask prayer, for we need it, at past seventy-seven as in my case. But I feel as if there are a few more years of service ahead of me. But whether or not, it is my desire that Christ be magnified.

Haifa, Palestine, April 13, 1935

We have been over a month in this part of the world, two weeks of which were spent in Egypt. Most of that time in Cairo. There are two meetings close together there, one in Cairo proper, and the other in Heliopolis, a new suburb about seven miles out. It is the smaller and they speak Arabic, while in Cairo they speak Turkish.

Between the two we had meetings every night and four on Sundays. We went to Jaffa (Joppa) while there and had three or four days with the little meeting there. We visited the house of Simon the Tanner, and went on the roof. In every place the evidence of the Jew's awakening is too plain not to be seen. Great things I am persuaded are in the near future. Adjoining Jaffa is Tel Aviv, the youngest and largest Jewish city in the world. If one were dropped into it, he would think that he was in an American city because of its broad streets, up-to-date motor coach service, apartment buildings, stores which would do credit to Los Angeles. All names, posters, signs, etc., are in Hebrew. Jaffa is old and ramshackle, as so often noticed in the old cities here. I could give you a very amusing contrast to Tel Aviv. We went on a Sabbath to see the Jew's wailing place on the wall in

Jerusalem. We had to go along King David street for six or seven blocks. We measured the width, it was 14 feet. The throng was so dense, that all the way we had to elbow through. There were stores on each side of the street with their wares lying out on the sidewalk—butchers, bakers, clothiers and all sorts jumbled together. Yet pushing stolidly through the mass comes a donkey with a big load on its back, and again, a man with a whole sheep across his shoulders, but, it was only the skin of the sheep, he was a water carrier. I must confess it was a comical preparation for the wailing place. When we got there we found it crowded, and all who could, were close to the wall, their faces up against it. They and the crowd were reading, in a sing-song way, out of the law. Once in a while, some voice was heard above the rest, and then the response was so like the sound of the crowd cheering at a game, that I really would not be able to distinguish between the two. No doubt in the case of some there is real sorrow, but nothing to what is before them.

Another suggestive thing struck us. We went to the Jordan and the Dead Sea, I dipped my hand in the sea and just licked it; my, I thought I would never be able to get rid of the taste! You know what sea-water is. Well, in the Atlantic there is only three and one-half per cent of salt, while in the Dead Sea there is twenty-five per cent. For thousands of years the Jordan has been pouring six million tons of water daily into it, with no known outlet. The water evaporates, and the solids remain, so that in the Dead Sea the Jews have a mine of wealth far beyond that of all the mines of the Transvaal. A very small beginning has been made to recover these salts; a company is working 350 men at it now.

Two places stand out in our memories which we visited in Jerusalem. First, the Garden Tomb where we went in and sat on one of the seats upon which the angels sat. I judge it is a little altered since the Lord lay in it. The door is larger, as I had no trouble going in.

The other place to which I refer is the Dungeon under Jerusalem. I shall never again read Jeremiah 38:7-13 and Lamentations 3:55 without my mind calling up that Dungeon in Jerusalem. The room on a level with the street was not at all bad, as such places go. In the center of the floor we saw a hole large enough to admit a man's body. We were each given lighted tapers and then guided down a very narrow stone stairway, to a room hewn out of solid rock, with not a single thing in for human comfort or convenience. In the roof we saw the hole we saw above. Down to a second room and down again to a third, but they were all alike. We blew out our tapers to realize the darkness. It was awful, and we felt that the mind of the poor prisoner would soon crack when shut up down there. His only chance of escape, if he ever did escape, was up by that hole. We could better understand the R. V. of Lamentations 3:55. And also why Ebed Meleck took the "old cast clouts and rotten rags," as it was a long pull for Jeremiah, from the lowest dungeon, and the rope would have cut into his flesh. We did not come sight seeing, but we take advantage of these places now that we are here.

The most conspicuous thing at present on the Mount of Olives is a great palace built by the German Emperor for himself. He intended to have some "say" as to what was done around there, but it is rather significant that its great high tower was cracked by an earthquake and has now to be held together to keep it from falling. When

Christ rode into Jerusalem, He entered by one of the gates, but to admit the Kaiser, part of the wall had to be broken down. Alas, human greatness is something like the tower of this palace; it won't last.

We leave today for Joppa, where we shall spend a little while with the small gathering there. With a few more places, we shall find our time taken up till May 1 when we take the "Llondonery Castle," for Beira on our way to Rhodesia. We will be quite glad of the almost three weeks when we shall be on the water. While we are both well, we sometimes feel a bit tired.

Haifa, Galilee, Palestine, April 22, 1935

Our Haifa conference of 1935 has just closed with a very precious forenoon meeting. During the past 50 years I have attended many conferences in different parts, but I am free to confess none just like the one which closed here today. At such meetings I have seen many nationalities in the U.S.A., but that country is known as "the melting pot," and the different people soon get a smattering of English, which enables them to follow the speakers. Here it is different. We had at least five languages represented, Arabic, Armenian, Russian, German, and English. Only some of these knew any English, and for the others it must be interpreted into their own tongue. We have seen an interpreter on each side of the speaker, an Arab on one side and an Armenian on the other. As a rule in the conference, to save time, just an Arab interpreter was used, as the majority were Arabs. But in order that the others might get what was said they sat in groups, and someone in a quiet tone repeated in their language what was said. This did not cause the slightest confusion. Ordinarily to

see one whispering would annoy the speaker, not so in this case. We saw a German, who knew no English, sitting where no one was near to translate for him, and we did not feel easy till we found someone to do that.

The Believers' Hymn Book is in general use in Egypt and Palestine, and the greater number of hymns were from it. The number of the hymn in the other books would be given, and as in most cases the melody was the same, one would hardly notice that different languages were being used. Some might possibly regard this as discord, we thought it heavenly harmony. The assembly in Haifa is a very orderly assembly.

The Russian group on one or two occasions during the conference sang an hymn in Russian, led by a Russian ex-professor (Prof. Martzinkovski), who has suffered much for Christ in Russian prisons. One piece they sang was to me very touching—there was a plaintiveness about it, suggestive of suffering.

I have been surprised at the wonderful progress this land has made in a very short time. For instance, in Haifa, in backward Galilee, the port, which a little while ago was nothing better than a place for fishing boats, can now accommodate a 52,000 ton liner. We have seen the most up-to-date steamers going and coming since we have been here. The building exceeds anything we have seen elsewhere for years. Jewish towns are springing up in a few months all over, which is doubtless a fulfillment of Jeremiah 16:16; God taking this way of bringing the Jews back to Palestine, where He will deal with them in a soon coming day.

But of all the wonderful things we have seen since we came to this land, we regard as still more wonderful the

spectacle which we witnessed here—150 dear souls gathered to our Lord Jesus Christ, and sitting under the Word of God for three days, with evident enjoyment.

There are many, little known but earnest workers in these parts, but under God the men principally responsible for the increase are Clapham, Cooper, Knowles, and Aboud. Palestine does not owe much to the tourist preachers, but these dear brethren and others are putting their lives into the work and enduring hardship, which all pioneers must do.

Beirut, Syria, April 27, 1935

We left Haifa Wednesday morning. After five hours in a bus, along the Mediterranean, never more than a pistol shot from it, we got to Beirut, a city of about 300,000. It is under the French, and you would imagine by the signs, the police, etc., that you were in Paris. It is situated in the midst of orange and olive groves, and all fruit is plentiful, but it must be very hot in summer, judging by the present, which is hot enough for comfort.

28th. Yesterday Brother Bunting baptized two men and six women in the sea. No doubt others will follow, and a good sized testimony will be seen in Beirut, if the Lord tarries.

We leave Port Said, May 1st, by the "Llandonery Castle" for East Africa. We will value prayer that the Lord may be pleased to bless His Word through us in South Africa, to saints and sinners.

Salisbury, So. Rhodesia, June 3, 1935

I do not think we shall ever regret the time spent in Egypt, Palestine and Syria, as some things became much more real to us there, which may prove helpful to us in

our service. Of the three countries and of all the places we visited in each, Palestine and Jerusalem, as you would expect, were the most interesting, even though to us saddening, as we thought of its palmy days, when David and Solomon were on the throne, and of its future glory, when our Lord Jesus will reign as the Messiah.

The Jews are there in increasing numbers, but they do not control things, and the reminders of this fact are many. The outstanding reminder is the Mosque of Omar standing on Mount Moriah, where the temple once stood, and from its tower we have heard the "faithful" (Moslems) called to prayer, and have seen the Arab drop his work and prostrate himself on the earth, touching it with his forehead several times. We could not but think how many believers are ashamed to bow their heads and give thanks for their food in a hotel or restaurant, and yet these poor creatures were quite indifferent to our looking on at their devotions.

The assembly in Beirut is very young and small, and nearly all are Armenians, of whom there are about 60,000 in that city. There is some ear for the Gospel among these people, more than among the other races, and the conference was really an attempt to get among them. I look to hear a good work done in Beirut. It is a key place; from there other places can be reached.

We thank God for being permitted to visit the land in which the Son of God lived and loved and died, and from which He went up to the glory. But we have no desire to visit it again, till that blessed day when "His feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives." It will be our joy and glory to stand with Him then.

Transvaal, So. Africa, July 9, 1935

I am thankful that I feel fit for meetings, and they are anxious here that I should take a series of Sunday and Wednesday night meetings, to which I am inclined to agree. The reason I do not have nightly meetings is that the evenings are too cool to expect people to come every night as there are no means of heating the Halls. Sunday night the women sat wrapped in furs and it is real suffering to sit through a night meeting. I am told that the same is true in regard to the big churches with just a sprinkling of people, or here and there.

On my last visit, in a Sunday night meeting in Ca Town five young men professed. It was such an unusual haul of fish that I was afraid to speak about it, but I have heard several times since of how well they have gone on, so that I feel more thankful now than I did at the time.

Transvaal, S. A., August, 1935

You see I am still in this big ungodly city, where all that is of God, has a hard time to exist, for godliness here is like a tropical plant, which one might seek to raise in a frigid country. The illustration is not in the least extreme.

In the thirty years which I have passed since my first visit, most of the meetings have become smaller, and in some cases have ceased. As I see the need in connection with these little meetings, I regret that I am almost seventy-eight. I am quite satisfied that work put in among them would be owned of God in freshening up believers.

This month here is like our March, and we have had the coldest spell in ten years. We have been without water some mornings, and when the native servant has gone to the neighbors to get some, he has found that they were

in the same fix as ourselves, the pipes all frozen up. In addition to its being unusually cold, Johannesburg is six thousand feet above sea level. I believe I can truthfully say, I have felt the cold here as much as in Canada or in the eastern States, and for the reason that ample provision is made there against the cold, but it is not so here, for as the days as a rule are bright and sunny, they don't want to admit that they need fires. And none of the Halls have any heating arrangement, and for this reason people do not care to come and sit through a meeting. Owing to the cold and the prevalence of the flu, I have not tried nightly meetings, but have taken the Sunday and Wednesday meetings through August in Jeppestown, the second largest meeting in Johannesburg. The average attendance at the Wednesday evening meeting was about a dozen, but now we get fifty, and the Sunday meeting has also much increased.

A little company in a place called Benoni, about twenty-five miles out, wants me to occupy Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays during September. I have consented, and will put up the chart of the Seven Feasts of Jehovah. It is just as well for me to leave some nights out, and if I feel like it, I can put in odd meetings. No need to be idle.

I feel now that it was hardly the best thing for me to have left Africa three years ago. At that time one felt the pull of the fellowship of the believers in the United States and Canada, and the barrenness of Africa, but this does not quite satisfy my mind. The greater need is what should have appealed to me, for nothing can help conditions here but the patient ministry of the Word.

This is my third visit. One of them was a very extended one, and I have never been left without all my needs

being supplied. I have traveled in the country many hundreds of miles, and, as one once put it, been treated like an angel, who having wings does not need money for transportation. Very likely we were regarded as gentlemen touring the country, but though this seemed to be the attitude of the meetings, we were not allowed to suffer, and we could act as if we were independent gentlemen. Many and many a time I thank God for the privilege I had fifty years ago of being associated with dear Donald Ross, James Campbell and Donald Munro and others, men who as to money were souls of honor, scorning the making of a poor mouth, grateful to believers for their fellowship, but above trying to cultivate it to their own advantage. Wherever we may be, God is there. "Say not my soul, 'From whence can God relieve thy care?' Remember that Omnipotence hath servants everywhere."

Because of a recurrence of my dizzy spells, I consulted a specialist here who gave me a very thorough examination. Like some doctors in the United States he told me that my vital organs were in fine condition and informed me that I was good for ten or fifteen years yet. I said that if he had said months, not years, I would have been more elated, for, after fifty years as a traveling preacher, having no certain dwelling place, at almost seventy-eight, and having never felt free to make any provision for old age, you cannot wonder at my not being elated at the prospect of fifteen years more. But I think I can truthfully say "The will of the Lord be done." It is now three weeks since I had any attacks of dizziness, and I can now read and write without any discomfort such as I used to have. You may be sure I am

glad and thankful, and I trust that I have at last got rid of these unpleasant symptoms.

S. S. Roggeveen enroute to Shanghai Feb. 8, 1936

I think some of my friends will say, when they see where I am now bound for, that my lust for travel is sadly out of control. Well at seventy-eight I am more than satisfied with seeing places. And though the route I am now taking is one of the most scenic to be found anywhere — through the Netherlands Indies, among coral islands, etc., yet, if I could, I would have them pass all these up, and give me a little longer with the brethren I wish to visit.

I expect to go to Shangai (D.V.) and from there to Peiping to meet Donald Hunter (son of his esteemed fellowlaborer, W. H. Hunter). Then back again to Shanghai to get a boat for Yokohama to see R. J. Wright, after which it is my desire to cross to Honolulu and visit some who were in the meeting in Oakland. This may look very pleasing, but jogging in and out, back and forth, with a lot of baggage is labor. These young brethren are anxious that I visit them on my way back to the States. To visit them from Europe or the U.S.A. would be next to-impossible, but a little expense more enables me to do so in this way.

At the last I was sorry to leave South Africa, and many of the believers were, I believe, sorry also. My last meetings in the different places were well attended.

Just a little about a very poor subject, myself. I am sure that this trip will be good for regathering energy. I have a large room, with lots of ventilation, and though just now in the hot zone, we have every comfort that can be had. It is a Netherlands ship, belonging to the

Netherlands Indies, adapted to the hot weather. As to diet, my three meals are pretty much the same—brown toast, beef tea and chocolate. This agrees with me, and I feel better than I have felt for more than a year. I never have any dizzy spells and hardly know what stomach trouble is any more. For some time before I left Africa I felt fit for the meetings, as I do now.

We have a small passenger list. I have spoken to some of them, to the captain, and some other of the officers, but got no response from any of them. They are very kind and considerate, which I wonder at, as I do not mingle in any of their pastimes or games.

Peiping, China, March 13, 1936

Having got to the end of my outward journey, I will send you a line before I start my eastward journey to California via Yokohama and Honolulu.

We left Durban on the Roggeveen, a Netherland-Indian ship on January 31, getting to Shanghai March 9th. For four weeks the sea was as smooth as glass, and the heat was tropical, so that at night I could not bear even a cotton sheet over me in bed. But the last week it turned very cold, so that I was compelled to have three blankets over me, and that was not too much.

I sought to get conversations with the captain and others of the officers and passengers, but did not discover any ear for the gospel. I need not tell you that this was very discouraging to me. I am thankful that I had grace to walk apart from them, but I feel that that is a negative thing; I won no triumphs for Christ.

An American M.D. and his wife joined our vessel on the way. I felt somewhat drawn to them, and as soon as

convenient I spoke to him. I asked if I was a Christian? You can imagine my disappointment when he told me that he was a Pantheist. Any talk with him was fruitless! "In the beginning God create the heaven and the earth." This only excited his contempt. He was full of Evolution, and by a diagram he outlined for me the various stages in man's development from the one-cell beginning up till what we see now. There was no room in his teaching for man as a moral and spiritual being, which is the great distinction of man over the nearest approach to him of the animal creation. We see in the grand, majestic account God has given us in Genesis of His work in creation how He prepared the earth interminable ages before man, and then when He had the kingdom ready, He brought man upon the scene, to be its head and lord. And man was perfectly fit for that exalted position; mentally and physically he was like one in his prime. How dignified and God-like that is, as compared with the nonsense called Evolution.

Brother Hunter is my host here; he has a little place of his own and I live with him. Two nights ago I took a Chinese meeting, and a very intelligent Chinese brother interpreted. If Donald had known the language he would have suited me better, as he knows my habits of thought and expression. But we got on nicely, and at the close this man announced that I would speak again Sunday afternoon. Donald and I were the only ones who were not Chinese and there must have been all of two hundred present.

On Tuesday, the 17th I start for Japan through Korea via Mukden to Kobe, my time will not allow me to go by sea, and at that I shall only have a week with the Christians in Kobe and Yokohama. From Yokohama I get the

Japanese boat, Chichibu Maru for Honolulu, where I shall break my trip to visit some believers who used to live in Oakland, and then resume my journey to California by a Matson Liner.

Monday, March 16

We shall not soon forget yesterday, our only Lord's day in China. As we looked forward to the day it caused us to wait a good deal on God, and that more especially in regard to remembering the Lord, and now it is to that meeting we look back most thankfully. Eleven in all were gathered together. I trust that it will result in a desire to have this meeting every Lord's day. With most, work seems more important than worship; you would think that they grudged the time given to the Lord Himself.

At 10:30 we had a Chinese meeting! the brother who interpreted conducts it every Lord's day. He is very loath to ask the missionaries to take it, as so many tend towards Modernism, to which he is opposed. We had about 400 present, about 100 sitting out in the court in the open air. It was somewhat cool, but none of them moved. That was the second time this brother acted as interpreter for me, and his help was very fine. His grasp of the truth helps him in the interpretation. One bright young woman came up to me at the close to tell me that she had trusted Christ during the meeting. Of course I could not say a great deal, but she certainly looked happy. They are not so Gospel hardened as in the homelands.

At 3:00 o'clock we had another meeting for Chinese in another part of the city. The interpreter was a school teacher, not so quick to grasp my thought as the other, but the folk seemed to enjoy it.

Our next meeting was at 5:00 o'clock. It was in English, and a great relief it was to be able to go right ahead without waiting for interpretation. The meeting was held in the home of the Chancellor of the Netherlands Legation, in two large rooms which once belonged to the Australian Legation.

Peiping is a large city with a population between 900,000 and 1,000,000. If all the missionaries were preaching the Gospel in the power of the Spirit, they would be but a drop in the bucket, but many are dealing out the theories of Modernism. Our host told me after the meeting, that there were forty missionaries present. Forty missionaries and twelve nationalities. You do not often meet that combination. Without having made any purpose beforehand, my subject was calculated to deliver from Modernism.

God willing, I leave tomorrow for Kobe, likely brother Donald Hunter will go as far as Mukden with me, and then come back. I appreciate the company of a brother who knows something of the language and ways of the country, and the more so as I am coming closer to the eightieth milestone.

Yokohama, Japan, March 25, 1936

I arrived here Sunday morning after a journey of four nights and days through China, Korea and Japan. Lack of time led me to travel that way. I could not get away from Africa sooner, or I would have used the water route, which is, at least to me, the more comfortable way, but I am thankful that my health has not suffered, for although I have been through such different climates I am real well.

Saturday night I begin a series of seven Lectures on Genesis Chapter 1 in Tokio. There is a little Japanese meeting in Tokio. We hope to be of some help to the assembly and possibly get in some outsiders. We shall have the opportunity of bringing out the truth of the New Birth and other foundation things, as well as combating errors that are very rife.

On the 9th of April we hope to sail on the Chichibu Maru for Honolulu, and we have arranged to break our journey there for about one week and continue on the President Lincoln to San Francisco.

I shall be glad to get back to California, after so much wandering, though I may not be long there. It seems I am bound to keep going. When I look at my "Baptism Lines," which I must shew to folk who are concerned in letting me in or keeping me out of the U.S.A., I almost feel that 1857 must be a mistake, but please do not suggest that I am an old man.

Chapter 31 Declining Years (1936-1937)

In 1938 Mr. McClure had a hemorrhage and was taken to the hospital in a serious condition and little hope was held for him, but he recovered and after a few weeks convalescence he desired to attend the Houston, Texas, Conference in October. It was quite an undertaking but Mr. S. Greer, who had been conveying him around in his car and helping him from place to place, promised to take him by automobile on the 2,000 mile trip.

They arranged to spend a few days in Jerome, Arizona, on the way. In this out of the way place Mr. Greer had seen a work of grace and a little assembly formed, so the saints there were mostly new born souls with a hunger for the Word. When the believers in Jerome heard that these brethren were going to visit them, they arranged a Conference for two or three days.

The primitive appearance of the place and the manifest interest among those young believers for the milk of the Word, reminded brother McClure of his early days in Gospel work in Ontario and were most inspiring to him.

Mr. McClure had stood the journey very well and during the three days' Conference in Houston, Texas, he ministered the Word with much help and gave one address on the "Great Woman" (2 Kings 4:9). He spoke of her exercise of heart and forethought as to the needs of a servant of God in making provision for his comfort. He went on to speak of hospitality as an outstanding Christian grace, and deplored the increasing lack of it in these days. During the Conference he received a

telegram from Los Angeles, stating that an old friend had died and he was wanted if possible to speak at the funeral. He was anxious to attend it, and many thought the train would be better means of travel for him. He and I left on Monday morning by the Sunset Route and we arrived in Los Angeles Wednesday morning. He was wonderfully sustained and that same afternoon he took part in the funeral services.

While our brother had recovered sufficiently to travel, he required someone with him, and for a few weeks longer he remained with Mr. F. Hillis in Los Angeles and took part in the usual meetings.

In November he arranged to go to the Oakland Conference at Thanksgiving time, and a number of the Lord's people put him on the train. In the morning he was met at the station in Oakland, but because of a minor accident that day he was deprived of the privilege of being at the Conference.

For a number of weeks our brother was confined to the house, something which he did not appreciate very much. On my way East early in January, 1939, I called to see him, and he greeted me with the words: "Why not wait until the weather is more favorable and I shall go with you to the East." He talked that afternoon about another trip to Ireland. His heart seemed set upon it and he had it all planned. He wanted me to accompany him on the trip and said, "We could leave from the Pacific Coast giving us a long ocean voyage by way of the Panama Canal." The doctor had encouraged him by telling him his heart was still in good condition. Sometime after I arrived home I had letters from him

still hopeful of recovering and again arranging about the trip.

In May I received a letter from brother McClure stating he was coming East with Miss McIntyre and asking me to meet him and take him around. His first stop was Akron, Ohio, to visit beloved Dan Becker.

Mr. Becker, a brother greatly beloved and a true shepherd in the Oakland Assembly had spent many years on the Pacific Coast and made his home at McIntyre's also. Mr. McClure and he were very close friends, but Mr. Becker had taken ill and was then being nursed in the home of his brother.

The meeting between those two brethren was very touching as in both cases the sands of time were sinking and it was only a short time until beloved Dan Becker was with the Lord.

Early in July I met Mr. McClure at the New York Terminal. He had become more feeble and was no longer able to travel alone. We remained in the city about a week. He enjoyed the Lord's Day at the 125th St. Assembly and also a night at the Bronx, and one night at Richmond Hill. I drove him to my home in Rhode Island and arranged meetings in Pawtucket, Providence, Boston and New Bedford. Many said it was wonderful how fresh and helpful his ministry was and he enjoyed much meeting many old friends.

In August we attended the Conference in Maine, but he had to be brought home when it was half over. After this he wanted to return to Oakland to see the eye specialist who still gave him hope that he would get back a measure of sight. Our brother wished to spend a short time in Detroit and we arrived there early one morning.

Again his ministry was much appreciated by the Lord's people in the city and he still liked to visit the sick, although at this time it was with difficulty that we got him from place to place.

While in Detroit Mr. McClure greatly desired to visit Mr. John Ferguson, who for fifty years was a well known herald of the Cross in the British Isles, United States, and Canada. As an Evangelist Mr. Ferguson had few equals, excelling in proclaiming the wonderful story of Calvary as well as the awful doom of the Christ rejector. His preaching had moved multitudes and through his ministry many were saved.

Mr. McClure and Mr. Ferguson had often ministered the Word together at large Conferences, but Mr. Ferguson was at this time nearing his Heavenly Home.

We brought Mr. McClure into the room and sat him down beside the bed where Mr. Ferguson lay. It was indeed stirring to me and a scene long to be remembered to be present at the meeting of these two soldiers of Christ, weary and worn after many years of wholehearted labor for the best of Masters. They conversed about the Lord they loved and served and of His unfailing faithfulness to them, and they wept together as they talked of the glories of Heaven. It seemed indeed like hallowed ground.

They bade each other farewell and after a little longer suffering and waiting beloved brother John Ferguson was called Home to glory.

We left for Cleveland and were at the Conference on Labor Day. Brother McClure took part a few times giving one address on the words "Now unto Him that is able to

do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

After the Conference in Cleveland Mr. McClure and Miss McIntyre left for Oakland, California.

The assemblies on the Pacific Coast arranged to take care of brother McClure. They appointed two local brethren, Mr. George White and Mr. E. Little of Goodyear Assembly in Los Angeles, to carry out this ministry. There was a monthly contribution sent from each Assembly and other Assemblies remembered him as well, so he lacked nothing. His eyes did not improve and in 1940 he was notified of the death of his sister in Los Angeles. This was the last of the immediate family circle as his brother Simpson had preceded her a few years.

He managed to be at the funeral and then remained for some time in Los Angeles. At some meetings I had, the Lord's people brought Mr. McClure along every night. He sat in the chair and prayed at the beginning of each meeting. He was always pleased to get out and said, "Well, I can still enjoy the Gospel."

In November Mr. McClure became very anxious to go "home." That was how he always spoke of the McIntyres, and when he got word about the Conference in Oakland coming on and a letter from the McIntyres saying they expected him home for it, he wanted very much to be on his way.

Each day as I went to see him his first words were "Have you heard of any one driving to Oakland or do you know anyone who would lend you an automobile to drive us up to Oakland?" The meetings were finishing and I talked the matter over with the brethren, suggesting

that I close on a certain night and leave the next night with Mr. McClure for Oakland. The suggestion met the approval of all, and we sent a message to Oakland advising them of our arrival. Next day as I went in to see him, his first words were—"Well, any more word about Oakland?"

"Yes, Mr. McClure."

"What is it?"

"We leave tonight by train arriving at 16th St. Oakland, in the morning and I have sent a message to the McIntyres. I am going to the depot to get the tickets and will be back to pick you up." What a pleased expression came over his face as he said, "All right."

While we were busily engaged packing his bags for the last time, he sat and wept. He always wanted to help in some way, but he just said, "I am sorry I can't help." We said, "It is a great pleasure you are giving the rest of us here, to do this service for you."

At the terminal quite a number of saints had gathered to say farewell, and they hired a wheel chair to take him to the train. On the way in the chair he said, "As Donald Ross used to say, 'Such kindness to an old man.'" The Lord's people were visibly affected at the parting that evening and some clung to him as they would to their father.

The Conference began November 21 and while sitting in a chair at the morning session, Mr. McClure gave his last Conference address from Psalm 127:

"This Psalm was not written to stir up more activity. In these days of such a nervous pace and concern about the things of time, many of the Lord's children lose

fellowship with God in their effort to secure these things. The world believes in building the house, but 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' Thank God for what follows in these verses. 'It is vain for you to rise up early and to sit up late.' The Lord puts his people at rest and gives them a sense of repose in Himself. While resting in Him, He provides for their needs, whatever they are, the needs of the body, or the needs of the soul. Instead of our becoming nervously occupied and busy, he says, 'Rest in me.' He 'giveth his beloved sleep.'

"Thank God we may know that in actual experience. Nearly 60 years ago, in following the Lord's Word, I gave up my position in a large place in Chicago. Mr. Donald Ross in talking to young men who desired to serve the Lord urged them to go forth looking to the Lord for only bed, food, and washing. In 1882 I went out in the Lord's work altogether and I was surprised to get more than just bed, food and washing. The Lord provided more than these to meet the needs we must find in the world. As the years went by there were things that tried us, but we always found love enough. If we had the power to choose over again, we believe by the grace of God we would do as we did—trust Him and find Him faithful. Thanks be to God we are found in Him, and He is faithful. Years ago when strong in body and able to go around we were cared for, and now, as an old man, broken in health and unfit for the things that we once did, what do we find? Not a care as to our path, and not a care as to our need. The Lord just seems to take it all in hand and we find the truth of that word, 'He giveth His beloved sleep.' He provides for them, and thank God, that is to be the way right to the end.

"I know the need of this Psalm, and I give you this portion of God's Word as something we should know in these meetings. May the Lord grant that this Conference of 1940 may go down as one of the best we have ever had—not that we are better prepared, but that He is able. The nervousness that leads people do this and that is not needed. He provides for His people who trust in Him. They rest in Him and He does everything else. May this Psalm speak to us for His Name's sake."

At the close of the meeting many remarked he fresh and inspiring were his words.

My last visit with him was in Sept., 1941. Brother Samuel Greer had just died and he said, "Think of Sam being called home and I am still left here, but," he added, "all is well."

The end came rather suddenly. On Dec. 4, 1941, the doctor examined him and told Mrs. McIntyre it would be all right to give him a little change. When this was mentioned to him he was pleased and said he would like to go to the beach, and they began to prepare for this trip. Friday to the surprise of all he came downstairs alone and could even tell them apart. Saturday morning, Dec. 6, Mrs. McIntyre had gone out to the store and a message followed her to come back immediately. When she returned she found Mr. McClure had passed away without a struggle. The portals of glory had opened and the ransomed spirit of beloved brother McClure had entered in to see that Blessed One in glory whom he had preached and served for more than sixty years.

The news spread rapidly by 'phone and wire and many hearts were moved. There was a deep sense of loss

among the Lord's people for "a Prince and Great Man" had passed away.

Chapter 33 The Funeral

Many were the expressions of deep sorrow and loss among the Lord's people in many lands as the news reached them that Mr. McClure had been called home. Tributes from aged and experienced saints who valued him and his ministry were sent from the colonies, South Africa, and the British Isles, all speaking of the great and noble standards of life that our beloved brother possessed.

During the long years Mr. McClure had spent in the Lord's service there were certain principles that governed his life. His standards were high and he sought to hold these in keeping with what is written in the Scriptures.

He went forth to preach wholly trusting in the Lord for guidance as to his path in service, and in full dependence on the Lord for his support. In his earlier years he was a true pioneer, and he was often tried as to financial need, but when more than enough came in to meet his own requirements, what was over went back to the Lord through His servants and their service, and as years went on his giving to the Lord increased. Servants of the Lord in the Gospel plowing their lonely furrow in new territory were made strong to labor by a letter and check from Mr. McClure. Preachers with families of small children were especially remembered by him in this way. Many a widow in her loneliness and sorrow, was made to sing for joy as she opened a letter from our brother with words of comfort and a substantial check to help her along. Aged brethren and sisters whom he had known in years gone by, valued for their liberality in the

Gospel, were remembered by him from the Lord's bounty. Indeed, giving was a grace he cultivated and he loved to pass on the Lord's portion sent him. Known to God alone is what Mr. McClure thus distributed. Some years it amounted even to thousands of dollars. Our brother's consideration for the children was well known. Wherever he stayed and children were in the home he would employ them to run errands for him, and then his hand was in his pocket to pay them well. The children loved to see Mr. McClure come along. Liberality and consideration were true of him at all times when he was traveling and requiring assistance from porters or working men.

Mr. McClure never married. He often told us it was not because he made any vows against it or that he did not at times long to have a home of his own, but "I just never seemed to have time" and he always kept busy with the Lord's work. Our brother never owned property nor did he make any provision for his old age.

One day in 1936 I drove him into our yard and the children ran out to greet us. He stood and looked around, greeted each of the children by name and then turning to me he said, "Well, you have a home and I am just a wanderer." He was a real pilgrim, a stranger on the earth, and followed his Master more than most, and when his funeral expenses were all paid there was nothing left.

The precious remains were removed to the "Grant D. Millar's Mortuaries." The day following was "Pearl Harbor" day, the whole Pacific Coast was in a state of excitement and war was in the air.

The funeral was arranged for Thursday, December 11. I left Detroit by train Sunday afternoon and Monday after leaving Chicago I met W. P. Douglas in the dining car. Although more than eighty years of age and in failing health, he had started that long journey of more than two thousand miles alone to be present at the funeral of his beloved brother and fellow-laborer in the Gospel.

We arrived in Oakland Wednesday morning and that day we viewed the remains of our brother. He lay in the casket as if asleep holding a Believers' Hymn Book in his hand.

The war-scare hindered some from coming, especially from Southern California, but notwithstanding all assemblies were represented. The funeral was conducted in Bethany Hall where our beloved brother had so often preached the Gospel and ministered the Word of God to believers, and he looked upon Bethany Hall as his home assembly for many years.

Funeral Service

Hymn: "A Little While," No. 14, Believers' Hymn Book, vv. 1, 3, 4 Address by Mr. J. T. Dickson Shall we read together 2 Samuel 3, verses 31, 32, 38, 39. "And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him. Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And the king, David himself, followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron; and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept. And the king said unto his servants, Knowing not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? And I am this day weak, though anointed king."

When the news reached me in Detroit last Lord's Day morning by wire that our beloved brother Mr. McClure had passed into the presence of the Lord the afternoon before, I had mingled feelings, as I thought that a great life was thus brought to a close; and then there came to mind these words spoken long ago, when one of Israel's sons was buried by none other than his sorrowing king. David, like others that day, stood at the bier, weeping brokenhearted, because of his loss of the one that was gone, and then he uttered these words to his servants, "Know ye not that a prince and a great man is fallen this day in Israel?"

It is not my purpose this afternoon to say much about Abner or about his noble life and the sad circumstances under which he was taken away. Suffice to say, he was a captain in the armies of Saul. He was a man that had a great interest in the kingdom and he spent his last days in diligent efforts to bring the people under the sway of David, God's anointed king. And David, who had watched him, and knew his value, felt weakened by the loss of such a man, and he summed up the life of Abner as "a prince and a great man." Now, a prince is one of noble birth, and as such, one who has been well trained and molded in his youth; a man that has high ideals and is outstanding among his fellows; a leader and one to be imitated. I am sure, dear friends, that as we think about our dear departed brother Mr. McClure, these words are very fitting—"A prince and a great man." Mr. McClure's greatness all sprang, we might say, from one very important event that transpired in his life, whereby he became a man of noble birth. I do not refer to his birth on Christmas day in 1857, when he was born after the flesh, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Simpson McClure, but I

speak of another birthday that he had sixteen years later, when his young heart was opened as he listened to the wondrous story of Calvary. It was upon that day when he rested his all for eternity on the finished work of Christ, that he experienced the new birth. I would like at this moment, to speak to any who may be here unconverted, for the truth that made such a change in Mr. McClure (the outcome of which has been seen and felt in many lands), is worth special mention, and we know it would be in accordance with the wishes of our departed brother, that the Gospel that he loved to proclaim so well to men and women should be told out to those "in this audience who know not his Saviour. "Be it known unto you, therefore, that through this Man, Christ Jesus, is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." By simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ you may have the forgiveness of all your sins this afternoon and leave this service rejoicing that your name is written in heaven.

As a new born babe in Christ, William J. McClure desired the sincere milk of the Word. He read it carefully and prayerfully and it wrought effectually in his life. Very soon after his conversion in the city of Belfast, Ireland, he was brought under the ministry of great men of God such as David Rea, James Smith, and James Campbell. There he listened to their stirring messages and through their ministry he was brought to see the truth of gathering in the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ. He took his place with the assembly of that city, known as the Old Lodge Road Gospel Hall, which I think was the only assembly in the city at that time. The truth he learned and loved and practiced then was a stay to him all through.

Mr. McClure was a deep student of the Holy Scriptures, and that was wherein his great strength lay, for what he learned he made his own and obeyed. He was like one of that noble band in the days of Ezra who were put in trust with the precious vessels of the Temple to bring them from Babylon to Jerusalem where they were to be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, for spiritually this would remind us of the exhortation, "Guard that which is committed to the trust"; and this Mr. McClure sought to do.

As a Gospel preacher he excelled above many. We have with us today Mr. W. P. Douglas, one of his fine fellow-laborers, and he will be able to tell you better than I of his beginnings as a herald of the Cross.

And as a teacher Mr. McClure had few equal. There was nothing fanciful or sentimental in his ministry, but he sought to get down to the deep things of God's blessed Word and to give the sense thereon. He was a real expositor. In dealing with a difficult subject he had the faculty of making it so simple and lucid that the people of God could take it in and profit thereby for years to come. Truly a prince and a great man is fallen today in Israel. Some would say he has not fallen but is promoted. That is true. But while it gives us real joy to know that he is promoted to the Lord's presence, yet, as to his service and his help, we mourn his loss.

I can look back to my first acquaintance with our dear brother McClure. It was in 1904 at the Lurgan Conference and in his address that day he desired to help young Christians, and to illustrate his point he spoke of Timothy as a disciple of the Lord, and as one who labored with Paul in the Gospel. In this he

demonstrated his gift as a shepherd, who had the natural care for the people of God. In 1916 I became more intimately acquainted with him and still more in the summer of 1917 when he came to Nova Scotia for the first time, and he and I together preached the Gospel in a tent in Sydney. On Saturday and Sunday nights he loved to proclaim the good news in the open air. His ministry was greatly blessed and souls were saved that year. Since then he has been like a father to me; he treated me as a son, and not me only, for he always took a deep interest in the work of all his brethren, and in a practical way helped those laboring in the regions beyond.

I accompanied him to the old country in 1927, and there he had great meetings in Belfast. Over two thousand people, gathered night after night to listen to his expositions of the Word of God. In his ministry he exalted the Person of his blessed Lord and the great work of Calvary and in this sphere he excelled in unfolding the glories of the blessed Son of God.

In expounding the types and shadows, his ministry was especially rich, as he unfolded the person of the Lord Jesus, His high-priestly ministry, His essential glory and His coming glories and in all ever bringing before the Lord's people their responsibility of being gathered alone to the peerless name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus he sought to build up and to strengthen the assemblies. I never knew of him to give any thought to anything else, than the building up and establishing of the assemblies of God's people according to the Word of God. I am sure as we think of the many and varied gifts of our dear brother we can say that "a prince and a great man is fallen in Israel."

It was my great privilege, when he became weaker, to take him around, and I had the honor of bringing him on his last train journey from Los Angeles to Oakland where he spent his last days.

In closing I would leave these words with you in regard to our brother McClure:

“Only one life,” shall the mourners say

As they look at last on the senseless clay

So soon to be laid beneath the sod,

“’Twas a noble life, well lived for God.”

Address by Mr. W. P. Douglas

We shall read a few verses in 2 Timothy 4, verses 6 and 7: “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, and I have kept the faith.” As I was musing a little this morning regarding this present meeting, I thought of these words, and I believe it was the Spirit of God who reminded me of them. Here is that man called Paul. He was facing execution. In a little while he would be at home with the One he had loved and served so long and so well. And that day he could say, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” These words especially impressed themselves upon my heart—“I have finished my course.” led me to think of my first meeting with our dear brother, Mr. William John McClure, and I can assure you that few men have ever had a place in my heart nearer or dearer than this dear brother. He left his work in the Deering Harvester Company after Thanksgiving day in 1884. A few weeks after that he traveled to Canada and there I met him for the first time

in a village called Cannington in Ontario, and a few days later, I had another meeting with him in a village about four miles down from there. He suggested we should serve together in the Gospel and we were yoked together, I believe, by God's will in His service. We preached together, we ate together, we walked together we slept together, for years. And a more faithful and diligent servant of the Lord Jesus Christ I have not known. My heart was won to him, and I believe it was reciprocated on his part to me. Many a long, long, walk we had when roads were not what they are today, often being covered deep with mud. I remember the years we spent under a tent, eating and sleeping under canvas, and where we were gladdened to see the grace of God manifested in the saving of sinners.

After that visit to Ontario he came to this part of the country and he labored here, as you all know, for many years, earnestly and diligently, and God was pleased to bless his labors in California. Assemblies were formed and God's dear people were established by his ministry. Now dear brother McClure is at rest and at home with the One he loved and served.

"I have finished my course." The writer of these words—Paul—was characterized by three particular things. The first was his devotion to the Person of God's Son. The next was his labor in the Gospel and the last was his love and care for the people of God, and I am sure, in a measure at least we could see a facsimile of these in our dear brother Mr. McClure. He was devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ. He loved Him, His Name was dear to him, His Person was precious to him. Yes, but he also loved to preach the Gospel, and as the result of his labors there are some in this gathering who know him as their

spiritual father through the Gospel he preached. Also, many in this audience can certify as to his love and diligent care for them and the people of God.

Dear brethren and dear sisters, it gives me joy to add to the testimony you have already heard regarding our departed brother, Mr. William John McClure; he was a faithful servant of Christ, a true yokefellow, and he was also a teacher of the blessed truths of God.

The Lord then bless to us this afternoon our coming together to this special service in connection with the passing away of our beloved brother. I want to leave one verse with you before I sit down: "The memory of the just is blessed" (Prov. 10:7). I am sure that this is verified in the case of our dear brother McClure. The memory of him is blessed to us who have known him and have loved him.

Address by Mr. William M. Rae

I want to read in the book of Revelation, chapter 21, verses 1-5. The reason for my reading those few verses this afternoon is because of my last visit with Mr. McClure in the home of our dear brother McIntyre a few weeks ago. We read these few verses to him and as we spoke about these wonderful words, while he was sitting in his chair, so frail and full of days, his eyes moistened as he said, "Give us more!" So we dwelt a little further on these glorious truths, then had a little prayer together, he joining in, adding his hearty Amen. They are precious words and they were maybe more precious to him than to some of us today, for he knew he was reaching the border land. He knew these words would soon be a happy and glorious and eternal experience to him. His expression was "How wonderful, how

wonderful!" He knew it would be wonderful, beloved friends, when the hand of the eternal God that holds the universe, Who by the word of His power flung millions of planets into space, that blessed hand should wipe the last tear from every eye of those who know Him. Tears are being shed today. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." And with these thoughts in mind, his soul seemed to be gladdened and so was my soul cheered by the realization these words would be true of every one of us very, very soon. These words are not meant for dying saints only. They are for living men and living women.

A voice is silenced, which we will never hear on earth again. This occasion is a stop signal on the highway of life. Activities were laid aside by many of you today. Office activities were dropped, various and domestic cares laid aside.

What makes this moment a hallowed one? We have been brought together in the realization of the very presence of God. His precious word brings us face to face with eternity and there is nothing more greatly to be prized, for this world is empty. It is a hollow sham, a scene of blighted hopes. But we have been drawn aside for a time from the bustle of life to lend an ear to the voice of God, that we too may number our days.

I am not here to eulogize our brother. When here on earth he abhorred flattery. If he had a voice to express himself today he would say, "No, do not do it." But I must say one or two things about him, even though he

deplored eulogy. He was a man of high honor and integrity. This I know to be true for in the last thirty-five years we have been a great deal together and have often been fellow-laborers. Like our brother who has already spoken to you, we traveled together, and we prayed together and we slept together and preached together. He would rebuke you to your face but never speak ill of you behind your back. He is now with the Lord, and I can say with those who knew him longest, that every memory is truly valuable. He was a prince of a man. Those who have, during the years gone by, listened to his ministry, know the value of our dear departed brother's teaching. Because of his unique ability, his gift of expounding the Word, his messages were written indelibly in the mind, and though years have passed, are still fresh in memory. And our dear brother is now enjoying in reality what he many times spoke of, and what he refreshed the hearts of God's people with—those wonderful truths of the enjoyment of the believer when at last in the presence of the Lord. "In thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."

The Lord bless His beloved people who today remember thus our departed brother. He is gone on to all that is eternal. May it lead us to a deeper sense of real need of living for God and, shall we say, seek to mold our lives as he did, in seeking to reflect and fulfill the life of Christ on earth. He is now with the One He so loved to serve.

Service at Mountain View Cemetery

Conducted by Mr. D. R. Charles

Let us sing one verse of the hymn, "I'm but a stranger here, heaven is my home."

Beloved friends, I would like to read to you from 1 Corinthians 15, verses 51, 52, 53. This passage refers to the portion of those who have died in Christ: "This corruptible will put on incorruption." And they are reassuring, comforting words to us at this time as we lay aside the body of our beloved brother. We know full well, from God's divine revelation, that this is not the end. The body shall be raised, not as before corruptible, but raised triumphantly by the power of our risen Lord, raised in incorruption.

The precious remains were laid away in Mountain View Cemetery to await that resurrection morning when the redeemed of all ages shall hear the trumpet sound; the dead raised and the living changed, and together caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Nevertheless an indescribable feeling of loss came over us as we left the cemetery that afternoon. In two weeks more we were again on the same spot and laid away the body of beloved Mr. John McIntyre just a few yards from where Mr. McClure, his old friend, lay.

Poems by William J. McClure

The One Who Took "The Lowest Room"

Creation (Job 38:4-7)

By faith we scan the universe,

And see Thee on the throne;

The heavenly host, adoring,

All Thy high glories own.

The Cherubim and Seraphim

Proclaim Thy might, O Lord

The Holy, Holy, Holy One,

For evermore adored.

Such was Thy majesty divine

When sang "the sons of God,"

While gazing on that universe

Brought forth by Thine own word.

Incarnation (Luke 2:9-14)

And when again they sang with joy

'Twas not at earth's fair birth,

But at that wondrous birth of Thine,

The Lord of heaven and earth.

Emmanuel, even "God with us,"

Jesus, Thou Prince of Peace,

"The Word made flesh," true Deity,

Whose praises never cease.
Though lowly in the manger crib,
Thou was the Lord from heaven:
To the incarnate God—God manifest—
This humblest place was given.
Humiliation (Luke 14:7-11)
Though higher than earth's highest ones,
Thou took'st "the lowest room,"
The greater than the greatest,
A servant to become.
And, oh, what grace excelling,
Lord Jesus, in Thee shone:
Of all the kingdom's servants
Thou wast the lowliest One!
Exaltation (Phil. 2:5-11)
"Give this Man place," the Father saith,
"The highest place and name
Belong to Him, to Him alone,
Who the Slave of slaves became."
Although creation's sovereign Lord,
In grace He stooped to fill
The lowliest place upon the earth;
He served and serveth still.
The Name that once was banned by men,

In heaven is praised alone;
Jesus, Jehovah's Servant,
Is on Jehovah's Throne.
God's Good Pleasure
Oh, wondrous theme for endless praise
That ransomed souls shall ever raise—
"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him."
The Father owns the Eternal Son,
The seraphs the thrice-holy One,
The hosts of heaven adore Him.
His pleasure was to do God's will—
'Twas thus He bore sin's awful ill
In Calvary's dark hour.
Comforters He sought, but found not one,
For there God left His Holy One
In man and Satan's power.
But now in heavenly glory bright,
We see the Son in power and might,
The only worthy One.
In Him the Godhead's fullness dwells
And Heaven's praise for ever tells
God's pleasure in His Son.
God is now "pleased" to set apart
Those vessels fashioned by His art

His wisdom to declare;
And “pleased” to make the Gospel story
Bring many sons to Him in glory,
Who shall Christ’s image bear.
“There is one body,” Christ its Head;
The members, those for whom He bled,
Each in the body set;
It hath “well pleased” His sovereign will
That all their proper place might fill,
And thus their needs be met.
Soon shall we see Jehovah’s pleasure,
Prosper through Christ in fullest measure,
His Son with glory crowned.
That glory, soon to dawn, shall show
God’s joy, the fruit of deepest woe,
God’s King by all be owned.
“The Heavens Were Opened”
Four Glimpses Into the Glory
The Father, the Son, and the Spirit of God (Matt 3:16)
“The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand:
O Israel, hail the day:
Ye sinful sons of Jacob, attend,
And hasten obey:
Repent, repent, and owning your guilt,

Be buried in Jordan's flood,
Confessing you sin of a broken Law,
And deserving the wrath of God.
In the river of death, 'the Descender,'
Find in Jordan your fittest place:
'Legal works' no longer render,
But take the ground of 'grace.'"
To John the sinners and publicans came,
Confessing, their guilt deserved wrath,
And with eyes suffused, heads bowed in shame,
They were plunged in the river of death.
But mystery great of love divine,
We see God's only Son,
Into that river of death descend,
O'erwhelming the Holy One.
But He arose again from the watery grave
And now, with what joy do we hear
The silence of centuries broken at last,
By a Voice speaking loud and clear:
"This is My Son, My Beloved,
In Whom is all My delight!"
And then, from the same opened Heavens,
We see God's Spirit alight
On the head of Him who descended,

But rose again in might.
Foretold thus in type and figure
Was the day when wrath's billows did roll
Over Christ immersed in God's judgment,
When the water came into His soul,
But out of the darkness of judgment
He arose, by His own holy might:
From the darkness of death and hades
He returned to Heaven's light.
And the Father, to show His good pleasure
In the finished work of His Son,
Sent the Spirit "to take out a people"
Unto Christ the risen One.
Crowned With Glory and Honor (Acts 7:56)
Once more the heavens are opened
Revealing our Lord within,
No longer the humble, the lowly,
Who came to suffer for sin:
For while Stephen, His faithful martyr,
Stands before his foes serene
He looks up into the heavens
And is transported with the scene.
Sees there in that brightest glory,
Upon the Father's throne,

A Man at the right hand of power,
And Jesus is that One.
And thus all Israel must learn,
Yes, the sons of Jacob, must see
That their blessing entirely dependeth
On the Man they impaled on the Tree.
Christ and the Church (Rev. 4:1-4; 5:6-12; 19:11-14)
Once again heaven's door is opened,
Oh, wonderous and blessed thought!
'Tis opened wide that we may see
The saints to glory brought.
Both as "kings" and as "priests" they are sealed
Within that heavenly realm:
As "the living ones" is their "royal" type
While "the elders" their "priesthood" proclaim
The time has now come that the earth
Shall be ruled by the Christ of God,
And one with Him in that heavenly rule
Is His Church redeemed by blood:
They shared His humiliation,
For Him they suffered loss:
Enduring for Him tribulation
They did not shun the cross.
Now, as triumphant victors,

They follow in His train:
Those linked with Him in the desert,
Now share in His glorious reign.
For the might of hell He did vanquish
When, on Calvary, in weakness, He died,
And the saints, the fruit of that anguish,
With Him in victory ride.

“The Son of God”—“The Son of Man”
(Ezek. 1:26; Rev. 4:2-3)

Do you ask of my peace the secret,
Poor and sinful though I am:
Behold on ‘the throne of glory’
“One like to the Son of Man.”
Once on the Cross of sorrow,
On Him my guilt was laid,
Now seated, enthroned in yon glory,
Proves atonement has been made.
For constancy in suffering
Read the lesson of the Cross:
And learn that those who Him honor,
Shall never suffer loss.
Our path must still be downward
To be like unto His own,
But it leads, as it led our Leader,

To the glory and the Throne.

Recollections

by W. P. Douglas

Cleveland, Ohio

My recollection of our first meeting was at Cannington, Ontario, in 1884. He was 26, I, 24 years of age. He had but recently left his employment with the Deering Harvester Company to devote his entire time to the Lord's service. For some time prior to his leaving Chicago, he, in company with other young men (among them Mr. Robert Telfer) had been under the tuition of that faithful and honored servant of Christ, Mr. Donald Ross of Chicago.

After our meeting in Cannington, Mr. McClure expressed the desire to unite with me in the Lord's service.

In the early part of the summer of 1884, we pitched a tent at Woodville, Ontario, a village on Lake Simcoe. We found it "Hard-Pan", an expression of dear Donald Ross. But we were not without a sign of the Lord blessing His Word.

We decided about the middle of July to move our tent over to Kirkfield, a village about eighteen miles distant. On a hot July day, drawing our tent and its belongings on a farmer's wagon to the new site, we pitched the tent. It was quite a novelty to the folks of the village to see the two strange and unordained preachers coming unheralded and unknown. The attendance at the beginning was very encouraging. This, with indications of the Lord's favor, stirred up the bitter opposition of a young preacher, who sought to hinder and dissuade the

people from coming, by wicked reports of what was preached and practiced. But God over-ruled and saved a few.

The winter of 1884 was spent at a small, out-of-the way place named Cosson Siding, near Balsam Lake. Having neither horse, buggy, bicycle nor automobile we depended on the old-time reliable method of locomotion—walking. Houses were few and far between. A ten mile walk over rough roads with banks of snow in winter, and sunbaked ruts in summer, was a common occurrence. But we proved the truth of that promise: “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.”

In the summer of 1886 we pitched our tent about five miles from the Village of Victoria Road, starting the latter part of May and continuing until the middle of September. During that time we were greatly cheered by the sudden and unexpected arrival of our beloved brethren, W. L. Falkner and F. W. Crook, who relieved us for a couple of weeks. Being tired and weary we were exceedingly glad of their help.

Having neither synod nor conference, either to help or to hinder, the Lord, in the winter of 1886 opened up a preaching place for us in the home of a friendly farmer. This was situated on the shores of Balsam Lake, near Victoria Road. We were encouraged by a well filled house nightly for some weeks, and God gladdened our hearts by giving blessing on the Word preached.

In the summer of 1887 (The Queen’s Jubilee), Trenton Falls, a village fourteen miles distant was tried. The attendance was not cheering. The aged Protestant preacher and the Roman Catholic priest combined in

their efforts, publicly and privately, to hinder the people from coming to the meetings.

The next year, having secured a new tent, we decided to pitch it at Lindsay, the county seat of Victoria County, a town then of over six thousand. We provided ourselves with two thousand Gospel Heralds and spent two days before starting our meetings, in going from door to door and inviting the people to come to the tent. We were cheered by fair promises but disappointed by their failure to be fulfilled. It was indeed "hard-pan" again. I was pleased to be relieved by our brother, Mr. Robert Telfer. Soon after he and brother McClure moved the tent to a place named Nesbitt's Corners, a short distance from Victoria Road. There again God was pleased to bless His Word in the salvation of some. Soon after, brothers McClure and Telfer joined together in the bonds of the Gospel until beloved brother McClure journeyed to California where he labored long and faithfully with others who now rest from their labors.

by J. J. Rouse

Calgary, Alberta

It was in the year 1894 that I first met Brother McClure. I had in the month of May of that year been commended to the work of the Lord, and I was preaching up in Muskoka, at Huntsville. In the latter part of December of that year I was at the railway depot, and when the train from Winnipeg stopped at the station I boarded it in a hurry and distributed Gospel papers to the passengers. After going through the train I was returning through one of the coaches when a tall man with black hair and a long black beard accosted me, and shook my hand very

heartily, saying "My dear young man, thank God for the good seed you are sowing, keep on at it."

As the train began to move I had to get off, but he put into my hand an expression of practical fellowship. This with his words of cheer greatly encouraged me, and I shall never forget this my first meeting with brother McClure. He was on his way to Orillia to attend the conference which at that time was held at Christmas. I was able to attend the conference and I shall never forget the spiritual lift I received through his ministry at that time.

I have heard him preach since on Ecc. 12:10-11, "The preacher sought out acceptable words and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the master of assemblies which are given from one shepherd."

All of this was manifestly true of Brother McClure's ministry not only at this Orillia conference but throughout the forty-five years in which I had the privilege of listening to him.

During this conference, beside the Lord's people from the different assemblies in the district, a number who had been saved in brother Alexander Marshall's meetings some years before were in attendance. These folk still clung to their denominational ties and brother McClure with his wonderful gift as a teacher, spoke much upon separation unto the Lord, from the world in all its different aspects, ecclesiastical, social and political. These denominational Christians were so affected by his ministry that several of them came on Lord's day morning and sat in the back of the hall and

observed God's order throughout the meeting. At the close they confessed they were fully persuaded through Mr. McClure's ministry and what they had observed that morning, that this was the way of the Lord. They said that when the meeting began they expected to see one man acting as a chairman, calling upon one and another to speak, as this was what they were accustomed to, but here was a meeting of three or four hundred of the Lord's people controlled and guided by the Spirit of God alone for one hour and a half and not a single mark of disorder. To them the presence of the Lord was manifestly real. They saw God's assembly was an organism, it had life in its self to function and did not need a man hired to run the organization.

Shaftsbury Hall where the Christians regularly met was all too small for the Lord's Day conference meetings, so the large opera house was rented for that day.

In the Lord's day afternoon meeting Mr. McClure delivered one of the most wonderful addresses I ever listened to. He read Matthew 18:20 and Hebrews 13:10-16 and spoke upon gathering unto the Lord alone outside the camp of the world's religious organizations. As a young believer just delivered from ecclesiastical bondage that address was a means of great enlightenment and stimulus to me and it resulted in a good number of those Christians saved in Mr. Marshall's meetings being led to gather alone in the name of the Lord Jesus.

About four years later at a conference in a country-place east of Orillia I again received wonderful help and instruction not only from his ministry but from an action of brother McClure's at that time. A man was present at

the Conference who was a troubler in his home assembly. He had been saved at Mr. McClure's meetings some years before. He was not guilty of anything for which he could be put out of the assembly, but what happened at this conference in Mr. McClure's attitude toward him gave me to see the difference between internal and external discipline. I happened to be speaking with brother McClure when this man approached smiling and with hand extended to greet brother McClure. I confess I was surprised, and the man was much more surprised when brother McClure put his hand behind his back and refused to shake hands with him. Then in a firm but gracious way he spoke to him about his conduct. The effect was striking, for the man broke down, and confessed his sin with tears. Then there was a hearty hand-shake. This was a very practical object lesson to me in connection with internal discipline. Once again at this conference I was greatly helped by our brother's ministry. In one meeting he read John 14:6 and Acts 16:17—The way of salvation; Acts 19:9—The way of service; and Acts 24:14—the way of worship, reading from the English Revised Version where capital letters are used in connection with "the way."

Brother McClure and brother Donald Munro were the two most stalwart men I have met in not only opening up the truth, but in maintaining it in their lives. We might well give heed to the word in Hebrews 13:7, Remember them that are your guides, who have spoken unto you the word of the Lord; whose faith follow, considering the end of their manner of life.

Appreciations

by F. C. Marshall

Portland, Oregon

Brother Wm. J. McClure was to me like a father naturally, as well as counsellor and instructor spiritually and for the greatest part of my Christian life I considered him to be beyond failure. His word and advice were by me taken without question. Even now with more mature judgment I cannot convince myself that there is any one else that could fill his place and if my life was to be lived over again, I would not hesitate in my choice concerning all I have met or known in deciding Wm. J. McClure as the cream and crown of all for me. I would not mar a true picture by magnifying his virtues and minimizing his faults, for faults he had, but fewer than most people.

I believe he lived too close to the Lord he loved and served to pre-meditatingly and deliberately injure any one. His judgment may not have been always the best, but in the main and on the whole, he was true as steel and sometimes as sharp. He was a dignified Irish gentleman possessing high standards. He failed by trying to impose these standards upon unwilling subjects, a position that can only be acquired by slow and painful processes. As an Evangelist he was clear and faithful, as a pastor tender, yet exacting as a teacher. Many times have I witnessed his audience melted to tears as he so affectionately and tenderly presented Christ Jesus our Lord. God gifted him with the power to visualize and impart truth reaching to profoundest depths in the sweetness of simplicity. One of the

valuable assets of his life was the gift of giving. To me, he never seemed happier than when he was being used in finding an outlet of expression for this prominent characteristic. He gathered to give in temporal as well as in spiritual things. I wish we had a few more after his mould to perpetuate this waning practice especially among preachers.

Some six years ago at a Canadian Conference in Forest, Ontario, Wm. J. McClure gave an address that most young preachers could profit by hearing and taking to heart. It reflects the real reason for his life usefulness to the assemblies planted by his labors and watered by his ministry, when he was exercised about engaging in full time service as an Evangelist. He first consulted with older brethren then engaged in this field of service in whom he had confidence. The encouragement he received was this: "If the Lord has called you He will prove you and you will be satisfied with bed, board and washing." Well, during a year of plowing, planting and reaping while bearing the yoke in the strength of his youth he received the promised satisfying portion of bed, board and washing, and in addition, he had also given to him gifts in coin, ten cent pieces, twenty-five cent pieces, the largest denomination being a fifty-cent piece, in all amounting to five dollars. His was surely a humble beginning but the Lord was in it which proved that godliness with contentment is great gain. Having his food and raiment he was therewith content. But we get a view of the true and lasting value of this service, for the Lord saw to it that souls were being saved which in after years proved to be some of the best material for the building of assemblies. He laid a good foundation and instructed others how to build thereon. He served

the Lord Christ and that day will declare that such labors are not in vain in the Lord. For it is of the Lord we receive the reward of the inheritance. What a contrast this life is to the many present day beginnings. I heard Donald Ross once say that some young men could swallow a sermon written by some one else and throw it up again amazingly well in all its parts but unmasticated, undigested, and unassimilated by themselves. Sermons were not brought up so by Wm. J. McClure: he brought his down; he was not slothful but roasted well what he took in hunting.

I first met W. J. McClure when a child of ten some sixty odd years ago in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, at the McNab St. Gospel Hall Sunday School. My recollection of him, as he then impressed me, was that of a tall, strong, handsome, serious young man: intelligent and courageous, most promising in every way for worldly success. But, thank God, he was not to be used that way in His purposes, but as a chosen vessel in a much higher calling and more blessed service.

In the year of 1893 I listened to his first sermon in Portland, Oregon, in a small hall over Parrott's Music Store on Union Avenue. Though unsaved at that time and unable to understand his subject which was on the "Churches of Asia," his spiritual earnestness interested me.

From the year of 1897, shortly after I was saved, our home was his home while he was in Portland. Together with John D. Mc Fadyen, a gifted young preacher (who was drowned when his steamer, The Columbus, was rammed by a lumber schooner while on its way from Oakland to Portland in 1904), Brother McClure gave

much of his time and service at Victoria and Vancouver, B.C., with frequent visits to the prairies, to Portland, San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Monrovia, Pomona and many other Southern California meetings. For a long time the West Coast got the lion's share of his service. My family and myself had a special claim on him. He seemed to belong to us. All my children called him Uncle McClure and he was still Uncle to them even after they were married and had their families.

Brethren McClure, Monypenny, and Hunter held tent meetings here in 1895. A number of souls were saved, among them representatives of three families of the wealthiest of Portland at that time: the Bayes family, Buftons, Roberts, Wests, Singletons and others. Most of these are at home with the Lord but many of them made real history.

He was always helping, either paying the rent for the hall, or buying blinds; always as much or more interested in the hall and the Christians as any local brother.

He never seemed to relish listening to gossip. Many times he has cut me short, not allowing me to finish information I thought worth telling. He did not fail to expose to you your own faults, but just let any one else say anything unjustly detrimental to your character in his hearing and they were due to receive a smarting rebuke.

He was a faithful and loyal friend. Many a check has he received that he never cashed, but indorsed and mailed on to some laboring brother that he believed was more in need of it than himself. This was his common practice. In later years I would venture to say to him, "You should

save some of the money that is given to you.” He would look at me as he only could, and would say, “I have enjoyed living in dependence on the Lord all my life and would not change now.” A chief pleasure in life to him was to have the wherewithal to give to others.

He delighted to get something fresh from the Word, therefore his messages were outstanding at our conferences. Personally I have received from him the most real sound and helpful instruction and encouragement, and not alone from his ministry in the Word but linked with it his consistent practice.

God used him to instruct and encourage Christians to abide faithful. He never left the divine path of separation. If he wounded others, it could be said his words were the faithful wounds of a friend. Though he seemed severe at times, it oftentimes proved that his judgment was opportune and necessary. On the whole he was not given to extremes, and hence he suffered much from two extreme factions for not submitting to their line of things. He was so well fortified by the Word as to his path and position that his challenge in itself was a consistent and persistent life supported by the Word which was not inviting for contest. He always spoke plainly and I never heard it said by any that they could not hear or understand his language. His articulation was one hundred per cent. One can confidently say his life’s ambition and soul’s desire was to see souls saved and assemblies grow and prosper in spirit. His time and talent were dedicated to the Lord for this express purpose—a channel of blessing to others. If he failed it was only in trying to force others to rise to his practice or standards of life.

As an Irishman he was not lacking in humor or wit but it was held back for the good of others, though it frequently leaked out, as for instance when he said "You would not take a sledge hammer to kill a mosquito on a brother's forehead." This illustration he used to impress the need of gentleness in our service for others; as if it were a delicate operation in its administration, when good intentions might be ruined by lack of discretion or good judgment.

Brother Alexander Marshall wrote me from Scotland telling of the great expectation manifested for Mr. McClure's ministry and the great response—large crowds everywhere he went in Scotland and Ireland. His punctuality in opening and closing a meeting on time was an outstanding practice of his life. Unless sickness prevented, he never missed a meeting, an example of the importance and seriousness with which he considered all meetings.

Some fifteen years ago he was holding a week's meetings during winter. It had snowed heavily all night and all day making it impossible for street cars to operate on schedule. Mrs. Marshall and I did our best to persuade him that no one would be out, for we would be compelled to walk miles in deep snow, and most Christians living at a distance could not possibly make it; but nothing would deter him—a meeting had been announced and he must be there. So off we started and what a task we had trudging through the deep snow to get there and find only the janitor present. When laboring through the drifts to get home he said he was glad he went and was not disappointed at no one showing up, but he was satisfied he had done his duty and was content.

His ministry was to the heart. Christians always thought more of their Saviour after listening to his messages and more determined to love and serve Him better, more willing to let the world go by, to know no gain or loss, their only shame their sinful self, their glory all the cross. His ability never lifted him above the poorest and weakest saint. He often spoke in the tenderest terms of some dear old bed ridden isolated saint, telling how they had ministered to him by their happy enduring faith. From his store of accumulated knowledge he always managed to select what the mind and heart of the youngest Christian would grasp—his aim was sure, and never over the heads of his audience. He had the ability to impart the richest truths in the simplest manner and form, and yet able to challenge every interference to the spiritual well being of assemblies. Many who posed as teachers vanished after an interview with Mr. McClure. He protected the assemblies and felt keenly any departure from the simplicity of assembly order as a lack of progress in spiritual growth. He greatly appreciated assembly fellowship gifts, not for the supply of needs alone, but because of the fact that assemblies were made richer, not poorer, by their giving. Developing in others what he knew was well pleasing to God by being an example in himself, he loved himself to give first, and then to see this gift developed in others.

His gentle, aristocratic appearance worked well in his favor. I got a ticket on my auto for overparking while we were shopping. We went together to the Police Station to pay the customary fine of one dollar. When the desk sergeant asked why I had over-parked, Mr. McClure immediately braced himself in his characteristic way and answered for me by saying “I am the cause,

gentlemen, of his getting this ticket. I am a visitor in your City and for looking after me he is paying for this neglect." That was quite enough. One look at him turned the whole situation. The ticket was torn up and we were dismissed with a pleasant smile.

This is only a sample, but one always felt, at least I felt that my prestige and little importance was elevated many degrees by his imposing personality.

Brother McClure's work still lives in the heart and life of many. Just a few days ago a brother addressing the Assembly, remarked — "In those happy days when Brother McClure unfolded the Scriptures I could not understand, nor appreciate as I do now, that I was taking in the teaching that has preserved my own life and the assembly's. Richer, simpler or more practical instruction has never been given. It is fresher in my mind today than when he delivered it then."

On a return trip from the Calgary conference he called by phone about eleven in the evening advising us that he and two of the Lord's servants were on their way and would be home in about an hour. He understood all would be welcome as it was one of his many homes where he still could get three beds, board and washing if necessary, and auto service included. They stayed for a few meetings and a young man was saved.

We can continue to admire and follow every grace-producing virtue of our esteemed and much missed brother. Mr. McClure surely had a work on earth to do and thank God he did it well. His personality, spiritual gift and ability he wisely used in view of eternity.

by W. J. Scott

South Africa

I welcome the opportunity of giving an account of what I know of Mr. McClure's travels in South Africa.

Mr. McClure visited South Africa on three different occasions, first in 1905 and then again in 1932, when I first met him, and later in 1935.

During his first visit, he had large revolutionary meetings in and around Capetown, going on to Johannesburg and later right up to Southern Rhodesia. At those meetings many of the Dutch folk were reached and some of those families are still in the assemblies. A great many of those who attended the meetings have passed on, but a few remain, amongst whom is a Dutch brother who is now the chief prosecutor of the Inland Revenue Court of South Africa. And he declares that, if required to do so, he would have paid Five Pounds per meeting to have been present. Describing the effect those meetings had he said, "Mr. McClure turned the Cape Colony upside down."

I first met Mr. McClure on his South African visit during 1932, when he stayed in our home for more than six months. Before reaching Johannesburg he had been several months in the country and had had meetings in and around Capetown and at Wellington and Durban. After several months' meetings in Johannesburg, and along the Gold-reef towns, at which meetings he found it very difficult to arouse any interest in the things of God, he and I left for up North by car, a trip that was to take us right up into the Belgian Congo, some two thousand seven hundred miles North of Capetown. We had meetings at Bulawayo and then went East as far as Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia where the meetings were

well attended. During these meetings at Salisbury, the Minister of Finance, for Southern Rhodesia, the second in office to the Prime Minister, attended, I think all the meetings, and described Mr. McClure as the man who could speak for an hour without drawing his breath. Returning to Bulawayo we then went on North through Northern Rhodesia into the Belgian Congo.

Africa, North of Bulawayo, is very thinly populated and one can travel long distances without meeting any white person. It had always been Mr. McClure's ambition to see wild Africa, to travel through its bush and jungle and see the different species of buck in their native air, and to visit the Victoria Falls and travel into Central Africa, and all this we were able to accomplish in thirteen weeks covering nine thousand odd miles. I remember him remarking how good the Lord had been to him, granting him in his old age, this life-long desire.

During this trip (Mr. McClure was then already an old man with a weak stomach) I had great difficulties in getting him suitable food. One remarkable experience was getting through a tract of sand, some two hundred and seventy miles long, with the car swaying from side to side, taking pretty well, its own course, I holding on to the wheel and Mr. McClure holding on to the side of the car. On several occasions his face looked yellow and his lips blue, I was afraid he might collapse. I had to stop occasionally and give him a stimulant. I think that that trip was easily the greatest experience of his life and in some respects of mine too. I have traveled, in distance, some fourteen times around the world, all in Africa, and have worn out ten American cars, and flown over a good part also, but that trip was equal to anything prior to it or since.

Mr. McClure was the one outstanding example of all that he preached. We are deeply grateful to the Lord that we were ever privileged to know and have in our home for so long such an honored servant of Christ. And we may yet talk it over again in happier circumstances on that great day. There is perhaps no family which will feel Mr. McClure's home-call more keenly than we do. And we trust that what we learnt by example and in conversation and through his ministry will redound to God's glory.

by John Monypenny

Egypt

My earliest recollection of meeting with dear brother McClure was at Victoria Road Conference in December, 1890. That was one of my first Conferences, and it proved a very searching time for me. At times I was terribly discouraged. Before the Lord's Day evening Gospel meeting brethren McClure and Telfer asked me to take part in it. I tried to refuse as I felt utterly unworthy, but they kindly urged me, and to my surprise I had some joy in giving a short message. Another recollection somewhat later, carries me back to Toronto. I was in the East End Assembly (afterwards Broadview). Brother McClure visited us for a Lord's Day, and before the evening meeting he again kindly urged me to open with a word. I said to him "I am trembling in my shoes." He answered "I am glad to hear it." The trembling was again followed with some joy.

In the summer of 1892 brethren McClure, Telfer, and Hunter, arranged to operate two Gospel Tents— one in Campbellford (where brethren McClure and Hunter had labored in 1891) and the other in Trenton during 1891

and 1892. I had been very much exercised regarding the Lord's work at times feeling I must give up the thought of going forth and then again the longing would fill me again. Thus the alternate experiences continued till June 1892 when it appeared to me wrong to refrain further. The three brethren knowing of my exercise, gave me to know (to my real thankfulness) that they would be glad to have me join them. About July 18th, 1892 I reached Campbellford. Brother Hunter met me at the station and we had a little over a week together, and then he joined brother Telfer at Trenton, and brother McClure came back to Campbellford and I had a similar time with him before going on to Trenton where I helped brother Telfer till about the end of August.

In October of that year brother McClure was best man at brother Telfer's wedding in Clairsville. I was also present that evening. Shortly after that Brother McClure left for his first visit to the Pacific Coast, brother Hunter joining him there somewhat later. After a fruitful time of service together in Portland, Oregon, etc., brother Hunter returned to New Bedford perhaps near the end of 1893. During these years I kept a little diary. Here is an entry of March 2nd 1894—"To night after going to bed I tossed and was sleepless for over five hours.

Remarkable to say California and brother McClure came vividly before me. Am very much exercised about it. Am not sure what it means." California then seemed a long journey from Toronto, and for a little time I said nothing to any one about my exercise that night. I did not write to brother McClure till March 30th. On April 23rd I had a letter from him encouraging me to come, and enclosed with the letter a note from beloved Andrew Fraser who was then an invalid in Los Angeles, and with it a gift of

fellowship from him — ten dollars. That note I preserve still as one of my treasures. A week later another letter came from brother McClure enclosing also practical fellowship, and urging me to come speedily and so on May 30th I left Toronto and after a few stops on the way on June 8th I reached Los Angeles. Brother McClure and brother Dan Mc Kay met me with a buggy, and took me to Mr. and Mrs. Foster's where dear brother Fraser was also staying. Brother McClure and some fellow believers had secured a new tent, and on Friday, June 15th, we pitched it on Union Avenue near 23rd St. The campaign lasted over thirteen weeks, and considerable blessing was granted amongst unsaved and saved. We took the tent down on Sept 12th and on Sept. 14th pitched it at Pomona. The series there lasted over eleven weeks, the tent being up till early in December. I have a diary entry for Dec. 2nd—"This morning to our joy, and I trust to the joy of the Lord as well, eighteen of us broke bread in McComas Hall." Pomona assembly has had many testings since then, but through the mercy and gracious care of our God the gathering to the Name of the Lord still goes on.

In Los Angeles and also in Pomona we found it necessary to live in the tent to insure its safety. We had two camp beds in a curtained off portion, and we took breakfast and the evening meal in the tent. We went to a restaurant at midday as the tent was very hot. It was arranged we should rise at 6 o'clock each morning. Sometimes when I ventured to lie a little longer brother McClure would look at me and say, "Gallant soldier! the last to leave the battlefield."

On Dec. 17th brother McClure left for a visit to Oakland and San Francisco. About the second week in January I

heard from Mrs. Foster in Los Angeles that Mr. Fraser appeared to be sinking. Loving constant care was about all that could be done for him and Mr. and Mrs. Foster were unable to do this as much as they wished. As soon as I could arrange it I left for Los Angeles, and was glad to share in nursing our beloved brother whose ministry of earnest prayer had largely contributed to the blessing granted in the two campaigns. Soon after I telegraphed to brother McClure and he came, and alternately we shared in watching by the dying one. He was taken home Jan. 31st and on Saturday Feb. 2nd fellow believers and ourselves laid his body away to await the cloudless morning to come.

After some weeks I accompanied brother McClure to San Francisco where we had a series of Gospel meetings, and following that, a short visit to the Oakland Assembly. Then we returned South and after helping in Los Angeles and Pomona and visiting Monte Vista, etc., we pitched the tent again in Pomona, on May 10th and had eleven week's meetings with further definite blessing. On August 9th we pitched again in Los Angeles, this time at Washington St and Pacific Ave. and continued a little over seven weeks. We both felt physically the need of a change by that time and so we attended a Conference in San Francisco and following that a Conference at Portland, Oregon, at which Mr. Donald Ross was present. After remaining a little time in Portland brother McClure and I went North to Victoria B. C. and had a series of meetings there. During these brother McClure left for a visit to the East.

When brother McClure arrived back from the East he and I returned to Los Angeles and Pomona. In June we pitched the tent at Temple and Pearl Streets and had

about eight weeks there and then moved it to Grand Ave for four and a half weeks further.

In the latter part of October we went to Oakland and had a share in the Conference there. At that Conference H. A. Ironside, quite young, was present, and shared with three of us in the Gospel meeting in Y.M.C.A. Hall on the Lord's Day evening.

I said goodbye to brother McClure shortly after that Conference and left for the East.

As the years went by brother McClure and I were together fairly frequently for short seasons of fellowship in service in Ireland, England, Nova Scotia, Montreal, Ontario, the Eastern States, Michigan, Texas, etc. My marriage took place in 1900 in Banbridge, his native town, and he was there that day.

In May 1937 we were together at Calgary Conference. I was invited with him by the Oakland brethren to attend their Jubilee Conference as we had both known the assembly for many years. It was held in June 1937 and this proved to be our last time together personally. We continued in fellowship by correspondence, and in one of his last letters to me he spoke affectionately of our early days of labour together in California.

He has gone before. We shall meet again. And in the coming Eternity we shall both be glad exceedingly to experience the wonderful truth of Revelation 22:3, 4 —“His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face; and His Name shall be in their foreheads.”

by Donald M. Hunter

When Mr. McClure came to Peking in the spring of 1936, he came in the fulness of the blessing of Christ. How far-

reaching can be a single message spoken for God in the power of the Holy Spirit! Mr. McClure was in Peking for only one Sunday. Early that Sunday morning about fourteen believers met to remember the Lord and to announce His death. Most of the Chinese present understood English, so when Mr. McClure ministered, an interpreter was unnecessary. That morning Mr. McClure read Luke 22:7-20. His subject was "The Upper Room" and from his text he clearly taught the privilege and the responsibility of being steadfast in the participation of the Lord's Supper. Although the meeting was exceptionally enjoyable, I soon forgot the details of it, but there was one Chinese brother present who did not forget Mr. McClure's Christ-exalting message. Just a few months before I left China in 1940, this dear brother, Dr. Hsu Wen Chen, presented me with a new Chinese hymn book which he had just compiled. In it he had included a few hymns of his own composing and he pointed out two special hymns to me. The first was one he had written to be used at a Baptismal service, the second to be used when saints meet together at the Lord's Supper. As I read the second one, the thoughts seemed strangely familiar. I looked at Dr. Hsu, and saw a merry twinkle in his eyes. Upon reading it again, it all came back to me. It was Mr. McClure's message. Dr. Hsu had remembered all Mr. McClure had said three or four years before when together we were gathered around our Lord Jesus Christ, and when he prepared his hymn book, he set down Mr. McClure's message in the form of a Chinese hymn. Thus that meditation given in the Spirit years ago, is now being sung by Chinese believers as they come together simply and Scripturally to break bread in fond remembrance of their Lord.

But to return to the Sunday when Mr. McClure was in Peking, after the Lord's Supper we went to a large Chinese Gospel meeting. The little hall was packed with about three hundred Chinese, and though the day was cold and the wind keen, another hundred sat outside in the courtyard. It must be said, however, that it was not Mr. McClure's presence which attracted this great crowd, for every Sunday that building and courtyard are jammed—because the Word of God is being preached in power by Mr. Wang Ming Tao. But Mr. McClure had great liberty that Sunday morning, and his interpreter, Mr. Wang Ming Tao, had equal liberty. It was perfect team-work guided by the Spirit. Mr. McClure preached the Gospel, using the record of John the Baptist as his subject. After the meeting was over, Mr. McClure, Mr. Wang and I were standing together when a Chinese woman of about thirty-five came to us with a look of peace and joy in her countenance. She said in Chinese, "I have been coming to church for ten years, but this morning as you were preaching I came to Christ!"

Besides these two memorable meetings, Mr. McClure spoke at three others while in Peking. Another Chinese lady professed to be saved, and the believers were encouraged by his messages. Discerning Chinese Christians were struck with the rare depth of Mr. McClure's spirituality. The great missionaries of all the centuries have been great saints. In the Orient, the Christians soon know whether a missionary is a man of God. If he is not, his eloquence, his untiring labors, his clever sermons, his writings are all a vain show of the flesh. On the other hand, even though he may be a quiet unassuming worker and poor speaker, if Christ is seen in a missionary he exerts a tremendous influence. Such a

man was William J. McClure, and in Peking he left an indelible impression.

A Word To Preachers by W. J. McClure

“And moreover, because the preacher was wise he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The word of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd” (Eccles. 12:9-11).

There are many kinds of ministry to our Lord Jesus Christ and the saints but upon none has God been pleased to put such honor as upon the public ministry of the Word. By that believers are edified, instructed, fed, led, encouraged, warned, corrected, rebuked and restored. Something that God deigns to use in such a variety of ways might well be coveted, and whatever will fit for the better exercise of the ministry of the Word should be welcomed.

The professing church has its institutions of learning for qualifying those who will fill the place of “the minister,” but in most of them God is not taken into account at all. Even in the case of those who are really the Lord’s, by going at the work in man’s way, they miss the most important qualification, for the purely human is allowed to overshadow the Divine, the result being that even where there is a God-given gift, there is little or no Holy Ghost power, without which gift counts for nothing. The most ungifted speaker, without a spark of eloquence, will be a far more effective minister of the Word, and of far more blessing to saint and sinner, if in the Spirit’s power, than the most gifted and eloquent without it.

Indeed, it is a real snare to have a little eloquence, as it enables one to go on without the Spirit of God, while the one who has no gift must have God with him or he cannot get on.

But while the Word of God gives no encouragement to the very common practice of going to the "College" or "Divinity School," and the less pretentious "Bible School" or "Missionary Training Home," which, by the way, is liable to engender more conceit than the more complete college course, on the principle that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," yet the Word of God does teach that fitness is required in those who minister, and one cannot read the letters of Paul to Timothy without being impressed with the need of fitness for the ministry of the Word of God.

The ability to put before others what is on our hearts, grows with using, as the ploughshare becomes bright, not by lying idle but in making furrows. But there can be no greater mistake than to suppose that merely standing and talking on the platform frequently, will increase that gift. It is very sad to hear one who has a ready way of speaking, occupying the time of a meeting for thirty or forty minutes with what could be easily said in ten. Such an one confounds "talking" with "ministering." Ministering is giving, and unless we are "taking in" we cannot "give out."

If there is not constant "taking in" of the Word, two things will occur, there will be little in what we say to feed any who hear us, and there will be the tendency to fall back on old discourses. But it may be asked, "Is it wrong to give again that which we have given before?" Assuredly not. The needs that were met by certain

portions of the Word of God in days gone by, still exist, and these same Scriptures will still meet them. Hence, we read that the instructed scribe brings out of his treasury “things new and old.” But it is not because he has nothing “new” that he brings out the “old.” Yet in taking up the same passages again, to give almost word for word what we said on it before, would suggest that we are not digging into the Scriptures, as the Word is “a reat deep” and our best is but a skimming of the surface. Henry Moorhouse preached seven nights on John 3:16. But if night after night he had just said the same things, it is safe to say that instead of growing larger, his audiences would have grown smaller. And may this failure to study not have much to do with diminishing audiences?

The instructions given by Paul to Timothy are by no means as much heeded as they ought to be. “Give attendance to reading.” “Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them” (1Tim. 4:13-15). It need scarcely be remarked, that it was the Word of God Timothy was to read and meditate upon. “Skeleton Sermons,” “Points for Preachers,” “Feathers for Arrows,” “Bible Briefs for Busy Men,” etc., are poor substitutes for what one may dig out for themselves. David did execution for God with his sling and the stones gathered by the brook. He had proved them, but was afraid of Saul’s armor, which would have fit David as well as “ready made addresses” fit many a preacher.

The passages we are going to look at briefly, if read and pondered over by those who seek to serve the Lord in the ministry of the Word, will be of more service to them than a course in Homiletics (sermon making), in some “Divinity School.”

1. His Character

“The preacher was wise,” v. 9. In his exhortation to Titus (Titus 2:7-8), the apostle says, “Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.” The preaching will be just as weighty as the preacher and no weightier. It is not so much what is said, as the man behind what is said that counts. To be able to put things in a clear way with well chosen words, is to be desired, but this may be done and the effect utterly spoiled by the behavior of the preacher. A conference was held in a certain town, the Christians were delighted with the ministry of two men, whose grasp of the truth and ability to give it out was above the average, indeed, they felt edified and honored by the presence of these preachers at their little conference. But as soon as the meetings were over, these preachers threw off restraint and indulged in light talking and jesting, so that the Christians were grieved by their behavior, and the good that their ministry accomplished was spoiled. This may be an extreme case, but we have known the edge taken off many an address by the want of sobriety of the preacher.

2. His Occupation

“He still taught the people knowledge,” v. 9. We have not only his occupation in this sentence, but also the fact that, as the saying goes, he “stayed with his job.” He still taught the people. In spite of the fact that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer, and that because of that it is written, “We need not that any man teach you” (1 John 2:27), we know that the great majority of God’s people never get much at “first hand.” And God has graciously

condescended to meet the failure of His people by raising up those who “glean” in the fields of Scripture, and “beat out” what they glean for others. And till the Lord comes, there will be ample room for all who have the heart and the ability to do this work. Of old, God had to say, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hos. 4:3). And He might make the same complaint today, for it is in the great majority of cases, ignorance of His mind that keeps His people in the various social, religious and commercial mixtures, that are destroying their power to be a testimony for Himself. And the crying need now, as ever, is for those who, as the preacher, will “still teach the people knowledge.”

Not long since with another brother we visited a public school in the city of New York, and watched a teacher at work with a class of little ones. It is not often we have had such a lesson taught us. Again and again she put them through the simple lesson, till we just marveled at her patience, and could not but smile at the stupid answers they gave after being told it so often. However it turned out with them, I think we got our lesson that day. Isaiah 28:13 came to mind and had a deeper meaning for us: “But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little.” Till we instruct after this fashion, we should be slow to blame believers for being unfaithful to the truth. Merely to have heard it once or twice, does not give the assurance that it has been understood, indeed, we did not grasp it so quickly ourselves. Let us ever remember that there is more than natural dullness to contend with in teaching the Word of God; we have the opposition of the flesh and the Devil.

3. Meditation

“He gave good heed [“pondered,” R.V.]” v. 9. Paul’s words to Timothy come to mind here, “Meditate on these things.” When the portion of which we are exercised as to ministering, is pondered, its hidden beauties open up to our souls, and prevent our preaching from being just “a wilderness of words” that tends only to spiritual penury. Meditation is the great need of the present, but in the rush and bustle of business, it is being neglected; nor does it appear that conditions are likely to improve for those who follow worldly callings. But there is less excuse for those who have not to spend their day in the office or the factory; those have time to grind out between “the millstones of meditation and prayer,” the precious wheat they are about to give out. Probably those who are in the greatest danger of neglecting meditation and prayer, are those who have a ready way of speaking—trusting to that, and the fact that they have preached on that subject before, they allow themselves liberty to run around, till almost time to get on the platform, with the result that all spiritually-minded ones feel there is a lack of weight in what is said. And though they may not tell the preacher, they feel that the cause is lack of prayer and meditation.

4. His Preparation

“The preacher sought out and set in order many proverbs” v. 9. It is the desire of every one whose heart is in the work of the Lord, that those who listen should comprehend and retain what is spoken. To enable them to do this it is most important that it be presented in an orderly way. To give it out in a topsy-turvy fashion, makes it more difficult to carry away, whereas order

assists the memory. We are far from favorable to the sermon style of "Firstly, Secondly and Thirdly." We merely seek to remember that clearness in setting forth the Word of God is due to Him, and needed by His people. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). As the servant of Christ goes on with God in the exercise of his gift, he should become more workmanlike in the performance of it. "The preacher sought out and set in order many proverbs."

5. The Message

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth" (v. 10). There are very few whose manner and diction are beyond criticism, and we are conscious of the fact that there is room for much improvement in us, in this respect, since it was the will of God that we were not in circumstances in our early days to get an education. But whatever may be said of manner or diction, our message should be beyond gainsaying. Timothy was exhorted to "preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2). Titus to use "Sound speech that cannot be condemned" (Tit. 2:8). Of himself, Paul says, "By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor 4:2).

The prophet Jeremiah learned this lesson: "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully" (Jer. 23:28). The best that the human mind can produce in matters which belong to God, is but "chaff" as compared with "wheat," a dream as compared with the sure Word of the

Living God! What an immense difference there is between the Word of God and the thoughts of men! It has a majesty and power all its own. Let us be sure, however, it is the Word, and not our interpretations of it that we give out, then if not received, it will be to God men will be responsible.

Not only was the message of the preacher “words of truth,” but it was also “upright.” The apostle tells us that he did not handle the Word of God “deceitfully” (2 Cor. 4:2), which would be the opposite of upright. There is little that is so objectionable as hearing the Word of God used on the Hatform, not to edify, instruct or restore, but to get a hit at some one, who should have been sought out privately, if only there was the courage and honesty to do this. Alas, when hints and insinuations, from which anything may be taken, are regarded as “faithfully delivering the message!” Scriptures are read which caused one to wonder what is in the mind of the preacher, and then these are twisted around to suit the purpose he has in mind, and things taken out of it that never were in it. This ought not to be.

6. The Message Felt

“The words of the wise are as goads” (v. 11). The “goad” was a sharp pointed stick, which was used to urge on the oxen in the yoke; the animals felt it and naturally dreaded it. So true spiritual ministry will be felt, and if there is no probing of the conscience, no exercising of the hearts of God’s people as to sin and departure from God, then there is something lacking in the ministry. This result, flowing from spiritual ministry, is something altogether different from getting God’s people angry, on account of our ungracious manner in speaking to them.

We sing often of the Shepherd's voice, that, "Even when it chideth, tender is its tone." And words which are like "goads" are also "acceptable words."

We think of the Doctor's skill, as he manifests his ability to heal the afflicted one, not in the strength of a dose he could administer, which may kill the patient. It is poor comfort for the owner of a priceless vase, to be told by the servant that she broke it in trying to clean it!

Departure from God is soul-sickness, or worldliness, like the vessel becoming defiled, and God-given ministry is intended to cure and to cleanse— if it does not succeed, the real servant of God sees cause for being humbled over his failure to reach the backslider.

7. The Message Sticks

"The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies" (v. 11). Who has not looked back over Conference meetings for Christians, where many addresses have been given, but where much that we had heard took very little hold of us, while on the other hand, some things stuck to us like nails that were clinched. Years may have passed since we heard some servant of the Lord give an address, and yet it stands out in our memory as vividly as when we heard it. It is not that we judge we were in more receptive condition of soul in the one case than in the other, though undoubtedly this has much to do with the hold that God's Word takes of us. No, we believe that it was the force behind the ministry that made it so different from much else that we listened to. What has a grip on our own hearts will doubtless grip others.

8. The Source of the Message

“The words of the wise are as goads and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are “given from one Shepherd” (v. 11). The hand that drives the nail is that of the “masters of assemblies,” but the “nail”—the message—comes from the “One Shepherd,” and we know who He is, the exalted Head of the Church, from whom all ministry that edifies must flow. We like the word “Shepherd,” as it recalls the love and care that three times over, laid upon Peter the care of the lambs and sheep.

We began this with a most important word, one that we cannot ignore if we are to bring glory to God or good to His people, “The preacher was wise.” Now we find a still more important one at the close telling us the source of the message—the “One Shepherd.” Unless it comes from God it will never return to God with the results of precious fruit to His praise and glory. To be sure that one has a message from God, requires the soul to be in His presence, self-judged, and willing to see any other on the platform, if it be God’s will. There will be the honest looking at what we have to say. “Is this food convenient for the flock, or is it something I think I can give a good address upon?” when the sight of so many people, perhaps, stirs us up to be on the platform.

Those who have God’s message will be the last to proclaim that as they take the platform. “The Lord has given me a word that I want to give you,” said a young fellow, a few years ago in a meeting, and he fumbled in vain for a while to find his Scripture, and had at last to sit down without being able to deliver the message he said “the Lord” had given him. Every now and then we

hear, "I have a message from the Lord," and the word that comes very forcibly to our mind is what Joab said to Ahimaaz, "Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready" (2 Sam. 18:22).

Nevertheless it is the responsibility of all who minister in the name of the Lord, to "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). Mark, not merely according to the oracles of God, while most assuredly it will be that. One may say what is truth, while it may not be the truth for that person or for that meeting. And while we may have the consciousness in our own souls that we had God's message, should anyone dispute that, we shall not defend ourselves, we will be content to let the Judgment Seat of Christ determine that, though results may now justify us.

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