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**Narrative of Recent Events
with Some
Reflections Thereon**

BY

Two Eye and Ear Witnesses.



NOVEMBER 1926.

Dear Brethren,

We desire to acquaint you with the result of that "united meeting for prayer and humiliation" which, as you were informed by a letter of 8th June last, was proposed to be held at Clarendon Room on 10th July last. We relate you that solemn meeting in all soberness and in the fear of the Lord, and ask you to read it in the same spirit.

We thank the Lord for the ready response which the invitation received, for the Room was almost completely filled by brothers living in London and in the country; an evident token that the object of the meeting met a deeply felt need of many. And it was of the Lord who by His Spirit had put this desire in their hearts, The same Lord in grace was present by His Spirit, controlling the meeting, stamping it with a solemnity which cannot be conveyed in words; only those present could realize it.

We were before Him and were made conscious of His presence, conscious of the solemnity of being before Him in humiliation and confession of our failure and its consequences, conscious, too, of His grace which gave us liberty to own our failure. Verily, the psalmist's words are true: "it is good for me to draw near." We were before Him, confessed to Him our failure in keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, our worldliness, pride, self-will, self-seeking, which led to strife and contention so that we had been parted for many years and have

become often a stumbling block to Saints and brought reproach to His Name and the testimony which the Lord had entrusted to us.

We looked not at one another, we spoke not to one another, blaming or accusing one another; we looked to Him, confessing before Him our united sorrow in our common failure. We looked to Him who alone can help, not only to heal the breach, but to enable us to walk together in the same mind and in the same judgment. And we have no doubt that the Lord heard us. Who else, but He, by His Spirit could open our lips to sing together, as "with one mind and one mouth" at the close?

Hymn No. 90: Glory, honour, praise and power,
etc.

Commending ourselves and the brethren of the various meetings from which we had come to His grace and praying to be shewn His way—the meeting was ended.

It was a solemn meeting; not a jarring note throughout the two hours; a solemn but blessed meeting. *To faith*, the division which kept apart in walk those who were of the one body, was ended; the ending of it was His work. And though the meeting has passed, we are confident in the Lord that the memory of it with its teaching will abide. Other meetings have been held since, but that meeting of the 10th July stands by itself.

Two further meetings have been held at Clarendon Room, on the 11th September and

16th October. These were of the character of conferences so that by interchange of thoughts we might gain the full confidence of one another and be assured that after so many years of separation we still held and valued the truths which we had owned before the division. And especially did Bro. W. J. H. lay on our hearts (in words of which you received a copy) to remember that the interests of Christ and the unity of the Spirit embraced the whole assembly, spoken of in Eph., v. 25-27—a timely word, for strife and contention with their divisions tend to narrow us up in our heart's affections, saying: I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. We closed our second conference meeting by singing together:—

Hymn No. 210: One spirit with the Lord, etc.

We would own thus with deep thankfulness of heart the Lord's goodness. It is He who "prepared our hearts" and made us willing to own jointly our failure; and He has brought us together. We desire, also, to give heed to Him in thus teaching us His way, so that we may be kept in this new-found joy of being re-united. "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand His way" (Pr., xiv., 8). He has spoken peace to His saints; let us not turn again to folly (Ps., lxxxv., 8). May it be truly the joy of the Holy Spirit, which will keep us, at the same time, alert in the Holy Spirit for we have to beware against the wiles of the devil. The greater the deliverance, the more the need to walk softly.

David "went in" once before the Lord with joy and liberty of heart (2 Sam., vii., 18, 27); but a second time he "went in" with fasting and sorrow (2 Sam., xii., 10). Remember, how Jericho's capture was followed by Ai's defeat; how Elijah's faithfulness to Jehovah was followed by his desertion from his post. These things are written for our admonition.

We would write plainly. Was not our confession before God on the 10th July that the trouble which had overtaken us, causing the division, was the consequence of a declension in spirituality and in that singleness of heart which sanctifies Him (1 Pe., iii., 12), whereby occasion was given for the activity of the flesh, so that a defiling root of bitterness had sprung up among us? And how great has been the declension—not merely in outward conduct which should have manifested us as Christ's epistle, known and read of all men, but—in that knowledge of Him which is for those to whom He manifests Himself (Jno., xiv., 21), and by which everything else is counted loss (Phil. iii., 8)? Again, how little have we been concerned with His thoughts, which take in that whole assembly which He has loved and for which He has given Himself? And how little have we heeded His commandment to love one another as He has loved us (all) (Eph., v., 25) (Jno., xiii., 34)? If it had not been so; would it have taken 45 years before His appeal during all these years—if thou wilt return, return *unto Me*—fell on responsive ears and on hearts prepared by Him, leading us

to come before Him in one united confession of our failure?

The Lord, having brought us together again, let us see to it that we turn not again to folly. And let us heed the Holy Scriptures which alone are able to make us wise unto salvation. Our safeguard is indicated plainly there: if we live by the Spirit, let us walk also by the Spirit; walk in the Spirit and ye shall in no way fulfil flesh's lust. (Gal., v., 10, 25, N. Tr.). Let us heed this, and the fruit of the Spirit will be produced and not the works of the flesh.

But if, alas! Satan should get an advantage and trouble of whatever kind arise, threatening to bring in its train strife and divisions; yea, even if evil arise, which has to be dealt with, what is the divine ~~memory~~^{remedy}? The Lord has shewn it to us by the 10th July meeting: prayer to Him from whom is all our help. Not prayer in any party spirit (Ps. lxxvi., 18), nor yet as in Ezek., xiv., 4, but united confession of *our* failure as evidenced by the lack of wisdom, how to deal with the trouble. Let prayer be made to Him first, before attempting to deal with the evil by counsel, or conference, or assembly decisions (He will hear and help), so that a breach be avoided; or, if evil must be dealt with, that it be done in the way of God's righteousness and not of man's wrath.

Thus Moses acted in Lev. xxiv., 12, and Nu. xv., 34; thus Israel acted *not* in the case of the Gibeonites (Josh., ix., 14). But we would draw attention especially to the case of Ezra

(whose name is "help"). When he heard on his arrival from Babylon of the evil practices of the returned Jews in Jerusalem (practices of which he personally was clear nor for which he was personally responsible), he first of all—before attempting to deal with the evil—turned to God in humiliation and confession, making his people's guilt his own before God. And God heard and wrought in the people: "there assembled unto him a very great congregation. The people wept very sore . . . and said to Ezra, we have trespassed." And the evil was dealt with in a righteous way "according to law" (Ezra., chaps. ix. and x.).

The Lord is coming soon. May He grant us to be found at His coming: perfect (or perfectly joined together *cf.* 1 Cor., i., 10, the same word), of good comfort (encouraged *cf.* Heb., x., 25, same word), of one mind, living in peace (Mark, ix., 50, same word); and with the Apostle we desire that the God of love and peace may be with us (2 Cor., xiii., 11).

Yours affectionately in Christ,

O. HENLEY.

THOS. R. DIX.

P.S.—Since the above was written, we have had a final meeting at Peckham, on 13th October, some 300 brothers being present, with a view that a joint-letter might be sent to the various gatherings, conveying to them the result of their conferences and their belief of the mind of the Lord as to this desire for

re-union. Our Bro. G. F. C. especially urged the brethren impressively, to see in this movement the graciousness and faithfulness of our Lord. He pointed out that in the whole history of the Church no such a movement for re-union, in truth and love, is recorded. Her history is one of continued and repeated declension and failure, and of the Lord's faithful intervention by raising up a fresh testimony characterized by separation from the evil and corruption. And the testimony which the Lord has raised up in these latter days is the final testimony which is to close with His coming for us. We had failed sadly in maintaining it, but He has not given it up; and in His patient grace He is working now to revive it, and that in view of the nearness of His coming. This re-union is not of man by compromise of the truth, but of God for the witness of the truth, as it is in Jesus. It is a matter of thankfulness that He has brought us together, but also of deep solemnity, for we are before Him and under His hand in this matter. May we be enabled to understand fully the will of the Lord in this.

We record with thankfulness that the letter, conveying to you the considered opinion of the brothers, was agreed to with one consent.

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