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Progress in Nigeria

By W. McClements

In the territory of the Nigerian Union, which includes British Mandated Cameroons and the colony of the Niger, we have about twenty-five million souls. With a staff of ten Europeans and one hundred and fifteen Africans, including our colporteur-evangelists, the task of giving the Advent message to these people is a gigantic one, and, we might add, an impossible one were we depending on material resources and human instrumentalities only. We have evidence, however, that the Spirit of the Lord is working in the hearts of men and women in Nigeria, leading many to Christ.

During the year ended March 31, 1937, over three hundred souls have been received into church fellowship. The number of candidates in baptismal classes has increased by nearly six hundred. Twenty-three new Sabbath-schools have been opened, and the Sabbath-school membership has mounted up by another 2,200.

Our latest figures for the Union are as follow: Church membership, 2,032; baptismal candidates, 1,898; Sabbath-schools, 143; Sabbath-school membership, 11,939.

Most of these increases have been reported from the South East Mission where the Advent

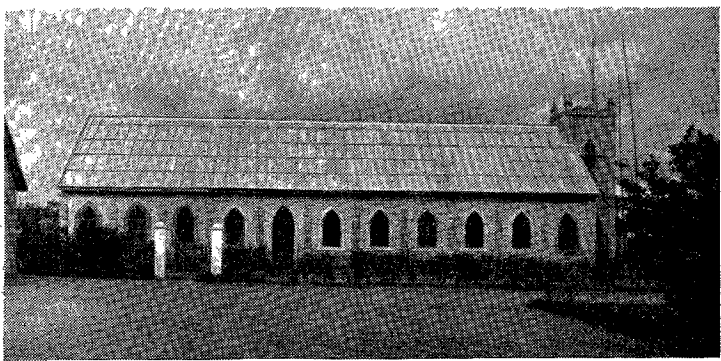
message continues to make rapid progress. We rejoice, however, over twenty baptisms in the North East Mission where Pastor and Mrs. Hyde opened up the work among the pagans at Jengre in 1931. During Pastor Nord's visit fourteen of these people won from rawest heathenism were baptized. A good foundation has been laid, and we expect still greater gatherings of souls in Jengre district.

We are happy to report good increases in tithes and offerings. During the first six months of the current year the South East Mission alone has reported an increase of over £100 in tithe over the same period last year. At the camp meetings held last February large financial and soul-winning goals were set for the year, and the Lord is honouring the faith and courage

of our district leaders, evangelists, and lay members who are working hard to reach these goals. The African work in Ibo land is practically self-supporting. Very soon we hope it will become a base from which African missionaries will be sent to Cameroons, Munshi country, and many of the Greek towns and villages still unentered along the Atlantic seaboard.

I have just returned from an extended visit to that interesting field. It was a busy month. In company with Brother Edmonds, visits were made to churches, schools, companies of believers, and districts with new and promising interests. Most of our visiting was done in the interests of the new developments that are taking place in that field. Two advisory councils were held and many mission problems considered. Naturally, with a rapidly-growing work and but meagre facilities, problems are ever on the increase.

A year or two ago a boy from Nkwerre district found his way into our station school at Aba and became an Adventist. Later he took up trading in his own village and gathered out one or two interested ones. This resulted in an evangelist being sent there, and now thirty-eight adults



The Seventh-Day Adventist church at Aba, Nigeria.

and one hundred and eleven children are attending the Sabbath services. The wonderful change which has come into the lives of these children has so impressed the village elders that they are now asking their wives to come to church, too. Some of the children read their Bibles well and are going out as Missionary Volunteers, preaching the Sabbath truth and telling their neighbours of a soon-coming Saviour. The heathen elders have given us land and built a church for us. They said: "We have erected this church to show the sincerity of our desire to have your mission open up work in our district." A service was held in the church the night we stayed with them and our hearts went out in praise to God as we listened to those people, just emerging from heathen darkness, singing the Gospel songs which we in Christian lands have known so long. It was evident that a new and joyous experience had come into their lives. We felt that our labours for the Lord in Africa have not been in vain and that the investments made in mission work are producing large dividends for the kingdom. The following day the village elders met us and pointed out the site where they plan to erect a school at their own expense. Planks are being sawn and the work of building will soon commence. Then our part will be to find them Adventist teachers. The elders will be responsible for their salaries.

Last year when going down to Budo to hold our first baptism among the Agoni people, we passed through many heathen villages. The inhabitants appeared to be very raw, to say the least. Some of these areas are not considered safe for strangers. "It is bad bush" is a term frequently employed by Africans to describe such districts. But the power of the Gospel is working mighty changes in the darkest corners. Two weeks ago, as we went through to Budo once more, we stopped at two of these villages. At one we found a fine new Adventist church erected, and in the other a growing interest in the message. In Iubu, where the new church is built, we have forty believers. The atmosphere of the vil-

lage seems entirely changed. When Brother Edmonds commenced preaching the church was quickly overcrowded, and soon the nine windows and one door were completely blocked by eager listeners as the sermon was presented through two interpreters. The village chiefs pressed through the crowd and manifested a deep in-



Miss Lizzie Ani, a teacher in the Girls' school at Aba.

terest in the words spoken. Likewise in the other village, the chiefs received us cordially and wished our mission success in their midst, at the same time assuring us of their co-operation.

The Ibo people manifest a strong interest in educational work. At Ovom the village elders have supplied a school building and paid the deposit against teachers' salaries, as required by our "policy." The elders say that they will be responsible for the teachers' salaries because they do not want their children to be debarred from school because of school fees. They appeal to us to supply Seventh-Day Adventist teachers.

At Obagi, in Elele district, the church is responsible for running a standard VI school without expense to the Mission, but here again the people plead for the appointment of qualified Adventist teachers. Indeed the demand for such teachers greatly exceeds the supply, and accentuates the need for greater training facilities in this growing field.

As we travelled from district to district and came face to face with the needs, the open doors, the earnest countenances of elderly heathen men and earnest young believers pleading for teachers and evangelists, we thought of the words of our Saviour: "He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. . . . The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." I wish it were possible for our fellow-believers in the homeland to have a glimpse of the needs and prospects of this field. That purse strings would be loosened as a result, and the Harvest Ingathering go with a swing, I have no doubt.

GIRLS' SCHOOL WORK

The girls' school at Aba is running smoothly and doing efficient work under the direction of Sister Eva Raitt, who came out from England recently to take up the work which her sister had been compelled to relinquish following an attack of the dreaded yellow fever. After passing through very trying times during the first year of its existence I did not expect to find the school functioning nearly so well as it is at present. The mission greatly appreciates the services rendered by Sisters Vine and Edmonds and Miss Lizzie Ani in keeping the school running throughout the interregnum.

This school has an enrolment of forty day scholars and fourteen boarders at present, and fresh applications for admittance to the boarding section are coming in. More than half the boarders are Adventist girls and it is planned to increase the percentage of Adventist children in the future. Already a non-Adventist girl has accepted the message and has won her future husband, too, so the school is starting out on its mission as a soul-saving agency. It will become, we believe, a tower of strength to the work in Ibo land.

In Yoruba country there is an equally great need for a girls' school. Many of our young men are receiving a training at Ibadan school and entering the work, but what of the girls—their future wives? At present they are being neglected in this matter of train-

ing. A well-balanced work calls for a girls' school for the Yorubas.

THE BOOK WORK

About seven hundred pounds' worth of Gospel literature was sold last year. Such books as *Bible Readings*, *Daniel and the Revelation*, *Home Physician*, are much appreciated by the educated Africans. As far North as Kano, on the borders of the Sudan, dozens of *Bible Readings* have been sold.

The North West Mission of the Nigerian Union

BY W. G. TILL

ONE of the greatest problems that face us in this field is the giving of the Gospel to the vast number of Mohammedans. Of course all who profess to follow Mohammed are not true believers, for many only make an outward show and do not really know what they believe when questioned. A great number merely make the profession because the rulers of their province are Moslems, and they desire to find favour with them. However, when we preach to these people they say they are followers of God and that there is no need for us to preach to them. They are quite content with their own condition.

A short time ago we were standing near the market-place of one village when a heathen ceremony began to take place. Some men appeared whose bodies were completely covered so that they could not be recognized; they professed to be the returned spirits of some who had departed from this earth. Women must not stand before these supposed spirits, so in a little time the large market that was in progress was completely scattered. Some women had walked ten miles to sell their goods, but the business of the day was soon ruined. The men of the village ran around with the supposed spirits and joined in a heathen rite. Yet these same men will vigorously declare that they are true Mohammedans and followers of the one God.

For some time it has been our desire to establish our work if possible in Ilorin, the ninth largest town in Nigeria, with a population

of 47,412. It contains more mosques than any other place in Nigeria; yet as you drive the four miles from one side of the town to the other, you will not find one place of Christian worship. Three societies have small places of worship outside the township. No native of Ilorin attends these places of worship.

Two years ago the Emir of Ilorin granted us a piece of land, which we had requested, situated about half a mile outside the town. On this plot a house has been erected for the African pastor, and also a small two-roomed building for the European missionaries to use when visiting that area. At the beginning of the present year Pastor Oriola moved into his quarters and set to work on his task of driving an entering wedge into Ilorin, as well as superintending

the work in the district which stretches around this town for a radius of thirty miles. Recently we were able to pay a visit and made the new site our base while visiting the district. One Sabbath was spent at Ilorin and it was encouraging to see six Ilorin people gather with the little company that met in one room of the European house. We were informed that eight persons who are natives of Ilorin are now keeping the Sabbath, and the only people of this town so far as we know who gather in a Christian place for worship.

Pastor Oriola reports that a keen interest is shown by the people in the compounds where our members live, and when he visits them they readily listen to the Word of God. They want us to try and get a place of worship in the town as the walk of two to four miles in the strong sunshine or the rain is an obstacle.

We pray that God will in His own good time help us to get a place of worship close to the town, if not inside it.

We were glad to meet two men who some years ago knew the truth but had grown cold until Pastor Oriola found them in Ilorin; after some labour they decided to follow Jesus faithfully. These men, one a tailor and the other a carpenter, are now working in this town and letting their light shine so that others may know they belong to Jesus.

Just previous to our arrival, we learned that a minister of another religion had been to Ilorin and had preached about some of the false religions in the world to-day, and Seventh-Day Adventists were included. When we entered one large store we overheard some Africans discussing the Sabbath question, and then we noticed that the chief clerk was pointing us out as representatives of the Sabbath-keeping people. Soon we were approached, and then we were able to spend the lunch period in answering the many questions that were asked by the little company that gathered. Before we left, the people admitted that we followed the Word of God.

The same day we entered the post office and were surprised to hear a discussion taking place be-



Pastor B. I. Tikili, one of our older workers in West Africa.

tween the postmaster and one of the messengers in which a Bible was being used. The postmaster greeted us and then stated that one of our members was trying to convince him concerning the Sabbath. We did not know the messenger, but we entered into the discussion and soon had another interested group around us. After talking for about one and a half hours we stated that if they would appoint a place and gather their friends together we would be glad to answer any further questions when next we visited Ilorin.

When leaving we were desirous to know who the messenger was who had been witnessing for his Master. He told us that he had learnt of the truth in another town just over a year ago and had started to keep the Sabbath. Then he came to Ilorin and had been employed by the Government, but did not keep the Sabbath. This worried him and after six months he resigned his position. Pastor Oriola approached some of his friends on behalf of the young man. They could not allow the Sabbath free, so the young man refused the offers and is still searching for work where he can obey the commandments of God. When we met him he had this temporary job in the post office for a few weeks. We ask an interest in your prayers for the workers in Ilorin and the district around that as they batter away on the rock of Mohammedanism God will reward their labours.



J. L. BROWN writes concerning the work in Brazil: "I felt impressed with the many missionary activities of our people. In one place a priest became alarmed for his diocese. One day he met the leader of our company of believers on the street and stopped him. After due salutations had been exchanged he asked, 'How many preachers have the Seventh-Day Adventists in this town, anyway? Wherever I go I find Seventh-Day Adventist literature in the homes of the people, or one of your preachers has been visiting the home.' The leader of the 'preacher' missionary band said, 'Sir, we are seventy in number in our church and every one of us is a preacher.'"

Hausa the Lingua Franca of North Africa

BY J. J. HYDE

FROM the Mediterranean countries of Tripoli and Morocco to the Belgian Congo and from the Atlantic Ocean to the borders of Egypt. What a stretch of country, and what millions it contains! What a work must be done in it! And amid what difficulties! Much of the area is a fiery desert, some of the people are still very unsettled and warlike, and Mohammedanism is everywhere. But the work must be done and God will provide the means.

In all this vast area the Hausa language is heard to a great degree. It is the language of trade. And the Hausa is a great trader and traveller. If only the Gospel were to grip a few of these hardy, fearless travellers, so that they would travel and preach and trade Gospel books! What possibilities would open before us! For it is estimated that Hausa is spoken by 20,000,000 people.

But how are we to gain these Hausa converts? God has His ways, and we must not limit the possibilities. Our division has stations in North Cameroons and

in the coastal areas of Nigeria, Gold Coast, and Sierra Leone. Then the Central European Division has stations in the Mediterranean countries of North Africa. Most of these are in touch, more or less, with Hausas. We here, on the borders of Hausaland, are operating the one station which does its work in the Hausa language.

But to tap the possibilities of the Hausa trade routes one must be in the heart of Hausaland on those routes.

And now a decision has been taken that may make such a move possible. The Thirteenth Sabbath overflow of the fourth quarter has been set aside to provide a hospital for Nigeria. Will the hospital materialize? and if it does, will it become as the voice of one standing beside the trade routes calling travellers to turn aside and find comfort for body and spirit? Who knows? But at least the first part of the question is in your power to answer.

May God help you to answer rightly.

Printing in Nigeria

BY W. T. B. HYDE

THE printing department of the Advent Press of Nigeria is just completing the largest task it has yet undertaken—a five-thousand edition of a 216-page hymn-book in the Yoruba language.

The setting and printing has been done entirely by boys from our Ibadan school. One of the two full-time workers has been in the Press since he left school two and a half years ago, and the other had done some part-time work in the composing-room before he passed his sixth standard and began to set the hymn-book.

The older boy can now carry out any of our regular jobs quite unaided, but he still has some of his countrymen's ideas of finish, and would soon fall back to their standards if left to himself; al-

though, under supervision, he did the printing of the issue of a Yoruba missionary magazine, *The Watchman*, which is as good a production as we have seen in Nigeria.

Each quarter we print a sixteen-page Lesson Quarterly in Ibo and in Yoruba, and another regular job is the press work only of the local Native Administration's monthly gazette. The task of binding the hymn-books now confronts us and, as none of us has had any experience of the work, it is proving both interesting and instructive.

Four or five schoolboys do part-time work in the Press: printing small jobs on the tiny hand-platen, setting and distributing, folding and stitching, and—of course—doing most of the cleaning.

Our Wharfedale cylinder machine gives us good service, and though only crown size, is most frequently used to print the larger demy sheet. For offering envelopes and other small jobs we still use the little forty-five shilling Adana hand press which printed our first tracts eight years ago.

As our staff grows in numbers and experience and we add to our equipment of type and rule, we

shall still have plenty of work available to keep them busy; but, before we can expand very much more, we shall have to build a convenient, well-lighted building to replace the ex-kitchen in which all our composing is now done. Meanwhile we carry on, confident that the printed page has as large a part to play in the service of God in Nigeria as in any other populous country.

he was able to report that over two hundred converts had been won.

We are happy to say that this is not an isolated instance of the way the Lord uses consecrated laymen in Africa. Many of our Nigerian brethren are good preachers and soul-winners. In Ibo country, when some of the men folk go on evangelistic tours extending over weeks and sometimes months, their wives look after their farms, planting the crops and hoeing the land. In Emii district a strong work is being built up, and a good school established as the result of the preaching of another lay member.

One Month in Nigeria

BY W. J. NEWMAN

WITH the temperature below 75 degrees and rain falling heavily the "Calabar" steamed into Port Harcourt. No sooner had the boat come to a standstill than we were surrounded by Africans apparently eager after our baggage, but more eager for that which glitters. Within two or three hours we were on the S.D.A. Mission compound at Aba, where there were many to welcome the new man. It puzzled some that the new missionary's name should be "Newman." They understood that he was a new man, but why should his name be such.

We often read and hear of the progress of God's work, of the many who are eager to hear and accept this last message, but when I saw the bright faces of hundreds of Sabbath-keepers in the new Aba church, my heart was thrilled. And that question which so many are asking to-day—"Are

missions worth while?"—was permanently settled in my own mind in the affirmative.

My greatest impression of all and which grows stronger every day, is the need of consecrated workers to fill the many urgent calls that are coming in almost daily. If there was a Macedonian call, there is a greater Nigerian call. During my few weeks in this land I have been constantly reminded in different ways of the desire of these folk to know more of God's message, and yet, I am told, only one in many of these urgent calls is answered. Miles away in the "bush" colporteurs have raised up groups of believers but with no one to shepherd them. "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few."

Do not only pray and give but answer the Nigerian call, "Come over and help us."

Our colporteur-evangelists are good missionaries, too. They are known to be Seventh-Day Adventists wherever they go and often they leave people behind them rejoicing in the truth, or deeply interested in the message. At the present time we have four or five companies of believers calling for workers to instruct them fully in the message. These have been raised up through the labours of our faithful colporteurs.

Pray for our African brethren, that they may be imbued with the love of Christ and much missionary zeal and power; for on them must rest the great burden of giving the last warning message to the millions of this mighty land.



Education

BY W. T. B. HYDE

WE have just enjoyed a pleasure rare in Nigeria. We attended the wedding of a loyal Adventist girl, who had been trained in a Government hospital as a midwife, and one of our certificated teachers trained in our own school. What a joy it was to feel that here was one worker who had a help meet for him, and not meet for him only, but also for good work among her less fortunate sisters who still suffer because of ignorance and superstition. Would that there were more such girls available for our other young workers.

We are glad for the splendid work being done in the Aba Girls' School, where the school has already recovered from the inevitable set-back caused by Miss R.

A Layman Wins Two Hundred Souls

BY W. McCLEMENTS

WRITING recently concerning the progress of the work in the South-east Nigerian field, Pastor L. Edmonds says: "Some who have been regarded as lay workers have had far greater successes than those of greater attainments." He then relates the experience of one such worker. Interests in the Advent message were springing up near Okpuhie district, as they are in many parts of Ibo country, and our mission leaders, confronted with these new openings for the third angel's message and a lack of workers to meet the many calls,

were perplexed to know how to meet the situation. The problem was placed before some of our experienced lay brethren, and after careful consideration they proposed that one of their number—Isaiah by name—should be sent to that particular district to preach the truth. Isaiah, with his humble attainments, was known to be a godly man and a faithful Adventist, so the choice fell on him. His business affairs were arranged and Isaiah went to Okpuhie. The Lord greatly blessed his labours among the people there, for within a year

Raitt's illness; but we long for the time when the Yoruba field will also have a school where the girls may be trained for service as teachers, wives, and mothers, so that the marriage of trained young people may become a frequent occurrence in both fields.

The school work has made steady progress throughout the Union, and especially in the Ibo country where the desire for the education of the boys is growing rapidly and bringing many calls for new schools. We have sixteen schools in operation now, and two or three more will be open by the end of the year. Forty-four teach-

ers, most of whom also look after one or more churches, are employed in the schools. The total enrolment is now over one thousand.

When the girls take their places in the schools as they should, this enrolment will soon be doubled without much increase in the teaching staffs being necessary. We hope that the *Aba Girls' School* will become a centre of influence that will affect the lives of the thousands of women and girls in the large and rapidly-growing Sabbath-school membership around it, and prove to be the beginning of a definite and much-needed campaign for their uplift.

aim is to sell the same number of Adventist books in order to bring to the people the knowledge of the truth. We have a most promising field for the winning of souls, and my prayer is that the Lord will bring His work in this land to a blessed finish.



Notes from the President

WEEK OF PRAYER

It is none too early to begin thinking about the annual Week of Prayer season. The date set for this is December 4th to 11th. Much can be done before the time by way of careful preparation for this season with our churches. If we have this in mind as a regular part of our work, and in our visiting and sermons seek to prepare our believers for this special season, we shall reap much larger results. If there are difficulties in the church, we should seek to have everything put right. If there is estrangement among brethren, let us do everything we can to bring the brethren together in love and fellowship. Let us pray earnestly for a rich blessing from the Lord, and seek also to lead our believers to make the largest sacrificial offering ever given at the end of the year to the cause of God.

COLPORTEUR SABBATH

SPECIAL note should be made of the fact that Sabbath, November 6th, is the time when we are to give special consideration to our colporteur work. In planning for this, it would be well not only to give a study on the value of the Literature Ministry, but where possible have some of our colporteurs take part in the service. If there could be some good, live testimonies from our literature workers, and an effort made to bring in more recruits to this important phase of our work, we feel sure that there will be large results for the work of God.

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

WE have all been very happy that the General Conference voted that the Thirteenth Sabbath offering at the close of this year should be used for the missions in our

The Message in the South Polish Conference

BY K. SCHAFER

OURS is the youngest conference in the Polish Union. It was organized in July 1934, when the office was located at Lwow. It embraces a fairly large territory of over 60,000 square Km., and a population of 6,300,000. In the east it borders on Soviet Russia, in the south-east on Rumania, and in the south on Czechoslovakia. About 65 per cent of the population belong to the Ukrainian race, and these are strong Greek Catholics, while thirty-five per cent are Polish and are Roman Catholics.

The Advent message first entered this field in 1920, when the first church was founded near the Soviet border in 1921. It was hard and trying work at first. There was persecution from the priests, the authorities, and the people; the colporteurs often found themselves in prison, and there also they bore their witness faithfully. Nothing was able to stay the progress of the work. The difficulties with which we are yet contending are also powerless to restrain the truth. At present we number twenty-two churches and companies with 353 members, who bravely fight for the truth and bear their testimony.

Especially do our members show their perseverance in working for missions in the Harvest Ingathering and Big Week. Members often travel from forty to fifty kilometres to reach their goals. The

personal goal is eight Zloty, but it must be remembered that poverty is general. Most of the families have a yearly income of about Zl.200. Often there is the will to purchase the literature, but the money is lacking. It takes days of hard work to reach the individual goal. Through the industry of the brethren and sisters, twenty-four souls were brought to baptism in the year 1936, and one new group of eleven members was organized.

Courage and faith are especially needed by the colporteurs in this conference. Daily they must pass through difficulties and suffer ill-treatment. They are often fined and imprisoned by the authorities. Two colporteurs were recently arrested and will shortly come up for judgment. Despite the prohibitions against the work, they rejoice that they have opportunity to bear their witness before the courts also.

A special interest is growing up among the inhabitants of the Carpathian mountains. Little work has been done in this district, but notwithstanding, the truth is spreading through our literature ministry. By God's help we hope to organize a new church shortly in that region. A colporteur of the British and Foreign Bible Society, now an Adventist bookman, tells me that he has sold over 2,000 copies of the Bible in this district. Now his

own Division. Our brethren in other lands are taking this question up with great enthusiasm. They have been supplied with special articles from our office, and they have written very encouragingly about them. These articles will appear in our publications all over the world. We are hoping and praying that there may be a large overflow in the Thirteenth Sabbath offering on December 25th. Remember that the Thirteenth Sabbath comes on Christmas day! What an excellent opportunity this affords for bringing a special gift to the Lord! We are all making gifts to one another on that day. Why not bring a special gift to our heavenly Father? In all our contacts with our believers let us seek to bring home to them the dire needs of the missions overseas, and on this occasion do everything we possibly can to bring in a large

overflow to be used for our proposed hospital in Nigeria.

LEADERSHIP IN UGANDA

FOR some time the Upper Nile Union Mission has been without an appointed superintendent. Brother F. Muderspach has done splendidly in caring for the work since Brother Toppenberg left for America about two years ago. His health has recovered, however, and matters have been worked through the General Conference to the point where he has been re-appointed to the superintendency of his old mission field. All being well, Brother and Sister Toppenberg will be setting sail for Uganda toward the end of the year, and our good wishes will go with them that the Lord may abundantly bless them in this part of the great harvest field.

W. E. READ.

Calendar Reform

BY W. T. BARTLETT

In our last issue we gave the substance of the report to be presented to the League of Nations Council by the Committee appointed to study the subject of Calendar Reform. Owing to pressure of business, the report could not be taken up until September 17th. It was accepted unanimously as presented.

In its report the Advisory Committee recites the history of the agitation so far as it had been connected with the proceedings of the League. In the course of this summary it speaks "of the unquestionable advantages from a commercial and social point of view, both of a simplification of the Gregorian Calendar, and a stabilization of movable feasts"; then remarks that "such reform can only be contemplated if it meets with quasi unanimous approval"; and finally concludes that it is "clear from the replies so far received that quasi unanimity among the governments consulted has not been attained, and does not seem to be near attainment."

Then the report goes on to deal with another aspect of the whole matter, namely the attitude of religious bodies. It states that the

"organs of the League of Nations have always deemed it desirable to take account of the views of religious authorities"; and goes on to say that "most of the Orthodox and Protestant churches have already stated that they have no objection to the stabilization of movable feasts though such stabilization they declare should be subject to the consent of all the Christian churches."

Then follows a statement that indicates the most formidable influence that has led to the throwing out of the proposed Reform at the present time. "As is clear from the information conveyed to the Committee by several of its members, the Holy See, after having previously stated that it could not consider any change in the date of the movable feasts, has taken up an even more definite attitude during the present year in that it has approached certain governments stressing more particularly: (1) That the stabilization of movable feasts could not be separated from Calendar Reform, but such stabilization should be conditional on the meeting of an Œcumenical Council; (2) that as regards the reform of the Gregorian Calendar

the introduction of blank days would result in breaking the continuity of the weeks and be incompatible with venerable and long-established traditions."

Finally the report goes on to advise since there is no possibility at the present time of carrying out the Calendar Reform, that the question be removed from the agenda.

Some at least of the governments referred to as having been approached by the Holy See were formerly strongly in favour of the Calendar Reform. Their present attitude is due to the pressure brought upon them by Rome. According to that potent influence, Calendar Reform can only be carried out by an Œcumenical Council. Such a council would, of course, register the will of the Bishop of Rome. So it is now within the realm of possibility that an Œcumenical Council may convene when, no one knows, and that such a council may deal with the question of Calendar Reform. It seems as clear as day from the report that, if the Holy See moved in the matter, its action would have an enormous following. Then it would be possible to do what many of the replies by the various governments have laid down as an absolute essential, the compulsory application of the new Calendar by laws enacted at the same time in every land. This would mean that a day set apart by the authority of the Papacy, and accepted by the whole civilized world, would be set up everywhere in direct opposition to the day of rest sanctified by the Creator. Such a universal day of rest might not be the wandering day proposed by the Calendar Reformers, for the Holy See has declared itself against a blank day calendar. But whatever it was, it would have the authority of the Holy See and the power of all nations behind it.

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Shall We Sit or Kneel in Prayer?

BY W. E. READ

It is a wonderful privilege to come into the presence of the Lord and make our wants and wishes known unto Him. As we approach the mercy throne in the attitude of worship and devotion, we should ever seek to be reverent before God. While Jesus is our Saviour and our Elder Brother, we should remind ourselves of the fact that He is also the Holy One of Israel—He is the Creator and we are the creatures of His hands. When Moses came near to the burning bush he was reminded of the fact that "the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Yet, notwithstanding this, we are invited to come boldly to the throne of grace and earnestly seek our great Advocate for the grace and help we need. Our attitude in worship is one to which we need give very careful consideration.

I. The Exhortation of the Scriptures.

When we enter the audience chamber of the Most High we are ushered into the divine presence. Nowhere in the Scriptures are we counselled to sit while praying to God. Sometimes we find the servants of God standing when pouring out their petitions before Him. This is true concerning Abraham. It is said that he "stood yet before the Lord." Gen. 18:22. Then follows Abraham's earnest entreaty for the people of Sodom. Concerning Jehoshaphat, it is said that he "stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem." 2 Chron. 20:5. Then follows his prayer of earnest supplication to God for deliverance from the enemies which surrounded Israel. In the case of Nehemiah we read that the Levites stood when pleading with God and exhorted the people also to "stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever." Neh. 9:5. The remainder of the chapter is not only a prayer, but an earnest confession of wrongdoing to Jehovah.

The general attitude in prayer as we find it in the Scripture is that of kneeling. "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before Him, all the earth." Psa. 96:9. "O come, let us wor-

ship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." Psa. 95:6.

II. The Examples in the Scriptures.

There are many instances in the Scriptures of the ministers of God kneeling when offering their supplications to Him. Let us notice the following:

Solomon. 1 Kings 8:54. "And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven."

Ezra. Ezra 9:5. "And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God."

Daniel. Daniel 6:10. "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

Jesus. Luke 22:41. "And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed."

Stephen. Acts 7:60. "And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Peter. Acts 9:40. "But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed."

Paul. Acts 20:36. "And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all."

Acts 21:5. "... And we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed."

When the benediction is pronounced at the close of a service, it would seem that the scriptural injunction is for all to stand. This is seen in the experience of Solomon, in the dedication of the temple of old. His prayer as recorded in 1 Kings 8 was offered while he was kneeling, with his hands spread out toward heaven. At the

conclusion of this remarkable prayer, he arose, and the record as given in verses fifty-five and fifty-six states: "And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant."

III. The Counsel of the "Testimonies."

The counsel of the Spirit of prophecy is very clear and definite on this question, and we would commend the following paragraphs to the careful study of all.

"Both in public and in private worship, it is our privilege to bow on our knees before the Lord when we offer our petitions to Him."—*Gospel Workers*, page 178.

"When the minister enters, it should be with dignified, solemn mien. He should bow down in silent prayer as soon as he steps into the pulpit and earnestly ask help of God. What an impression this will make! There will be solemnity and awe upon the people. Their minister is communing with God: he is committing himself before he dares to stand before the people. Solemnity rests upon all, and angels of God are brought very near. Every one of the congregation, also, who fears God, should with bowed head unite in silent prayer with him, that God may grace the meeting with His presence, and give power to His truth proclaimed from human lips. When the meeting is opened by prayer, every knee should bow in the presence of the Holy One, and every heart should ascend to God in silent devotion. The prayer of faithful worshippers will be heard, and the ministry of the Word will prove effectual. The lifeless attitude of the worshippers in the house of God is one great reason why the ministry is not more productive of good. The melody of song, poured forth from many hearts in clear, distinct utterance, is one of God's instrumentalities in the work of saving souls. All the service should be conducted with solemnity and awe, as if in the visible presence of the Master of assemblies."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pages 492, 493.

Let us remember the injunction of the psalmist as given centuries ago, that when we come into the presence of Jehovah we should "kneel before the Lord our Maker."