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Reuben R. Figuhr,
Newly Elected President of the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists.

Extracts from the President's Address

By W. H. Branson

This meeting tonight begins the forty-seventh session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Our Membership Goal

When we gathered here four years ago we joined in setting a new goal before the church for the ensuing four years. That goal was to double our membership within the quadrennial period. Well, the goal has not been reached. But we have been richly blessed of God in seeking to accomplish this mighty task.

The entire world field accepted the challenge, and in every division our workers and laymen alike put forth their best efforts to reach the goal. The Spirit of God co-operated with the church in this great effort, and many marvellous things have been accomplished.

We can truly say with the psalmist, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad" (Ps. 126:3). The highest gain by any division was Africa, with 74 per cent. Next highest was the Far East, with 42 per cent. Three unions overseas fully reached the goal, and our hearts will thrill with joy as they tell us of their experiences on leading their forces to victory in this matter. The highest gain reported by any union was the Coral Sea Union, with an increase of 331 per cent. The next was the Congo Union, with a 169 per cent gain. Fourteen unions reached over 50 per cent of the goal. More than twenty local fields will also be able to report that the goal has been fully reached.

The baptisms during this quadrennium have numbered 294,793.

The nett gain in world membership has been 208,284.

Our present membership, December 31, 1953, was 924,822.

The per cent of gain for the world field was 29 per cent.

Our Sabbath school membership has reached 1,187,883. This is the largest gain in the history of our work.

Sabbath school offerings raised during this period were £7,044,070 a gain of over £1,000,000.

It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

It is a literal fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy where he said, "Arise, be enlightened; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen over thee. For behold, darkness shall veil the earth, and dense vapour the peoples; then Jehovah shall shine forth upon them, and His glory shall be manifested upon them. And the nations shall walk in thy light and kings in the brightness of thy sunrising. Lift up thine eyes roundabout thee, and see, all of them gathered together advancing unto thee; thy sons come from afar, they shall come, and thy daughters shall be nursed at their side. Then shalt thou behold it with exuberant joy, and thine heart shall palpitate, with exulting delight, when like the sea the multitude shall roll onward upon thee; like a rapid stream the nations shall flow in unto thee." (Isa 60:1-5, Spurrell's translation).

Surely what we have seen is the result of a mighty manifestation of the work and power of the Holy Spirit. It is the fruitage produced of copious showers of the latter rain. Our hearts are enlarged and overflow with joy over the conversion of so many to the faith since our session here four years ago.

Outstanding Accomplishments

Among other outstanding accomplishments of the church during these four years we would list the following:

1. A dental college has been opened at Loma Linda, California, and our first class of some forty students are just now completing their freshman year. This new institution probably will become approximately as large as the medical college in a few years, if time should last. This should give many more of our own youth an opportunity to secure a professional training in a denominational school.

2. A building programme has been launched at the College of Medical Evangelists, both at Loma Linda and at Los Angeles, in an effort to replace old structures that have been condemned by the authorities, and for the erection of needed additional buildings, both for the medical college and the School of Dentistry. This programme calls for an expenditure of some £2,000,000 about half of which has been raised to date.

3. A large and much-needed addition was

made to the General Conference office building in Washington, which has added to the efficiency of the work in our general headquarters. This had been sorely needed for many years.

4. One of the most outstanding accomplishments of this quadrennial period, we believe, was the holding of a Bible conference during the year 1952. This was held in the large Sligo church at Takoma Park, and was attended by many of our world leaders, Bible teachers, editors, and evangelists. This conference dealt with the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, with special emphasis being given to those articles of faith that have made us a separate and peculiar people. The studies given by those who were chosen to speak, revealed the fact that a wonderful unity of faith exists among our ministers throughout the world. There were no discordant notes sounded, and those who attended saw a literal fulfilment of the oft-expressed desire of Jesus that His people should "all be one." and also the appeal of the apostle Paul when he said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined

together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.)

The report of the Bible conference has been published in two volumes and thus made available to all our people. We hope, as far as possible, every church member will secure and read these two volumes.

Some Countries Not Represented

At best this report cannot be complete, owing largely to the fact that about half of the world is shut off from us and cannot send either delegates or reports to this session. In many fields we know that our ministers and members are suffering much persecution, and the work that they had formerly built up has been greatly disrupted. Institutions that had been established by the church have been confiscated and turned to other uses. Some of our leaders have suffered martyrdom for the truth's sake, while others have been driven from home and loved ones in addition to suffering the loss of all their earthly possessions.

We learn, however, that in many cities in these countries our brethren still gather in our churches on the Sabbath day and do the best they can, under most trying circumstances, to carry out our Lord's commission to the church.

Pastor Figuhr's Acceptance Speech

Thank you, Elder Branson, and thank you delegates, brothers and sisters, for the confidence that your vote indicates. I hardly know what to say. I feel very serious, for this is an exceedingly heavy responsibility to lay upon anyone. Were it not that God assures us of His presence and guidance and of His companionship, I am sure anyone would shrink from assuming such a responsibility as this. I feel comforted and reassured to know that you will pray that God will lead us. I know it is God's plan and purpose to lead His people, and I sincerely hope that the excellent beginning we have made in this council in seeking the Lord, we shall continue in the days, months, and years, if necessary, until the Lord brings us into His everlasting kingdom.

I do not suppose for a moment that any one can satisfy a million people. I just want to say that I wish to be found in the middle of the road, walking toward the kingdom of God. I recall the words of the Spirit of Prophecy which say that

if the devil cannot keep us bound in the ice of indifference, he endeavours to rush us into the fires of fanaticism. May we be found in the middle of the road, expending our energies in the proclaiming of this truth.

I may say that I earnestly hoped and fervently prayed that our dearly beloved Brother Branson would be able to continue on. He has given to us such marvellous leadership. The remarkable record that has been established during these four years under his earnest, faithful leadership is unparalleled. The large number of baptisms, the large additions to the church, the growth in every direction, indicate the blessing of the Lord. I had hoped that he might continue. I was very happy working with Brother Branson. But the turn of events has been in another direction. So I simply ask that you pray that God may have His way, that His work may prosper, and that together we may be faithful until the day of God.

A report from the U.S.S.R., recently published in the United States, tells of a considerable number of young Communists lately becoming members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—twenty-three in one province. The article goes on to say that, in many districts, the various churches have good choirs and conduct meetings that are well attended. Mention is also made of the fact that the “opium” of religion is spreading in the villages and cities.

Only eternity will reveal the true condition of our work in some of these sections of the world, but of this we are confident—that when Jesus comes He will find companies of believers in all these lands who will be ready and waiting for Him. Let us earnestly pray for our believers who must live and labour under these difficult and trying conditions.

The 457 B.C. Date

Since the beginning of our history we have believed that Christ entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary in 1844 in fulfilment of the great prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9. As the point of departure we took the year in which the decree of Artaxerxes I was given to Ezra and carried out by him, which has been dated by many scholars in the past in 457 B.C., a date that has been endorsed in Sister White's writings (GC 326, 327, 398, 410; DA 233).

In recent years the validity of this date has frequently been challenged, when it was discovered that, according to the Persian calendar in use during Ezra's time, the events described in Ezra 7 would have to be dated 458 B.C. A committee appointed by the General Conference several years ago worked on this and related problems without coming to a satisfactory result for a long time, since source material which shed light on the Jewish calendar used after the Exile was almost unavailable.

It was only in 1952 that certain ancient Jewish documents came to the notice of this committee, which gave the long-desired information. Although brought many years ago in Egypt, they had only recently been discovered in a trunk where they had been kept for more than fifty years since the purchaser's death. These documents, published a few months ago, show that their Jewish writers used a calendar which varied from the Persian one, and that they counted the regnal years of Persian kings according to their own calendar, as Nehemiah evidently did, as seen in Nehemiah 1:1 and 2:1. This and other findings led to the conclusion that

Jewish writers like Ezra and Nehemiah counted the seventh year of Artaxerxes I from the fall of 458 B.C. to the fall of 457, and that therefore the decree of Ezra 7 was issued and carried out in 457 B.C. The report on this subject was published last year as a Ministerial Reading Course book.

We Are Near The End

As we open this session of the General Conference for business it is with the profound conviction that we have about reached the end of our earthly journey and that whatever we have yet to do must be done quickly. I wish tonight to leave on the record of the session my own profound conviction that the time of Christ's coming is at hand. I know that many of you have the same conviction. And in this we no longer stand alone. In a letter to his diocese in November, 1945, the Archbishop of York said:

“The Biblical declaration that the end of the world will come suddenly is driven home to us with fresh meaning. . . . The writing on the wall of threatened doom and destruction can now be read clearly by all thoughtful men.”

Not long ago Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, then Chancellor of Chicago University stated:

“Without the atomic bomb the prospects of civilization would be dubious enough. Now that we have it, they are black. . . . The pity is that we have so little time.”—The Alumni Bulletin, Sept 25, 1945.

Yes, actually the time left us in which to finish our world task is shorter than we think. Beloved, the blessed hope of the heralds of this mighty Advent message is now about to be realized. **Jesus is coming soon.** And His coming will be doomsday to the wicked, but it will be the beginning of eternity to Christ's followers. To the wicked it will be a time of utter darkness and despair, while to the righteous it will be the dawn of an eternal day.

And the time is at hand. It has overtaken us. We may expect Him to come without further tarrying. The prophecies are fulfilled. All things are ready, and we must from now on live in a state of constant expectancy—ready, watching, and longing for His appearing.

But we are not to be idle during the little time that may intervene until we see Him. We must work while the day lasts. And that work must be of a character that will rescue men and women from the beson of destruction that is even now about to burst upon the world.

The theme of this session of our General Conference will be the imminence of the return of Jesus. The fires of faith, hope, and comfort in this mighty doctrine must be kindled in our hearts. We, of all people, must constantly feel the warmth and glow of this stupendous truth. Jesus is coming again. We must sing it; we must preach it; we must believe it; and we must be constantly ready for it.

The marvellous growth of our work throughout the world during these four years is positive evidence of the direct work of the Holy Spirit through the church. In certain fields literally thousands have been baptized in a day. It is the beginning of the fulfilment of Revelation 18:1-4, where the earth is lightened with the glory of His angel messenger, as he cries mightily with a strong voice to the dwellers in Babylon to come out and be separate. It is the latter rain that comes to ripen the harvest, and we should recognize it as such.

Long ago the servant of the Lord warned that some among us would not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.

Brethren, we have reached the time. What you see and hear today is the fruitage of God's Spirit. Let us recognize it as such, and let us rejoice that we have been accounted worthy of thus becoming labourers with God in the very closing phases of His work of saving men.

Mayor of San Francisco

Addresses General Conference

On Tuesday morning, May 25, the Honourable Elmer E. Robinson, mayor of San Francisco, addressed the session. Following is a condensation of that address.

It is a pleasure and a privilege for me, as mayor of San Francisco, to extend this city's cordial welcome to this great Forty-seventh General Conference Session of Seventh-day Adventists.

It seems a remarkable thing to me that you have delegates here from nearly 100 countries, representing a world membership of about 925,000 persons, one third of which, I am told, live in our United States. I have learned with much interest of the large gain in membership since your 1950 conference,

and of your outstanding fund-raising campaigns, including your successful Ingathering and Up-lift Campaign that began just recently, around March 1, I believe it was.

It can be truly said that your people, working and striving for the great spiritual programme of Christ, constitute a virtual "United Nations in Action," co-operating as you do, the people of one nation with another, people of one race with those of others. Your international co-operation certainly provides an example for all to follow, for certainly there is no greater need today than for a return to the basic principles of Christian brotherhood, practiced by all peoples the world over.

These times through which we are now passing present a challenge to society; they present a challenge to the individual; but I believe that most of all they present a challenge to religion. We know that there has been a spirit of materialism, a spirit of cynicism, and in some parts of the world, a spirit almost of despair following World War II and the Korean conflict. And

OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Reuben R. Figuhr was born October 20, 1896, in Superior, Wisconsin. He attended Laurelwood Academy, Gaston, Oregon. After finishing the academy he entered the work for about two years. He then went to Pacific Union College for one year and on to Walla Walla College, graduating from there in 1922.

Immediately on his graduation as a young minister he was assigned to the Astoria, Oregon, church. In the year 1923, he with his young wife sailed to the Philippines as missionaries. There they stayed until 1941. During those years he served as the local conference president and later as union president for the whole field. In 1941 he was called to South America as president of the division. There he laboured until the time of the 1950 General Conference session, when he was elected as one of the general vice-presidents of the General Conference. He continued in that office until he was elected on May 24, 1954, as president of the General Conference.

The Figuhrs have two children, both missionaries. The son is serving in North Sumatra. The daughter, Mrs. Alva Appel, has been for years a missionary in Ceylon. She is now on furlough. After General Conference she will return to missionary labour in Southern Asia.

now the sky is darkened again with storm clouds over Indochina. It is a tragic turn of events that after the nations of the world spilled their blood and spent their treasure to achieve freedom, new dangers now threaten the peace of the world and the freedom that the Architect of the universe has built deep into every human being.

Human freedom is a delicate and a precious thing. And the essential freedom is this: That every man should remain free to worship his Creator according to the best dictates of his intelligence and conscience.

I hope that this convention will bring you the inspiration to proclaim again the fact that man does not live by bread alone; the fact that no tyrant, no dictator, however powerful, however ruthless, can stamp out of the human soul its freedom to seek and to worship the Creator. This nation was built by men with a deep and burning faith in a power above and beyond themselves. This

nation, and all free nations, we hope and pray, will be saved by men with the same strong and invincible faith in their right to worship their Creator as they see fit to do.

May this convention be abundantly blessed, and may it be most inspiring and successful. San Francisco is proud and happy that you have chosen this city for your convention.

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P. O. Box 1016, Accra, Gold Coast.
Editor - - - - - G. L. ANNISS

Pastor Branson Retires From Presidency

(The following statement was made by Elder Branson at the conclusion of his quadrennial report rendered Monday night, May 24, at the General Conference session:)

By this time I am sure that all our people, at least in this country, know that I have become affected with a disease, a sort of palsy, which they call Parkinson's disease. This difficulty became noticeable some time after the last session of the General Conference, and it has reached its present stage very gradually. This difficulty has not kept me from the work at any time. It has greatly affected my public ministry. The nervousness caused by this disease is always exaggerated whenever I try to speak in public or get under pressure in heavy Committee work.

The palsy has also affected my voice. I used to have a very strong, clear voice. There are occasionally times when the Lord gives me a clear, ringing voice again, but the palsy generally affects the voice, and therefore I can no longer speak in clear tones, as I formerly did. I have counselled with a number of specialists, who advised me not to continue longer under the burden of world leadership as president of the General Conference. I am sure you all recognize that world lead-

ership in the church today is a heavier burden than at any other time in the history of the world. This position requires the services of one who is in possession of all his physical powers and who is able to speak with a voice that will command the attention of the hearers everywhere. It is no task for one who is handicapped with some malady that prevents him from doing his very best work. I am therefore making the request at this time of your Nominating Committee that they do not consider my name for the office of president of the General Conference for the ensuing four years, but that they choose someone else who is stronger and better able to carry on the work of church leadership in the strenuous and a trying days that are just ahead of us.

Mrs. Branson and I shall be very happy to continue to serve the church in some lesser capacity if that should be desired. We stand ready to support whoever may be chosen with whatever strength God shall give us and shall earnestly pray that God will make His chosen one a tower of strength to the entire church.

Brethren and sisters, let me repeat: We are near the end of the journey. We are nearing home. May God bless you and keep you faithful until the end. This is our earnest prayer.

Progress And Promise In West Africa

By G. D. KING

Secretary, Publishing Department, Northern European Division

I have just finished an itinerary of nine weeks in West Africa. This extended trip was both an exhausting and an exhilarating experience. To re-visit a territory I knew thirty years ago and see the development and progress that has taken place is an amazing revelation. In West Africa today I saw great developments in education, health service, and industry. These have almost revolutionized the whole picture of this vast area of Africa.

Our mission programme in the West African Union gives one the impression that we have entered upon that period spoken of in the Spirit of Prophecy when the "final movements will be rapid ones." The impression left upon my mind as I look back upon the itinerary in East and West Nigeria, in the Gold Coast, in Sierra Leone, in Liberia and the Ivory Coast, is that the Lord is greatly blessing the soul-winning witness of His servants and that the potentialities for greater ingathering and a fuller development of our work are tremendous.

As never before the educational departments of the various governments are looking to mission societies to provide educational facilities in all parts of their territory. To a large extent this is also true of the medical service, and the opportunities for developing hospitals and clinics are pressing in upon us with such rapid succession that it seems impossible to cope with the demand.

There is in many places in West Africa a pressing demand for Seventh-day Adventist educational and medical work. Consequently there is a double urgency that our programme should be stepped up in such a way as to reap the harvest that now awaits us in this territory.

In my visits to camp meetings, constituency meetings, and committee meetings I noted that our African believers and workers are themselves astir to meet the needs of their own field, and they are giving sacrificially, not only of their means, but of their sons and daughters, to the cause of God in their homeland. One most impressive feature in Africa today is to see the development of our own African leadership, and we believe that an increasing responsibility will be

placed upon the indigenous workers of West Africa during coming days.

The recent development in West Africa of our publishing work and of our Voice of Prophecy Bible Correspondence School will mean much in the programme of evangelism throughout the whole field. The Bible correspondence school at Ibadan in West Nigeria is enjoying great success.

Progress and Problems in West Africa

During the course of my itinerary there were four important events which serve to illustrate the development that is taking place in West Africa. These events were as follows:

1. The opening of the Advent Press at Accra, Gold Coast.
2. Nurses' graduation exercises at Ife Hospital, West Nigeria.
3. Opening and dedication of the secondary school building at Bekwai, Gold Coast.
4. Dedication of the new church in Monrovia, Liberia.

In our West African publishing house at Accra we have an institution that stands as a worthy representative of our great publishing programme. The building brings great credit to our mission. H. S. Pearce worked energetically and wisely in the establishment of this institution. At the opening ceremony the Honourable Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of the Gold Coast Government was in attendance, and gave a most appreciative speech concerning our expanding mission programme.

The Ife Hospital in West Nigeria has now become a well-established medical institution with a high reputation. An outstanding feature of the work of the hospital is the nurses' training school. At the graduation exercises held over the weekend of January 30 and 31, seventeen nurses received their diplomas. Dr. S. A. Nagel, Jr., and his associates, are making a great contribution to the finishing of the work of God in Africa.

Our training school at Bekwai Gold Coast, was first established in 1932, and its primary purpose at that time was for the training of evangelistic workers. Since then great developments have taken place in the field of

education, and courses are now offered for the training of teachers with government recognition. On February 5 the new secondary school building was formally opened by the Honourable Kojo Botsio, Minister of Education and Social Welfare of the Gold Coast Government.

Our mission work in Liberia received a setback during the years of World War II, but since 1946 a most progressive programme has been launched under the leadership of our coloured brethren from America. At the present time C. D. Henri, who is in charge of the field, is giving earnest attention to every phase of our denominational work.

While visiting in Liberia it was a great privilege to visit our splendid school at Konola, where the principal, P. E. Giddings, is not only following a full teaching programme but setting an energetic example to both students and staff in the upbuilding of the institution.

Extracts from the General Conference Secretary's Report

I wish to take you for a quick trip around the world.

1. North America—Without question, the outstanding interest in the North American Division, as with other fields, was the evangelistic urge to double our membership. While this goal was not achieved, yet, as the report for the North American Division will reveal, there were over 68,416 baptisms during the last quadrennium.

2. Inter-America—Things are literally on fire in Inter-America. With enthusiastic zeal our workers and church members are moving into every section of the field. Although they have faced persecution and perplexity in many countries, they have baptized 38,419 souls during this quadrennium. Their membership now stands at almost a hundred thousand. And they are baptizing almost a thousand souls every month—the equivalent of a new church of about 250 members every Sabbath.

3. Northern Europe—Thirty countries, with a total population of almost 170,000,000, speaking 86 different languages, constitute the Northern European Division. Evangelism in these lands and among these people is the thrilling theme of the report from this division. During the past four years, 14,367 members were added to the

In Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, the dedication of our new church building took place on Sabbath, February 20. This building occupies an excellent location on one of the main roads in the city of Monrovia.

West Africa is indeed showing great signs of progress and promise. The beginnings of our missions of the French Ivory Coast have been encouraging. Two consecrated African workers are selling hundreds of our papers and books and arousing interests that undoubtedly will bring an eventual harvest of souls.

This is a partial picture that left an indelible impression upon my mind as I finished my itinerary of the West African territory. J. O. Gibson and his associate workers are endeavouring to meet the pressing demands that are made upon them, and we in the homeland must do all that we can to stand by them in their great programme.

church, bringing the membership of this field up to 46,365. In the West African Union a new emphasis on evangelism has resulted in an 81 per cent increase in church membership since the last General Conference session. The Ethiopian Union more than doubled its membership during the four year period.

The Evangelization of the great cities of the division has been particularly stressed. Strong campaigns, with splendid results, have been conducted in many large cities of the British Isles and of the continental countries.

4. Central Europe—Our workers and people in the central European Division rejoice that, during the quadrennium, there were added to the church in their field 6,901 precious souls by baptism and 1,223 on profession of faith.

A substantial increase is to be seen, not only in the total amount of tithes and offerings received in 1953, as compared with that for 1949, but in the per capita amount of tithes, as well as of offerings.

There are now 870 organized churches throughout the three unions of the divisions, with a membership of 43,570. In the last eight years 425 chapels and halls have been reconstructed or repaired, including 111

chapel buildings of our own and 314 rented halls. The report that the brethren are bringing to us at this meeting, I am sure, will greatly encourage our hearts.

5. Southern Africa—Many of us will recall the thrilling scene at the Autumn Council in Washington, D.C., when R. S. Watts reported that on one day, September 6, 1952, the number of believers baptized throughout the division was 5,063. By the end of the year 1952 the total number of baptisms in the division totalled 17,174. I know we are all waiting with interest to hear what the record was for 1953.

The atmosphere of Southern Africa is dynamic with the spirit of evangelism.

Our missionary programme out on the African stations is largely motorized; pick-up trucks have replaced the old, slow ox-carts. This is a fitting symbol of the speed with which the work in Africa is moving forward today.

6. South America—W. E. Murray of South America will tell how the message is reaching right into the living rooms of thousands of families in every country on the continent. He will give a thrilling account of their success in establishing the work in fifty or more large cities for the first time. And he will report the highest literature sales of any overseas division—over a million dollars' worth in one year.

Seventh-day Adventist Foreign Missionary Sailings 1944-1953

Home Bases	1944			1945			1946			1947			1948		
	New Workers	Returning Workers	Total												
Australasia	8	2	10	36	14	50	48	19	67	22	14	36	30	18	48
British Union							26	12	38	17	22	39	5	20	25
Central Europe															
North. Europe	2		2	1		1	10	3	13	16	11	27	7	5	12
South. America	8		8	3		3	9		9	5		5	7	6	13
South. Africa	7	27	34	15	31	46	14	28	42	16	8	24	25	17	42
South. Europe				10	2	12	14	8	22	21	4	25	15	4	19
North America	86	9	95	121	52	173	249	61	310	262	127	389	178	98	276
TOTALS	111	38	149	186	99	285	370	131	501	359	186	545	267	168	435

Home Bases	1949			1950			1951			1952			1953		
	New Workers	Returning Workers	Total												
Australasia	40	12	52	30	14	44	16	25	41	24	27	51	31	30	61
British Union	18	11	29	14	8	22									
Central Europe	2		2												
North. Europe	6	1	7	11	1	12	13	9	22	9	11	20	18	18	36
South. America	1	3	4	4	3	7	4		4	6	6	12	21		21
South. Africa	16	34	50	13	40	53	7	40	47	17	8	25	15	20	35
South. Europe	33	6	39	17	4	21	28	6	34	24	18	42	23	10	33
North America	123	48	171	98	47	145	143	64	207	126	92	218	148	106	254
TOTALS	239	115	354	187	117	304	211	144	355	206	162	368	256	184	440

Baptisms in South America have increased by a thousand each year.

Over 4,000 in 1950

Over 5,000 in 1951

Over 6,000 in 1952

Over 7,000 in 1953

A total of 24,003 in the past four years!

7. Middle East—More than 100,000 people of the Middle East Division, 90 per cent of whom are Moslems, constitute one of the greatest challenges that face us in our task of proclaiming the message to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

Composed mainly of Bible lands, it was in the Middle East that Christianity was born and first proclaimed. Following in the steps of the Master and of the early apostles, our workers are today again preaching Christ in these ancient countries. In increasing numbers men and women are responding to his claims, and often despite bitter per-

secution are courageously confessing Him and joining God's remnant people. The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation even to the Moslems.

8. Southern Europe—From across the Atlantic, W. R. Beach will report our first Mohammedan converts in West Africa. He will report the baptism of several hundred in old Italy, some of whom live right under the shadow of the Vatican. He will give us a glimpse of the progress of our work behind the iron curtain. He will tell how 33,241 persons were baptized during this quadrennial period, bringing the total membership to 94,700.

9. Southern Asia—To proclaim the everlasting gospel to more than 480,000,000 people, speaking about 250 different languages, is a colossal, and humanly speaking, impossible task. But that is the task that faces our workers in the Southern Asia Division. There we have even today only one



C. L. Torrey,

Re-Elected Treasurer of the General Conference.



W. R. Beach,

Newly Elected Secretary of the General Conference

ordained minister to every five thousand cities, towns, and villages.

During the past quadrennium the workers in this division added another glorious chapter to the book of Acts for the Orient. Over one thousand evangelistic campaigns were conducted, with the result that during this four-year period there were more baptisms than there were during the previous eight years. Everywhere throughout Southern Asia men and women are searching for that which they can find only in Christ. A new day has dawned for our work in this citadel of superstition and paganism. It is our day of glorious opportunity.

10. Far East—The Far East has been the scene of many disturbances during the past quadrennium, with wars or revolutions raging in all of the six union missions except one. But in the face of these conditions the membership has continued to grow to 67,674, which is about 20,000 above the membership four years ago. I understand that four local missions have succeeded in doubling their membership during this period. New institutions have been established in the division also, including a college, several secondary schools, and some hospitals.

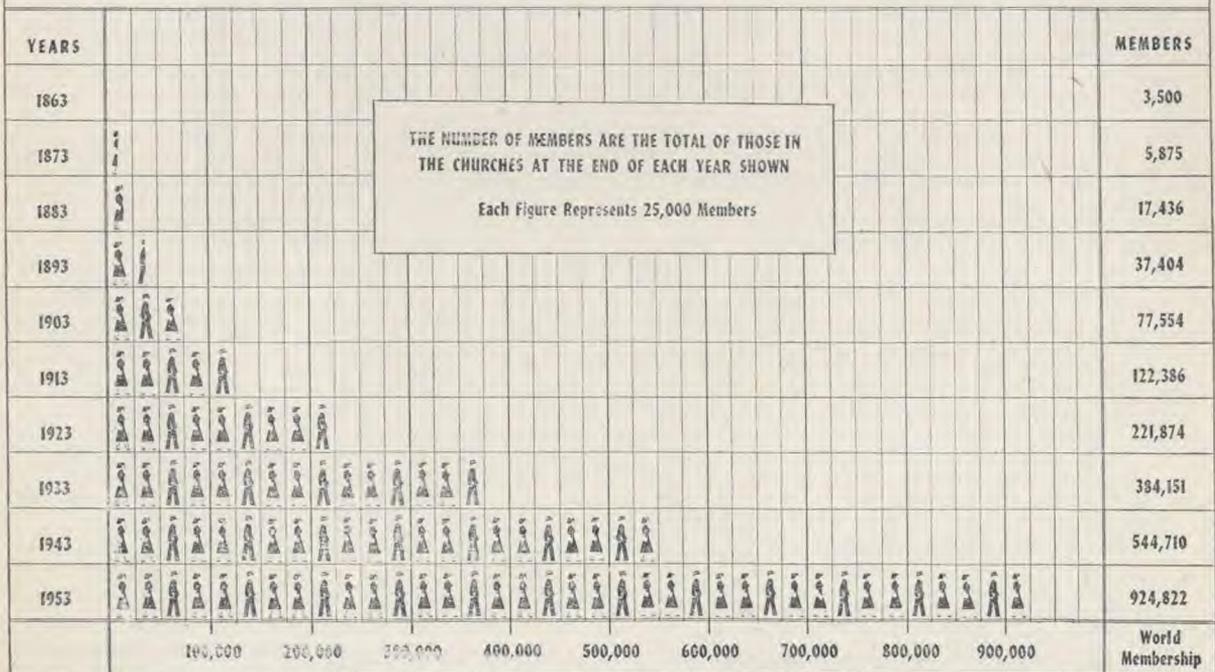
One very large task has been the rebuilding of churches, workers' homes, and institutions destroyed or damaged by war.

11. Australasia—The report from the Australasian Division is an inspiring one. It was on June 7, 1885, that our first workers arrived in that extensive field. During the years since then the work has made great progress, with the result that today we have in that division 516 organized churches, with a membership of 36,415. There were 11,997 new members added in the last four years. Sabbath schools, with a membership of 63,783, number 955. The Sabbath school membership exceeds that of the church by 27,368.

The high light of the report from Australasia is the work that is being done in the South Sea Islands. There one of the most glorious chapters in the story of Christian missions is being written. Primitive people, whom time forgot and with whom only recently civilized man has made contact, are eagerly listening to the gospel message. Naked savages, cannibals, and headhunters are turning from their idols and from devil and spirit worship to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a thrilling story.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IN THE WORLD FIELD

Since the Organization of the Denomination in 1863 to the End of 1953



12. China—There are no finer people in all the world than the Chinese. The seed of truth sown in many thousands of hearts is still working quietly and effectively. Church services are still conducted in many places. Several hundred are meeting each Sabbath in some of the older churches. They carry a tremendous burden to help their own people and teach them the truth.

Seventh-day Adventist students are attending the colleges and universities and many are favoured with Sabbath freedom from classes and other privileges granted because of their good scholastic records and their devotion to a cause.

13. U.S.S.R.—What a cordial welcome we would give to the president of our work in

Russia if he were privileged to be here with us in this General Conference! We do join in praying for God's blessing to be upon him and our brethren and sisters in that great land. In May, 1952, there was held in Moscow a Peace Preservation Conference. We have the report of that conference in three languages, and the book gives us the picture of the president of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination in Russia, and publishes his speech made before that conference.

Seventh-day Adventist hearts in Russia have the same longings and hopes as Seventh-day Adventists in every other part of this old earth. Together we yearn for the return of Jesus Christ; He is our only hope for a better world.

At Rest Pastor W. G. Till

It is with deep sorrow that we record the death of Pastor Wilfred George Till, one of our pioneering missionaries to West Africa, at the age of fifty seven years.

Brother Till came home from Northern Nigeria a few weeks ago in need of medical care. On April 20th he was admitted to University College Hospital, and passed to his rest, following an operation, on April 29, 1954.

In infancy our brother was dedicated to the Lord by his parents, and after a life wholly spent in the service of his Saviour he now sleeps in Jesus, in the blessed hope of the resurrection unto life everlasting.

After taking the nursing course at the Sanitarium our departed brother was called to mission service in Nigeria, West Africa, in the year 1922, and in the year 1924 he was united in marriage to Sister Gladys Morgan. For thirty years following their union they laboured faithfully together in that field.

Pastor Till was a devoted, resourceful missionary. He combined medical and Gospel work among the African people with good success. Extracting a tooth, sewing up a wound, making bricks, doing accountancy work, supervising the building of homes, schools, churches and hospitals, all these and other duties he took in his stride, and our work in Nigeria owes much to his unstinted labours throughout the years.

In 1924 he opened up our mission at Awtun, where a strong work has grown up and made that station a centre of light throughout that region. Then in 1940 Brother Till was asked to superintend the building of the Ile Ife hospital and the doctor's and nurses' homes. This heavy task, in addition to his regular work was carried out with commendable skill and credit to himself and the mission. One of his latest tasks was the erecting of new buildings for the extension of the medical work at Jengre in Northern Nigeria.

Brother Till was a builder in more senses than one. Through diligent mission work he built solidly from small beginnings and many were the hard battles fought against heathenism in places where unsympathetic chiefs and people endeavoured to hinder the Gospel message.

In the year 1930, when the work in Nigeria was organized as a Union Mission, our brother became superintendent of the North-West Mission and some years later he took charge of the two mission fields, comprising the Yoruba country, now known as the West Nigerian Mission.

From 1947-1951 Brother Till served as secretary-treasurer of the East Nigerian Mission, and during the last three years of his service in Africa he was president of the North Nigerian Mission, rendering a most encouraging report of progress in that difficult field at the recent Union session. On a number of occasions he acted as Union superintendent.

He was a reliable, devoted man who loved His Lord and put His work foremost in his life. The news of his passing will bring great sorrow to his fellow missionaries and believers in West Africa, and especially in Yoruba land, where he spent most of his years of mission life.

Our brother is survived by his dear wife and son Garth, also by his aged mother, his sister, Mrs. H. Benwell, and other relatives. To all these dear people our hearts go out in deepest sympathy praying that the Lord may grant them His divine consolation and fill their hearts with the same steadfast faith and trust that was ever manifested by our departed brother.

The funeral service was conducted in the Stanborough Park church in the presence of many friends and fellow-workers. Pastor A. K. Armstrong officiated, assisted by the writer and Pastor J. Clifford. The interment took place in the North Watford cemetery on Tuesday, May 4th.

W. McClements.

Mrs. W. G. Till and all members of the family wish to acknowledge with sincere thanks the many messages of sympathy sent to them at the time of their sad bereavement.