

Our Contributors.

The Winona Conference.

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The Place.

On the shores of a beautiful little lake, in the sunny State of Indiana, is one of the most delightful summer resorts that I have ever beheld. Somewhat above the level of the lake is a charming plateau of ground, covered, or rather studded, with fine large trees, beds of luxuriant flowers, separated by graceful, serpentine walks, and rising up as a sort of comely background is a gradual elevation called "The Hillside." As one walks through this enchanted ground, he beholds the comfortable seats under the shady trees inviting him to rest his weary limbs, and he hears the rippling of the numerous fountains of mineral water which bubble up all around him, calling him to refreshing draughts of health and strength. On the peaceful little lake, a small steamer plies, giving the weary summer resorters opportunities for fresh air, and the exhilaration of a boat ride. On the beach is a splendid bathing place, with bath house attached, and bathing suits to rent. A fine electric road connects Winona with the nearest town, called Warsaw, and is owned by the company to which the grounds belong. There are several first-class hotels, with the very best of accommodation, and board. A golf links, for the man who loves the "clubs and balls" is an additional charm to the place. And if there comes to Winona, any person who feels that all these means of diversion are too tame, he can shoot the chutes or revel in the excitement of the "merry-go-round." Nestling among the trees is a large, comfortable Auditorium, with the very latest Opera House seats, a roomy platform, and the sides composed of glass windows that will shove up, and let the wind blow through, or drop down, and shut all in, during a storm. This fine hall which will seat over 3,000 people, was very prettily decorated with "Stars and Stripes," a few "Union Jacks," and a flag on which was a red cross and underneath, these words "By this sign we conquer." At no great distance from the Auditorium were two large tents in which meetings were held at various intervals. The Chapel of "The Inn," one of the hotels, that has a large hall attached, also claimed part of the meetings.

We were informed that all these elegant grounds, handsome hotels, pretty boats, exciting "merry-go-rounds," and electric roads and all the rest, are owned by a company called the "Winona Assembly." A joint stock company has been formed, composed almost entirely of Presbyterians (which is no small recommendation) with Dr. Dickey as Secretary and General Manager. The profits accruing from all these different branches mentioned, go to the improvement of the grounds. Stock may be purchased at \$100.00 per share, or building lots may be bought and houses erected thereon. This then was the spot, and these were the delightful surroundings of the "Winona Bible Conference." This was the Ninth Conference held on the Winona Assembly grounds. The first one was attended by thirty-five, the last one by over five thousand persons, the majority of whom were ministers of the Gospel.

The Meetings.

We averaged about ten hours a day, in the tents, and Auditorium. There was generally an early morning prayer meeting at 6.30 a.m., but the conference proper opened at 8 o'clock, and continued straight through until 12. In the afternoon, the first lecture was given at 2 p.m. and the session continued until 5. At 6.30 the service on the hill side, in the open air, as the sun was setting began, and it was usually 9.30 or 10 before we left the Auditorium. These meetings were nearly all of a very inspiring character. They were run upon a thoroughly business basis, and no speaker trespassed upon the time of another. A great deal of shrewd common sense was exhibited in the changing, frequently, the places of service. One or two hours in the morning would be spent in the tents, then there would be a general adjournment, to the large hall, and then to the Hillside, and so on. Anything like monotony was not allowed to enter any of the meetings. We were also well supplied with choice musicians, who discoursed sweet music to us at all the gatherings. The Welsh Choir of Male voices, won for itself golden opinions. We had also a male quartette, and the Baltimore girls, and two cornetists, and the leading Evangelistic singers of the United States. All of these, or any of them might be brought on at any session, and added new interest to every meeting. The variety of subjects dealt with was also a pleasing feature of the Convention. For instance in one day we would have an hour with Dr. Orr of Glasgow on some real abstruse piece of Systematic Theology, such as the necessity of the Trinity, or the Atonement, and Mr. Fitt of Chicago on Y.M.C.A. or Bible Institute work, and then Dr. Torrey on his wonderful work of Revival, which God had given him throughout the whole civilized, yea and uncivilized world; then we had Mr. Alexander on the "Mission of song" in winning men to Christ, and Dr. Woelfkin would contribute a solid piece of Exegesis, and Marian Lawrence would occupy an hour on Sunday school work, and Dr. Dixon gave us some good old fashioned sermons in the evening. With such a variety of speakers, and topics, with the resfulness that came from change of meeting place, and the continual interspersing of sweet music between addresses we could stand the whole ten hours beautifully, without even wearying. None of the speakers were dull. Every man had a message, and he delivered it with all the earnestness that he could throw into it.

The Men Who Spoke There.

Of course it would be impossible in a short article like this to mention all the men who spoke at that memorable gathering. Many of the speakers had only one opportunity of appearing before the audience, and as that might be a side meeting in the tent, little would be said or heard of him. There, were however, quite a number of men, who were before us very frequently, and who might be called the outstanding personalities of the Assembly. Perhaps Dr. Orr of Glasgow might be mentioned, as he addressed us oftener than any other. It was my privilege to sit under Dr. Orr in Edinburgh some few years ago, and I was indeed glad to meet him again. The Scottish Professor differed, as would be expected, from all the other speakers. He dealt with deep, heavy sub-

jects, such as Creation, the Trinity, the Atonement, Regeneration, etc., His lectures were given, with but little reference to notes. They were characterized by clear strong logical reasoning, and revealed all the way through a deep spirit of reverence, and a very conservative, though open, mind. Two ladies discussing him on the verandah of the hotel, declared they "Liked him, but he made them work frightfully hard." However I feel safe in saying, that the impression left upon the Winona people by Dr. Orr was a lasting one, and in some respects I think he might well be called "the strong man of the conference." Dr. James Gray of Boston would perhaps come second as to the number of times he appeared before the Assembly. Dr. Gray impressed me as a man of very fine spirit, and a wonderful insight into the word of God. His addresses were characterized more by subtlety, and penetration, than by strength. His clear, succinct, forcible, utterances will never be forgotten by those who listened. He spoke to the heart, and searched the lives of men. The great subject that seems to be his speciality, is the personality and work of the Holy Ghost in the life of the believer. I have heard many speakers on this theme, and have listened to many addresses on it, but I never heard the matter put in such a common sense light, as it was put by Dr. Gray.

Another man that impressed me very favorably was John Balcom Shaw. Not because of any particular brilliancy, not because of deep powerful reasoning, not because of particular insight into some phase of truth, was I attracted to him but because of his all roundness, because of his level headed commonsense, because of his great sanity upon all subjects, because of his uncommon "sense of the fitness of things," and all backed up by a zeal, a conscientiousness, a consecratedness that made me feel here is a rare man." He gave several addresses and all impressed me along these lines.

Dr. Torrey the now famous Evangelist, made perhaps the most powerful impression of any, upon the gathering. It seemed to me that the meetings at which he spoke reached high water mark. He aroused great enthusiasm in his wonderful story as to how the Lord had used him to save thousands of souls in his "round the world tour" from which he has just shortly returned. It seemed to me that the mantle of Moody has fallen upon Torrey. He impressed me as a man of strong personality exceedingly conservative in his doctrines, unbounded faith in prayer, and great faith in God, but a little lacking in sweet Christian spirit, and tolerance of views other than his own. However he thrilled and aroused that vast audience by his wonderful story of Revival, and we all went away feeling stronger in faith for having listened to him.

The Missions of the church were not forgotten, but were represented by strong men. Dr. Halsey on several occasions, brought before us, with telling effect, the needs, and claims, and successes of the Foreign work. Dr. Halsey is a man of tremendous earnestness, and every nerve in his body seems to tingle in sympathy with the work of Evangelization of the Heathen world. His knowledge seems to be Cyclopædic upon that particular subject. Every Field, he seems to just have at his finger tips, and knows the men and women who are there, the number of professed converts in the year, the amount of money expended, and the particular needs. Sometime ago, he visited all the fields in person, and came into vital touch with the missionaries and their work. I am sure that