

TIMES OF REFRESHING

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10,000 MILES OF MIRACLE—
THROUGH CANADA

BY
J. EDWIN ORR

"Times of refreshing shall come from the
presence of the Lord." Acts, 3. 19

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“Either you’re a terrible fool about it all, or
else it’s going to be *ten thousand Miles of
Miracle*, Edwin.”

——from *CAN GOD*——?

TIMES OF REFRESHING

CHAPTER I

WESTWARD AT SUNDOWN

A LOW sound of moaning fell upon my ears. Woman or child? I wondered which. I heard it again. It seemed to be the last word in misery—the highest pitch of anguish—the deepest note of despair.

I listened sympathetically. Then I heard a child crying; and again the moaning: and then a man's voice.

"Poor things," I thought, "I would not like to be you."

Again the heart-breaking moaning.

"What if I should have to go through it myself?"

I shuddered at the thought. But as the suggestion grew in my mind, all my will power resisted it with the unexpressed words, "Never, *Never!*"

As it was, nearly everyone was seasick. After watching one and another of the passengers glide away from a half-completed meal, and seeing the number at each sitting gradually reduced to a fraction of the original company, I had thought that it was time to "take myself off" as a precaution. So I had two whole days in my cabin: and all the while the good ship *Newfoundland* rolled and tossed and pitched on the wild waves of the

stormy North Atlantic. I spent the time sleeping, reading, eating, praying, thinking—chiefly thinking.

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My thoughts ran in cycles—beginning in a strange way, and ending in a way equally unexpected. That day's date was *September 28*, and September 28 has always been an important day in my life—a day of beginnings and endings. Take 1933, for instance. On that self-same date, I commenced to tour the British Isles—without prospects, money, friends, or anything save a shaky faith in the Providence of God. Then take 1934. On the same date I completed the tour—ten thousand miles of miracle in Britain, with a heart full of thanksgiving to God. And between that date and its successor in 1935, what? A much wider field of service opened in Europe, preaching the Word in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Soviet Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Turkey, Greece, Palestine, Italy, Spain, Portugal.

And now what lies ahead? The 28th September, 1935, begins a world tour, a circumnavigation of the globe. I will not be surprised if it ends a year hence. To God all things are possible.

Already the signs of His approval have been in evidence. A friend, whose name counts for much in both the shipping and the Christian worlds, very kindly offered me a passage on one of his ships going west. I accepted. At the last moment I received a

telegram to state that the ship's sailing would be delayed by about a week—just enough to upset my programme. So I replied, saying that I would have to decline the kind offer; and booked a passage in the usual way, perhaps a little disappointed to see an offer of £20's value suddenly disappear. But the Lord Who provides gave me a surprise—on the two succeeding days there arrived two cheques, each £10. From Liverpool, I sailed westward at sundown.

The other day we passed the Giant's Causeway, and the Giant's Chimneypots, the huge basaltic pillars which crown the summit of the steep headland.

It brought back the memory of happy holidays a short time before spent with boyish freedom by Jack and myself among the glens of Antrim—the beauty of the coast road—Portrush and this world-famed spot, but, as we went westward, memory took me back to the Portsmouth campaign. I had just received a report from Miss M. Key, the organiser:

“It was only six weeks before that we heard that Mr. Edwin Orr could visit Portsmouth—it was holiday time, too. We asked several clergymen and ministers to come to our house to talk over what arrangements could be made. Only four came, the majority being on holiday. So it seemed hopeless, but for the fact that we had our four Mission Halls, each seating 150-250 people.

We called our workers together, and placed Mr. Orr's proposed visit before them with its great opportunities and its great difficulties. We decided to ask him to come to each hall in turn, so as to

spread the revival message as much as possible. Best of all, we started united prayer meetings, and these increased in numbers and power, God's presence being wonderfully felt. And the meetings were well advertised.

On the Saturday evening of his visit, Mr. Orr spoke in our Copnor Hall, which was packed. It was full again on Sunday afternoon, and in the evening—crowded to overflow. On Monday evening many Christians received definite blessing in the crowded Winchester Hall.

We then moved to the London Road Baptist Church at the kind invitation of Rev. John Edmonds. Although it holds up to 1,500 it was well filled. On Wednesday, Mr. Orr spoke on 'The Holy Spirit' to a rapt congregation. He showed from Holy Scriptures the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, His ministry, and the need of every believer to be filled. At this meeting also, many entered into a new experience and the presence of the Lord was manifested.

"On the Thursday evening, his farewell, Mr. Orr gave an evangelistic address, the church being crowded as before. The message concerned 'the suffering Messiah and the atonement for sin.' There was great power, many saying afterwards that they had never heard such an address, or such an appeal to the unsaved. The meeting was quiet but tense as he brought Calvary before his hearers. At the end, he appealed for definite decisions. There were many young people present, and all over the building came responses to the appeal.

"We thank God for His servant's visit, which will remain fresh in the memory of many hundreds. It has been a time of searching and a time of refreshing such as few of us have ever known before. Unity of

heart was evident, there being present each evening local clergy and ministers and leaders of Christian work, as well as friends from the countryside around. We feel that it is but the beginning of revival. At the foot of every advertisement we put 'Can God send revival to Portsmouth?' We believe He can."

Mr. Ian Thomas carried on the mission and had much blessing, I hear. There were conversions under his ministry at Copnor. Indeed, we had all much to thank God for—I myself received blessing from His hand. I think that the secret of success was its birth in prayer, its continuance in prayer, and our reliance upon God for the power to do what was obviously a necessity—the deliverance of a challenge to lukewarm Christians.

Many other memories came crowding into my mind. Chief of these were amusing times in the car. During the six weeks between the Keswick Convention and the departure of the ship from Liverpool, Jack Sherriff and I travelled about 3,000 miles in Great Britain, he—the expert driver and mechanic, I—the learner, but all the time cognisant of the fact that a loving Father's hand was over us protecting us in the hour of possible danger and directing us by a right pathway.

On one journey of 800 miles, I was interested in finding out the cost of running the car, telling Jack that if it cost less than a penny per mile, I would be more than satisfied that it was economical to run compared with any other means. So we kept an accurate note of the mileage, petrol and oil. The total mileage was 800, and we paid exactly *nothing* for petrol and oil,

all of which was wonderfully supplied. If the reader is a mathematician, he can prove the claim that it *did* cost less than a penny a mile.

On yet another occasion we were motoring in Monmouthshire. I was driving the car at about 35-40 miles per hour, along twisted, hilly roads. Suddenly, without warning, a herd of bullocks burst out into the road. I braked immediately, and somehow managed to steer between two of the beasts, but a third animal came forward blocking the way. Him we smote in the ribs, and strangely enough, did the car more damage than the bullock. The humorous side of the incident struck both Jack and myself—we had never seen such a look of pained surprise on any human face, never mind a bullock's! The cattle drover agreed that the accident was unavoidable, we repaired the damage, and so ended one of the many funny happenings of "two men in a car."

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After two days of stormy weather, I got up. I was told once by Miss Wakefield MacGill of London of the tactics employed by a mutual friend of ours in his personal work on board ship. He, like myself, found that the little Gospels and Testaments issued by the Pocket Testament League (of which Miss MacGill is the indefatigable secretary) were the best material for use in personal contacts. Our friend, however, commenced talking to people as soon as he got on board so as to get his work done before any passengers became seasick. I found that the seasick ones were even more approachable.

On board the s.s. *Newfoundland*, was a young Anglican clergyman from Nova Scotia, Rector of an Evangelical parish. With him I had many friendly talks, finding him a man of the best type. At seven a.m. on Sunday morning, we had a Church of England Communion service—a very happy one, too, despite the fact that it was so stormy that it was almost impossible to keep the Bread and Wine upon the table. In the evening, we conducted a service together.

Most passengers were confined to cabin, for the wind howled in fury the whole of the voyage. The waves were mountainous, sending sheets of salty spray across the decks. But, as the recurring entry in the diary of Christopher Columbus told its tale, "we sailed on."