



(Photo by Jim Burton)

# Peace Pilgrim's Progress

**NUMBER SEVEN**

**Peace Pilgrim, Cologne, N. J.**

## **BEAUTIFUL NEW ENGLAND**

I began my 1,000 mile New England pilgrimage in Greenwich, Connecticut, and ended in Burlington Vermont - zigzagging a lot in between to walk through not only the large towns but also the smaller towns to which I had been invited. I started among the apple blossoms - I walked among them when they were pink buds and when their falling petals were white as fallen snow. I ended among the ripened apples, which supplied me with some tasty meals. In between I feasted on luscious wild strawberries and blackberries and blueberries. When I started, gardens were fragrant with a magnificent rainbow of spring flowers, and hills and valleys vied with one another in a display of springtime blossoms. I walked amid the peaceful evergreen trees and the lovely graceful white birches, and many times I paused beneath the wonderful thick shade of the maples to admire and enjoy the abundant summer blooms. When I ended there were autumn hillsides. New England is a land of placid lakes and rushing mountain streams and miles and miles of picturesque seacoast with rocks strewn into the sea. New England is a land of hills and mountains, and the less lofty ones are no less scenic than the stately White Mountains of New Hampshire or the rolling Green Mountains of Vermont or the scattered peaks of Maine. Once you have seen New England's scenic beauty you understand why one of New England's chief industries is "Tourists".

## **OLD NEW ENGLAND**

I slept in a canopied four-poster bed in a room with wide uneven floor boards and window-panes which gave a rather distorted view of the world outside. The chair I sat in was not particularly comfortable, but it was a genuine antique. I was staying in the home of a rather well-to-do New England family. If a family of moderate means had offered me shelter I would probably have slept in a new house. In New England one finds a reverence for that which is old and a reticence about that which is new. This does not apply only to houses and furniture, it applies also to customs and traditions. New England has been writing history for well over 300 years now, and in this young country that is a very long time indeed.

## **THE FREEDOM OF SIMPLICITY**

This morning for breakfast I had blueberries covered with dew, picking them from the bushes as I journeyed through the New England mountains, and I thought of my fellow human beings eating various kinds of processed and flavored foods, and I realized that if I could choose my breakfast from all the foods in the world I could not make a better choice than blueberries covered with dew. Later in the day I took a swim in a clear lake, and afterward, as I put on my simple clothing, I thought of those who have closets full of clothes to take care of, and who carry heavy luggage with them when they travel, and I wondered how people could want to so burden themselves, and I felt wonderfully free. To the world I may seem very poor, walking along penniless and wearing or carrying in my pockets my only material possessions, but I am really very rich in blessings which no amount of money could buy - in health and happiness and inner peace.

## **TO THOSE INTERESTED IN SIMPLE LIVING**

If you are free, may I recommend a hiking trip on a wilderness footpath? How inspiring it is to walk all day in the sunshine and sleep all night under the stars. What a wonderful experience in simple, natural living. Since you carry your food, sleeping equipment, etc., on your back, you learn very quickly that unnecessary possessions are unnecessary burdens. You soon realize what the essentials of life are such as warmth when you are cold, a dry spot on a rainy day, the simplest food when you are hungry, pure cool water when you are thirsty. You soon put material things in their proper place, realizing that they are there for use and relinquishing them when they are not useful. You soon experience and learn to appreciate the great freedom of simplicity.

## **SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT**

If you but knew how short is the earth life in comparison with the whole, you would be less troubled with the difficulties of the earth life than you are troubled now with the difficulties of one of your days.

## **TO ALL PEACE PIONEERS**

Whenever something is accomplished for the cause of peace, I cannot help feeling grateful to the peace pioneers, who worked for peace when the going was rough and there were no apparent results. But all right work and all right prayers does eventually bear fruit! Now peace is an idea whose time has come!

## **JOYOUSNESS IS GODLINESS**

I once met a man who said to me, "I'm surprised at the kind of person you are. After reading your very serious message on the way of peace I expected you to be a very solemn person, but instead I find you just bubbling over with joy." I said to him, "Who could know God and not be joyous?" If you have a long face and a chip on your shoulder, if you are not radiant with joy and friendliness, if you are not filled to overflowing with love and good will for all beings and all creatures and all creation, one thing is certain - you do not know God!

## **THAT WHICH I FEARED CAME UPON ME**

A pessimistic attitude is detrimental to the pessimist and to the world, for in dwelling upon and expecting and fearing war or catastrophe of any kind we attract the very thing we fear. Those who think only positive thoughts stay in harmony with the higher laws and attract only good. We fear because, in our spiritual immaturity, we identify ourselves with the garment of clay we wear, which is destructible, instead of with the reality - that which activates the garment of clay - which is not destructible. The reality can only be injured by our own wrong actions or our own wrong reactions, both of which we have control over. For instance, our sins of omission - when in this crisis situation we do not do everything we can for peace in the world - do much greater damage than nuclear bombs, for they injure what is real, not what is transient.

## **A FRIENDLY GOVERNOR**

As I stepped inside the big front door of the State House, a nice friendly gentleman greeted me and shook my hand and asked if he could help me. I told him I was looking for the Governor's office, and he promptly took me there. "Is there anything else I can do to help you?" he asked. "I thought I might have the privilege of shaking hands with the Governor," I said. "You have shaken hands with the Governor," said the nice friendly gentleman - the Governor himself!

## **SOME DEFINITIONS**

**God**                      A creative force, a motivating power, an over-all intelligence, an ever-present,

all-pervading spirit - which manifests itself within us and everywhere else in the universe. You are within God - God is within you.

**God's Laws**

Creation includes not only the worlds and the beings, but also the laws which govern them. These apply in the psychological realm as well as in the material realm. Insofar as we obey these laws our lives are in harmony. Insofar as we disobey them we create difficulties for ourselves by our disobedience. These laws are the same for all of us.

**God's Guidance**

For every one of us there is a unique place in the divine plan. We perceive this and are motivated toward it by that of God within - by God's guidance. We cannot live in harmony until we have found it.

**God's Will**

God's will includes God's laws and God's guidance. Only in harmony with God's will can anyone feel at peace or accomplish anything worthwhile.

**Good and Bad**

Good is that which is in harmony with God's will and bad is that which is out of harmony with God's will. Very simply defined, good is that which helps people and bad is that which hurts people.

**Heaven and Hell**

Insofar as you are in harmony with God's will you are in heaven and insofar you are out of harmony with God's will you are in hell. You can be in either condition on the unembodied side or on the embodied side.

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