



(Photo by Jim Burton)

Peace Pilgrim's Progress

NUMBER THIRTEEN

Peace Pilgrim, Cologne, N. J.

IN THE DEEP SOUTH

On the grass shoulders along the Mississippi roads walking conditions are ideal, and I met some young men who were trying to walk fifty miles in a day. I know it can be done, because I've done it. The Magnolia is the state flower of Mississippi. I realized that I was not seeing Mississippi at its best. The Magnolias - and there are a great many of them in the gardens and in the woods - were not blooming. The fields - and there is much fertile farmland in Mississippi - were not planted. The people - who seemed to want to be warm and friendly - tended to be rather tense. Yet I was given hospitality and good opportunities to speak through the news media. As I walked toward Dothan, Alabama, I saw fireworks for sale, for down here they celebrate Christmas and New Year with fireworks. Along the way there were houses that looked very flimsy - and even some fine homes down here have no central heating - but of course it seldom gets very cold (although I once encountered below zero temperatures in Northern Alabama). I could always see some pine woods somewhere. I could usually see some pecan trees. Some fields were bare, some were covered with grass or corn stalks or cotton stalks, *(and)** some winter vegetables like turnips and collards were growing. This turned out to be a typical rural scene in Alabama - except that I did not see winter vegetables farther north. When I entered Dothan I noticed some houses with pillars in front, and in the yards camellias and azaleas were growing, and along the streets there were live oaks. This turned out to be a typical urban scene in Alabama. In spite of the conflict situation, things seemed calm and peaceful in Alabama - where it says on the license plates "Heart of Dixie" - and I was overwhelmed with hospitality and speaking opportunities. In Georgia I noticed the red earth. In Georgia I noticed the Pine trees - some of which can be tapped for turpentine and some of which have needles more than a foot long. The Georgia peach trees were bare, but I could not go hungry in Georgia, because everywhere there were delicious Georgia pecans. People were friendly and hospitality was better than average. South Carolina is a state that has a minimum speed limit as well as maximum speed limit. In this land of cotton fields and textile mills I visited many old friends and made many new friends. The Deep South has relinquished many of its old customs, and of course some of them needed to be relinquished - but it is still picturesque and friendly, and I much enjoyed my visit there.

PRAY ABOUT IT

At the time of conflict there, I discovered that there are a few inter-racial prayer groups in the Deep South. In Alabama I attended one for women, and was told there was also one for men. This should be done in every conflict situation - get together and pray about it - and right prayer will motivate to right action.

PEACE IN THE WORLD

Peace will probably come to the world in the same way as it has come to our land. Out of the chaos of civil war, Indian wars and duels of a hundred years ago has come order. Mechanisms have been set up to avoid physical violence while psychological violence still endures. The smaller units, the states, have given up to the larger unit, the United States, the right to make war. Yes, I think the time will come when the smaller units, the nations, will give up to the larger unit, the United Nations, one single

right - the right to make war. I don't believe nations would or should give up other rights. People have the most control over their affairs at a grass-roots level. Anything that can be fairly and efficiently handled at a grass-roots level should be thus handled, and only delegated to a higher authority when necessary. The United Nations would have as its job maintaining a peaceful situation in the world. As long as we are as immature as we are it would have a police force to deal with individual offenders against the peace of the world - removing them, I would hope, for their rehabilitation. Also it should have an unarmed peace force to deal with war prevention. While our nation can deal with problems like an inadequate food supply, they would have to deal with problems like a country striving for freedom - and freedom is now the desire of all human hearts.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

Peace and freedom! These things shall be! How soon these things shall be - whether now or whether after great destruction and new beginnings and eons of time - is up to us!

Disarmament is slow in materializing - partly because fear is so prevalent, partly because there are vain hopes that arms might still accomplish some desired objective, partly because some economies seem to be functioning rather profitably in a situation of war preparation.

I never met anyone who built a bomb shelter and felt protected by it. The nuclear bomb says to us, "Make peace or perish!" Peace interest increases with the acuteness of the world crisis. In this accelerated peace interest there is hope - and protection. Become a part of it!

We people of the earth need to find ways to get to know one another - for then we will recognize that our likenesses are so much greater than our differences, however great our differences may seem. In the beginning we can best get into other lands with cultural things like music and art. We have gotten into Russia in this way, and I know a lady who has gotten into China with flower seeds. Perhaps you will think of a way to get into every corner of the world.

We can now step into a golden age of great light and beauty and truth - if we will. We have struggled upward into a little dim light, bringing with us out of the darkness very burdensome and very dangerous implements of destruction. There is a chasm between us and the golden age which we cannot cross unless we lay down this burden from the dark ages. We are making the choice now!

The medicine this sick world needs is love - hatred must be replaced by love, and fear by faith that love will prevail.

The world operates in accordance with the Law of Love. As long as we remain in harmony with the Law of Love we remain "on the beam". When we get out of harmony we get "off the beam" and are likely to collide with anything else that is "off the beam". When enough of us are "off the beam" naturally our world situation is "off the beam", too. But the reverse is true also!

Never think of any right effort as being fruitless - all right effort bears good fruit, whether we see the results or not. Just concentrate on thinking and living and acting for peace and inspiring others to do likewise - leaving results in God's hands.

Always dwell upon the golden age which could come to help to bring it into materialization. Those who dwell upon the destruction which could come help to bring that into materialization. If we knew how powerful thoughts are we would never think a negative thought.

The spiritual life is the real life - all else is illusion and deception. Only one who is attached to God alone is truly free. Only one who lives up to the highest light he has finds his life in harmony.

Everyone who acts upon his highest becomes a power for good. It is not important that others be noticeably affected. Results should never be sought or desired. Know that every right thing you do - every good word you say - every positive thought you think - has good effect.

When we have found inner peace we feel unity with the Divine within all men and unity with God, so all fear is gone from our lives. As long as we feel separate we are afraid to be and act alone - as soon as we feel oneness that feeling is gone.

If we could but look a bit more deeply into life, we might see that physical difficulties are reflections of spiritual difficulties, and that negative thoughts and feelings are much more harmful than disease germs.

Although others may feel sorry for you, never feel sorry for yourself - it has a deadly effect on spiritual well-being. Recognize all problems, no matter how difficult, as opportunities for growth - and make the most of these opportunities.

If you feel the need of a spiritual lift, why not try getting to bed early and then getting up early to have a quiet time at dawn? Then carry the serene "in tune" feeling that comes to you into your day, no matter what you may be doing.

From all things you read and from all people you meet take what is good - what your own "inner teacher" tells you is for you - and leave the rest. For guidance and for truth it is much better to look to the Source through your own "inner teacher" than to look to people or books. Books and people can merely inspire you. Unless they awaken something within you nothing worthwhile has been accomplished.

The more spiritual truth we know and are not living the more out-of-harmony our lives are. Live up to the highest you know!

Of course I trust the Law of Love! Since the universe operates in accordance with the Law of Love, how could I trust anything else?

*Editorial corrections added to the original newsletter appear in italicized gray brackets. i.e. (*correction*). Text in the original newsletter #13 read "on".