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Isabel Kimball Whiting

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A PILGRIMAGE TO SENEXET

A GROUP of pilgrims has just returned from Senexet after three days under the leadership of Dr. Charles E. Park and Rev. Earl C. Davis.

In the Grail Legends it is told of Sir Boers that as he returned from seeking the Holy Grail and on being asked if he had found it, he answered, "Ask me not, I may not speak of it; I saw it." Something like this presses upon my mind and urges reticence, and yet when the woman found the lost piece of silver she called the friends and neighbors together, and asked that they rejoice with her, that the piece which was lost, was found. In this spirit I dare to speak.

Approaching Senexet through tall pines, dark against the sunset, with yellow beech leaves glowing between the branches, and a sudden brilliant maple flaming crimson above a lake, deep-set and clear, the first intimations came to us that a holy pilgrimage had been undertaken. Then hour by hour the experience developed and when Dr. Park stood in the little chapel against the gray field stone wall under the roughly hewn, but clearly carved stone cross, and spoke the lines from Revelations, "Behold I make all things new", we were ready for the words.

We were a group of pilgrims, I say, and under the comfort of fellowship each brought her own experience,—a

personal grief, the passing of a beloved saint, perhaps—a secret pain, a deep joy. Professor Hocking has said, "Mass consciousness forms a level from which the individual departs and takes his solitary leap to God, as a tongue of flame out of the midst of the fire." Could any one of us have done just that so exultantly without Dr. Park, Mr. Davis and Senexet?

We felt the making of all things new, as we sat around the fire in the wide hospitality of the living room, while our leaders brought up out of their own religious experiences, light, and guidance, and succor, for us, pilgrims that we were. Then it was these words of Professor Brinton came to mind, "A living ministry does not reason nor argue nor preoccupy itself with means and instruments. It suggests as best it can a simple insight and it appeals to the simple insight of others." We know now what that means and we give thanks. The silent, solitary walks, so quiet in the autumn woods that a leaf would fall one after another in the windless places, and "Where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest." Here meditation deepened the insights revealed in "The living ministry" and one knew, in actuality, the trees that grow whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

Then the dwelling itself—well perhaps it is Christian's House of the Interpreter. As one "went on he came at the house of the Interpreter where he knocked", and, "then said the Interpreter, Come in, I will show thee that which is profitable to thee." So there dwells at Senexet, when the men of God and the pilgrims come, one who opens to one's

knocking, who welcomes, who sees the fires are lighted, food and rest prepared, and she does this with a grace the source of which is understood, as the days pass. "So Christian went on his way, saying, 'Here I have seen things rare and profitable—Thankful, O good Interpreter, to thee'."

To reach the "little sanctuary" is a symbol in itself. Passing down through the long living-room one turns by the windows at the end and suddenly is in an "upper room", in the sense of its being apart, and a place instantly holy. It is not far from the daily living, it is no long journey from close and tender ministries; it is there, just a turn and you are in the sacred place of the Most High. "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues". Here at the close of our pilgrimage Dr. Park took the "dim fragments" of our life "meant to be united in some wondrous whole", and gave them back to us resplendent; bound us together as he said "into a bundle of God".

We gathered up into our autumn sheaf, "the dispassionate rectitude of God", the integrity at the heart of things, "God as Companion", insights into life, death, immortality.—"The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made." There were august presences, majestic insights revealed at Senexet, and there was the fellowship of pilgrims in the house of the Interpreter.

Isabel Kimball Whiting

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