

FAITH HOME AND MISSIONARY TRAINING SCHOOL IN BUFFALO

By Anna W. Prosser

Having often talked with you through the pages of this Journal in the past, I feel sure that you will want to hear about the very important step, which I have just taken in the vineyard of our Lord, and will often, I trust, bear me on your hearts in prayer. For many years I have felt that at some time in my life the Lord would (or at least might) call me to open a Faith Home. Whenever the idea suggested itself, or any one spoke to me about it as many have done, I shrank from it with such a dread and sinking of the heart as I cannot find words to describe. I did so want to obey God in every detail of my life, even the tiniest thing; but oh, how I hoped from the depths of my soul that He would never, never ask me to open a Faith Home!

Ten years ago, while spending a few weeks for rest and refreshing at a certain Faith Home in a distant city, I thought of the precious work carried on by its founder, and said to myself, "What an honored handmaid of the Lord she is, to have such a house put in her care!" Instantly a voice seemed to say, "What if you should have such a Home some day?" It seemed a wild idea, but I have never forgotten it. At the same time, while attending the meetings held at the Home, I heard many testifying to having forsaken all to follow Jesus, and every such testimony given by those who were living a life of faith went through my heart like an arrow.

One lovely Sunday while there, while praying earnestly for guidance in this matter of giving all my property to the Lord, I was led to go down to the beach (for it was a seashore resort) and there wait for any message which God might send me. Sitting apart from the others, in the sand, I took my Bible and earnestly prayed that I might be directed to a passage, which would show me clearly the will of God in this important matter. Judge of my feelings when I opened to the following passage: "Sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up thy cross and follow Me." It was so startling that I felt almost stunned for a moment, but soon turned my steps toward the Home, with the feeling that I was stripped of everything, and with a strange sense of loneliness and desolation sweeping over me; but just at that moment the sweet words of the hymn, "I'm the child of a King," were brought to my mind, and I went on my way comforted and strengthened. From that day I have felt that sooner or later I should be called to put all the money which I have into the Lord's work in some way, and I have endeavored to use it, in the meantime, in His fear and as He led.

During the past year I have had a delightful parlor-meeting in this city on Sunday afternoons, on the four-fold Gospel, and at one time it became so crowded, and the interest was so intense, that I lay awake after retiring, one night, wondering what I

should do with it, thinking I should be obliged to rent a hall. Suddenly a voice said, with great distinctness, "Take a house." Now this seemed an amazing thing, as I already had a house of my own in Kenmore, in which I fondly hoped to remain until called away by death or the Lord's return. At once the thought of the much-dreaded Faith Home rushed to my mind, and then the conflict began. However, feeling quite sure that it was God's voice, I immediately went forth in the neighborhood where the Sunday meeting was held, to look for a house, supposing that it must necessarily be located near where the little flock resided. Strange to say, I never once asked God to tell me in what part of the city He wished the house, although spending hours in prayer over the house itself.

Many weeks were spent in this way, and much needless trouble, time, and carfare. Now, dear reader, learn right here with me an important lesson in regard to Divine guidance. It is never safe to be led by impressions alone. If I had trusted to impressions alone I should have chosen a house which seemed in every way fitted, in the very locality where I was working, in every way desirable, and very low rent. Added to this, the landlord offered it at still lower rent when he learned that I wished it for Christian work. But after waiting upon God about it three days, not one ray of light could I get upon taking it. I seemed to be so intent upon taking it that I felt as if I were just being whirled right into it. All this was very perplexing, and I finally concluded that it could not have been the voice of God that night at all, but was just a trick of the enemy to lead me into a very trying

work for which I was in no way fitted, and which would only end in confusion and reproach upon the cause.

So I tried to go on with my work but alas, the blessed anointing, which had rested constantly upon me in the meetings, disappeared to a great extent; the interest waned, and my precious meeting seemed to have become load and a drag upon me, and I had no peace night or day. After a time I could endure it no longer, and again began praying about a house, and said publicly in the meeting that it seemed I should be obliged to go forward, as I could get no rest. Just at this juncture I had a very remarkable dream, which was undoubtedly given of the Lord. I had been constantly praying for such sure and clear guidance, either by a dream, or through the Word, or by the Voice of the Spirit, that I could never, never doubt that God had led me to the house, which He wished me to have. And so He answered, not only by a dream, but also in two other ways. I dreamed that a short, fleshy woman came to me, and, pointing three times most emphatically in a certain locality on the west side of the city, said to me, "There, right there, is where I believe the Lord wants the house." And, as she spoke, fire broke out from all over a house, which seemed to appear before me. This, I thought, was the glory of God, and it filled me with great joy, a thrill of power going through my frame from head to foot. I said to the woman, "Why, how remarkable! That is the very locality toward which my mind has been directed for weeks." And indeed it was, but I had said nothing about it to any one.

When the dream came to my mind, the next day, I knew it was of God, and at once set out to look through the locality indicated, but could settle upon nothing. The next night in prayer I said, "Lord, I will take such and such a house tomorrow, if you say so." Instantly the same blessed voice said, "Fargo Avenue, near Connecticut." This was in the locality shown in the dream! Wondering and trembling I went forth, praying all the way. When I reached Fargo Avenue I walked slowly down both sides of the block near Connecticut Street, but not a house for rent could I see. Discovering one for sale, I went in, but could make nothing out of it, and in the meantime left my umbrella behind me. After walking on some distance, feeling utterly sick at heart, I thought, "Well, I am just being made a fool of by the devil," and I felt like sitting down on some stoop near by and crying for about an hour. Just then I missed my umbrella, and retraced my steps wearily to go after it. On the way back a lady approached me, walking rapidly, and said, "Isn't this Miss Prosser?" I said, "It is." She said, "I used to see you often in Carrie Judd's meeting years ago." After chatting awhile I told her my errand and said mournfully, "I thought the Lord said Fargo Avenue, near Connecticut Street, but there is nothing here for rent."

"Why, yes there is," she replied, "Didn't you see it? The notice is a small card hanging inside the window. And it is the very house occupied by Carrie Judd for her first Faith Home! Look at it!" and she pointed to a house just three doors from Connecticut on Fargo! Such a flood of joy, of

tenderness, of adoring love, rushed over my soul as I took in at a glance the house once used and consecrated by the prayers of my precious, dear, old-time friend, the editor of this Journal, that I felt as if I should sink to the earth. I really did not know whether to laugh, cry, jump, or shout, but I wanted to do a little of each! How good of my dear Heavenly Father to thus lead so wonderfully His feeble, trembling child to the very house once occupied by one whom He had so signally used and blessed, and one so dear to my own heart! It seemed indeed like following in her very footsteps. Oh it did seem so sweetly significant, so tender, so precious. I ran with eager feet after the umbrella, which had been the means in God's hands of my meeting with the unknown friend, and then went to the owner, told my wonderful story, and secured the house.

Soon after this the Lord showed me that I would dedicate it on my fiftieth birthday, and so it proved, for last Thursday evening, October 15th, on the occasion of my fiftieth birthday, we had our dedication service, and it was a time never to be forgotten. The dear people were so happy that many were weeping for joy. Mrs. E. V. Baker of Elim Home, Rochester, addressed the meeting, and delighted us all with an account of the wonderful growth of her work of faith there, and was followed by Rev. Mr. Parsons, pastor of the Hudson-street Baptist Church of this city, with a most helpful address on the full Gospel, and I tried to tell, in the midst of my tears, of the weak, puny little baby who arrived in this world fifty years ago, and tipped the scales at four and a half pounds, and of the wonderful conversion and

healing, and steppings in the Lord up to the present time. After which dear Mrs. Baker and Mr. Parsons laid hands upon my head in prayer, thus setting me apart in faith to the work, which the Home will involve. Then followed the dedication of the house itself, and the service closed with the anointing of a dear young girl who desired healing. Several excellent donations came in during the day, both in furniture and money, and altogether it was a red-letter day in the life of one who feels herself unworthy of the least of God's countless mercies. Glory to His Name!

In connection with the Home I expect to open a Missionary Training School in the chapel, fitted up and set apart for that purpose. Full particulars of this School will be given later. The entire work will be carried on by faith, there will be no collections and no debts. Pray that God may here be greatly glorified.

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