

rich in faith as they told the gospel story and enrolled Bible readers. A Tecumseh school principal came to a dinner in Oklahoma City honoring the Reads' tenth anniversary in the schools. She brought a sheaf of letters from the children telling what the Bible program meant to them. Some told how they had found Christ as Saviour.

During the summer months when school was out they visited neglected communities holding Summer Bible Schools. I have gone to their two story home at 304 South Boulevard in Norman and heard Brother Read humming and talking cheerfully while he and Mrs. Read were getting their upstairs rooms renovated for student renters for the coming winter.

They were careful to keep the house painted inside and out. The rental of rooms was one means of their support. Thus they labored with their hands to maintain themselves while they freely gave others the gospel.

There were a few faithful friends who contributed to their worthy labor of love. On one occasion I saw the report they prepared and the average income from interested donors was much less than \$100 per month. Yet Brother Read smiled joyously as he told of doing this work and expressed appreciation for those whose gifts made it possible. With careful management the Reads were able to maintain their car in good condition, travel hundreds of miles every month and buy supplies for their lesson stories.

Missionaries were frequent guests in their home. They would open the double doors between living room and dining room and invite friends in to hear of gospel work around the world. They scarcely let a missionary pass their way without giving him a gift for his work. Yet they contributed from a very modest income.

"AS DYING, AND, BEHOLD, WE LIVE"

(2 Corinthians 6:9)

As God gave Isaac to Abraham and Sarah after they were past the age to beget and bear children, so He gave a large work of faith to the Reads in the twilight years of their life. Brother Read had passed his 65th birthday when he and Mrs. Read visited their first rural school near Norman, Oklahoma with the Bible program.

He had already served as a Presbyterian pastor at Gurdon, Arkansas and in Little Rock. Following this he spent some years as a missionary among the Indians of Oklahoma under the Reformed Church in America. His father had also labored as a missionary to the Indians of Oklahoma, so this was familiar territory. After moving to Nor-

man in 1931 the Reads had conducted a Bible class ministry for university students. Then they spent four years opening up work for Child Evangelism Fellowship in Oklahoma. For some years he commuted to Minco, serving as pastor of the Presbyterian Church. So by 1945 he had put in many years of active service for the Lord.

In the spring of 1945 the Reads made their first trips to the rural schools. Who could have imagined that a man in his 65th year was beginning a work that would take him jostling over rough country roads covering more miles every year for the next eleven?

I knew him as a man who was frail of health. He suffered from chronic undulant fever and other discomforts. But the shout that went up from the school grounds when his familiar car came to a halt, "Here comes the Bible man!" continued to ring out because he found a source of renewed strength which his aging body could not have supplied (Isa. 40:31). Thus fortified he pressed on.

Two remarkable recoveries from close calls at death's door enabled him to prepare the work for younger hands to continue. First, he suffered a heart attack at the age of 77. This seemed to preclude his ever making another school trip. But it was not so! A year later, his faithful companion who seemed to be in so much better health than he was, suddenly went home to be with the Lord after a very brief illness which had not appeared serious at all. In the wake of this shock Brother Read, who was by now "such as one as Paul the aged," found strength to take new workers around the large rural school circuit. Then leukemia struck about a year later. I visited him in the hospital and wondered if his body now showing the strain of age and serious illness could survive much longer. He always sought prayer to know how he should spend the time which remained for his earthly pilgrimage.

To my complete surprise, I returned one day to find him sitting up. Somehow, Paul's phrase seemed to be vividly enacted before my very eyes, Brother Read was "as dying, and, behold, he lived." At his request I pushed his wheel chair to the chapel where we prayed and he thanked God for restoring him to health. He left some gospel tracts and distributed others as he returned.

A few more months of service as a senior counselor for Oklahoma BLL remained before his home call. He was on our Board of Trustees and to our amazement was able to come to Oklahoma City for our meeting in May of 1959. After hearing our report he offered a motion of