

STA Report for July 23, 30, and 8/6/15:

In case you don't know how to access the website, here is the URL: <http://christianscienceoutreach.org>

You can read the current report and/or go to Archives to read past reports in PDF format.

Enjoy!!! Theodora

From Bob 7/23/15:

Never a dull moment today! We gifted 20 or more books...closer to 30 if those grabbed by Tyrone were not returned by a security guard! This was kind of a hoot. Tyrone is a serious person we've seen around before who has flashes of coherence but his speech is mostly out of left field. Anyway, while both of us were occupied with others, Tyrone came up, lectured me about something, then as I turned away he took at least six books off the stand, offered them to passersby enroute to the down escalator. I was tied up with another person but a few minutes later told a security guard what had happened plus a description of the man. The guard laughed heartily. "Oh yeah, that's Tyrone. He likes to hand out things to people on the sidewalk." I laughed too. Then about a half hour later another young security guard came up on the escalator with six books in his hand. He just smiled and shook his head, returning maybe all of them. All's well. Though one would wonder to whom he might have gifted the possibly missing one and where it might have gone! We feel like we are part of the family in this bus plaza---we and staff support and take care of each other in the broadest sense.

Then along came Nehemiah (who couldn't believe we were able to spell his name), age 56 with 13 children, from Antigua, who is a jovial friend of some of the staff here also. He's studying to get his high school GED, hopes to go to a Bible college after that, and is an all-round intelligent and warm gentleman. We spent a long time with him, disagreeing on some of his assertions about his wide-ranging Biblical knowledge ("Jesus is God"), but certainly agreeing on the all-presence of Mind, the commonality of Spirit, the nature of God as Love, and ourselves as the expressions of God. He started out saying he couldn't possibly fit any more reading in during the next years---he was already late to get to the library to study---but after he

expressed so much Bible knowledge Tina suggested to him that he might tuck S&H away on a shelf and then remember it in a future time of need. He thoughtfully took the book. His current stance is one of those who takes the Bible mostly as literal but quietly discerns the greater; a thinker who embraces all humanity in his sense of religion, one who decries the formal church because it has, in many instances, left the humble teachings and actions of Jesus behind. We certainly have common ground wherein we rejoice.

From Bob 7/30/15:

I don't really have anything to report this time around; we probably set a new record for the fewest books gifted! (3?)

From Bob 8/6/15:

Another pleasant session downtown...ten or twelve books out the door. Several people said nice things. And we were happy that earlier we found several Spanish editions of S&H hidden below other books. One went out to a young man who noticed and asked for a "Biblia" from our collection of used Bibles. We were happy to augment his Biblia with the Spanish S&H. He apparently didn't speak English but then rewarded us with a great smile and "gracias!" from as far away as the down escalator.

Another interesting person was a youngish woman who recognized who we represented. She told us how she enjoyed the nearby Reading Room and implied she was a frequent visitor.

From Tina 7/23/15:

Bob's right, our visitor, Nehemiah, is truly a "thinker" and his brightness reminds me of something I read describing bands of Indian tribes in the Interior Salish country we hail from (Eastern Washington): Before European contact the indigenous people were composed of small family groups (bands) and the combined bands were led by a head chief. Each band had a leader, whom they called a "thinker". These men or women thinkers from various bands united as a decision-making council for the entire tribe. "Thinker" - I love

that! Indeed "the time for thinkers *has* come" - indeed it never left.

A man wearing a "Star Wars" t-shirt pointed to our poster about spiritual healing and said, "I do believe in it!"

Joe spoke to me for a long time. He is homeless, elderly, and thoughtful. He doesn't feel safe relying on the various local shelters so he sleeps outdoors, except for the times he saves enough money to rent a motel room. Then he and his rescue dog spend a little time in comfort and companionship. Joe's vision isn't clear and he really doesn't need to haul around extra baggage, yet when I told him I could find him a large-type Science and Health he was eager to receive it. "I'll look for you next Thursday," Joe said. (I've got a book set out to take next Thursday. I told him the Christian Science Reading Room is nearby and would welcome him in for some quiet study and conversation.)

Another fellow didn't want our book. "I am a Satanist," he explained with raised arms and the sweetest smile. That he cared enough to explain politely and apologetically spoke volumes about his goodness.

Custodian Liz came and stood behind the table with Bob and me. We were still talking with Nehemiah and we learned they were already acquainted. Liz put her arm around my shoulders and told him, "This is my momma." We had a good laugh - the four of us, and inwardly I was deeply touched by her comment.

Sometimes standing behind the outreach table seems like more than two hours. Today there was no time element involved. We set up, we shared ideas with several dear 'thinkers" and it was over. Where did the time 'go'?

"It matters not..."

From Tina 7/30/15:

I have something to report but will include with this upcoming outreach's report.

We gave more than three books, I am sure.

It was a good quiet day.

From Tina 8/6/15:

I couldn't find ways to express my thoughts about last week's outreach so I didn't contribute anything. It was a quiet day. There were good things to report. And then there was this encounter which caught me off guard and flummoxed me:

A long time visitor came by and, as we always do, we hugged each other. I usually ask if all is going well for her...life hasn't always been easy for her. I have written of our conversations and her progress in earlier reports. She showed me the bruises on her arms. Emergency doctors were not having success finding veins to draw blood from her - hence the blue marks. She told me she had been pet-sitting and since she did not have a car, she called for an ambulance because she was in great fear and discomfort. Her arm was numb and her leg hurt like hell. She said the doctors could find nothing wrong with her and I am glad. But as she was telling me about her 'adventure' I realized that her symptoms were exactly what I had been experiencing for several days. As we stood face to face I realized my dear body was mirroring her extremities."How could there be such a coincidence? That is what I was trying to figure out and this is what I learned:

"...mortal mind is a theater...full of drama and absurdity..." CSS
8.13.15, p.06.

I usually don't tell my husband when I am praying about a difficulty...mostly to protect him from fear and because he likes to search for 'causes'. But that evening I did tell him about my unusual experience at Outreach. Thankfully we both were alert enough not to get mired in the possibilities. Days later he asked me how I was doing - arm and leg-wise. I had forgotten about telling him. There were no issues to report - everything was/is functioning in an unobtrusively normal way.

The 'theater of the absurd' can be broad comedy - and not very subtle, to boot. I am glad I caught the silliness of error's blatant suggestiveness trying to convince me "me and God weren't/aren't tight." I am glad my friend stopped by for a hug and a lesson.