



"Watchman, What of the Night?"
 "The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!" *Isaiah 21:11*

SEMI-MONTHLY

Vol. XXVII. JANUARY 1, 1906 No. 1

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I will stand upon my watch, and will set my feet upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them that oppose me. And the Lord said unto me, "Write down the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that every one may read it fluently." *Hab. 2:1-2.*

Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking forward to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—*Luke 21:25-28-31.*

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

This Journal is one of the prime factors or instruments in the system of Bible Instruction, or "Seminary Extension," now being presented in all parts of the civilized world by the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, chartered A. D. 1881, "For the Promotion of Christian Knowledge." It not only serves as a class room where Bible Students may meet in the study of the divine Word, but also as a channel of communication through which they may be reached with announcements of the Society's Conventions and of the coming of its traveling representatives styled "Pilgrims," and refreshed with reports of its Conventions.

Our "Berean Lessons" are topical rehearsals or reviews of our Society's published "Studies," most entertainingly arranged, and very helpful to all who would merit the only honorary degree which the Society accords, viz., Verbi Dei Minister (V. D. M.), which translated into English is, Minister of the Divine Word. Our treatment of the International S. S. Lessons is especially for the older Bible Students and Teachers. By some this feature is considered indispensable.*

This Journal stands firmly for the defence of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated.—Redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6.) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to—"Make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which . . . has been hid in God, . . . to the intent that now might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed."—Eph. 3:5-9, 10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken;—according to the divine wisdom granted unto us, to understand. Its attitude is not dogmatical, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the up-building of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made, to facilitate such testing.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His Workmanship;" that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of his Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing, of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progress; and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8.

That the Basis of Hope, for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man" "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; Jno. 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the World lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35.

CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Editor.

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ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE.

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED IN THE

FRENCH, GERMAN, SWEDISH, DANISH AND ITALIAN LANGUAGES.

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We are always glad to hear from the dear brethren and sisters, and especially so when they write their business communications on a separate sheet, and when their writing is plain and easily read. Please be specially careful with the signature and address.

Friends in foreign lands will please not send us postal cards with writing on the face other than address, as there is a penalty attached here to all such cards. Also remember that letter postage from foreign countries to U. S. is the equivalent of 5 cents each one-half ounce, and any deficiency is charged to us at double rates.

THE PITTSBURGH DISPATCH

Most of the subscriptions to the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* expired with November. Please note the date tag and let us know if you wish us to renew for you. We have a special clubbing arrangement by which we can supply this cosmopolitan newspaper for \$3.00 per year, or just half price. This supersedes previous notices. *The Dispatch* proposes more space for Brother Russell's discourses every Monday hereafter.

*These two opening paragraphs first appeared in issue of February 1, 1906. The remainder of the article is that which appeared in each issue since January 1, 1895.

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The WATCH TOWER and Herald of Christ's Presence

VOL. XXVII

ALLEGHENY, PA., JANUARY 1, 1906

No. 1

THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

The dawn of another new year is properly a time for solemn reflections, both retrospective and prospective. In the retrospect how abundant is the cause for thanksgiving! We who have been blessed with the richest favors of divine grace in that knowledge of divine truth which reveals to us the high privilege of becoming sons and heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for the called and chosen and faithful according to his purpose, have a never-failing cause for deepest gratitude. Great indeed was the favor which revealed to us the hope of everlasting life as justified, human sons of God—of full restitution to the divine favor and likeness, as was at first possessed by our father Adam. And great was our joy when first, by faith, we appropriated this precious promise and realized that legally, through merit of the precious blood of Christ shed for our redemption, we had passed from death unto life, and that in God's appointed time the everlasting treasure with all its attendant glory and blessing would be ours. But beyond even this are the "*exceeding great and precious promises*" to those of this justified class who have been called, according to God's purpose, to become the bride and joint-heir of his dear Son.

Then, in addition to all these blessings of hope and promise, was the blessed realization during all the year, and with some of us for many years past, that though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, as the Psalmist aptly represents the present life, our blessed Shepherd's rod and staff have been our comfort and our safeguard. How often has the friendly crook of the Shepherd's staff stayed us from wandering off into bypaths and kept us in the narrow way; how his chastening rod has from time to time aroused us from dreamy lethargy and urged us on our way. And at such times we have recalled the comforting words: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."—Heb. 12:5-8.

"THOU SPRADEST MY TABLE IN THE MIDST OF ENEMIES"

Spiritually, we have feasted on the bounties of divine favor; while in things temporal, under whatsoever circumstances we have been placed, having the assurance that *all things* work together for good to them that love God, we have realized that godliness with contentment is great gain, having promise of the life that now is [so long as God wills to have us remain here], and also of that which is to come. Wherefore, we can and do most heartily "offer unto God thanksgiving." And shall we not render unto him, not only the praise of our lips, but also the incense of truly consecrated lives, throughout the year upon which we are just entering? Dearly beloved, consecrate yourselves anew to the Lord today—not in the sense of invalidating the consecration made once for all, possibly many years ago, but rather in the sense of re-affirming and emphasizing that covenant. Tell the dear

Lord that you consider yourselves entirely his, and that it is still your purpose to keep your all upon the altar of sacrifice during this new year and until it is wholly consumed in his service. Then let us proceed with studious care from day to day to pay these, our vows of full consecration, unto the Most High.

As we look back and with sorrow view the imperfections of even our best efforts, and then forward and see the lion-like difficulties that seem to obstruct our onward course, we will need greatly to reinforce our waning courage with the special promises of divine grace to help in every time of need. We have the blessed assurance that "the Lord will give strength unto his people." "Call upon me in the day of trouble," he says, "and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." As soldiers under our great Captain, we have enlisted in no uncertain struggle, except our own faint-heartedness or unfaithfulness should make it so. We are fully supplied with the whole armor of God, and will be amply protected against all the fiery darts of the adversary if we accept it and carefully buckle it on; we are forewarned of all the snares and dangers that beset our onward way, so that we may avoid and overcome them; we are fully informed as to the policy and course of the Captain under whose banner we have enlisted, and of the part we are to take under his leading. We have his constant presence with us, even to the end of our course. His inspiring voice may always be heard above the clash and din of battle—Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom! Be of good cheer; I have overcome! Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid! Greater is he that is for you than all they that be against you. If we are weak and incline to faintheartedness we have only to remember the blessed promise, "The Lord will give strength unto his people;" and by our faithfulness in the service we shall glorify God and he will deliver us gloriously from all our foes, both seen and unseen.

HOW SHALL WE PAY OUR VOWS?

This is an important question with all the truly consecrated, and one surely of paramount importance. Let us consider, then, that when we consecrated ourselves fully to the Lord, we thereby signified that we would hold nothing back for self. That consecration included all our possessions, our time, our physical energies and our mental attainments. And it implies the sacrifice of all our former earthly ambitions, hopes and aims, so that we should no longer pursue them to any extent. This, and nothing less, is what our vow of full consecration signifies. But it signifies, further, that these possessions or personal qualifications, which the Lord terms talents, are not only to be released from the service of the worldly ambitions, etc., but that they are to be so released, not for aimless inactivity, but for the purpose of being utilized in an opposite direction—in the service of God, of his plan and of his children.

In the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) the Lord illustrated very clearly how we are expected to pay our vows of consecration to the Most High. He says: "It is like a man who, intending to travel, called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, to another

two, and to another one; to each according to his respective capacity; and straightway took his journey."

TO EACH ACCORDING TO ABILITY

This master had important and valuable interests to leave in charge of his servants; and as these servants had all engaged to serve him, he had a right to expect of them a sincere and faithful interest in the work. Yet he did not expect more of them than they were severally able to accomplish. He rightly expected larger returns from the one who had five talents than from those who had one or two talents. And in the reckoning, it will be observed that the servant who had doubled his two talents was just as highly commended as the one who had doubled his five. The reply to each was the same—"Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And had the servant with the one talent been similarly faithful he would have received the very same commendation. Notice also that the parable does not represent the obligations of the world of mankind in the use of their talents, but merely of "*his own servants*"—the consecrated believers only. And notice also that no servant was left without some talent of usefulness and responsibility. Each servant had at least one talent; and for the right use of that one talent he was just as accountable to his master as were those who had more.

But the professed servant with the one talent was unfaithful to his master, and yet he evidently wanted to be considered a servant still, and probably thought he was worthy of commendation and reward for not perverting his Lord's money to other uses. He had taken good care of the talent; he had not turned it in opposition to the Lord, but he had simply buried it—failed to use it. At the reckoning time, he who had received the one talent said, "Lord, I know thee, that thou art an exacting man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not scattered. And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast thine own."

"His Lord answered and said to him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not scattered; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers; and then at my coming I should have received mine own with interest." It will be observed that this servant was not what men would generally call wicked. He was simply an idler, willing, if he could, to draw a servant's approval and compensation, but lacking any real, active interest in his master's business. He had no ill will toward his master; he was probably very glad that the other servants kept the business from going to wreck and ruin; he did nothing to hinder them from using their talents, but he did not feel the responsibility he had assumed in becoming a "servant," nor take a proper interest in his master's affairs. Yet, as a faithless, slothful servant, he was really a covenant-breaker, and therefore "wicked" and certainly unfit to be trusted with still greater responsibilities on the master's return.

But let us remember that this was not a real case: it was simply a parable used to illustrate real cases. And if the illustration fits your individual case, let it not lose its effect upon you. The very object of the parable is to arouse such to a sense of their short-comings, and to recover them from the lethargy into which they have relaxed, by reminding them of their responsibilities. Activity in the Lord's service to the full extent of our ability or talents is what the Lord has a right to expect of all who profess to be his servants; and it is what he does expect. Therefore, if you have but one talent, do not bury it, but cultivate and use it; do what you can, and all you can, in the great work to which we have already consecrated our lives.

MUCH GIVEN, MUCH REQUIRED

And those who have several talents, let them see to it that they too are faithful to the extent of their abilities, not being content to do merely what the one-talented man can do or ought to do. Such a one would not be a good and faithful servant, and could not expect the Master's approving "Well done!" His approval will be given to those only who are faithful to the extent of their opportunity.

Those who find the truth and make the consecration before they are encumbered with the cares of this life, who have no families dependent upon them and who have a reasonable degree of health, have at least two talents—time and health—which can and ought to be utilized in the service to the best possible advantage. Then there are those who have a money talent, or a business talent, and such should consider how these are being used. Are they largely swallowed up in luxuries, or a superabundance of the good things of this life, for either self or family? Or are they being laid up as treasures upon earth—in banks, store-houses and investment securities, to en-

rich and cultivate the spirit of pride in friends or children, and for them to quarrel over after you are dead?

Our talents for use in the Lord's service consist of all those things and opportunities which are over and above what we need for the necessary and reasonable maintenance of ourselves or our families, if we have families, and the reasonable provision against distress in case of a sudden calamity or approaching old age, etc. Aside from these, all we have should be in active service, be they many talents or few. If we have five talents and are using only one or two, how can we expect the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant"? Did we not covenant to give and to use *all* for him?—all our money, all our time, all our influence, all our mental activity, all our physical ability? How faithful have we been during the past year? How do we stand at the bar of our own judgment? And how faithful will we be during the coming year? After providing things decent and honest for ourselves and those dependent upon us, let us judiciously appropriate our talents to what we profess to consider the chief business of life. Here are the testing points of true loyalty and devotion. Let us ponder them well, and not lightly set them aside.

FORMER OPPORTUNITIES LOST

But observe further what the Lord has to say about this "wicked and slothful servant." He says: "Take the talent from him and give it unto him which hath ten talents; for unto everyone that hath [made use of his talents] shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not [made use of his talent] shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into *outer darkness*: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The outer darkness here referred to is in contrast with the inner light of the holy place of favor and communion and instruction from God, symbolized in the Tabernacle. The testing comes on the return of the Master. Then the faithful servants shall enter into fuller joys and privileges and blessings, while the unfaithful will go into the outer darkness of error and ignorance concerning God's plans and ways, which envelops the world in general, and their neglected opportunities for more abundant service will go as a reward to those who are already earnest and active, and whose earnest and faithful labors will in due time be abundantly rewarded.

As we thus view our Lord's teaching, we see that our only security as sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ is in activity in the service of the truth. Well, says one, I see very few doing that. Very true: only a few will do it. But that precious few are the Lord's jewels. Are you one of them? Ah, that is the point to be considered. No matter how few they are, or whether you ever saw or knew of any such, that does not alter the conditions of our calling. "This is the way: walk ye in it." One, at least, has trodden it before. Look for his foot-prints and follow him, and "He will give strength unto his people," even though they walk alone, as he did, without the cheering companionship of fellow-travelers.

"LO, I AM WITH YOU"

But think not that you are traveling alone in this narrow way. The Lord has now a consecrated people, a faithful band of servants who, with every talent consecrated, are steadily pursuing their course in the narrow way. We know some of them by name and by character and by their steady and progressive activity in the blessed work. Not many of them have five talents, but a good many have two or three, and some only one. Quietly and unobtrusively they go about from day to day preaching the wonderful words of life, and God is with them and is leading them on. Their hearts are full of joy and hope and they are kept securely amidst all the perils of this evil day. None are so clear in their apprehension and appreciation of truth as those who are fully enlisted in its service. Let all who would run the race successfully look well to their zeal and activity in the Lord's work. If we bury our one or our many talents under a weight of worldly cares and encumbrances which might be avoided or set aside; if we bury them under worldly ambitions for either self or family—whether this be by wasting consecrated time upon science, philosophy, music or art; or upon business, politics or pleasures; or in pampering pride and appetite—then as unfaithful servants we will sooner or later go into outer darkness, by being caught in some of the snares of this "evil day," and will be led farther and farther into error and away from truth.

Mark well that it is not a case of such unfaithful servants being *liable* to get into outer darkness, into error: it is a case of *must*. The Master's orders are peremptory and decisive: "Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." The light now shining is *not* for the unfaithful, but for the faithful servants; and no matter how clearly the unfaithful may have seen and understood the deep things of God, and no matter how he may have enjoyed them, if he has not loved them

so as to serve them and sacrifice his conveniences for them, he is unworthy of them and *must* go out into the outer darkness of the world in general. With these as with the world the disappointment of theories and plans in the great time of trouble will ere long bring the weeping and gnashing of teeth foretold.

FAITHFULNESS IMPLIES ACTIVITY

It is indeed a notable fact that in no single case have we seen one drift away from the truth into the snares of these perilous times who was very active and fully enlisted in the Lord's work, whose one aim and endeavor was to herald the truth and to bless others with it. To such the Lord says, "My grace is sufficient for thee"—"Ye shall never fail, for so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Let us, then, dearly beloved, have for our watchword during the year the word "devotion," and let each of us write upon his heart the gracious promise—"The Lord will give strength unto his people." Let us be faithfully "his people," and let us earnestly desire and faithfully use the strength promised. Faithful is he that hath promised, who also will do it. So, then, if you lack the strength to use faithfully your talent, the fault is yours, not God's. You either have not his service close enough at heart or else do not make use of the strength he provides. "The Lord will give strength unto his people"—his trusting, faithful servants—those who are using to his praise the talents consecrated to their Master, however many or few those talents may be.

1906	"God Bless You"	1906
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Our New Year's greeting is, "God bless you." It applies primarily to those nearest and dearest in the bonds of Christian fellowship in present truth; secondarily, to all who trust in the precious blood, in the merit of which alone there is forgive-

ness of sins and reconciliation with God and a basis of Christian brotherhood; thirdly, to the world in general, still blind and deaf to God's great salvation, but heirs of the great oath-bound covenant, "in due time;" fourthly, to those who oppose us and say all manner of evil against us, falsely, for Christ's sake—because we are heralds of his truth and grace.

For all of these our wish is God's blessing, which, if received, maketh truly rich, and addeth no sorrow. If for our enemies and the world in general we pray opening of the eyes of understanding, surely with the Apostle we may offer the same prayer also for all the "brethren" and for ourselves—a wider opening of our eyes of understanding. The Apostle's words are, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father . . . that ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."—Eph. 3:14-19.

We suggest as our motto for 1906 the words upon the motto cards designed by Sister Seibert (advertised in our issue of Nov. 15 last), viz., "In Due Time."

"In Due Time."

1 TIM. 2:6

"Be patient, therefore, brethren."

We hope that the motto cards representing these sentiments so fully will be in all of our homes to assist us in the development of the grace of patience, without which other graces of the spirit cannot be matured. We cannot pack and mail a single motto for less than 10c, but conclude to offer 5 in a tube, postpaid, for 25c, to the intent that all may have them. We can endure many things with patience if we can but keep in memory that "in due time" that which is perfect will have come, ushering us into the joys of our Lord, and establishing peace on earth and good will among men.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE CRISIS NEARING

The Federation of Religions, now fairly launched, we have been waiting for ever since we published our interpretation of Revelations, chapter 13, in 1881. We there showed that Protestantism would federate, that the Evangelical Alliance of 1842 was the start of it, and that it would be in full bloom when the Episcopal body should associate and lend the dignity of its claimed "Apostolic ordination."

This combination is made ostensibly as the outcome of greater love amongst the Lord's followers, but really is the rolling together of the one end of the symbolic "heavens" for self-defense and to make an impression on the worldly.

Really, this is a step toward political power. The masses are becoming too logical to be dealt with as formerly, and religion to be popular must assume a new role. The old-time preaching, "Ye must be born again" to "enter the kingdom," backed up by the horrible dogma of the dark ages, that all not "born again" must go to a hell of eternal torment, can no longer be preached—the world will not accept it. The new Gospel must be something which will appeal to the worldly wise as "practical religion," namely, good morals—in politics, in finance, in society, in the family. Everybody can understand and appreciate that much of religion, and everybody will support it, and the churches will thus pose not as representatives of Christ and the Bible's teachings as a whole, but merely representatives of Christian morals. The effect will be a growth of Christian-Phariseism which will make clean the outside of the cup or platter, leaving the inside still unclean—unregenerate.

So popular will Federated Churchianity become that to even criticize it will be a "crime" worthy of crucifixion in some form—socially and financially, if not physically.

Politicians will quickly realize that their bread is buttered on that side, and be ready to enact legislation of any kind desired by the Federation. Mammon-worship will take on new forms temporarily, but power will soon debauch the unregenerate mass and drive out the regenerate faithful who may temporarily be misled by the great "Union" movement in the name of Christ, but without his spirit or authority.

The Scriptures clearly show that anarchy will speedily swallow up everything—social, financial, political and religious—in the great "time of trouble" with which, as the Scriptures everywhere show, this age is to close and the Millennium of our Lord's reign of righteousness to be ushered in. Socialism, already growing, undoubtedly is the seed out of

which anarchy will develop, though many Socialists are no doubt hoping to the contrary—misled by their failure to appreciate the power of selfishness, which will exhaust every means and battle to the death on both sides of the question—to get wealth and to hold it.

CHURCH UNION IN GREAT BRITAIN

Ardor for church union in Great Britain has cooled considerably of late over the law which practically turns over the public schools to the care of the Church of England—the Episcopal church. All other Protestant denominations there are known by the general term "Nonconformists," because they refuse to conform to the services of the church established by the law of the land. These now are bent on an attempt to secure the disestablishment of present church and state union. The hope has been expressed that with all churches on an equal footing a general Church Federation of Protestants will follow.

Now, a new suggestion is offered by Canon Henson of Westminster Abbey, namely, that an easier and a more popular course would be for the Government to recognize all Christian denominations (with certain limitations, possibly), putting all on a parity with the Episcopal church. His suggestion is that this would be a *practical union*, and he favors it as a possibility. He says in a lengthy article:

"Clear the fiction of Apostolic Succession out of the way and Establishment will be no barrier to reunion. Leave that fiction paramount in the minds of the English clergy, and disestablishment will only give freer play to the intolerance it inevitably generates. The deeper forces of our time are not moving in the direction of that severe individualism which would reduce the action and responsibility of the state to the lowest measures; rather we move toward a larger view of state action and state responsibility.

"The logical goal of modern tendencies is not toward disestablishment, but toward a fuller and worthier establishment. Why should not the nation draw into its service all the organized Christianity instead of limiting itself to a single denomination? I rejoice to observe a beginning made in this direction by recent legislation, which has recognized for certain civic purposes the status of Nonconformist clergymen, and I would venture to hope that the final solution of the problem of religious education in the state schools may be reached by an extension of the principle of establishment.

"If, even at the eleventh hour, more temperate counsels could prevail, and a resettlement of the educational difficulty

could be arrived at by the combined efforts of the just and peace-loving men on both sides, it does not seem to me impossible that the cause of home reunion should receive a great impetus from this very educational conflict, which, for the moment, seems to put back by at least twenty-five years the hands of the clock which were slowly, very slowly, climbing toward union."

* * *

Can it be that *thus* the two-horned beast [Great Britain] may give "life," energy, the effect of Apostolic succession, to the Protestant "image of the [Roman] beast"? (Rev. 13:15.) A very few years will demonstrate; but this appears to us a very likely course of fulfillment.

RESULTS OF RUSSIA'S STRUGGLE

Matters are in a sad condition in Russia, but probably not one-fifth as bad as the majority of people surmise. In times past rioting has occurred in many cities of the United States, the details of which were learned by fellow-citizens only through the same channels as by the remainder of the world—through the newspaper dispatches. Doubtless the same is true in Russia, except in the immediate vicinity of the troubles.

What is now occurring in Russia is awakening that stolid people marvellously. Even when order shall have again been fully restored the people will have gained such a knowledge of this power as will prepare them for the great climax which, according to prophecy, we believe will be reached by 1915.

"The Internationals," extremists of the Socialist class, are credited with the chief direction of the Russian revolution. They have shown great skill thus far and may be esteemed as getting a schooling with the most stupid of "Christendom," which will prepare them for the great struggle to occur at the close of "the times of the Gentiles."

RUSSIA'S THREE-SIDED MELEE

The telegraphic reports from Russia are confusing to many. One time we read of the Socialists and students rioting and in conflict with the troops; again we read of massacres of Jews, to which the Government employees seem to give assent and secret aid. These seemingly conflicting reports can only be understood when we remember that there are three parties more or less in conflict:

(1) The Socialists, mechanics, students, etc., who are moving for liberty—some for a constitution and a congress

composed of the people's representatives, and some for out-and-out Socialism.

(2) The old government party, sometimes styled the Bureaucracy. Amongst these are many of wealth and culture, who believe that any concessions to the growing discontent will surely lead up to further discontent and eventually disrupt Russia. This party is charged with being responsible for having brought on the Japanese war. They are influential and close to the Czar.

(3) A third party is everyway conservative. It desires reform and peace under a midway government—neither autocratic nor liberal. Count Witte is at the head of this division.

The Czar is credited with sympathy for this third class of his subjects, but has been closely pressed by the influences of the second party until recently, when, under fear of the first party, he formally put Witte in office and issued a decree, or ukase, granting a constitution and congress. Had he followed this course sooner matters would have gone more smoothly, for at one time party number three was of considerable size. Many have deserted it for party number one—some because they have imbibed the theories and spirit of Socialism and some because they doubt the Czar's honesty or ability in respect to his ukase.

Witte and his associates of the third party are obliged to operate largely through present office-holding governors and generals, whose sympathies lie with the second party—across Witte's path of governmental reform. It is these who have secretly sanctioned or aided the riots which have killed so many Jews—because the Jews are of the first party, namely, Socialist sympathizers and abettors.

LATEST REPORTS

As we write, the dispatches seem to imply that the Czar is in great perplexity, because the masses refuse to accept his ukase of freedom, and are, by strikes and increasingly revolutionary methods, more than ever menacing the social structure. He doubtless feels that he must do something and that quickly; and that his "olive-branch" ukase having been rejected he can do nothing now but fall back upon the second party and use force to crush the rebellious into submission or into death. Matters may not yet have reached this extreme, but if it has we doubt not there will be strenuous times in Russia before Socialists are reduced to submission.

BEREAN BIBLE STUDY FOR JANUARY

FOR EXPLANATION SEE PREFACE OF WATCH TOWER BIBLES AND WATCH TOWER, MARCH 1, 1905

PRAYER

1. What is prayer? "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." Z. '98-27 (1st col. ¶ 2); F. 680, ¶ 2, (1st sentence).
2. What is the *privilege and power* of prayer? Z. '95-213 (1st col. ¶ 1); Z. '96-161 (1st col. ¶ 1).
3. What is the *object* of prayer? Z. 96-161 (1st col. ¶ 2); Z. '98-29 (1st col. ¶ 2); F. 679, ¶ 1.
4. What is the *necessity* for prayer? Z. '96-161 (1st col. ¶ 3); Z. '99-184 (1st col. ¶ 2); Z. '00-268 (1st col. ¶ 1,— "Manna," July 24); Z. '05-297 (2nd col. ¶ 2).
5. What is the necessity for *persistence* in prayer? Z. '96-162 (2nd col. ¶ 3, 4); Z. '01-270 (2nd col. ¶ 2); Z. '05-342 (2nd col.) and 343 (1st col. ¶ 1).
6. To whom and *through* whom should we pray? Z. '98-28 (2nd col. ¶ 1); E. 468, ¶ 2, (last sentence).

7. Before whom should we pray?

In secret, Matt. 6:5-9.

Before believers, Jno. 17; Jno. 11:41, 42; Matt. 18:19. Before believers and unbelievers, Lu. 3:21; Jno. 12:27-29; Matt. 27:46.

In the public assembly of the saints, Acts 12:12; 1:14; 1 Cor. 11:4, 5; 14:13, 14.

Z. '98-27 (1st col. ¶ 5) to 28 (1st col. ¶ 2).

8. What should be our *manner* of approach to God in prayer? Z. '95-213 (1st col. ¶ 3, 4); Z. '98-27 (1st col. ¶ 3, 4); Z. '04-118 (2nd col. ¶ 3).

9. What should be our *position* in prayer? Z. '99-184 (1st col. ¶ 1); Z. '05-297 (2nd col. ¶ 2).

10. What are the *conditions* of acceptable prayer to God? F. 679, ¶ 2, to 681, ¶ 2; Z. '95-213 (2nd col. ¶ 1,— "Manna," June 10); Z. '05-343 (2nd col. ¶ 3, 4) to 344 (1st col. ¶ 3).

REPORTS FROM SOME OF OUR FOREIGN BRANCHES

BRITISH BRANCH REPORT

—1905—

Total copies "Millennial Dawn" sold at cost.....25,640
Total Booklets sold at cost.....6,075
Total "Dawns" in magazine form, sold at cost.....2,022

Total Tracts, etc., sent out free.....1,129,000
These represented in tract pages.....27,112,790

Letters received.....6,230
Letters sent out.....7,742

FINANCIAL—1905—STATEMENT

	£.	s.	d.
Preaching, Pilgrim and Convention expenses....	164	15	01
Cost of tracts, freight, postage, and all other office expenses	1,133	18	10
	1,298	13	11

TRACT FUND DONATIONS

London	£ 88	12	0
The Provinces	554	7	2
Special donations	400	0	0
	1,042	19	02

Deficit for 1905£265 14 09

London, N. W., England, November 14, '05.

Dear Brother Russell:—

The season of the year when the annual report and review of the work is made has again come round, and I have pleasure in giving you the working of the British Branch for the year ending October 31, 1905. As on previous occasions, we have had the privilege of reporting an advance in every branch of the work; though the pleasure in this is modified a little by the fact that the onward march is not quite as rapid as last year. I speak now particularly of the sale of the

"Dawns," in which, though we report an increase in circulation of nearly 2,000, we have not progressed as much as last year, when we advanced 4,000. Our total issue of "Dawns" and booklets is 33,741; truly a goodly total, and one for which we praise the Lord. It has happened this year that several of our colporteurs have had to relinquish the work for a time; some because of their ill-health, and some for domestic reasons. We thank the Lord for the noble band of colporteurs, co-laborers in the harvest field. Their sacrifices, as well as their difficulties and trials, are many, and we constantly remember them at the throne of grace, that they may be strengthened as they go from door to door or from place to place. We are often cheered and encouraged as we read their letters full of cheery optimism or of courage to pursue the work. We have yet much ground to be covered and we are still praying "the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the vineyard."

The volunteer work, as you know, was started late in the season, and though of necessity we have not sent out as much ammunition as usual, of tracts in general we have circulated a larger number than ever. The ammunition for this season is very fruitful of inquiries and we hope for much result from it. The demand is still strong.

The "Tower" list continues to grow all the time at one uniform rate. Yet, judging from the pleasure which the "Tower" gives when once it becomes a regular visitor, we imagine there are many who would be glad to have it did they know of it and of the generous provisions through which it may be obtained, even by those unable to pay for it.

The receipts of the Tract Fund are considerably in advance this year. I have already informed you of the chief reason for this. One of the Lord's dear children, wishing to free the British Branch from the burden of debt, gave liberally of that which the Lord had given. As is generally the case, there are not many with us who are able to give largely, but the many smaller items swell into a good total by the end of the year, and give cause for rejoicing as the Lord prospers his work.

With yourself I appreciate the coöperation of all the dear brethren, whether it be shown in the colporteur work, volunteer work, or by donation to the Tract Fund. Many who are unable to donate are able to distribute the literature, and all may be co-laborers with the Lord and with each other. The Pilgrim visits of Brothers McPhail and Edgar were very much enjoyed.

Of the general work I could say much. The interest is getting more widely spread over the United Kingdom; and Ireland, through the labors of the few brethren there, is getting her opportunity to hear the "glad tidings." The meetings of the brethren in the various towns and villages are, generally speaking, making progress. Naturally the work grows most and goes forward the quickest where the attention given to the interests of the kingdom is not divided with any personal interests. We could mention the labor of many, and, were it convenient, would gladly do so as an encouragement to them and to others. Many are laboring for the Lord unknown to the brethren at large, often with little apparent result; yet we are assured that of all work done for him, "Your labor is not in vain in the Lord." As we are not without signs of the coming "Confederacy," and of the growing political and social power of Nonconformity, there is need that we busy ourselves with the work that has been placed before us. Ours is a better cause than that political religious combination which proposes to amend the world. We know that amendment cannot come until the kingdom comes into power. We wait to heal the world's woes, but in the meantime we can be preparing to "cast up the highway, gather out the stones and lift up a standard for the people," and there is no better way of doing these desirable things than by putting the truth into the hands of the people.

Praying the Lord's blessing upon all his dear children, and for you that you may have grace and strength in abundant measure,

I am, dear brother, yours as ever, in Him,

J. HENERY.

GERMAN BRANCH REPORT

—1905—

Copies of "Millennial Dawn" sold at or below cost.....	2,979
Copies of Booklets sold at or below cost.....	3,770
Copies of Dawns in magazine form.....	3,250
* * *	
Letters received	3,181
Letters sent out	3,220
* * *	
Free sample tracts and Towers, represented in tract pages	21,074,400

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Expended for Pilgrim service.....	1,108.90
The total amount expended for printing, postage, freight and all other expenses of the work.....	18,202.28
	19,311.18
Tract fund donations	3,125.57

Deficit for 1905 *Marks 16,185.61

Elberfeld, Germany, Nov. 11, '05

Dear Brother Russell:—

I now have the pleasure of sending you a statement of the work of the German branch during the year just ended.

We might have reason to wish for a more rapid spread of the Truth on the continent of Europe, especially in the Protestant countries of Germany, Holland and Switzerland, but we are assured "the Lord knoweth them that are his" and who are hungering for a clearer insight into his plans and purposes, and that he will "seek and find" his own sheep. We have various evidences of how the Lord is doing that very thing and rejoice therein.

As the accounts show more particularly, we have been enabled to circulate 21 million tract pages of free literature and ten thousand "Dawns" and booklets. We may hope that some of the seed will ultimately show some fruitage in the gathering of the Lord's people to the Lord and his feast of fat things from his Word. We are constantly securing addresses of earnest Christians, many of whom may be of the class who do not really bow their knees to Baal.

Our Pilgrim service this year has not been very extended. The colporteur service has thus far proved itself impracticable for Germany, or it may be we lack capable and experienced colporteurs. It seems to be a fact, though, that poor circumstances of a large proportion of the people, the spread of infidelity and socialism, together with the large percentage of Roman Catholics in this country, the ever-increasing prices of food and taxes, and perplexities innumerable of the small merchant, etc., and the fight with carnal weapons of Protestants against the encroachments of Catholicism on the one hand and the loss of faith in the virtue and supremacy of Protestantism over Catholicism on the other hand, as manifested in the Rome-ward leanings of the Kaiser himself—that all these things are creating and have created a general contempt for religion of every kind.

May the Lord grant us wisdom to let the light of the truth shine as the only guide to a place of refuge from the storm and tempest for all who are truly his, as the poet has said:—

"When the storms of life are raging,
Tempests wild on sea and land,
I will seek a place of refuge
In the shadow of his hand."

With much love from us all, in loving sympathy for all the Lord's people in every land, in every clime, and commending ourselves to their and your prayers for our heavenly Father's and our dear Master's leading, I am,

Faithfully yours in Christ and his blessed service,

O. A. KOETITZ.

P. S.—The mutiny of the Russian soldiers is evidently driving the Kaiser to desperation. He fears the bad example. The Socialists claim the sympathies of the great majority of the soldiers, officers and men, whether in the standing army or in the reserves. To the Socialists their regime or a republic seems within sight, and it must seem folly to them to hear the Kaiser talk of the soldiers as belonging to him personally, to whom they are compelled to give the oath of allegiance.

As true soldiers of the cross we may even get some inspiration from the words of the Kaiser to his soldiers respecting soldierly qualities. I translate as follows:—

THE KAISER'S SPEECH TO RECRUITS

"Recruits! Since you have now rendered me the oath of allegiance you no longer belong to yourselves alone. Through it you have been received into the great family, whose calling it is to protect the Fatherland when it is in danger. By this oath which you have rendered in view of these glorious field-emblems *you have become mine!* You have thereby taken upon yourselves [under stress] a *great responsibility toward the highest lord* [of the empire]. I expect that you will be conscious of this. I greet you as my soldiers! Wherever it may be, remember what a *privilege* it is that you may belong to my corps of Guards, with its great and glorious memories from the times of your fathers. Many are jealous of you for this privilege, and you may well be proud of it; therefore always remember your oath. Remain true to it, even as your comrades

* The statement of this in dollars would be about one-fourth the amount in marks, a mark being equivalent to 24 cents of U. S. money.

who, in a far country, far from home, have now for twelve months been subject to all kinds of deprivations, doing their duty and fighting a hard battle for the Fatherland and for German culture. This is the special trait of the German soldier, that he willingly follows the call of his king, without murmuring and hesitation, all in faith and confidence in his king, and in confidence in his God, who will not forsake the upright. Therefore *continue steadfast in prayer*, for the calling upon God gives strength, even in the most difficult hour when one is inclined to give up, not to despair but to look forward with courage. Thus do your duty in obedience and you will not fail to receive acknowledgment from your superiors. Practise self-control and never grow weary of today's promise. May this day be to you all a constant source of soberness and a stimulation to zeal, for your entire life, especially since his majesty the King of Spain has so highly honored and distinguished the Guard corps by his presence. To his majesty the King of Spain, Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!"

"Berlin, Nov. 13.—According to the 'Local News,' the Kai-

ser yesterday, after receiving the oath of allegiance from new recruits in Potsdam, addressed them as follows: 'You see here an altar, upon it a cross, the emblem of all Christians. As such you today gave the oath in support of the flag. I wish and hope that you will always remember this oath. Just now a memorable event comes to my mind. When Emperor Leopold of Austria delivered the supreme command of the army to Prince Eugene, handing him the marshal's staff, Prince Eugene grasped a crucifix and held it high with the words: "This shall be our supreme general." Such an attitude I expect of you. I want *pious, brave soldiers* in my army and *no mockers*. You have the privilege of service in the Guards of Potsdam, where you will be constantly reminded of the great soldier-king who not far from here has his last resting place, and of the most glorious history of Prussia. Show yourselves worthy of this special distinction by special cultivation of the soldierly virtues and set a good example to the others in godly fear, faithfulness and obedience.'

OUR PATHWAY

Our lonely hours
In meditation sweet,
Our nothingness to own
In his grace complete.
The narrow way,
Our path, from day to day;—
Gently he leads,
Tho rugged be the way.

He went before
And Sorrow's cup did drink;—
His father's will
His ministry fulfil.
A Priest is he,
In mercy he doth feel;—
The weak and lonely,
By grace he'll ever shield.

—John LaDow

THE GLORIOUS PROCLAMATION

Luke 2:1-20.—JANUARY 7.

Golden Text:—"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord."

The message of the angels to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains sounds more and more precious to each child of God in proportion as he grows in grace and knowledge. As his eyes and ears of understanding open more widely to the lengths and breadths of God's great plan of the ages, that prophetic message is the more highly esteemed as an epitome of the entire Gospel. Nor can our attention be too frequently called to the great event which lies at the foundation of that message—our Savior's birth.

It matters not that December 25th is not the real anniversary of the Savior's birth, but probably the anniversary of the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, the anniversary of the Virgin Mary's conception, our Lord being born nine months later on the calendar, or about October 1. One so great, whose birth, death and resurrection from the dead means so much to the human family, may be remembered and celebrated any day, every day, by all who appreciate what he has done for our race. Since, then, the majority of Christian people have become habituated to the celebration of December 25th as our Lord's birthday, we need make no protest, but join with all in celebrating that day with rejoicing of heart, giving gifts and remembrances one to another, thus copying divine favor, which gave to mankind the Son of God as a gift of mercy and love for our redemption.

For four thousand years and more the promises of God, clothed in more or less of obscurity, had been given to mankind, intimating that ultimately the great curse of sin and death which had come upon the world through father Adam's disobedience in Eden would be rolled away, and instead of a curse, a blight, would come a blessing of the Lord with life-giving refreshment. In various types, figures and shadowy promises this lesson had come down through the ages to the time of our Lord's birth, especially amongst the Jews, who were the divinely favored and covenanted people. And since the Jews were of a commercial spirit, many of them were to be found in all parts of the civilized world; and thus amongst every people the faith in the one God and the hope of Israel through a Messiah were more or less made known, so that at the time of our Lord's birth we read, "All men were in expectation" of a soon-coming Messiah. Doubtless this expectation was built upon the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy, which we now see clearly marked the year of our Lord's majority, when he was thirty years of age and made his consecration to his work and received the begetting of the holy Spirit, his anointing as the great antitypical High Priest and as the great antitypical King over Israel and the world.

FROM BETHLEHEM TO NAZARETH

In olden times there were honorable cities and mean cities. Nazareth was generally recognized as one of the latter, while

Bethlehem was distinctly one of the former—the City of David. Israel's beloved king. The Scriptures explain to us that Mary, our Lord's mother, and Joseph, her husband, were both of the lineage of David, and that in a seemingly accidental manner the prophecy was fulfilled which foretold that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.—Micah 5:2.

The Roman empire at that time bore rule over the whole world, the Jews being subject to it, but waiting expectantly, restlessly, for the coming Messiah, who would deliver them from being subject people and make of them the ruling caste in his kingdom, the dominion of the world. Rome's great emperor, Caesar Augustus, was in power at this time, and had sent forth his decree for a polling or census of the whole world for purposes of taxation, etc. Luke informs us that it was in response to this royal decree that Joseph and Mary went up to their native city to be enrolled, and that thus it was that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and on account of the great concourse of people at the same time and for the same purpose, accommodations being scarce, the stable of the inn, or khan, was used by some as a lodging. Joseph and Mary, being of the late comers, were forced to occupy these humble quarters, and thus it was that the King of glory, whose kingdom is by and by to rule the world, was in the time of his flesh born in a stable and cradled in a manger.

THE ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS

Noble shepherds those must have been to whom the Almighty sent the angelic message respecting the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, which has rung down the ages and reached our ears—the message which thrills us the more in proportion as we are able to grasp its meaning. First a single angel appeared to the shepherds and allayed their fears, saying, "Fear not; behold I bring you good tidings." It would appear that fear is one of the dominating impulses of the human mind, especially in conjunction with any revelations from the Lord. Men realize—even the best of the race—that they are imperfect and that the Almighty and his laws are perfect. Instinctively the world seems to realize that a curse or condemnation of the Almighty rests upon it, and instinctively it fears a further curse and further condemnation, realizing its continual and increasing sinfulness. The same is true today with all except the comparatively few who are well informed respecting the divine character and plan. Thus the subject of religion is generally obnoxious to the world in general—a subject which they prefer to avoid, because of a feeling of guilt and a dread of further knowledge and condemnation.

It is for the true children of God today, as it was for the angels at that time, to assure the world that God is better than all their fears—that God so loved the world as to redeem

them from the just sentence of death, the curse that came upon all as inheritors of Adam's imperfection and sentence.

"Good tidings" is another translation of our word "gospel." How beautiful the thought that the Gospel is really and truly good tidings. Alas, for the misrepresentations of God's plan, under which so many of his professed people misrepresent his character and his Word, and apply the term "Gospel" to their various messages from the dark ages, teaching purgatory and eternal torment as the portion of the race. Let us get away from this false thought and get the truth that the Gospel is good tidings. The angel elaborated, saying that his message was good tidings of great joy, which should be unto all people. Ah, thank God, his plan is wider and deeper and higher and grander than anything we had ever conceived. The Gospel message is not merely to be good tidings to the comparatively few that now have ears to hear and eyes to see its beauties, but in God's due time it is to be good tidings of great joy to all people.

As every member of Adam's race shared in his fall and in the curse of death which came upon him as a result, so every member of the race was included in the great redemptive sacrifice which our Lord Jesus offered and which was finished at Calvary. God's plan in Christ, as it is being worked out and shall ultimately be accomplished, will mean great joy for all people, and the tidings of this were given at the very moment of our Lord's birth, because he was the one through whom all the glorious things of the divine purpose and plan shall ultimately be accomplished.

THE CAUSE, THE LOGIC, OF THE MESSAGE

The message took cognizance of the fact that it was to reasonable people, who would want to know why the unchangeable God, who had once pronounced a curse, should at any time so amend and alter matters as to supplant the curse with a blessing. The messenger states the philosophy of the divine plan, "Unto you is born this day a Savior, which is Christ [Messiah] the Lord." There we have the key to the entire Gospel statement of how God could be just and yet be the justifier of sinners who accept Jesus. The word "Savior" here signifies life-giver, and how beautiful is the thought that as death is the wage of sin, the curse upon the race, this Messiah who was born is to be the one who will rescue the race from the sentence by giving them life again. The explanation of how he would give life was not given, nor was it necessary at that time; but now, in the light of developments, and with the explanations furnished through the Spirit in the New Testament, we see how that our Lord's voluntary sacrifice of his life, dying the just for the unjust, settled the claims of divine justice against Adam and thus incidentally against all who shared his sentence.

Truly the more we see of the divine plan for our salvation, which began to take shape in the birth of Jesus, the more we feel like shouting with the angelic choir praises to the God of heaven, thankfulness for his mercy to the children of men. It mattered not that the babe born in Bethlehem was the Savior only in prospect, that he could not even be anointed to do his work until he reached manhood's estate thirty years later; it mattered not that even then it would be necessary for him to lay down his life gradually through three and a half years of his earthly ministry, to be finished at Calvary; it mattered not either that the resurrection was still three days after that, and his ascension forty days later, and that the blessing in general would be deferred for nearly nineteen centuries thereafter. As the angels could sing and rejoice at the first budding of the divine plan of salvation, so also can all who have faith in the ultimate outcome rejoice with joy unspeakable and give praise to God in the highest and to his Son our Lord.

Although nearly nineteen centuries have rolled away since that angelic message was delivered, it has not yet been fulfilled except in a limited measure by faith to those who have the eye of faith and the ears of faith, in all a "little flock." But the tidings of great misery for nearly all people has been spread abroad in the name of Christ, much to the discredit of the divine plan and to the dishonor of the divine character. Instead of carrying joy the message has very generally carried grief and sorrow, especially to the kind hearted and more generously disposed. Indeed we may say that no message of the Lord Jesus, either true or false, has ever reached all people. Even today, after nineteen centuries of propaganda, only a comparatively small portion of the human family have ever heard of the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved—"nor is there salvation in any other."—Acts 4:12.

What, then, shall we say of the salvation which is come to those who have truly accepted Christ as their Savior, and who are today rejoicing in him as such, and who by faith are seeing the salvation of God begun in their own hearts and yet to be

fully accomplished under the whole heavens? This the Apostle calls the salvation by hope. His words are, "We are saved by hope." (Romans 8:24.) We are not saved actually; we are still surrounded by sin, pain, sighing, crying and dying; the curse is not yet rolled away. All that the best of the Lord's people have received is salvation by hope, by faith. Yet this anticipation of the future salvation, of the resurrection from the dead, of a participation in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature promised to the faithful, is so strong, so clear, that those who possess it are enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even in the midst of trials and difficulties and weaknesses and unfavorable conditions incident to the curse upon the race.

A PROPHECY OF GOOD THINGS

Yes, the angelic message was a prophecy of good things to be accomplished for the church and the world during the Millennial age. The church is to have the first blessing. The first resurrection is to be composed only of the blessed and holy who shall live and reign with Christ during the Millennium, the thousand years in which Satan shall be bound, and when the good influences of truth and righteousness shall enlighten the whole earth. The declaration of the Scriptures is that the deliverance of the church will come early in the morning of that Millennial day, as the prophet declares, "God will help her early in the morning."—Psalm 46:5.

But much as we rejoice in the glorious hopes of the Gospel set before us who now see, who now believe, who now rejoice with joy unspeakable, we are glad that the divine mercy and love are of such lengths and breadths and heights and depths as to encompass the whole world of mankind, and to provide a blessing for every member of Adam's race through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

It will be during the Millennial age that this prophecy of the angel will have its fulfilment, and the great Savior who have already redeemed us by his sacrifice will stand forth as the King, the glorified Messiah, and establish his dominion of righteousness in the world for the blessing and uplifting of every member of the race. In harmony with the words of the Apostle, those will be times of refreshing, "times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21.) If the Lord had based the hope of the world upon some works of merit or righteousness of the world's doing, then indeed we might have feared—indeed the more we know of the world the less hope we would have. But, on the contrary, the Lord has based the entire proposition for the future blessing, not upon our worthiness, but upon the worthiness and sacrifice of his Son—To you is born a Life-giver, which is Messiah the Lord.

How it adds to our enjoyment of the coming age blessings to know that the trials and difficulties of this present Gospel age are subject to the divine supervision in the interest of the little flock that is now being gathered in advance from amongst men—the "elect," the church. We see how the present trials and difficulties are the chiselings and polishings necessary to our development in the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit in the character-likeness of God's dear Son, our Lord, our Hope, our Bridegroom. How joyful the thought that soon the elect number called from the world to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, will be completed and enter into her glory. How precious the thought that then they shall be privileged with their Lord and Master to extend the divine favor of blessing and uplift to the world. What higher honor or privilege or blessing could possibly come to any?

It was after the giving of the message of good tidings and great joy by the heavenly one that a host of angels appeared to the shepherds, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." This, too, is a prophecy. It is not yet true, but will be fulfilled in every particular in God's due time, which we believe is now nigh, even at the door. Not yet does God receive glory in the highest, not yet is there peace amongst men. Quite to the contrary. God's name is blasphemed, not only by those who vulgarly and in ribald jest take the divine name in vain, and not merely by the heathen who worship devils and think they are gods, but even by Christian people God's name is blasphemed every day. For be it known that blasphemy is any dishonorable misrepresentation of another. God be merciful to us, for at some time or other every one of us doubtless has blasphemed the holy name in this manner—by misrepresenting the divine character and divine plan, by picturing the God of love and mercy and justice and truth as the originator, the planner, the perpetuator of the eternal torment of the great mass of his creatures, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, born to sin as the sparks to fly upward.

But the Lord had mercy upon us because we did it ignorantly. And we also should have compassion upon others who

still ignorantly misrepresent our God, and our energies should be continually bent to their assistance, that the eyes of their understanding might open more widely to perceive the lengths and breadths and heights and depths and know the love of God which passeth understanding.

Noting that peace on earth and good will to men have not followed the Savior's birth thus far, and discerning that this is a prophecy of what is to be accomplished during the Millennium, many have been inclined to change the translation of this verse so as to have it read, "On earth peace amongst men, in whom he is well pleased." However, by thus changing it the statement would not be true, for even the Lord's people have no peace on earth. Whatever peace they have is in their hearts, and based upon their faith in the Lord and in the glorious things which he has promised. Our Lord himself and the apostles testified to this, assuring us that whosoever in this present time would live godly should suffer persecution, that a man's foes would be they of his own household, etc. (2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 10:26.) Let us not confuse ourselves nor abridge the testimony of the Word, but with the eye of faith look forward to the day of Christ in which all these glorious things shall have their fulfilment, in which peace shall indeed fill the whole earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, bringing divine favor and rolling away the curse from the entire groaning creation, as pointed out by the Apostle.—Rom. 8:22.

Not even with the inauguration of the Millennium will this prophecy be fulfilled: not until its close, when the human family shall have been lifted by the kingdom regulations out of sin, sickness, pain, sorrow and death, up, up to all that was lost in Adam—not until then will there indeed be glory to God in the highest, not until then will there be peace amongst men. Nor are we to understand that the entire race will be appreciative of the divine love and favor even after they have fully seen the righteousness of God in Christ manifested. On the contrary, the Scriptures seem to clearly teach that there will be a class who will then prove unfit for life eternal, unap-

preciative of the divine favor, and it is with pleasure that we learn that all such shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people in the second death. Thus eventually, by the close of the Millennium, Satan and all wilful wrongdoers having been destroyed, the time will come as declared in the Scriptures when all voices in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard praising God, him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb forever and ever. Hosanna! Glory to God in the highest! Peace and good will to men! will be the final shout of a redeemed race when the great plan of salvation shall have been fully outworked according to the divine plan set forth in the Scriptures.

The time of our Lord's birth is quite clearly fixed. We have gone into the subject in detail in "Dawn" Vol. II., and will not here repeat. The notable census made by order of Caesar Augustus included the civilized world of that day, and according to Jewish custom each family and tribe were enrolled therein. Both Joseph and Mary, being of the Davidic line, went to the city of David—Bethlehem. The city is a small one on a hillside. Nearly all of it appears to good advantage in the cut below.

The inns or hotels of that land are very different from ours: they are neither hotels nor drinking saloons, but entered from a court-yard, as in the cut. Various large unfurnished rooms are at the service of the traveller, who carries with him his wraps, in which he sleeps, and his food and utensils for such light housekeeping as he may choose to do. Stalls for horses, camels, etc., are provided on the ground floor, and in the event of a crowd, as on such a census occasion, it is no uncommon thing for people, finding the upper large rooms all crowded full, to make themselves nearly as comfortable in the stabling department. Thus it came that the Lord was ushered into the world, which as the Logos he had made (John 1:2), in a most humble manner.

It was there that the shepherds found the babe, as predicted by the angels, and went forth proclaiming the fact; but Mary made no boasts but waited for God's due time.



GIFTS TO OUR KING

Matthew 2:1-12.—JANUARY 14.

Golden Text:—"My son, give me thine heart."—Prov. 23:26.

Our lesson is concerning the wise men of the East, who came seeking the new-born Jesus, the King of the Jews, with presents of myrrh, frankincense and gold, and doubtless we shall be able to gather from this incident some valuable suggestions respecting our obligations to the great Messiah, and the propriety of renewing these and increasing them now at the beginning of another year.

The wise men—according to tradition, three in number—arrived in Jerusalem and began making inquiries respecting the newly-born Jewish King. The news soon spread, and the holy city was in commotion because, according to the prophets, Messiah, promised for centuries, was due to appear about that time; and we read again, "All men were in expectation of him." This expectancy naturally would be heightened by the coming of the wise men or magi from a far country—supposedly Persia—to show homage to Messiah. The news spread, and

finally reached the royal palace and King Herod himself. The latter, doubtless on his own account, felt a kind of jealousy toward any being who would be likely to share in any measure the royal honors and dignities and thus to detract from his own importance. But additionally, no doubt, he felt that as the representative of Caesar's government, the protégé of the Roman Empire, it was his duty to see to it that no king should arise in the land under his jurisdiction, whose title or claims would in any measure conflict with those of the Caesars.

THE BRIGHT MORNING STAR

Herod, therefore, sent for the wise men. Feigning a deep interest in their quest, he made a critical inquiry of them how they knew about Messiah in their far-off country, how they knew where to look for the babe. They replied that they had seen his star in the east. The eastern magi were astrologers,

and affected to read in the stars the history of nations and individuals—they were astrologers rather than astronomers. To what extent the Lord may have written the history of nations and of men in the arrangement of the stars, we will not attempt to decide, but assuredly for the world in general the starry heavens have been the great book of God, as the Psalmist explains, "Night unto night showeth knowledge." With the written Word of God in our possession now we neither have need of traditions of men nor of old wives' fables nor of astrologers' guides, because "we have the more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 Pet. 1:19.

Without attempting to determine how much or how little truth attaches to astrology, we have the assurance that there was a truth connected with the manifestation of a special, peculiar star which guided the wise men of the east to know of Messiah's birth and to know to which country he belonged, so that they came to the capital city of that country. Moreover the Lord may have given them some additional explanation of the matter, even as he subsequently warned them in a dream. Herod cunningly affected to be deeply interested in the wise men in their search for Messiah. He called the wise men of Judea to assist. These were not astrologers, but men learned in the Law and in the prophets—chief priests and scribes. Thus he put the wise men of Israel into conjunction with the wise men of the east, inquiring where the prophets had foretold that the Messiah should be born. They promptly answered, "Bethlehem of Judea," and for that city, only six miles distant, the eastern magi set out, with the promise that they would return again and identify to him particularly the babe king and where he might be found, ostensibly that the king might also go to worship at his feet, but really that he might improve the opportunity and use such knowledge for the destruction of the babe Jesus.

En route for Bethlehem the miraculous star which they had seen in the far east appeared to them again, apparently as a ball of light or of fire travelling near the earth, and serving as a guide until they had rejoicingly reached the very house and found the babe and his mother. Professor Charles A. Young, LL.D., of Princeton University, asserts that it is not a rare occurrence for stars to suddenly blaze up in the heavens and for a time to be the brightest, and then suddenly fade in a year or two; and that such a star was observed in 1901. Our thought, however, is that the latter was merely the appearance of a star, a bright, electrical, luminous spot.

WISE MEN OF THE EAST

"We are informed by Tacitus, by Suetonius and by Josephus that there prevailed throughout the entire east, at this time, an intense conviction, derived from ancient prophecies, that ere long a powerful monarch would arise in Judea and gain dominion over the world."—Farrar.

"Virgil, who lived a little before this, says that a child from heaven was looked for, who should restore the Golden Age and take away sin."—Jacobus.

Confucius had prophesied the appearance of such a deliverer; and a deputation of his followers going forth in search of him were the means of introducing Buddhism into China."—Abbott.

"But the clearest of all these prophecies was one by Zoroaster. The Nestorians say that Zoroaster was a disciple of Jeremiah, from whom he learned about the Messiah and talked concerning him to his disciples."—Persian Missionary.

In this connection we should remember that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were at this time princes of Persia and intimate with the wise men of that country, which was at that time the principal nation of the world. It is easy to see how traditions would be handed down through that channel, and especially may we suppose that Daniel's prophecy respecting the time of Messiah's birth would be well known to the disciples of Zoroaster, Persia's wise men. Furthermore, there were Jews scattered abroad throughout that country who still more or less kept alive the thought of Israel's hope for the great Messiah so long promised of God, prophesied of as the bringer of blessings not only to Israel but through them to all the families of the earth.

MYRRH, FRANKINCENSE AND GOLD

God chose as messengers of his good tidings not only wise men but reverential men, men of faith; and his choice of these messengers from the east to arouse the people of Judea and Jerusalem and to be heralds of the great King was not an exception to the rule. Although heathen men, in the sense of not being of the nation with which God had thus far dealt and to whom he had thus far confined his gracious promises, they were, nevertheless, good men, reverential men, who delighted to know

of the coming blessing of peace on earth and good will amongst men through whatever channel or nationality the Lord should be pleased to find his representative and messenger.

In one respect many of Christendom could learn numerous important lessons from these wise Gentiles. No false patriotism stood in their way to hinder their appreciation of any manifestation of divine favor to the children of men. And when they found the Savior they were nothing daunted by the fact that his home surroundings were of the humbler sort. They worshiped him in three senses of the word: (1) They fell before him, prostrated themselves, thus physically expressing their reverence. (2) They worshiped him in their hearts and with the tongue gave expression to their rejoicing and confidence. (3) They opened their treasure-box and presented to him three gifts appropriate to royalty: the myrrh representing submission, frankincense representing praise, gold representing obedience.

"PRESENT YOUR BODIES LIVING SACRIFICES, HOLY, ACCEPTABLE UNTO GOD, YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE"

The reverent spirit of these noble heathen men who had so little light, so little knowledge respecting the great Messiah and his work, will bring to our cheeks the blush of shame as we reflect that, favored with still brighter light to guide us to the Lamb of God, having seen his star in a still better and truer sense, having been guided to him by the prophecies, having found him not only a babe, but one that in prospect would bear our sorrows and carry our griefs and make his soul an offering for sin, that we by his stripes might be healed, what manner of oblation should we pour at the feet of him who loved us and bought us and with his precious blood? With what deep reverence have we bowed the knee, prostrated ourselves, given outward evidence through our bodies of full submission to our great King, of whom we not only know but of whose gracious provisions for us and for the world of mankind we have heard, not uncertainly, but with the voice of him who speaketh from heaven? Have we offered our myrrh? Have we shown a willingness for service even to the extent of bitterness, a joy to honor the King to the extent of suffering with him? Have we worshiped him in heart, not with an outward form of godliness without the power—in other words, have we offered him the frankincense of heart, adoration, appreciation, and gratitude?

Have we laid at his feet our earthy substance—our gold? Have we realized that all that we have and all that we are are offering far too small to be worthy of acceptance by the great King Immanuel? Is this our present attitude? and will it be our attitude through coming days even until the end of the present pilgrimage?

The Apostle's words, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, your reasonable service," apply not only to the primary consecration of our hearts to the Lord, but are, as the Scriptures express it, a covenant of sacrifice, an agreement to die daily to self and to be alive daily more and more in the Lord's service, to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his. If this has not been our attitude in the past shall it not be our future course? Shall we not in any event continue to grow in knowledge, to grow in love, in service, in worship and in the privilege of laying our little all at the feet of him who is our gracious heavenly King, whose kingdom is so soon to be established and who has invited us to sit with him in his throne, to share his glory, to be participants as spiritual Israel in the great work of pouring out blessings upon the world of mankind, every kindred, people, nation and tongue?

"MY SON, GIVE ME THINE HEART"

Our Golden Text is well worthy of our remembrance here. It is not applicable to sinners, who are not sons in any sense of the word. There is a message to sinners, namely, a call to repentance, to the forsaking of sin and to the acceptance of the justification secured by the precious blood. But it is only to those who have repented of sin and who are seeking to live a repentant life and so far as possible to make restitution for wrongs of the past, and who are trusting to the precious blood of Christ—reconciled to God through the death of his Son—it is to these that this Golden Text is applicable, My son, give me thine heart.

When we give our hearts it includes all that we have and are in the highest and noblest and fullest sense—that which was illustrated by the three gifts of the wise men is all represented in this brief statement, "Give me thine heart." Whoever gives his heart to the Lord fully and unreservedly, gives his body, gives his worship and reverence and praise, and gives his earthly treasure, time, talents, influence, money—all—to be used in joyful service for the glory of the King.