

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE SEA AND THE WAVES ROARING

The daily press has kept us all informed respecting the turmoils in Russia. What a pity that reasonable concessions could not be secured from the Government without such confusion and bloodshed. To those who view matters from the standpoint of the Bible the cause is plain: selfishness on the part of all concerned.

We do not expect the complete overthrow of the monarchy at present, however, but rather that matters will soon settle down on a higher basis, but still an unsatisfactory one. Indeed the poor world is too selfish to be satisfied with anything reasonable or possible under present conditions. Not until wearied by vain endeavors will men be in a proper condition even for the Millennial kingdom—which will be an autocracy, and for a time quite unsatisfactory to some—until they learn of the great blessings therefrom because of the perfect rulers and their divine laws, backed by Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power.

Two effects of the Russian agitation may be expected: (1) The igniting of violence elsewhere, as in Austria and Finland. (2) Then a reaction, the subsidence of turmoil in Russia and then a temporary opposition to lawlessness everywhere. The educated and comfortably well-to-do will soon realize that anarchy is of doubtful advantage to anybody, and especially to themselves. The weight of their influence, swinging to the side of government and law and order, will secure peace for a time.

Let us remember to expect various outbreaks at intervals, but that the general collapse of all governments in anarchy is not to be expected before the close of 1914 A. D. What has occurred in Russia is but a circumstance compared to what we expect at that time; but it gives us a picture, nevertheless.

THE POOR JEWS SUFFER

It is notable that the poor Jews suffered in the Russian massacres more than others. One public press dispatch from Odessa says:—

"Up to the present time no Christian shops or homes have been touched. The principal hotels are full of the better class of Jews seeking refuge. There was a veritable reign of terror on October 31. After the Emperor's manifesto granting a constitution to Russia had been published the Jews made the Russians furious with rage by making a prominent display of red flags, trampling on a portrait of the Emperor and tearing down the emblem of the crown. Late in the afternoon there was firing in the outskirts of the town and the massacre of Jews commenced and lasted during the night of November 1. All Jews found in the streets were severely beaten and many were killed in their shops, which were ruthlessly pillaged. A leading consul, in an interview, argued that the disturbances were the result of the behavior of the Jews, who shocked Russian patriotism by the manner in which they celebrated on Tuesday the publication of the imperial manifesto. The Liberals contend that the Governor had all the means to stop the outbreak in the first hour, and that his inactivity during the three days of massacre and his protection of the murderous rabble in the guise of patriots prove the real origin of the trouble."

"PROUD AND STIFF-NECKED"

True to the Bible's description the Jews are still a "stiff-necked generation." Bright, persevering, resourceful, economical, money-makers, they prosper where others except Orientals would starve. But this very success excites the envy and hatred of their less frugal neighbors. Keen money-lenders, and not always just, the money-borrowers of Russia would be pleased to see them killed or driven out of the country. Some of them, indiscreet as well as proud, are offensively boastful and arrogant and boisterous. We were witnesses of such things in this very city of Odessa in 1891 and wondered at their unwisdom.

All mankind are fallen, but not all in the same manner or degree. What the whole world needs is the restitution which God has promised, and the Jews will doubtless progress as well or better than others under the Millennial government and assistance. In the meantime only the spirit of Christ will properly offset the fallen disposition of any of us.

"THE WRATH OF MAN SHALL PRAISE HIM"

Socialism, the coming power in the world when it later shall turn to anarchy, will be like dynamite to the whole civilized structure, political, social, financial and religious. Many of its theories are good, but wholly impracticable under present selfish conditions: because organized wealth will permit anarchy rather than allow Socialists to carry out all their schemes.

Meantime many well-meaning and fairly intelligent men are lending their voices and influence to Socialism, not seeing the outcome—not having the light of God's Word on the subject. It is not for us to oppose these, however, for two reasons: (1) We have a more important work—the proclaiming of the good tidings and assisting in the perfecting of the saints. (2) We incline to think that Socialists are "the Lord's great army," though not soldiers of the cross nor followers of the "Captain of our Salvation."

As the Lord has all along permitted the wrath of men and of devils to work out features of his plan, so we believe he will permit men now to delude themselves into the greatest calamity which ever befell humanity: "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." O, how glad we are that God will make man's extremity his opportunity for bringing in the golden age—the kingdom of his dear Son!

SOCIALISM HERE AND IN BRITAIN

America and Great Britain are behind the other civilized nations as respects Socialism, because of more elastic and liberal laws. But discontent and aggressiveness are being cultivated in these lands by the wonderful prosperity which has heaped vast treasures in the hands of a comparatively small number; and by the fear that the end of this way will mean the eventual slavery of the masses to "plutocracy."

In consequence a socialistic propaganda is making rapid headway—as never before. The elections just held give a suggestion of the rapidity of the growth of Socialism. These voters have no thought of anarchy, but as they become enthused by the Socialist propaganda they will be led step by step to one and another extreme of word and deed to bring it about.

The Lord's people do well to remember that Socialism is not the hope set before us, and that time and thought and effort devoted to it are taken from the higher work given them as ambassadors for God and evangelists of the kingdom of Christ and its reign of righteousness and blessing which shall be unto all people.

GERMANY'S REACTIONARY ALLIANCE

Germany, the hotbed of Socialism, is experiencing just now a reaction. A National Alliance against Social Democracy has been started recently and already its effects are manifest. We give a resume of the objects of the Alliance, translated from one of its widely distributed circulars, as follows:—

"On May 9, 1904, the National Alliance against Social Democracy was instituted in Berlin, having for its aim to unite for the impending struggle against the revolutionary aspirations of Social Democracy all those Germans who are loyal to their emperor and the empire, irrespective of their religious and political views. Although in existence for only a short time, no fewer than 55,000 members have joined the Alliance.

"Objects of the Alliance:—(1) To create compact organizations against Social Democracy at such places suitable for the purpose. (2) To combat by word and pen the activity of Social Democracy directed against the overthrow of the existing States and social order. (3) To bring about united action of all civil parties at elections in such districts as are endangered by Social Democracy. (4) To render all the assistance possible to the workmen and traders oppressed by Socialistic terrorism. (5) To establish a solid connection between all those unions and organizations pursuing like and similar aims."

* * *

This movement has put the Socialists on the defensive. Already they have lost heavily in some electoral districts. The effect will be to measurably check the movement for a little while, giving it a chance to grow in other quarters. We have every confidence that the end of the "times of Gentiles" in Oct., 1914, will find Socialism not only fully developed but changed to Anarchism, as the Word implies.

A ROMAN ARCHBISHOP'S BOAST

Of Power to Forgive Sins, to Create Christ in the Host and Sacrifice Him in the Mass. Declares these Greater than Creative Powers

The *Albany Telegram* publishes the following extract from the pastoral letter of Cardinal Klatschthaler, Prince Archbishop of Salzburg, Austria. It is worthy of publication only as a curiosity and an illustration of how men can be deluded by false doctrines, especially after they have become hoary with age and weighty with many and influential adherents. This man, it will be seen, overestimated the stupidity of his countrymen, even in Catholic Austria. Thanks be unto God, that although priestcraft still flourishes in the Protestant clergy and though it still is often arrogant and self-assuming, yet it is a vast improvement over this example of the domineering arrogance of the "dark ages."

The extract follows:—

Salzburg, Austria, Sept. 16.—Your correspondent secured a copy of the Lenten pastoral letter by Cardinal Klatschthaler, Prince Archbishop of this diocese, in which his Eminence extols the power of the priest above that of the Son of God and his holy mother. The letter was read from all the pulpits on March 5th last, but was immediately withdrawn, at the instance of Emperor Francis Joseph, it is claimed, who telegraphed his disapproval to Pope Pius. Your correspondent has made a literal translation of the remarkable document, omitting only the mere formal parts for want of space.

THE PASTORAL LETTER

"The Catholic priest is the most venerable dignitary, for his powers are beyond words. He has the power to absolve man of sin. This priestly power to absolve man of sin is greater by far than the power to cure the blind, to give back to their eyes the light of day. It is greater by far than the power to make the lame and halt walk. It is greater than the power to recall the dead from lethargy, from the grave itself.

"The priest's power to absolve man of sin is greater than the *fat* that created the world and scattered the darkness. It is greater than the word of command that formed the firmament. It is greater, in short, than the divine Being who created the world out of nothing.

GREATER THAN CREATOR OF THE WORLD

"The priest's power to absolve man of sin is greater than would be the power of creating as many new worlds as there are stars in the heavens. For in this act of God the Catholic priest is a co-operator, nay more than a co-operator. The very word, uttered by the priest's lips: 'I absolve thee of thy sins,' means absolution, means that a lost soul is once more entitled to the heavenly kingdom, for the word is not a mere announcement of God's grace, but in itself means the absolution of sin. As the Holy Council of Trent teaches us, the words quoted make the sinner a new man or woman, rehabilitate him or her in the divine grace.

"At the moment the priest says: 'I absolve thee,' he is imbued with the all-powerfulness of God; and at that moment God allows his representative on earth, the priest, to participate in the divine power.

"The patriarchs and prophets, the martyrs and sufferers for the faith, the millions of sainted virgins and the angels and archangels, and the thrones and principalities of heaven, the cherubim and seraphim, even Mary, the mother of God, the queen of heaven—none of them are equal in power to the Catholic priest. Mary, the bride of the holy Spirit, mistress of the world, may pray for the forgiveness of our sins, but the priest alone can actually forgive sins. He alone is entitled to say, 'I absolve thee.'

ABLE TO CREATE AND THEN TO SACRIFICE CHRIST

"Where in heaven is there such power as vested in the Catholic priest? With the angels? With the Mother of God? Upon Mary's word, 'The Lord's will be done,' the grand indescribable mysteries of the transformation of the Son of God into man took place. But, beloved Catholics, listen to me if you are able to understand the miraculous, the un-understandable: Mary's word was not the cause of Christ's appearance on earth; it was merely a declaration of her obedience to the divine will. But when the priest says: 'This is my body,' 'this is my blood,' then the all-highest transfiguration actually takes place.

"The priest sacrifices him, the Son of God, who became man; he sacrifices him for the benefit of the living and the dead, an unbloody sacrifice, as it were. And Christ, the only Son of God, the Father, the creator of heaven and earth, the divine power upon whose shoulders rests the world, Christ performs the will of the Catholic priest.

JESUS OBEDIENT TO THE PRIEST

"We read with astonishment and admiration in the writings of the holy evangelists that Jesus, our Lord, was obedient to Mary and Joseph, was subject to their orders and criticisms. Hear ye, then, beloved Catholics: I repeat what I intimated in the foregoing. Christ gave the Catholic priest power over himself, his body, his flesh and blood, his divinity, his human-

ity; yes, and he is obedient to the priest. Oh, beloved Christians, reflect on the power and great dignity vested in the priest. Am I not right when I say that the power of transfiguration, the power to consecrate the holy waters, is even greater than the power to forgive sins, and we know how great that power is? The power to absolve man from sin gave the priest dominion over all human beings, but the power over the body and blood of Christ gives him power over Christ, over Christ's divinity.

"And with St. Dionysius I ask, 'Shall we call him man who is the select of men, whom God has elevated over all men, namely, the priest? The priest, with whom God has united himself, whom God gave power over his own divinity?'

CARDINAL KLATSCHTHALER.

"Prince Archbishop of Salzburg.

"Salzburg, March 4, 1905."

INTER-CHURCH FEDERATION

The entire religious world is agog over the Church Federation gathering, whose sessions are to open on November 15th at Carnegie Hall, New York City. All the large Christian denominations are to participate through their chosen representatives. The object will be to find a basis of co-operation.

Those familiar with our views of the prophetic Word will know that this movement is one we have long expected, which will at some later session "give life to the image of the beast."—See Rev. 13:15; MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. III., chap. 4.

The following items are officially set forth by the Convention Committee:—

"We believe that the great Christian bodies in our country should stand together and lead in the discussion of, and give impulse to, all great movements that make for righteousness. We believe that questions like that of the saloon, marriage and divorce, Sabbath desecration, the social evil, child labor, relation of labor and capital, the bettering of the conditions of the laboring classes, the moral and religious training of the young, the problem created by foreign immigration and international arbitration—indeed, all great questions in which the voice of the Christian should be heard—concern Christians of every name and demand their united and concerted action if the church is to lead effectively in the conquest of the world for Christ.

"The churches, representing 18,000,000 people, which have consented to send delegates are eager to see the conference result in some tangible organization or method of co-operation. Every church with 500,000 adherents is entitled to fifty delegates; those having 100,000 communicants or more are entitled to ten delegates, while all of less than 100,000 membership will be permitted to seat five delegates."

THE HEAVENS ROLLING TOGETHER

The prediction that the heavens shall roll together as a scroll in the day of the Lord is fulfilling before our eyes. The daily press keeps us posted on the various steps by which the Protestants propose to federate: this is one side of the scroll rolling itself in concentration. The other side of the ecclesiastical scroll is Roman Catholicism, which is also concentrating, or in-rolling. Note the following on the subject:—

CATHOLICS PLAN POWERFUL UNION

"Cincinnati, O.—All the Catholic societies of the United States will be united by a plan being worked out at an important meeting in the Burnett House of the executive committee of the American Federation of Catholic Societies. Bishop McPaul of Trenton, N. J., and Anthony Matre of St. Louis, are foremost in the work. There are 15,000,000 Catholics in the United States, all more or less represented in the new movement. The Catholic Women's organizations are also to be affiliated. Beyond this is also a movement to unite the Catholic societies of the world."—*Fort Wayne News*.

BUDDHISM IS ADVANCING

"The advance of Buddhism and the decline of Christianity are engaging the most serious attention in Germany. The *Vossische Zeitung* sees an important sign of the times in the fact that the Grand Duke of Hesse is erecting a statue of the Buddha in the grounds of his private country residence at Wolfsgarten, in the neighborhood of Darmstadt."—*Toronto Globe*.

THE TRUTH IN FRENCH, ITALIAN AND GREEK

Besides Vols. I. and II. of MILLENNIAL DAWN, we can supply the following in the French language: Booklets on "Hell," "Evolution," and "Parousia," at same rates as English booklets; tracts Nos. 52, 53, 57, 66; samples free for judicious circulation.

Besides Vol. I. of DAWN we can supply the following in

Italian: Tracts Nos. 38, 52, 53, 58 and 59, 66; samples free for judicious circulation.

The DAWNS are supplied at same rates as English volumes. See next column for price list.

We have also tracts Nos. 38, 53 and 66 in Greek; samples for free distribution.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

There is a tendency among God's people to cement *fellowships* as well as to make *divisions* upon various unscriptural lines.

As illustrations: The various branches of the Presbyterian family have each its own system of theology and its own methods of worship. They are one family and have a special sympathy or fellowship upon the doctrine of Calvin—that everything that comes to pass was foreordained. Among Baptists, although there are many subdivisions of them, there is a common bond of fellowship in water-immersion. No matter what else a man holds or does not hold, if he practice immersion there is at once a sympathetic fellowship. So also it is among Premillennialists: They feel that any other differences, almost, should be overlooked if their point of special interest is acknowledged.

We protest that none of these are *true* grounds for the fellowship taught in the Scriptures; and that the rejection of any or all of these is not the Scriptural ground for refusing fellowship in Christ.

The Scriptural basis of fellowship and disfellowship is both a much broader and a much more simple one. It is simply of two parts: (1) *An acceptance of Christ as the Redeemer*, and (2) *A full consecration to him*. Whoever complies with this scriptural formula is entitled to the love, respect, sympathy and care of every other such one; for such, and such only, constitute the church which God recognizes—the church “whose names are written in heaven.”

And if the above proposition be true as indicating who are worthy of our fellowship, it must be true also that any one who cannot claim fellowship upon this basis has no claim to it at all.

All Christians should see that this rule is broad enough to unite all of *God's people*, and narrow enough to exclude *all others*, including those who would seek to “climb up some other way.” (John 10:1) And if this simple test—the only one recognized by the early church—is *sufficient*, let us recognize it, and none other.

But, says an objector, such a simple basis of faith would let in all sorts of false doctrines and would divide the church of Christ. No, we answer; the church is already divided. It would tend to re-unite the true ones and to separate the worldly and the false. Upon so broad a platform all true Christians could come together for the study of God's Word. Methodists would find themselves studying the principles of *election, baptism*, etc., while Presbyterians and Baptists would find themselves studying free grace and free agency. The result to all (after sectarian considerations were gone) would soon be harmony—Bible harmony.

But, says another, so broad a platform would compel us to fellowship Unitarians and Christian Scientists and Spiritualists. Not at all, we answer. None of these believe in Jesus as *their Redeemer*. It would exclude all such and all others who

deny that man is a sinner under divine condemnation, and that Christ died *for our sins*,” the just *for the unjust*, that he might bring us to God. It would and should exclude all who do not recognize this essential base of Christianity. (Possibly a few believers in the *ransom* may call themselves by the above names, ignorantly—not appreciating the doctrines upon which they are built. We refer to the views of the leaders and the masses of these denominations.)

A man may be honest and sober and in every way moral and be a Buddhist or a Mohammedan or an Infidel (an unbeliever as to the claims of Christ) of any other shade. Morality and general decency may be proper enough grounds for their recognition socially, as friends and acquaintances; but these constitute no claim whatever upon the sacred name of Christian, nor upon the close heart sympathy which should make *truly one* all who are trusting in the precious blood of Christ—our ransom-price from sin and death—and who are fully consecrated to him.

We are living in the time when past and present combinations and doctrines of men will be breaking to pieces; when many are, and many more will be, seeking *fresh grounds* for fellowship; when it is important that all true Christians should stand fast, and shoulder to shoulder defend the foundation principles upon which we stand—the rock foundation;—for “other [proper] foundation can no man lay.”

How our great adversary would like to get the soldiers of the cross confused and separated, following different affinities, rallying around different standards, and hence leaving the true standard—“the cross of Christ,” the “Ransom”—undefended. Let all who see the *true* standard assemble to it, and separate themselves in heart and Christian fellowship from all the unclean [those unjustified by faith in the redeeming blood, and clothed still, therefore, in the filthy garments of their own unrighteousness, instead of the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness]. Let their efforts be for and with each other; to present each other blameless and unreprouable, without spot or wrinkle, before the heavenly Bridegroom. Hear the Word of the Lord:—

“Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people: cast up, cast up the highway, gather out the [stumbling] stones; LIFT UP A STANDARD for the people.” Isa. 62:10.

Let us assure ourselves, from a study of God's Word, that it is as much a part of our duty to *disfellowship* (as Christians) those who, either directly or indirectly, deny that Christ gave himself a ransom [a corresponding price] for all, and who, hence, are the worst enemies of the cross of Christ, as it is our duty to fellowship any who confess him thus as their Saviour; and who, hence, are our “Brethren” in him. We are to “have *no fellowship* with the unfruitful works of darkness, but should rather reprove them.”

“WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS?”

“For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?”

For we are not as many who corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.”—2 Cor. 2:15-17.

This ministry, which all the consecrated, as ambassadors for Christ, have received, is one of tremendous import. It greatly influences the final destiny of those to whom we preach this Gospel of the kingdom, the tendency being either to life or to death. The Apostle's language here is another of the solemn warnings of the inspired Word against the danger of the second death, and should awaken to a sense of their danger any one who have been deluded into the idea that there is no such possibility, and are permitting the great adversary thus to deceive them. There is an equal responsibility on the part both of those who undertake to preach the Gospel and of those who hear it. The truth is God's truth, and the responsibility of speaking as well as of hearing it is very great.

The Apostle's words show that many in his day as in ours, failed to realize this responsibility, and, to answer their own selfish ends, corrupted the Word of God. To willfully or recklessly corrupt the Word of God—to vitiate its pure and holy doctrines; to add to it the vain philosophies of ambitious men and seek to support their theories by perverting its truths; to under-rate its exceeding great and precious promises and mystify the conditions upon which they may be realized; or to minimize or make void the solemn warnings of the Word of God—is indeed dangerous business, in which the faithful saints will never engage, but in which those who fall away from the faith are usually most active—deceiving and being deceived.

To be faithful ambassadors for Christ—faithful representatives of the truth and faithful proclaimers of it—requires great humility and simplicity of heart. It necessitates the complete ignoring of all worldly ambitions and aims, and the cultivation of a brave spirit of endurance which will not shrink from any reproach which fidelity to the truth may bring. And such service, the Apostle here shows, is acceptable to God as sweet incense, no matter what may be the effect upon those to whom we minister, whether they accept or reject the message of divine grace. What God is looking for in us is loyalty to him and devotion to his cause; and this condition of heart he appreciates, regardless of our success or failure to secure large results. What a comfort it is amidst all discouragements to know that under all circumstances the Spirit of Christ in us is as sweet incense to God. And the reward of his constant approval is richer than all the unwholesome sweets of ambition gained by corrupting the Word of God.

To the hearer of the Gospel, the message must prove either a savor of life unto (or tending to) life, or a savor of death unto (or tending to) death. His responsibility is great: there is no neutral ground; he either receives or rejects it. But observe that the statement is not that the rejection of any item of truth inevitably dooms the rejector to death, and vice versa, but that the *tendency* of such a course is to death, and of the opposite course to life, unless interrupted—changed.

Thus, for instance, the Lord, in reproving the Scribes and Pharisees, who rejected the Gospel and yet claimed to be the children of God and leaders and examples of godliness to others, significantly inquired, "How can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna"—the everlasting destruction, the second death? (Matt. 23:33) In rejecting the truth so plainly brought to their attention, and in pursuing the hypocritical course of claiming to be faithful and devoted children of God, they were forming and establishing such characters that repentance would, ere long, be impossible to them. Few, perhaps, clearly realize how serious a thing it is to be making character, and that every act and every thought leaves its impress upon the soul. Every right thought and act tends to establish the character in righteousness, while every wrong thought and act, and every self-deception tends to confirm and establish an unrighteous character. And when a wrong course is adopted and persistently followed—when conscience is stifled, and when reason and Scripture are perverted to selfish ends, until the heart is deceived and the judgment is overcome—who can predict the repentance of such a one?

Such construct characters or wills so out of harmony with God and righteousness as to be fit only for destruction. (Heb. 6:4-6) How can such "escape the condemnation of Gehenna"? for God will not permit any one to live whose will is confirmed in unrighteousness. How responsible then is the position of those who are building character in themselves and in others! Remember that our characters are manifested by our habits of life; and each act, even the smallest, tends to form some new habit, or to confirm one already established. How important, then, that our thoughts and actions should not be aimless, but with a purpose (1 Cor. 10:31); and, above all, that our lives should be "transformed [re-formed] by the renewing of our minds;" that, putting aside the evil, and all influences

which tend toward evil, we should receive of the Lord, through his Word, the "spirit of a sound mind," the "mind of Christ." In this view of the case, it is indeed a solemn thing to live, a solemn thing to think, and to act; and it behooves us to guard well our words, our thoughts and our actions, and ever to bear in mind our responsibility to God, both for ourselves and for others as ambassadors for Christ.

"And who is sufficient for these things?" Surely none of us is in our own strength. We need first of all to give ourselves to the Lord without reserve, and then daily to drink in more and more of his spirit by communion with him through his Word and in prayer; and constantly to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation.

Let all the consecrated endeavor more and more to realize their responsibility, both in the matter of their own character-building and also in that of building up others in the most holy faith and in the character which is the legitimate result of that faith. The issues of eternal life and eternal death are before us, and before those to whom we present this Gospel; and therefore it behooves us carefully and prayerfully to present the pure truth of God in all sincerity and in the spirit of Christ before God, ever bearing in mind that it is a savor either of life unto life or of death unto death.

"Grant skill each sacred theme to trace,
With loving voice and glowing tongue,
As when upon thy words of grace
The wondering crowds enraptured hung.

"Give strength, blest Savior, in thy might;
Illuminate our hearts, and we,
Transformed into thine image bright,
Shall teach and love and live, like thee."

BEREAN BIBLE STUDY FOR DECEMBER

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

BROTHERLY KINDNESS (BROTHERLY LOVE)

41. What does the illustration of "the third-quarter mark" signify? F. 188, ¶ 1; F. 370, ¶ 3; Z. '01-9 (1st col. ¶ 3, 4).
42. Why is it important that we manifest brotherly love *now*? Z. '05-106 (1st col. ¶ 3, 4; 2nd col. ¶ 3 to 6).
43. How may we become members of "the Mary class"? Z. '05-105 (2nd col. ¶ 2, to 106, ¶ 1, 2); Z. '97-242 (1st and 2nd cols).
44. How did Jesus show us a grand example of brotherly love and sympathy? Z. '04-292 (1st col. ¶ 2; 2nd col. ¶ 1); Z. '01 150 (1st col. ¶ 6).
45. How can we fulfill Jesus' command to "wash one another's feet"? Z. '05-120 (2nd col.); Z. '97-242 (2nd col. ¶ 3, 4) and 243.
46. How jealously should we *guard and increase this* grace of brotherly kindness? 1 Thess. 4-9, 10; Z. '97-230 (1st col. ¶ 1, 2).
47. How may we *cultivate* brotherly love? Z. '02-308 (1st col. ¶ 5, 6; 2nd col. ¶ 1); Z. '98-183 (1st col. ¶ 1, 2); Z. '04-293 (2nd col.); Z. '01-183 (2nd col. ¶ 2); Z. '98-8 (2nd col. ¶ 2).
48. What additional thoughts are found in Topical Index of "Heavenly Manna," under "Love One Another"?

NEHEMIAH'S FAITH AND WORKS.

NEHEMIAH 4:7-20.—DECEMBER 3.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Watch and pray."—Matthew 26:41.

In a previous lesson we noted the devotion of Nehemiah, and his prayers to the Lord that he might be used in connection with the establishment, the rebuilding at Jerusalem and the encouragement of the faithful who had returned to Palestine from the Babylonian captivity. Today's lesson gives us a glimpse of this noble man working and encouraging others to work along the lines of his faith and the Lord's promises.

The Persian king, Artaxerxes, favored the proposition of his confidential servant, Nehemiah, and granted him an armed escort and royal authority in connection with the project close to his heart. Thus far the Lord had favored him, and a three months' journey brought him to the city where centered his hopes and the hopes of his nation, because in it centered the divine promise. In all this we see an exhibit of faith in active operation—faith with works, as the Apostle enjoins. It will be remembered that Ezra, when starting on his expedition, although he probably took much more treasure, had no armed escort from the king. In this case, Nehemiah, with no less faith in the Lord, had the armed escort.

The reason for the difference of procedure is stated: it was not wrong for Nehemiah to use available means for the protection of his life and the property under his care, which was to be used in the Lord's service, just as it is not wrong for the Lord's people of today, while fully trusting in him, to insure their property against loss by fire. It does not imply a lack of confidence in God to use every reasonable and proper means for the preservation of life and health and property. We remember how our Lord resisted the temptation of Satan,

and would not leap from the Temple pinnacle into the valley below—he would not thus tempt God and the providential care in which he trusted. Had he been cast headlong by his enemies while in the dispatch of duty the matter would have been different, and undoubtedly his life would have been miraculously preserved, because his hour had not yet come. There is a lesson for us in all these matters; our faith in the Lord should not lead us to expect him to do for us those things which we are able to accomplish for ourselves.

"BE YE WISE AS SERPENTS"

On his arrival at Jerusalem Nehemiah did not reveal his plans. The people merely knew that a Jew high in favor with the King, an officer of his household, with a small retinue of servants, was in their midst. Had he told his plans the enemies of the city would soon have heard of them and have taken steps to interfere; besides, the course followed was a much better one for the awakening of the interest and co-operation of the people. Many of the Lord's people need to learn this lesson of secretiveness—not to tell everything that they know. Our Lord not only exhorted us to be as wise as serpents while harmless as doves, but through the Apostle also he exhorts that we should be swift to hear and slow to speak—not too ready to tell all of our plans and arrangements, etc. We even know of some of the Lord's consecrated people who have gotten the wrong impression that to secrete any matter, to avoid telling all that one knows, to avoid giving full answers that would reveal all that is asked, would be considered by some as sinful, deceptive. It is well for them to have their conscience, but

conscience requires training, and the safest instruction comes from the words and example of our Lord and his apostles.

Our Lord used this very method of not telling all that he knew to those who were not ready for the information. He said on one occasion to his disciples, "I have many things to tell you but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12) When asked questions by his enemies who sought to entrap him he avoided answering them or gave them evasive answers. In all this he was as wise as a serpent, yet harmless as a dove. He did not refrain from telling that which was really proper to be told, necessary to the comfort or advantage of his questioner. The Apostle Paul quotes his enemies as charging him with guile—"Being crafty I took you by guile." (2 Cor. 12:16) An evil mind can indeed put an evil construction upon the noblest words and deeds. This was true in the Master's case also. The Apostle exercised wisdom in his method of dealing with those whom he desired to bless, hiding from them for a time truths which at first they were not prepared to receive or appreciate, but afterward, when necessary to them, he made plain, assuring us that he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27) Strong meat for men and milk for babes is the thought. Let us more and more seek to exercise heavenly wisdom in all our affairs, that we may accomplish as much good as possible and choke and stumble none.

"A MIND FOR THE WORK"

Nehemiah was a man of action: he had come to Jerusalem for a purpose and wasted no time. He arose by night, took with him some of his trusted servants, and made a thorough inspection of the wall all around the city, probably by moonlight, and then he promulgated his plan for doing a great work speedily. As a matter of fact, the entire wall was reared in fifty-two days. How could he have possibly accomplished so much in so short a time? The answer is that the people had a mind to work—their hearts were in the work, they labored not as eye-servants nor as men-pleasers merely, but labored as for the Lord and for his cause. The method employed by Nehemiah shows not only that he prayed and labored but that he planned. His project was to divide up the work of the wall amongst the various parties: for instance, the priests and Levites and their families undertook a section, various of the notable families undertook sections, guilds and societies undertook sections, until the whole work was parceled out and each party was pledged for his share in the service. The people entered into the matter spiritedly, each anxious not only to see the whole wall built, but anxious that his own share in it should be substantially done, a credit to himself as well as to the city in general.

There was tact in this: it was the endeavor to make use of the natural tendencies of the human mind. It would be well for all of the Lord's people, charged with the building of the wall of righteousness which surrounds the people of God, separate them from the world, to likewise encourage and stimulate one another in the work which all have at heart. To make a practical illustration of this to our own time and work in this harvest of the Gospel age, we see that there is an abundance of labor for all who have a mind to work. Some can engage in the colporteur service—many are so engaged, much to their own spiritual advantage as well as to the profit of those to whom they minister the Truth, and to the general upbuilding of the wall of righteousness and to the separation of the Lord's people from those who are without, the world. Others can labor as pilgrims and find plenty to do; still others as volunteers can serve the cause by word of mouth, by pen and by the printed page, distributing tracts and in general co-laboring with the Lord and with the brethren in the building of the wall of Zion. Those who are in any measure or degree successful have a mind for the work, otherwise the harvest work would not progress as it does—the Lord would find some other way of accomplishing results now due to be obtained.

"BE NOT WEARY IN WELLDOING"

The work started with great energy and zeal, but was not long in encountering the opposition described in our lesson. Sanballat was a governor of the Samaritans, a mixed people partly of Jewish and partly of heathen blood; Tobiah was the governor of the Ammonites, across the river Jordan; the Arabs of the desert as well as the people of Ashdod, a Philistine city in the South, heard of the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem and were opposed to it for several reasons: the fortification of that city meant an increase of Jewish power and a proportionate decrease of their own influence. They remembered how the city had once been great and influential, and selfishness prompted opposition to it. Besides, religion was the factor with all these peoples. Each had his own religious party and creed, and the success of the Jews in Jerusalem meant the triumph of the God of the Jews and a corresponding lessening

of influence of those who differed. Furthermore, the Jews scattered amongst these various peoples and gradually becoming amalgamated with them would be more likely to be drawn back to Judaism if its capital were again a stronghold and the nation seeming to rise more completely from the dust.

As these enemies of the Jews were wroth without a proper reason, from selfish motives, so those who are engaged in the harvest work, in the rebuilding of the walls of Zion, in the replacing of the doctrines of righteousness and truth, overthrown by the adversary during the dark ages, find opposition not only from the world, the flesh and the devil, but chiefly from the Sanballat followers of nominal Christianity—the "mixed peoples" who have a form of godliness without its power. All of these opposing influences are ready to combine to hinder the re-establishment of the truths and principles which properly separate the Lord's consecrated people from all others. Various are the schemes and hindrances devised.

In Nehemiah's time, the opposition first took the form of sarcasm and ridicule, saying that the wall they were building was not scientifically done, would not stand the tests of "higher criticism;" and a fox even brushing against it would be liable to throw it down. Those who today are building upon the wall of Zion, each in his own place, according to his own opportunity, must be prepared for similar sarcasm. Who are you? What are you? What can you hope to accomplish? Look at Romanism, look at Methodism, look at Presbyterianism, look at all the wealth and learning represented by the various denominations of Christendom! What can you hope to accomplish by the rebuilding of the walls of Zion? Those who are easily put to shame and who give up to the work of building evidence thereby that they have not the faith which would be pleasing to the Lord if they withdrew in spite of all we can do to encourage them. We must let them go, although by and by they will regret such a course.

"FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH"

When the enemies of the Jews found that sarcasm availed nothing, and that the building of the wall progressed with considerable speed, they secretly took counsel to make an attack on the city, to break down the walls and to discourage the builders. However, in the Lord's providence some of those who were building had come in from the surrounding country anxious to have a part in the work; and the secret messages for these to return home because of an attack about to be made reached the ears of Nehemiah, who forthwith armed the people so that they would be ready to repel an attack at any time. The hodcarriers were armed, and those who did the mason work had swords at their sides, while Nehemiah's special guard, divided into two parts, relieved each other at labor and at military service. Thus the work progressed under serious difficulties, which demonstrated all the more that love and zeal were behind the movement.

Thus it must be today with all who are laboring in the harvest work—each one needs to be armed: not, however, with carnal weapons. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," (of error). (2 Cor. 10:4) All of those laboring today upon the walls of Zion need to be equipped with the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the sandals of patient endurance, the shield of faith and the sword of the spirit. Whoever is not armed is in danger of being overcome by the adversary. The sword of the spirit as well as the shield of faith are necessary every moment. When we are opposed we must be able, as the Apostle Peter enjoins, to so use the sword of the spirit as to be able to give to every man that asketh us a reason for the hope that is in us, with meekness and reverence, from the Word of God. Our warfare has reached this stage at the present time, our enemies no longer ridicule as at first. Let each who is a servant of the Lord and has consecrated his life to his service be on the alert continually. Greater is he who is on our part than all they that be against us.

Finding that the Jews could not be taken unawares, Sanballat and his associates tried another scheme; they invited Nehemiah to a conference, but that wise man refused to confer, and sent them word that his work was great and urgent, and that he must build the wall. Doubtless our opponents now would like to draw our attention away from the particular work we have to do; they would like to have us discuss with them other projects, other reforms, social, political, federations, etc. But we cannot join in any of these; we have a work to do, the Lord's work; there are few to do it and it requires all of our time and energy.

The next step of the adversary was to threaten Nehemiah. This they did indirectly, not directly. They got a certain man to pose as a prophet of the Lord and to prophesy injury to Nehemiah, and to advise him to hide himself in the sacred precincts of the Temple. The thought evidently was that, if the

leader of the movement could be affrighted and drawn from the work, the others would soon be discouraged and the whole matter would fizzle out; but Nehemiah was certainly a chosen vessel of the Lord for this very service, and could not be thus frightened. May it be so with us; may our confidence in the Lord be such that the fear of man will not be a snare to us.

"FIGHTING WITHOUT AND FOES WITHIN"

While the outer foes were thus seeking to hinder the work, other matters tended to discourage the workers: (1) The supply of stones for the wall began to be more difficult to secure; as the top and loose ones were used the others required to be more or less dug out; (2) as the wall grew higher it made slower progress and required greater effort to carry the materials onto it; (3) the burden and heat of the day sapped the strength of the laborers and they needed the encouragements which Nehemiah continually gave them, that the Lord was on their part, that their prayers were heard, and that they should not be afraid of their enemies, but remember the Lord which is great and terrible. It is so with us, the Lord's followers who are today building the walls of Zion. At first we felt so glad to be rid of the tormenting errors of the dark ages, so glad to be free, so glad to know something of the divine plan of the ages, we built hard and fast. But with the outward opposition came also greater labors as we strove for mastery ourselves and to build one another up in the most holy faith.

How many spiritual Israelites of this "harvest time," who began with great courage and zeal, and shoutings of joy, have become more or less disheartened. But not all. By the Lord's grace there are encouragements and stimulations for the laborers on the walls of Zion still. The pilgrim visits, the one-day Conventions, the general Conventions, together with the regular visits of the WATCH TOWER and the growing numbers and volumes of DAWN, have served to encourage and stimulate the Lord's faithful, and we are still going on from grace to grace from knowledge to knowledge, and still trusting in him who is the Captain of our salvation.

"WE THAT ARE STRONG OUGHT TO BEAR WITH THE INFIRMITIES OF THE WEAK"

Another difficulty arose: Nehemiah found that some of those who labored on the wall, full of zeal for the cause, were made to suffer for their faithfulness by the wealthy Jews. The

poorer ones getting behind in their rents, taxes, etc., were scarcely able to provide for their families; and their richer brethren, taking advantage of their destitution, had made hard contracts with them, taking away their small possessions, etc., in payment for debts which they were unable to pay because of their engagement in the Lord's service. Nehemiah was righteously indignant with this condition, and called the offenders and stated the matter before them plainly and clearly, and shaking out the flowing folds of his outer garment he declared that thus the Lord would shake out from amongst his people any who had such a selfish spirit.

We are glad that this condition of things finds no parallel amongst us at the present time. On the contrary, we find that love of the brethren is one of the marked evidences of growth in grace and knowledge. Amongst the assemblies of the Lord's people we find a general tendency not only to avoid asking the poorer brethren and sisters to contribute to the expenses, but a willingness to do what each can for the assistance of the needy ones. At our conventions, where no collections are taken up, there is a forwardness to see that none of the entertaining church are overburdened with expense, and also that any in attendance at a convention who are not well to do in this world's goods shall not suffer for necessities and some of the comforts of life. May these evidences of true brotherhood in the body of Christ and of the true building of the walls of Zion continue and abound with us until the work is finished, until our Master shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

ONE TRUMPET-VOICE DIRECTS US ALL

The last verse of our lesson tells of the arrangement made whereby the various workers on the different parts of the great wall could be summoned by Nehemiah to one place if necessity required. The summons was the sound of the trumpet—"In whatsoever place ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us. Our God shall fight for us." Is it not the same with us today? It is not the voice of man that gathers us but the voice of the trumpet—the voice of the great trumpet, the seventh trumpet, announcing our Redeemer as the Captain of our Salvation, present, gathering together his saints unto him, making up his jewels, and shortly to establish them with himself in kingdom glory, in the control of the whole world for its blessing and uplifting, for the destruction of all who wilfully and intelligently oppose him.

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NEHEMIAH 8:18.—DECEMBER 10.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."—Luke 11:28.

Nehemiah was governor at Jerusalem, and after the repair of the Temple walls, noted in our last lesson, he did not consider that great work the end of his mission but rather the beginning of it. The wall was necessary first for the security of the people, to arouse their national spirit, to revive their hopes in respect to the promised kingdom of God, and afford them a practical demonstration of God's favor with them in the accomplishment of that work, and thus to lead on to trust in the accomplishment of other promises of the Word still future.

In the Lord's providence the work was accomplished just at the right time to permit of the rest of the week at their homes, and then to have a general gathering to celebrate the New Year. The Jewish civil year begins with the seventh month, this year September 30, but varying a few days either way from that date, as their calculations were made by lunar time. In God's providence the national interests were associated with the religious interests of the Jews. They were God's people, and all their political and national hopes were associated with the divine promises, and hence a revival of interest in their city and nation and national hopes meant a revival also in their reverence for God, in their religious sentiments, in their desire to honor the Lord and obey him, to observe the festivals which he had commanded.

Nehemiah was evidently a prudent man in such matters to begin with. Indeed we know that this is the Lord's general way of choosing those whom he may use in his service. He chooses suitable persons, and then adds his blessing to promote the outcome which he desires—as, for instance, when instructing Moses respecting the intricate devices for the Tabernacle structure, the Lord said, "Choose out from the children of Israel cunning workmen and I will put my spirit upon them." The thought is that the Lord employs as little of the miraculous as is necessary—he takes advantage of conditions as they are so far as possible, and uses them. While, therefore, the Scriptures declare, and all the facts of the case correspond to show, that not many great, not many learned, not many wise, not many

noble according to the course of this world are chosen by the Lord for his special servants, we are to assume that the Lord chooses as noble, as great, and as learned as he can find who are of the right condition of heart.

LOVE AND DEVOTION FIRST

We are not to consider that qualifications are despised of the Lord, but rather to note that the Lord puts first and foremost the qualities of honesty, humility, obedience and love, and that these things being present in a number, those possessing the greatest number of other qualifications would have the preference. For instance, we may assume that the twelve apostles chosen represented the best material for the Lord's purpose every way, yet subsequently when Saul of Tarsus, educated, talented and wealthy, consecrated himself, saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" the Lord was willing to use him, and his peculiar talents, combined with his deep consecration, humility and zeal, enabled him to take a foremost place amongst the apostles.

Nehemiah, the man of opportunity, brought to the governorship of the Jews at this important juncture, manifested his humility and his zeal in many various ways. When calling for the convocation for a general assembly of the Israelites for the New Year's celebration, called the Feast of Trumpets, he did not ignore the worthy ones of the Lord's people and seek to take all the honor to himself. On the contrary, he recognized Ezra the Scribe, a member of the priestly family, as more suitable than himself to take a prominent part in the work of educating the people in the knowledge of the Lord through his law. Ezra's chief place of importance was the ceremony of reading the Law and introducing it to the attention of the people. On his right hand were seven of the prominent men, on his left hand six more, and the reading was done by course, and probably participated in by many if not all of these fourteen.

The place of the reading was on the plaza of the Temple. The people, sitting about over a considerable area, rose when the Law was read, and after the reading of a section they sat

down. Meantime amongst them had been scattered various of the Levites, the teachers of the people, who explained to them the meaning of the words they had heard, giving them the sense of the language. This was necessary probably for two reasons: first, that the people who had been in Babylon had more or less of a corrupt tongue or ear, while undoubtedly the Law was written and read in classical Hebrew; secondly, even if they had understood all the words, a particular explanation of the sentiment or meaning is sometimes both convenient and necessary. This reading of the Law in sections, and expounding it both from the higher platform occupied by the fourteen officiating and also its further expounding to the people by the Levites who were in their midst, occupied all of one afternoon and a good portion of the next forenoon. The result was that the people had an understanding of God's own message.

"PREACH THE WORD"

Here we see the real essence of preaching, as the Apostle wrote to Timothy, "Preach the Word." The difficulty of much of the preaching of our day is that it is not the Word of God that is preached, but the traditions of the ancients, or more frequently perhaps something that has very little to do with religion at all. Higher criticism and evolution theories and general agnosticism prevail to so large an extent both in pulpit and pew that the Word of God is losing its place of importance in the minds of those who are nominally God's people. Why should they study the book which they no longer accept as divinely inspired? Ignorance of the Scriptures is greatly on the increase amongst those who profess godliness. Undoubtedly there was great advantage in the Scripture studies of olden times, even though ignorance and superstition and the false theology of the dark ages gave a distorted view to much that was studied; nevertheless, fifty years ago the Scriptures were very much better known to the masses of those professing godliness. The loss is a keen one. On the other hand we know how those who have come into the light of present truth, and whose eyes of understanding are opened wide to a greater appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine character and plan, are becoming more and more deeply interested in the study of the Word. This is sure to be the case. No religion, no theory, can be either true or helpful that does not bring us to God's book and deepen our interest in his message. Canon Farrar pays a splendid tribute to the value of the Bible as a civilizing influence, in the following words:—

"It was the Bible that gave fire and nobleness to her (England's) language; it was the Bible that turned a dead oppression into a living church; it was the Bible which put to flight the nightmare of ignorance before the rosy dawn of progress. . . . It was the Bible which saved England from sinking into a tenth-rate power as a vassal of cruel, ignorant, superstitious Spain, whose Dominicans and tyrants would have turned her fields into slaughterhouses, as they turned those of the Netherlands, and would have made her cities reek as she made Seville reek with the bale-fires of her Inquisition." "Let England cling to her open Bible."

"And what the Bible did for England, it did for the United States of America. It was the Bible that made America what she is."

"EAT THE FAT AND DRINK THE SWEET AND SEND PORTIONS"

Evidently this was the first presentation of the Law to the people since their return from captivity. Evidently Ezra had given his attention to the rearranging of the law and the instruction of the priests and Levites therein, but had not up to this time caused it to be promulgated amongst the people. Quite possibly it was a part of Nehemiah's wise insight as a governor to see that the explaining to the people of God's own message would be helpful to them; that it was not sufficient that the priests and the Levites should be learned in the law and that they should tell the people, but that the people themselves should be made to understand the divine message. The same is true today. It will not do that others shall attempt to tell the Lord's plan, but ignore the Lord's Word, in order to have weight and influence. Those who receive the message must know that it is more than man's message, must have the evidence that it is from the Lord.

When the law was read and expounded to the people they saw at once that they had been under chastisement and in difficulties because of their neglect of the divine institutions, and they wept; but Nehemiah and those conducting the services under his direction sent word to the people not to weep, not to mourn, but on the contrary to rejoice and give thanks to God that they now were at last awake to the true state of affairs, that their troubles had come as a result of reform and to have God's blessing in their endeavor, their effort, to obey his statutes. There is a time to mourn, but it is when sin and opposition are prevailing; when repentance has come, when

contrition for sin has led to reformation, it is time to cease mourning lest utter discouragement should result. They had met to thank God for returning favor, to realize that they had received chastisement at his hands, to thank him for the same to take good courage, to start afresh to walk in his way, and now were hearing his law with a view to observing the same and thereafter having his blessing and favor. The message was, "This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, neither weep. Go your way, eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy unto our Lord; neither be ye sorry,—

"FOR THE JOY OF THE LORD IS YOUR STRENGTH"

Spiritual Israel can take an excellent lesson here: "Why should the children of the King go mourning all their days?" It was proper that we should mourn for sin, that we should realize the need for a Savior, that we should lay hold upon him by faith; but once we have accepted the Lord and realized the forgiveness of our sins, the time for mourning is past, the time for joy and rejoicing is commenced. To so great an extent is this true that the Apostle exhorts that we should rejoice in everything, even in tribulation, realizing that since we have given ourselves to the Lord and he has accepted us as his children and given us the anointing of his spirit, adopting us into his family and made us heirs with Christ in the glorious promises to be fulfilled, our hearts should be so full of rejoicing that all the trials and difficulties of the way should seem as nothing.

Whoever can exercise the proper faith in the Lord and in his Word can rejoice; those who cannot exercise the faith cannot have the joy and rejoicing in this present time, but must wait for their portion by and by. The Lord is now seeking those who may firmly trust him, come what may; he is seeking those who will walk by faith, not by sight. Those who cannot walk by faith now will have the opportunity of walking by sight very shortly, when the kingdom shall be established. They indeed shall have a goodly portion, but the portion which God has specially provided for the faithful is joint-heirship with his Son in the kingdom. Let us, then, who have accepted the Lord and his Word, cast away everything of doubt and of fear, and live rejoicingly day by day while seeking to walk in the footsteps of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. The joy of the Lord is our strength, the joy which God gives, the joy which comes from realizing that the Lord is our fortress, and that no ill can betide us without his knowledge, and that he has promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love him—with all their heart, mind, soul and strength.

This message that the leaders set forth, uttered from the main stand, was repeated to the people by the Levites in their midst. The tears were dry and the company dismissed to rejoice in the opening of a new year, which symbolized to them a fresh start in the ways of the Lord and in his favor. The reading of the law on the second day (v. 13) would seem to have been principally to the priests and Levites and heads of the various families—probably some of the special selections of the law, appropriate to them as persons charged with certain responsibilities amongst the Lord's people. It was during this reading that it was discovered that for some time this feature of the law had been entirely overlooked, namely,—

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They found that in the law it was commanded that at this season of the year, namely, from the fifteenth to the twenty-second of the seventh month, the Israelites should dwell for a week in booths constructed of branches of trees, and keep that week as a special festival of thanksgiving to the Lord. It was a feast of ingathering or harvest home. Our American Thanksgiving Day to some extent resembles this. They were to live for a week in these booths to remind them of how once they had been a people without a home, when God delivered them out of Egypt and brought them on the way to Canaan. The yearly remembrance of this experience would tend to produce in their hearts thankfulness to God as the one who had given them the land of promise, the one upon whom they were dependent for their national existence and freedom from slavery, and the one who had promised to bring them to a full inheritance of all the glorious things contained in the great promise, the oath-bound Covenant made to Abraham, that ultimately through his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed.

Our general three-day Conventions are somewhat after this Feast of Tabernacles pattern, only on a higher plane, adapted to us as spiritual Israelites. This year we had such Holy Convocations in June in Chattanooga, Tenn.; in July another at Niagara Falls, N. Y.; in September one in Denver, Colo., and another in Portland, Oregon, besides one in Germany at Elberfeld; one in London, England; one in Glasgow, Scotland, and

one in Stockholm, Sweden. These various gatherings of the Lord's people now in different places are made necessary by reason of the larger scope of country in which spiritual Israel resides. We do not live in tents and booths, yet our absence from our regular homes for a few days implies temporary dwelling-places or tabernacles. We are absent for a time from some of the conveniences and comforts of our homes, yet these conditions may be very favorable to us as reminders that here we have no continuing city, that we are not to set our hearts upon houses or lands or any earthly thing, but to remember that our citizenship is in heaven and that our present sojourn is toward the heavenly Jerusalem, the kingdom, and that everything in the present time should be considered by us as a temporal or tabernacle condition, waiting for the eternal conditions which God has promised us.

OUR FEASTING IS SPIRITUAL

For the entire seven days the Jews rejoiced and had a feast of good fellowship one with another, dwelling in these booths. The whole people, for a time at least, were on a common level. The booths were erected inside the city or outside the walls as might be convenient, and many of them were on the roofs of the houses, which there are usually flat. It was not a feast of sensuality nor an occasion for moral abandon, but, quite to the contrary, was a time for Bible study. The reading of the book of the law and the expounding of it were the main centers of interest, and the people no longer wept and repined at the reading of it, but on the contrary, rejoicing that the Lord's favor was with them, they studied the Word with a view to practising it to the extent of their ability.

This also corresponds well with our Conventions, in which Bible study has the chief place and chief interest. Surely we do have spiritual refreshing, feasting; surely these gatherings, these spiritual feasts in temporary tabernacles away from our usual homes, are proving very helpful to the Lord's people. For this reason they grow more and more to be appreciated amongst those who put spiritual matters first. We live in a very busy day, when business, money-getting, is placed in the first rank by all civilized peoples. If worldly people can take vacations to engage in hunting and fishing and other so-called

"sports," why cannot the Lord's people take their spiritual refreshment and recreation, and cultivate in their children more and more of the desire for the spiritual things? for these gatherings so far as possible should be family gatherings, and the pleasure of an outing and change of surroundings and rest from ordinary work should be combined with the highest pleasure of which we have knowledge, the pleasure of meeting with the Lord and with those who are his, the pleasure of studying the divine Word and helping one another onward and upward in the heavenly way.

We exhort that so far as possible all the friends of present truth shall have in mind the spending of one week in each year separate and apart from ordinary business and work, in something resembling the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, only on the higher, spiritual plane. It is our thought that hereafter the General Conventions may best be held under circumstances that will permit those of the friends who desire to stay longer than the three days, engaging in quiet study and reflection upon the things discussed during the three days, a rest time aside from the world and its hurry, giving special attention to spiritual nourishment after the example of our Lord and his disciples.

HEARING AND OBEYING

Our Golden Text should not be forgotten. It is important that we should hear the Word of the Lord, that we search the Scriptures, that we have them well at our command, that we be able to give an answer to him that asketh us a reason for the hope that is in us, and we need more than all this. We need to obey the Word, to practise it to the extent of our ability. True, we cannot come up to the demands of perfection, for God's law is perfect, but we can have the perfect attitude of heart, and nothing less than this will be acceptable to the Lord. We can show him and to some extent show to others the endeavor of our lives in the direction of righteousness and all the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. If we had all knowledge and zeal and had not the spirit of obedience it would evidence a lack of the spirit of love, and prove us unworthy of the divine favor and blessings promised to those who are rightly exercised by the message from above.

ONE-DAY CONVENTION REPORTS

AT KENTON, O., OCT. 29

We had a grand time at Kenton. Friends from nearby towns and cities came in goodly numbers and full of the spirit, and greatly cheered the little company of friends of the truth at this point. Brother Russell arrived just at the close of the morning rally and gave a few words of cheer respecting the general prosperity of the "harvest" work and the evidence that "due time" will accomplish all that God has promised.

The afternoon meeting for the public was held in the Opera House. Its large attendance, filling the house reputed to hold over a thousand, is said to have been the largest religious gathering ever held in the little city. Our friends certainly advertised that meeting thoroughly, Brother Russell did his best to make plain the great divine plan and the report is that the entire city and countryside are thinking and talking about the teachings of the Bible as never before.

The evening discourse was specially for the interested, but as many of you got the stenographer's report in the *Pittsburg Dispatch* we need go into no details here.

AT FORT WAYNE, IND., NOV. 12

Our train arrived early and we had great pleasure in the Rally and Testimony Meeting in the forenoon. Surely it was good to be there. Many tongues testified to the Lord's grace and truth and to responding devotion and love.

The afternoon session for the public must have been well advertised. It had a splendid turnout of very intelligent people from all the walks of life. The sermon topic was, "To Hell and Back? Who are there? Hope for the return of many of them." The Majestic Theatre, seating 1,400, was packed, about 100 standing, and several hundred were turned away. The closest of attention was given, and we will hope for some good results. We may surely hope that a considerable number will hereafter have saner and more loving views of our heavenly Father than before. And if only a few grains of ripe "wheat" were found we shall rejoice.

The evening session was for the interested, on "Man's Elections and God's Elections," as reported in the *Dispatch*. Here also we were escorted to the depot by quite a number of the beloved friends.

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS

The letter below is from one now a colporteur representing our Society in the spreading of the truth. The writer has learned to listen to the voice of God in his appointed way—through his Word and not through spirit "voices." We rejoice that the Lord is pleased to use the WATCH TOWER to call attention to the precepts of His Word.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

All day and nearly all last night I have been rejoicing over the article on the "Increasing Influence of Spiritism." I do thank the Lord for it from first to last and you also. It is to me another wonderful deliverance, as when I first read the Spiritism pamphlet. I praise God for his goodness, and for his mighty Arm protectingly thrown around his people in this article. What a safeguard! I am most deeply grateful. It seems to put away so much of fears and worries from me—it is one of the answers long delayed in wisdom. It meets my prayers for 15 months past. How thankful I am that I burned my "Message Book" about three years ago. It was an idol, and a truly Satanic snare.

This TOWER explains several circumstances in my life that have greatly puzzled me, and seems to add clearness to the exposition of the Spiritism pamphlet, or makes the impress deeper. I certainly have been tormented with the "voices" not a little.

I certainly will keep as far away as possible from all such "voices." Their words were as distinct as possible, and as beautifully expressed oftentimes as those spoken of in the clipping. Praise God for the precious blood shed on Calvary, and the glorious liberty wherewith it hath made us free.

And now even Telepathy, which has generally been a great delight to me, I am willing to put aside as evil, unless it be that good angels do carry messages within the church. But I would rather deny myself this pleasure also, in such measure as I have practised it, than to meddle for one instant longer with any of these Satanic snares and deceptions.

"Tho from my life he seems to take
What I thought wholly blest,"—

There is no question but I will to love the truth. It is