

in this instance (Nehemiah's commission) he made a considerable alteration, substituting another date of his own, so as to adapt the reign of Artaxerxes to his own theory.

"The date which stands in our Bibles for the 20th year of Artaxerxes is B. C. 446. This makes the commencement of his reign B. C. 465; but the date fixed by the best and most nearly contemporary historian will put the matter in a different light. Thucydides mentions that the accession of Artaxerxes had taken place before the flight of Themistocles. This authorizes us to adopt Ussher's date and to place the commencement of the reign 473 or 474 B. C. This would give the date of 454 or 455 B. C. as his twentieth year and the date of the commission."

It appears that Archbishop Ussher was the first to establish the date of Nehemiah's commission as 454 B. C. as a result of lecturing on the 70 weeks of Daniel in Trinity College, Dublin, in 1613. Other critics who support the date given in DAWN II. are Vitringer, Kruger and Hengstenberg, as well as Tregelles, above quoted. With much love, I remain,

Yours in the Lord,

J. P. BURNS,—England.

"SCRIPTURE STUDIES" AS CHRISTMAS GIFTS

DEAR FRIENDS:—

It might interest you to know that we are already offering the books for "Christmas gifts." We find that many secure their Christmas presents several months ahead, and that this month is the one in which many are very pleased to secure "*such a beautiful, appropriate, and above all such a reasonable [in price] gift!*" Often we can get orders for several sets in one home, in view of the fact that the books make such splendid gifts. Today we got more than one order on this account. We mention this because we think it might help wonderfully during the next six weeks in securing orders from people who would perhaps not buy for their own use. We say, "Many are taking them for gifts, and it is of course a compliment to a friend's intelligence to give him a book, and especially this kind, and you get the three for only 98c!"

With much Christian love and appreciating more and more the great privilege of laboring in the harvest field, we are,

Yours in Him,

J. AND L. HUTCHINSON,—Colporteurs.

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

Dear Brother Russell:—

Being my Pastor in a very special sense to me, and knowing of your deep interest in all who understand, even to a limited degree, the Harvest Message, I am taking the liberty to write you on a subject that has been on my mind for a long time.

I am sorry, very sorry to say it, but many times I have found, on close acquaintance with the brethren in the truth, men who professed full consecration, that they neglected their families so very badly relative to the truth. Seemingly anxious to spread the truth amongst their friends and neighbors, yet they made no provision for their wives, so that they could attend the meetings, and would even talk before the families in such a way as to leave the impression that maybe the truth was not for their wives and children.

I confess this is beyond my comprehension—how a man with brains enough to comprehend the truth, and after reading the six volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN and the TOWER, could or would do or say such!

A man can leave all the cares of the home and the care of the children to a perhaps not too strong wife, and spend all of his spare time while at home reading; and Sunday morning, instead of helping his wife and encouraging her, just get up and eat, dress and leave, and let her know he expects a hot dinner when he returns from the class, and it is no wonder she cannot go. It certainly doesn't look fair to me. Just nominal church people do better than that.

From the depths of my heart I pity the man who has the truth and objects to his children attending the nominal church Sunday school and makes no effort to teach his children and never has family prayer unless some of the colporteurs or elders call on him. These things are so. I wish I could believe otherwise.

Several cases have come to my personal knowledge where the wife was really hungering for fellowship with the class and believed all the truth she could understand, and whose husband, while himself attending the class every Sunday, was the real cause that hindered her. I feel confident a special, pointed article from your pen would do good to many.

Yours in the service of the King,

—, —Tenn.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

GETTING READY FOR FEDERATION

Unquestionably the splitting of Christendom into numerous denominations since the Reformation has been productive of a spirit of moderation in sharp contrast with the period in which many were racked, maimed, burned at the stake, etc., as "heretics." When we have pointed out that the proposed *Federation of Religions* would again put great power into the hands of a united majority and possibly revive the persecutions of the past, we have been laughed at. We are told that the world has so changed that *persecution* for religious belief would be unthinkable.

Within a month we have heard of two professed "ministers of the Gospel" whose remarks imply that nothing is lacking but the favorable opportunity for them to light the fires of persecution. Besides the most refined modes of persecution, by slander and ostracism, there may yet be opportunities for as barbaric martyrdoms for the truth's sake as were practised in our Lord's day.

REV. DR. PATTERSON'S CHRISTIAN LOVE

"There was an exciting episode at the Monday meeting of the Philadelphia ministers, and the Rev. Dr. R. M. Patterson, pastor emeritus, was the centre of it. His assignment was a discourse on John Calvin. He gave the ministers a surprise by advocating capital punishment for other felonies than murder—and for flagrant heresy. According to one reporter, he said: 'Those who spread blasphemous and immoral doctrines should also be put to death.' According to another reporter, he added that burning at the stake was too good for them."

The editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, in answer to a query as to the very words of the reverend gentleman, replied (Oct. 18):—

"We are sorry that you should ask us to print the very words used by Rev. Dr. R. M. Patterson in his recent outburst. They were reported as follows: 'If I had my way about it I would have an executioner called in to deal with all heretics and blasphemers. Burning at the stake would be too good for those who revile religion and take the Lord's name in vain.

The growth of heresy is such today that nothing but measures such as this can stop it.'"

Not all Presbyterians, however, feel so bitterly toward the non-elect heretics; for we read further:—

"The Rev. Dr. Henry C. McCook replied to the Rev. Dr. Patterson. 'My blood boils,' he said, 'at what I have just heard, and it astonishes me to think that a Presbyterian minister should utter such sentiments.'"

THE SPIRIT IS WILLING

Evidently, some of the "doctors of the law" in our day are as willing to do violence as were those who stoned Stephen. Their spirit is willing but their flesh is weak—because public sentiment would not stand for it. But we expect to see public sentiment grow in the same direction under the stimulus of the Federation of the Churches.

Recently the Editor preached at Morgantown, W. Va., to a large audience, which gave close attention for more than two hours. Shortly after a man who was present met one of the ministers of that city who asked him if he had heard the discourse. He replied, "Yes! and I enjoyed it very much. Did you attend?" "No," replied the minister, "I would sooner have joined in stoning him out of town!"

It is presumable that only lack of courage held back this Reverend Doctor of the Law of Love from enjoying himself at our expense. Poor blind leaders of the blind! We are so glad for them that God has a glorious plan in which they may yet share—when "all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped." Verily it is written, "They that hated you, that cast you out [rejected you] said, Let the Lord be glorified! [We do it for the good of churchianity!] But he [Christ] shall appear to your joy and they shall be ashamed."—Isaiah 66:5.

METHODIST RE-UNION IN ENGLAND

By means of re-union a new church was created in Great Britain on September 17. This event, says Dr. Robertson Nicoll in *The British Weekly* (London), "was a historic day of the twentieth century and marked an epoch in the Christian church." Three Methodist denominations, known as the Meth-

odist New Connection, the Bible Christians, and the United Methodist Free church, merged their separate life in one organism to be known as the United Methodist church. From the beginning, the above writer also states, "this church takes its place with the best equipped and most powerful denominations in the kingdom."

The historic uniting conference took place in John Wesley's chapel, City-road, London, and was composed of seven hundred delegates. The controversies which from time to time caused the formation of these divisions have long passed into history, and the only differences that have marked them in recent years have been those of polity and not doctrine. Legal questions were, therefore, the main questions requiring settlement. Some account of these old denominations is given in *The Daily News* (London). We read:

"The Methodist New Connection is the eldest of the three contracting parties, and has been in existence for one hundred and ten years. It represents the first division that took place in Methodism after the death of John Wesley. The question at issue, as in almost all the subsequent divisions of Methodism, was practically the right of the people to a place in the government of the church. The leader of the agitation was Mr. Alexander Kilham, who contended for the right of the Methodist people to order their own form and fix their own time for religious worship, the right of Methodist preachers as apart from clergymen of the Established church to administer the sacraments, and the right of the people to make and administer the laws of Methodism. The first two reforms were granted by the conference under what is known in Methodist history as 'The Plan of Pacification,' passed in 1795, but the third reform was refused, and for advocating this reform in a pamphlet Mr. Kilham was expelled from the conference in 1796, and in the following year, after a deputation to the conference had failed to obtain redress, the Methodist New Connection was formed.

"The second of the uniting churches is the Bible Christian denomination, which has behind it an unbroken and successful history of eighty-nine years of fervent evangelism. It originated through the remarkably successful lay ministry of Mr. William O'Bryan, who refused to confine his labors within the narrow bounds of a circuit. Though he was acting in the spirit of John Wesley, who said, 'The world is my parish,' and though he invariably chose as the sphere of his labors those parts of Devonshire and Cornwall where Methodism was unrepresented, he was deemed by the Wesleyan courts to be acting irregularly. Because he would not limit his labors to the circuit-preachers' plan, he was expelled in the chapel at Gunwen, in 1810, 'a chapel,' says the Rev. G. Eayrs, in his excellent little handbook, 'the erection of which he had superintended, of which he had given half the cost, and for which he had given the freehold, with more land for a burial ground.'

"The third church, the United Methodist Free church, is itself a union of denominations, each of which had unsuccessfully striven for certain reforms in the Wesleyan church, and, in consequence of their failure, had formed themselves into separate denominations. The Protestant Methodists, formed in 1827, stood for simplicity of worship and impartial observance of Connectional regulations. The Wesleyan association arose in 1835 out of controversies respecting ministerial education, and the claim of the local churches for self-government. The Wesleyan reform movement, in the controversy that ended so disastrously for the Wesleyan church, and which cost that denomination 100,000 members, was a protest against the arbitrary rule of the conference and a demand for the co-operation of laymen with the ministers in legislation and administration in Wesleyan Methodism. The expulsion of Messrs. Everitt, Dunn and Griffiths, and the formation of the Reform church, were the outcome of this controversy. Ultimately these three denominations united in 1857 under the name of the United Methodist Free churches, and for fifty years this denomination has been regarded as the most democratic of the Methodist churches."—*Literary Digest*.

THE TIME OF TROUBLE APPROACHING

The present financial flurry is doubtless another of the spasms of "travail" referred to in DAWN I., p. 334. The primary cause is a shortage of money, due to a demonetization of silver. Secondly, Italians, Poles, etc., to the number of 5,000,000, have come here lately, and, earning good wages, do not trust banks, but carry their money or bury it. At but \$200 each this would be an immense drain on our currency—\$1,000,000,000. Thirdly, the depreciation in stocks started many to hoarding money in safe deposit vaults. However, as the country is very prosperous it is to be expected that confidence will soon return. It is seven years yet before the time for the great financial and social collapse which we find so

clearly depicted in the prophecies. But meantime the spirit of unrest must be expected to prevail increasingly.

FRENCH PRIESTS AS TENT-MAKERS

The Hamburger Nachrichten in the following report does not intimate that these priests still serve the Lord and the people:—

"An unforeseen result of the separation of church and state in France has been to make the church of France more apostolic than it has ever been before. Peter was a fisherman; Paul a tentmaker. Thus a great number of the French priests are looking round for opportunities of earning their daily bread by the labor of their hands. Several of them are keeping bees and living on the sale of the honey. Others have large poultry-yards and live by selling eggs and fowls for the table. The breeding of blooded dogs, such as poodles, makes a profitable occupation for many of them. The curé of Labourgabe has a profitable trade in the fruits he preserves and has become quite famous for the geese he rears.

"Many of the clergy show a preference for handicraft. The curé of La Pannonie has set up a lathe and become a turner. Wheelmaking suits the priest of Averdun, who has accordingly become a wheelwright and carriage-builder, while as a side-issue he undertakes the repair of sewing-machines and bicycles. The curé of Maurages has turned locksmith. But the favorite trade of these spiritual men is that of watchmaking, in which seven noted curés are known to be engaged. Humbler vocations are also selected. The curé of La Tadiere has taken to tailoring, the ex-pastor of Négron weaves rugs, while about ten of his confères do knitting, producing stockings and underwear. Among the most respected and honored of French village clergymen is the curé of Héricourt, who now applies himself to the stationery business, the printing of visiting cards, etc. Others are bookbinders, photographers, artists, sculptors."

Such conditions in France should be very favorable to the truth. We will be glad to further assist French brethren in making use of present opportunities for "harvest work" there.

TO REVIVE "PASTORAL OVERSIGHT"

When a pastor meets a member of his congregation, should he talk politics and the weather, or bring the conversation to bear upon the member's spiritual condition? This spiritual pastoral oversight, which formed an important element in the vocation of a minister of a past generation, is practically laid aside by many clergymen nowadays without a substitute. The spiritual loss occasioned thereby is frequently lamented by religious journals; but the remedy is not easy to find, since it is alleged, "the younger lay element in the church" prefer the minister to "be a man among men," a "hail fellow, well met." "Real pastoral oversight," declares *The Lutheran* (Philadelphia), "is not desired as a rule, and, when offered, it seems almost like an intrusion, if not an impertinence." Whatever the cause, the fact remains, so *The Lutheran* asserts, that "in this age of ecclesiastical secularization, the pastoral office is not exercised as it should be." We read further:—

"That a similar state of affairs exists in communions where considerable emphasis of a certain kind is placed on conscious spiritual experience is made evident from an editorial on 'The Care of Souls' that appeared in a recent issue of *The Congregationalist* (Boston). It reports a business man as saying: 'I can't see that ministers as a class in private conversation with laymen discuss to any degree the subjects peculiar to their profession. When my pastor meets me, for example, it's 'How are you?' and then some comment on the news of the neighborhood or in the morning paper. He never ventures an inquiry or remark that has any bearing upon my personal religious condition.'"

The man in question is not regarded as a "complainer, or demonstrative in his emphasis of a peculiar kind of spirituality, but one who, immersed in business cares, probably feels the need of spiritual direction." *The Congregationalist* goes on:

"We wonder if this desire is not more widely spread on the part of the laity than many ministers realize! They have become of late years men among men. They play golf and mingle with their parishioners freely in clubs and social circles. That indefinable but real sense of separateness from common men which attached to the old-time ministry has gone. On the whole this is well, but the gains do not outweigh the loss if the average minister today is less eager and less competent to understand and satisfy the demands of the personal religious life. He is still or ought to be the spiritual specialist of the community. His supreme interest still is not in men in the mass, but in this and that and the other individual—how he or she can be brought under the compulsions of religion and then grow daily in grace and in knowledge."

The Lutheran recommends for its own communion a return

to the practice of setting aside a day in the week when pastors would be free to confer with souls who feel the need of spiritual counsel. "What but this individual-contact method of dealing with souls have we to take the place of the Roman confessional?" it asks. It even conceives a way of adapting that confessional to Protestant uses, speaking in these words:

"We need not wonder that the Reformers were loath to part with this individual method of dealing with souls and that they purified it and retained it. The inquiry room or sick-bed visitation is a very poor substitute for the confessional in its purged Protestant sense. What a new significance the celebration of the Lord's Supper would have could there be instituted in every congregation an individual preparatory service such as is in vogue here and there in Germany and Scandinavia! Besides, much of the reverence and respect once accorded by the laity to the clergy would be regained if the pastor might be known among them more preëminently than is the case at present as one who is in travail for their soul's sake. No ministry is likely to strike a powerful spiritual note until it has become intertwined with the deepest longings and spiritual needs of a congregation."—*Literary Digest*.

THE MISSION FIELD

William T. Ellis has made a journey to Heathendom with a view to studying out a better mission policy. He has returned wiser as respects true conditions there and, while admitting that he was greatly disappointed at what he saw, because he had accepted too fully the mission reports, he nevertheless is hopeful that if new "business" methods were adopted much might soon be accomplished. Alas! thus others have hoped against hope, only to find that there are twice as many heathen today (1,200,000,000) as there were a century ago (600,000,000). He says:—

"Up to the present, foreign mission work has been a mere reconnaissance in force, and not a war. One of the hurtful delusions of the home churches concerning foreign missions (a delusion sometimes fostered by ill-balanced reports from the field) is that the whole heathen world is on the verge of conversion to Christianity. One of the commonest figures of missionary oratory represents the nations as crowding into the church. Now, the unwelcome fact is that heathendom, as a whole, has scarcely been budged by missions. Great as have been the missionary triumphs in spots, the whole mass has hardly been touched by the Christian teachings. Even enlightened Japan, which many persons believe to have become almost

Christianized, is still rankly heathen, except for a small percentage of the population which only the mind of faith can invest with conquering power. The overwhelming and, at first sight, immovable and impregnable heathenism of mission lands is a challenge to the churches."

How much more reasonable the Bible hope: that when God's due time shall come, the glorified Christ (head and body) will inaugurate the Millennial kingdom, under whose wise and loving and powerful rule Satan will be bound, sin estopped, ignorance and superstition banished, and the knowledge of the Lord be caused to fill the whole earth—causing every knee to bow and every tongue to confess.

Let all of our readers understand, therefore, that our present effort to send the true Gospel into Africa and Japan and China is not at all with a view to converting those peoples, but to do a harvest work among them—to seek for some of the Elect church amongst them,—“not many.”

PROHIBITION SENTIMENT GROWING

"The movement against the use and abuse of strong drink has grown and is still growing. It has already assumed the proportions of a veritable crusade. It is, too, a crusade of the strongest and most effective kind—a crusade of the people. The growth of this sentiment is found most vigorous in places where, but a short time ago, to have hinted of such a thing would have been considered absurd. Throughout almost the entire South, where the very term hospitality has so long been synonymous with strong drink that it was a fixed tradition that all southerners drank, and no southern man would think of welcoming another to his home without offering him the cup that cheers temporarily, this sentiment against general drinking has grown wonderfully, and is gaining strength with every day that passes. Georgia has passed a strong prohibition law that becomes effective at the beginning of the coming year. Local option is coming to be the rule in another southern State, Kentucky, where tradition says every native is trained from his cradle up to 'turn his back when he passes the bottle,' that he may not be guilty of taking note of the size of the drink taken. In Tennessee saloons have been practically driven out of the State by the declaration of sentiment against them under the local option law. In Missouri fifty-three counties have already declared in favor of local option, putting the saloon under the ban, and the work appears to have only begun. These are only some of the more notable instances of the growth of this sentiment. Equally good work is being done in many other States."—*National Daily*.

NEW WATCH TOWER BIBLES

The first edition (5,000) of the new WATCH TOWER BIBLES is about exhausted. We however, purpose another (5,000) edition, which we hope will be ready by May, 1908. Meantime Brother C. J. Woodworth is at work on the Commentary again, and promises that soon he will have it include all TOWER comments that are not found in the DAWNS. This edition will make unnecessary "Part V., Index to Scriptures treated at length in Zion's Watch Tower." Nevertheless it will add over 200 pages to the "Helps," making them in all about 500 pages. This will add the price a little, too—15 cents each. Do not order until we announce that these are ready.

Of the present edition we still have some of all styles with the patent index, which adds 25c each to the price. We also have a few of No. W138, price with postage \$1.48.

To issue all of these "Helps" as a separate volume, in India paper, bound in cheap leather, would make the books cost as much as the cheapest of these Bibles; hence would be undesirable, for surely it is a great item to have such helps bound in with the Bible. However, we well know that some of our dear readers who get the TOWER free, as "the Lord's poor," cannot afford another Bible, however cheap.

We therefore are preparing all the helps, except the Commentary, on India paper, 64 pages, which we can supply at 10c each, including postage—and our "Lord's poor" will be welcome to one each free. Others may find these convenient for use with other Bibles. They are thin, so they can be carried under your Bible cover. Orders may be sent in any time. We expect to be able to make deliveries December 1.

GLASGOW CONVENTION REPORT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

The Glasgow Convention, just passed, was one of the many seasons of sweet and blessed refreshment with which we are now being favored by our present Lord. It was indeed good to be there. As for myself I could not but continually thank the loving Giver of every good and perfect gift for the love which was so clearly discernible in the brethren gathered there. I suppose that one's impression of the convention is sure to incline to the writer's mind or feelings, so I perhaps speak more for myself when I say that I thought the brethren seemed to have a quieter and more assured bearing. There was the feeling of work to be done, and that the time for its doing is rapidly shortening. The joy of the truth is widening out into a realization of the need of witnessing to the many who have not yet heard of the "loving kindness of our God," and that "the time is at hand" for the establishment of the kingdom. Brother Edgar early reminded us that we are now entering into the last week of the "Gentile Times," and that the probability is there are very few general conventions for

any of us. May we all be ready for the great convention where our Lord and all his faithful will be.

The two thoughts which were chief amongst those introduced by the brethren who addressed the meetings were, as might be expected, "The hope set before us" and "Our privilege of being shares in the 'ministration of righteousness.'" After a word of welcome from Brother Johnston, representing the Glasgow brethren, and from Brother Hemery, representing the W. T. B. & T. Society, Brother Guard gave us a helpful talk on "The great and precious promises." Later Brother Hemery spoke about "The disciple's race" (Heb. 12:1), of the difficulties and testings of the way we run in laying hold of the hope. On Sunday Brother Crawford talked on "The hope set before us," and many helpful hints were given. One of the pleasant features of the convention was an address by Brother Edgar on "A tree planted by the rivers of water." It was a very interesting comparison of the natural growth of a tree and the developments of the Christian in his growth from faith to love (2 Pet. 1:5-8)

and the lessons driven home made it an effective help to growth.

On the Monday 62 brothers and sisters symbolized their consecration by immersion. We rejoice in their faith and hope, and trust that they and all will grow unto the likeness of the Lord. There were other addresses and other meetings intended to help us all to do with our might the work before us. Quite a good number promised to help as much as possible in the colporteur service, and I believe both that department and the general work have got a stimulus. The farewell meeting was a happy time, even though it was tinged with the sadness of saying good-bye for a time, for there was the possibility of speaking with each one and thus of sharing in our pilgrim fellowship.

Our parting message was a word from Brother Hemery, who used the parable of the sower as the basis of a short exhortation to have the heart ready for this "word of the kingdom" which is now so abundant, that we may be neither

of the wayside class, nor of those who receive the truth into stony hearts, nor of those who allow thorns to hinder development. We trust we all may be of those whose hearts are of good ground, and who shall give back to the Lord some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, some an hundred. And we parted, thanking the Lord for the privilege of the convention.

Your letter came a day too late to enable me to make an announcement to the convention of the proposed dates of your visit next year, but the news has got around pretty well by this time. Before I left Glasgow the brethren there had entered upon a scheme which included colporteurship in the city again before your coming in the spring. The brethren in other parts are also preparing themselves—and the people, too—so we are looking forward to a good time. The Lord give you strength for all your many labors.

With much love, I am your brother in his grace,

J. HEMERY.

HONORING OR DISHONORING THE HEAD

"I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; that the head of the woman is the man; that the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying with his head covered dishonoreth his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head: for that is one and the same thing as though she were shaven. For if a woman be not covered let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered."—1 Cor. 11:3-6.

There is something about the above Scripture that seems to wound or hurt some of the Lord's dear flock. We greatly regret this, but the fact does not authorize us to change or modify the Scriptures. On the contrary, it implies to us that where there is a soreness of the heart against some regulation which the Lord has placed in his Word, some false ideas upon the subject resulting from wrong views and wrong practices of ourselves or others, there has been produced a condition of mind which, because of this very soreness, is indicated to be diseased. We have even known a few to be so sensitive, so tender, upon this subject that they felt embittered toward the author of DAWN STUDIES, Vol. VI., because he therein called attention to this Scripture and its evident meaning.

If we find any Scripture which touches us to the quick our attitude should be, not that of opposition to the Scripture nor of opposition to the one who drew it to our attention, but on the contrary we should be grateful that a weakness and sore spot of ours had been brought to our attention, thus enabling us to apply the correct remedies, which would salve the sores and make the Lord's yoke easy and his burdens light. It will not do to say that these were not the words of our Lord, but only those of his Apostle Saint Paul; for the Lord honored the twelve and their words and prayed a blessing upon us all through them—upon "all who would believe on him through their word." (John 17:20) He declared furthermore that whatsoever they would bind on earth would be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they would loose on earth would be loosed in heaven—thus giving us to understand that their words would be guided with particularity, so that what they would enjoin we might understand would be a divine injunction, and what they would tell us respecting our liberties in Christ we might understand to be a divine message also. Furthermore we are to remember how greatly the Lord used those channels of blessing for the comfort and edification of his church. We are to remember how they were specially given to him of the Father as he declares, "Thine they were and thou hast given them unto me, and I have lost none save the son of perdition"—Judas. We see that the Apostle Paul was the divine selection to fill the place vacated by Judas' defection, and we see that in the Lord's providence through him God has sent to the church the larger proportion of the New Testament message—the explanation of the divine plan as a whole. True, the words of our Lord and the words of the other apostles have brought blessing to the church, but in number and in explicitness the words of St. Paul outrank all others. As we have seen, this is true of our Lord's words, because his preaching was before the descent of the holy Spirit, and hence was to those who were not Spirit-begotten and who were unable consequently to appreciate and understand spiritual things. Hence many of our Lord's deeper teachings were given in parables and dark sayings, and these evidently were but partly understood even by the twelve until after Pentecost.

We call attention to this subject afresh, not by reason of any desire to make it more prominent than it already is—not because we wish to force the Apostle's words upon any, not because we wish to condemn any, but because we want to have the responsibility for these thoughts placed where it belongs, upon the Apostle and upon the holy Spirit back of him, and

not upon the author of SCRIPTURE STUDIES. Whoever quarrels with the subject let him know with whom he is quarreling and be on his guard proportionately. No one ever quarrels with the Lord to his advantage. On the contrary, those who with meekness receive the engrafted word which is able to make them wise—these have the greater blessing. The self-sufficient, and all who think themselves wise above what is written, are in a dangerous place. They should understand that now is the trial time, and that humility is one of the tests which the Lord is applying to all of us. They should remember that our tests are not all the same, but that it is the Lord who by the various testimonies of his Word tries and proves those who have made a consecration to him—not with a view to their stumbling, but to their testing, and if rightly exercised to their greater blessing and advancement in the divine favor.

Let any who are disposed to dispute this Scripture read the entire context down to and including the 16th verse, in which the Apostle declares, "But if any man seemeth to be contentious we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." This is the Apostle's final word on the subject—the Lord's final word through the Apostle. In substance it means this: "I have set before you the truth on this subject, through obedience to which you will have a larger measure of the blessing of God not only in your families and in the assemblages of the church but also in your own hearts and experiences. By following this course you will make better progress and be the surer of winning the greater reward and hearing the Master's 'Well done.' Nevertheless, do not consider what I have said as a law; I am not giving it in that sense. I am giving it as an admonition, as something that will be for your benefit individually and collectively. If anyone is disposed to resent my presentation and to argue the question and to contend about the matter it would better be dropped. Let those who appreciate my advice follow it and reap the blessings; let those who do not appreciate it follow their own course in this matter—to themselves will be the disadvantage from which I fain would shield them. They will lose the blessing which I fain they would receive by following this advice."

The Apostle's advice respecting the covering and the uncovering of the head is a part of his general teaching respecting the relationship of the husband and the wife in the affairs of the home and of the church. The man who covers his head in his devotions dishonors his head by showing that he does not appreciate the divine word on this matter. In the home in which the husband does not occupy the place of the head of the family, he is covering his headship; in the home where the woman does not recognize the headship of her husband she is dishonoring him and dishonoring herself in that she thus confesses that she has unwisely married a man whom she cannot esteem as she should—as the head of the home. If men and women professing godliness recognized this principle which the Apostle here enunciates it would, we believe, mean the solving of many domestic infelicities and difficulties; for the wife looking to her husband would thus throw upon him the greater weight of responsibility in the affairs of the home, and as soon as she got accustomed to this she would find a

great relief to her own mind—a lessening of the nervous tension which is so wearing, especially upon women. The husband, realizing his situation and his responsibility as the head, should and we believe would generally be more careful than ever to look out for the interests of his wife, his children and all that come properly under his supervision—to not only provide for their temporal necessities, but also to realize an increasing measure of responsibility as respects their higher interests, mental, moral, spiritual. But let us remember that the Apostle

has placed the responsibility of this question with each man and each woman in the church of Christ, and has not made it a matter in which Brother A may criticize Brother B or Sister B, nor vice versa. To his own master each one of us stands or falls on this and on other similar questions. The more obedient we are the greater our blessing, the less obedient the slower our progress, seems to be the divine rule, and it is increasingly important to us to know this as we are approaching the consummation of this age and of our course.

BIRTH OF "THE MAN CHRIST JESUS"

Matthew 2:1-12.—DECEMBER 22.

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people."
—Luke 2:10.

Our subject does not take us back to the beginning of God's creation when Christ as a spirit being became "the first born of every creature;" the Word that was with God in the beginning of creation, and by whom all things were made, and without whom not one thing was made. (John 1:1-3, 10.) Our Master at *that* time was "the beginning and the ending, the first and the last," of Jehovah's direct creation: all subsequent creations being by and through him as Jehovah's honored agent. (Rev. 1:11; 3:14; Col. 1:15; John 1:1-3) We come to the time when he who was rich and for our sakes became poor (2 Cor. 8:9) and left the glory which he had with the Father "before the world was." (John 17:5.) Then, without dying, our Master underwent a change of nature and "humbled himself," "was made flesh" (Phil. 2:8; John 1:14), "took upon himself the form of a servant" and was "found in fashion as a man;" "a little lower than the angels;" and then still further he humbled himself even unto death, and yet more even unto the shameful death of the cross—as a culprit, as a sinner. (Heb. 2:9, 16; Phil. 2:6-9) This lesson, appropriate to the season, calls our attention to the birth of "the man Christ Jesus."

In the divine predictions of a coming Savior attention is largely called to the fact that he is to be a King, a Deliverer, a Savior. This point is made prominent because God appealed to mankind along the line of their necessities and hopes. The sacrificial feature of the Lord's ministry was made less prominent than his power and majesty and glory, because the sacrifice related specially to God and was to meet the demands of the divine law against the sinner-race. The question of how God would settle the matter consistently with his own sentence of death, resting upon the race, would to the average human mind be much less important than the statement of the resultant glories, restitution and blessings. Hence, we find the references to the sacrificial features of our Lord's ministry largely presented under types and symbols intended to be comprehended only by those who, as sons of God, would be guided into the truth by the Spirit of God.

It is not surprising that the angels who announced our Lord's birth mentioned only the glories to follow and not his sufferings which would intervene. It is not surprising that they did not weep for the sufferings and humiliation, but sang, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men;" grasping merely the culmination of the great divine plan which had its beginning in the birth of Jesus.

(1, 2) Whether or not the "wise men" of the East were Hebrews we are not informed; but since divine favor was for the time confined to Israel, and since that favor did not depart until they had rejected the Messiah, we consider it highly probable that these wise men from the East were part of "the twelve tribes scattered abroad," who, "instantly serving God," were hoping for and "waiting for the consolation of Israel" through the long-promised Messiah. (Acts 26:7; Luke 2:25) We do know that hundreds of thousands if not several millions of Israelites were carried captive to this very East country—Babylon, Medo-Persia; and we know also that less than 55,000 availed themselves of the decree of Cyrus permitting their return to Palestine. The great bulk of the people of Israel, therefore, at that time (as now) resided in foreign lands. And it would appear that their foreign captivity was helpful to their religious interests, and that the Israelites in general had more faith in the Lord and more strong interest in prophecies respecting Messiah after the captivity in Babylon than for several hundred years previous, when they were continually beset with idolatry.

The promise of God to Abraham of a great "seed," a great king and ruler who should bless the world with a righteous reign, it would appear, was carried by the Israelites into all the then civilized world. Leading some to expect a Jewish

Messiah, it led others through a feeling of pride to declare that they were as able as the Jews to produce the desirable government and ruler for the world. Hence, we find that the idea of universal dominion began to prevail. It is claimed by some that Zoroaster, the great Persian religious teacher, was a disciple of the Prophet Jeremiah, and the memoir of Mrs. Grant, missionary to Persia, says:—

"Zoroaster taught the Persians concerning Christ. He declared that in the latter days a pure virgin should conceive, and that as soon as the child was born a star would appear, even at noonday, with undiminished luster. 'You, my son,' exclaimed the venerable seer, 'will perceive its rising before any other nation. As soon as you see the star follow it wherever it leads you, and adore the mysterious child, offering your gifts to him with the profoundest humility. He is the almighty Word which created the heavens.'"

Although this is only a legend, it is interesting to know that there was such a legend amongst the people of the East. And respecting Zoroaster it may be said that his teachings were of a higher character than those of other heathen teachers.

(3-6) Expecting a king, the wise men naturally came to the palace of Herod, who, although called the King of the Jews, was the representative of their conquerors, the Romans. Herod was the founder of the house of Herod and naturally had great expectations, not only with reference to the duration of his own dominion, but also with a view to the establishment of his posterity in the power and office which he enjoyed. No wonder, then, that he was "troubled." The prospect of a rival either in the power or in the esteem of the people was not to his liking. "And all Jerusalem [was troubled] with him." Political influence takes in a wide circle. There were connected with Herod's government or benefited by it, directly or indirectly, many whose plans, hopes, etc., might be very much disarranged by any change of the government. Herod evidently knew of the Jewish tradition respecting Messiah, for he at once sent for those who were learned in the Scriptures to demand of them where the prophets indicated that Messiah should be born. The scribes and Pharisees were evidently quite familiar with the subject, had looked it up, and apparently without hesitation gave the name of Messiah's birthplace as Bethlehem, and quoted from the prophet in support of it.

(7-12) The cunning art of Herod, by which he hoped to learn who was this divinely designated Prince and heir to his throne, is appreciated only when we remember the sequel to this narrative: how, when he found that the wise men did not return to give him the information and permit the destruction of the child Jesus, he determined to kill all the children of the city of Bethlehem of two years old and under; thus he might be sure, he thought, that he had outwitted the divine plan and protected his own power.

The star which seemingly had led these wise men toward Jerusalem, and which then apparently had vanished, and left the searchers to arouse the curiosity and interest of the people of Jerusalem, again became their guide as they left the city, leading them to Bethlehem, which is only a short distance, and the star appears to have indicated even the very house in which they found the new-born King. According to the custom of the time they presented costly treasures as well as their homage.

Although the King came, his own received him not; and like the "young nobleman" of his own parable he went "into a far country," even heaven itself, there to be invested with power by the King of kings, and to postpone the establishment of his kingdom until his church, his bride, his joint-heirs, should be selected and prepared to share the kingdom with him.

Meantime, the world still needs a King as much as ever. All nations are learning more and more their need of a wise,

a just, a powerful, a loving, a merciful ruler. They need this very one, and are gradually learning that none of the fallen race can be trusted with much power, honor and glory; that all are weak through the fall, and that a superior king and a superior government are essential to their highest blessing. The masses are beginning to feel this need more keenly; and it is remarkable to what extent various advocates of Socialism recognize and quote with commendation the teachings of this very King—even though it may be said that they wish others to be governed by the Golden Rule, while they themselves fail to walk by it.

The world is beginning to realize that the king is at the door: the Herods of today and with them all those of influence and power, political and financial, are "troubled" at a prospect of a *change of government*, which their own "wise men" announce as imminent. We need not expect that the princes of this world will welcome him; rather they will fear a disruption of present institutions; fear that under his gov-

ernment they would not have so favorable opportunities for prosperity; and that in the general leveling, which the prophets declare will accompany his reign, some that are high shall be abased, and some that are low shall be exalted. As a consequence, Messiah's kingdom, although a kingdom of peace and righteousness, must be introduced by a "time of trouble, such as was not since there was a nation." Yet we rejoice in the promise that "when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness," and that eventually his kingdom shall come to be the "desire of all nations."

Thus far the Gospel of the kingdom has been received by only a few; and the special blessings have been with the few who have acknowledged the King, and who are being prepared to be joint-heirs in his kingdom. But let us not forget the gracious results that are to follow the establishment of that kingdom, when, as declared in the Golden Text, the good tidings and the great joy "shall be to all people."

"OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF CHRIST"

Where's the day I'll call dreary,
While his favor shines so bright?
Where's the time in which I'll weary
Of his loving words of light?

Where's the test of faith that's greater
Than the measure of his grace?
Where's the loss of goods more precious
Than what's given in its place?

Where's the home that we could long for
Like his palace up above?
Where's a way more fit to get there
Than his narrow way of love?

Where's the stone on which I'll stumble
While I trust to him my hand?
Where's the fear to make me tremble
When his words the winds command?

Where's the cross that is too heavy
When his strength doth lend me aid?
Where's the crowned head I'd envy
Since he's having my crown made?

—B. H. Barton.

"THE PRAYER OF FAITH SHALL SAVE"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

A few weeks ago, while reading the *Diaglott*, I noticed that the word translated sick in James 5:14 was *astheneo*, a word derived from *a-sthenes*, meaning without strength (*a*, without; *sthenos*, strength). From this is derived *asthenia*, a word much used in medicine. From my knowledge of medicine I knew that a person might be asthenic without being diseased or sick, so I looked up the word rendered sick in the 15th verse, and this I found to be *kamno*, a word which occurs only three times, and means, "to labor, suffer from fatigue." The two other passages are Heb. 12:3 and Rev. 2:3, which Young's translation renders as follows: "For consider him who endured such gainsaying from the sinners to himself, that ye may not be wearied (*kamno*) in your souls—being faint." (Heb. 12:3) "And thou didst bear and hast endurance and because of my name hast toiled and not been weary (*kamno*)." (Rev. 2:3) These passages would indicate that it was the weary and weak in faith who was told to call for the elders, and not the one suffering from disease. There are other words which mean sick, such as *nosos*, meaning sickness, unsoundness, disease; *echo kakos*, meaning to be ill.

These two words are never used to denote moral or spiritual sickness, while *asthenos* in its various forms is so used, and while it is frequently rendered sick in the common version, it is never rendered sick in Young's translation, and the revised version has the number of times reduced.

I also looked up the word healed, and found that there are three words rendered healed, viz., (1) *therapeuo*, meaning to attend to, heal, cure; *sozo*, to make sound or whole; *iaomai*, meaning to heal. This last word is the one used by James, and it has also the significance of saved, as the following passage will show: Matt. 13:15, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and should understand with their heart and should be converted and I should heal [*iaomai*] them." (See also Acts 28:27, 28; Luke 4:18) "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal [*iaomai*] the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Jno. 12:40, "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes nor

understand with their heart, and be converted and I should heal [*iaomai*] them."

Acts 10:38, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing [*iaomai*] all that were oppressed of the devil." 1 Pet. 2:24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed [*iaomai*]."

These passages can be applied only in a moral or spiritual sense, while *therapeuo* is never applied in such a sense but always relates to a cure of a physical disease.

As examples of the use of *astheneo*, I quote the following: Matt. 8:17, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities [*astheneia*] and bare our sicknesses [*nosos*]." Matt. 26:41, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak [*astheneia*]." Rom. 4:19, "And being not weak [*astheneo*] in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb." Rom. 5:6, "For when we were yet without strength [*asthenes*] in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. 6:19, "I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity [*astheneia*] of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." Rom. 8:3, "For what the law could not do in that it was weak [*astheneo*] through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. 8:26, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities [*astheneia*], for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 14:1, 2, "Him that is weak [*astheneo*] in faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak [*astheneo*] eateth herbs." 1 Cor. 8:11, 12, "And through thy knowledge shall the weak [*astheneo*] brother perish for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak [*asthenes*] conscience ye sin against Christ." Heb. 4:15, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities [*astheneia*], but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Nosos is the word most commonly used to denote sickness or disease and occurs in the same verse in contrast to *astheneia*, viz., Matt. 8:17, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias, the prophet, Himself took our infirmities [*astheneia*] and bare our sicknesses [*nosos*]."

From the foregoing I would conclude that James referred to Christians who had become weak in faith, or, to use a common expression, had "backslidden." This is indicated in verse 16, the word "faults" being translated from *paraptoma*, meaning a falling away.

I hope I have made myself clear, and I very much desire your comments. The following is a more literal translation of Jas. 5:14-16: "Is any weak among you, let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the wearied one. And the Lord shall raise him

up, and though he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him. Confess your fallings away one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Yours in our dear Redeemer,

J. E. TAYLOR, M. D.

* * *

Evidently the weakness and faintness are spiritual, and the restoration and healing also spiritual. In accord with this is the exhortation that we "Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we become weary or faint in our minds," as respects the Lord and his promises, and thus become unfaithful, covenant-breakers, alienated from God. Any in such a condition will find it difficult to return to rest in the Lord and should follow St. James' prescription.

"THOU CROWNEST THE YEAR WITH THY GOODNESS"

Psalm 65:11.—DECEMBER 29.—REVIEW.

Interesting as it is to review the lessons of the year, reaching from the Creation to the boyhood of Samuel and the beginning of the epoch of the kings of Israel, we leave that to individual effort and consider here the beautiful golden text of the International lesson.

When we remember Father Adam's disobedience and that he justly came under the sentence of death therefor, and that in consequence ourselves and all of his posterity share his imperfections and dying conditions as we share the blessings of life through him, we have cause for gratitude toward God for enduring conditions of whatever kind he may be pleased to permit us to experience. From this standpoint every blessing is an unmerited favor, whether small or great, for we deserve nothing, all of our rights having been forfeited. Hence, as members of the world we should feel ourselves at the close of the year impelled to look up to the Creator and to confess that we have received at his hands numberless mercies and blessings which we could not claim by right or desert. For not only are we under condemnation through heredity, but we realize that individually we are unworthy of divine favor, for, as our Episcopal friends express it, "We have all done those things which we ought not to have done and have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no health in us." It is appropriate, therefore, that the world, which the Apostle speaks of as the "groaning creation," should be exceedingly thankful to God for the blessings they enjoy, even though these have not been unmixed with bitter disappointments and sorrows and tears.

But if the natural man has cause for gratitude to God, much more have we, the children of God through the adoption which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Do we not enjoy all the blessings which the world enjoys? and have we not the same call as they to thankfulness? And, in addition, is it not true that God has done for us exceeding abundantly more than we could have asked or thought according to the riches of his grace? (Eph. 3:20.) How profitable it is for us to turn our minds backward and note the steps by which divine grace has led us to our present station, in which we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. When we were without strength and without merit Christ died for the ungodly, including us. We are amongst the favored ones who heard of the grace of God; we are amongst the comparatively few whose ears and eyes of understanding were opened to a realization of the Lord's grace and truth; we are amongst the still fewer number who, having heard, were enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and who appropriate the blessing to ourselves. We are amongst the still fewer number who received not the grace of God in vain, but under the guidance of the Word and Spirit of the Lord presented their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, their reasonable service.

"Oh, happy day, that fixed my choice
On thee, my Savior and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice
And tell its raptures all abroad."

The Apostle says of himself, "If others have somewhat whereof to boast, I more." And so we see in general that if the world has something to boast of in respect to God's

gifts and blessings, and something for which they may be thankful, we more—we who are in Christ Jesus, who have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, and been made partakers of the holy Spirit, we may rejoice abundantly. We may be glad even in the house of our pilgrimage—even though here we have no continuing city, no abiding place, no security, but are buffeted by the world, the flesh and the adversary continually. The Lord, our great Deliverer, is on our part; his promises, exceeding great and precious, are our support and consolation. We have laid hold upon one who is mighty to save; yea, more, he has laid hold upon us, or, as the Apostle expresses it, "we have been apprehended of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:12.) Neither will he let us go so long as our hearts are loyal to him. Only the wilfulness which would take our interests out of the divine keeping could in any sense of the word separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Let all of this class review the year, especially from the spiritual standpoint, to note what progress each of us has made in spiritual growth, in grace, in knowledge, in love—the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. In proportion as these are large let us rejoice; in proportion as they are small let us lament the fact, yet not to the degree of discouragement or surrender to the enemy. Let us hear the Master's voice saying, "Fear not, I have overcome the world," "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in thy weakness."—John 16:33; 2 Cor. 12:9.

Reviewing the year in its temporal blessings and mercies and privileges and favors, and in its spiritual opportunities and strength and knowledge and development in character—likeness of our dear Redeemer—while rejoicing in all these, let us say to ourselves in the words of our text that the crowning of the year with blessings is in the divine goodness. The Lord would not have us understand that he does everything for us so that we have nothing to do for ourselves, but he does give us clearly to understand that all of our doings would accomplish nothing without his aid—that our efforts and strivings are profitable in their results only as they have the divine favor and blessing. God's goodness is the crowning of the year for us. We are glad at its close to remember how good he is, how generous, how sympathetic, how compassionate, how loving and kind—especially to the household of faith. To these alone he has exhibited or sent messages of his grace and peace as yet, but we are glad to see in his Word that soon the New Covenant will be inaugurated and its message of forgiveness will go forth in trumpet tones, a Jubilee message to the world of mankind that they have been ransomed by the precious blood which seals the New Covenant and which makes possible to them the "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21.) We rejoice, then, not only in our own favor and blessing, but also in the coming blessings, all of which we recognize to be of, by and through divine goodness. Our Lord Jesus was the great channel of this divine goodness, through whom it reaches us who are his followers, the adopted members of his body. We are thus permitted to come into relationship with him, so that we also shall become channels for the dispensing of the divine goodness ultimately to natural Israel and to all the families of the earth.

NO DEBATE IN PARAGOULD, ARKANSAS

Some months ago the Editor received a challenge for a debate from the Baptist minister at Paragould. We declined personally, but assured the gentleman that one of our "pilgrim" brothers would serve in a Christian manner for the edification of the truth. The following is the outcome:

Dear Brother Russell:—

I have no doubt but what the Lord had some good purpose in permitting me to come to Paragould, but it evidently was along different lines from what we had anticipated. The challenger is a little country preacher, one of apparently little ability, and if we had known the man it would have been better to ignore his suggestions. However, the Lord knows best, and by his grace I shall make the best use of the occasion. If the Baptists fail us we will explain matters in papers and advertise fact that we will take both sides, showing what Baptists believe and why, and why we know that they are wrong, and what is right. If they will not show their weakness we will have to do it for them.

Later.—The challenger had tried to engage a man who possessed great eloquence and no spirituality—much fighting ability but little Scriptural knowledge of a desirable sort—Rev.—, one of the last men in the world anyone would want to talk Scripture with. He told me himself that it would depend on the deacons of the Baptist church as to whether he would debate at this time or not; but I suppose they would not agree to pay him enough, for he decided not to take part. However, before he left he asked me to sign some

propositions which accompanied a resolution regarding a debate in December, and of course I refused. This was merely a ruse to enable them to circulate a report that the debate was not held because I would not sign the propositions.

Not content with that they had us locked out of the school house, in which we purposed to hold other meetings. The school house has been open for religious services of every kind, but we were obliged to secure an unoccupied house for our meeting place. The first night our audience had to sit on the floor. What a miserable substitute for Christianity these people have!

The experience has confirmed my old idea that it is not the representative religious people of each denomination that are asking for debates, but rather the little country preachers, who owing to lack of better ways of using their time are anxious to stir up a fight and have some excitement and have their people attend, not to learn, but to applaud their preacher.

There are only six or seven believers here and I trust our visit may prove to be a blessing to them and to a few others who are willing to hear. The Baptists may write about a debate later, but I told them that if you had known the real condition of things you would not have noticed their request and that future communications would be ignored.

However, there is a blessing for me in this experience and I am trying to get all the good I can out of it. Am giving discourses on the various propositions, and hope to tract the town before leaving. With much Christian love,

BENJ. H. BARTON,—*Pilgrim*.

"GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD"

Dear Brother Russell:—

Should you think well to make use of this in the TOWER please do not use my name. It is a copy of a letter I sent to a brother, a stranger, who twice addressed me requesting charity. Yours in the Lord, C—.

My Dear Brother:—

Your letter of some weeks ago and also your later one came duly to hand, and though I feel I did quite right in making no reply to your first letter, yet now that you have taken the trouble to address me twice on the same subject I will give you my understanding of the Lord's will in regard to the matter discussed.

First let me say that I take no exceptions to the style or composition of your letters. On the contrary they disclose a very unusual talent for writing, and my only regret is that this talent should have found expression in a way that is so little calculated to glorify the Lord or his cause, or to really benefit you or anybody else. I remind you that all our talents belong to him if we are truly his, and that these talents ought never to be exercised in any manner which would reflect upon his ability to care for his own, but on the contrary should be directed into channels such as would provide an honest livelihood for ourselves and our families and additionally enable us to give something toward the spread of the Lord's truth and the blessing of his people. It is not yet too late for you to make a proper use of the talent you possess in letter-writing, nor for the Lord to aid you in making it a source of honorable income if devoted to worthy ends.

I trust you are not mistaken, dear brother, in your confidence that if any man goes to the kingdom he will be sure to meet you there; but I remind you that the Scriptures are very explicit on the point that the only ones who will ever get there will be the ones who do the will of our heavenly Father as expressed in his Word, and that many, very many, who now have unbounded confidence that they will be accepted of the Lord are sure to hear the words, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity, I never approved of you." The fact that one has been fed on the loaves and fishes broken by the Lord's hands is no guarantee whatever that he will be accounted worthy to be the Lord's joint-heir in his kingdom.

These matters are stated thus plainly to you, dear brother, because as a diligent student of the Word you must be very

familiar with the Scriptures, which declare that "I have been young, and now I am old, and yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread"; "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly"; "All things work together for good to them that love God"; "His bread and water shall be sure"; "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things"; "Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed," and a host of others of like import.

And it ought not to be necessary additionally for me to call your attention to the fact that there is not one solitary passage in the Lord's Word that would justify you or any other brother in Christ in asking alms of anybody except the great Dispenser of all blessings upon whose never failing bounty we all subsist. To whom did the Lord Jesus instruct us that we should raise the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread"? Of whom is it said that if we lack we may ask and he "giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not"? Furthermore, it would be quite as improper for me to respond to your appeal for alms as it was for you to make the appeal. Why? Because the statement is clear from the Scriptures that we should be on the lookout for wolves, swine and dogs, and the predominant characteristic of all these creatures is hunger, selfish rapacity, which would greedily devour not only the food of the Lord's true sheep but the very sheep themselves, if given the opportunity; and the Lord has instructed his people not to be led about by every suggestion that may come to them (for the devil is just as busy in making suggestions as he ever was) but to be "Wise as serpents and harmless as doves," testing every question—even this question of alms to the needy—by the Scriptures and by them alone.

It is not for me to say why the Lord has permitted poverty to come to you, dear brother. I have never seen you, and have no knowledge of you whatever beyond what is contained in your letters, but it is barely possible that the chief reason for your poverty is that instead of "working with your hands the things which are good, that you may have to give to him that needeth," you have been of the class that are mentioned by the Apostle as content to live on the bounty of others, "working not at all." I hope this is not the case, but there is nothing in your letters to indicate that such may not be true.

Your brother in Christ,

C—

BE STRONG

"Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;
We have hard work to do and loads to lift;
Shun not the struggle—face it; 'tis God's gift.

"Be strong!

It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong;
How hard the battle goes, the day how long;
Faint not—fight on! Tomorrow comes the song."

YOUR "GOOD HOPES" FOR 1908

[The plan here proposed we designate "GOOD HOPES," because nothing is actually promised—only your generous hopes expressed, based upon your future prospects as they now appear to you. The plan has proved not only so beneficial to the cause of Truth, but also so blessed to the hoppers, for some years past, that we again commend it to all as Scriptural and good. Those who desire to make use of this plan can fill out both of these memoranda. One should be kept for the refreshment of your memory; the other mail to us.]

—TO THE—

"WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY."

Dear Friends:—I have read with interest of the openings for the STUDIES and Tract work in foreign lands and here at home. I need not tell you that I am deeply interested in the spread of the Glad Tidings of the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of redeeming love expressed for us in God's great Plan of the Ages.

I am anxious to use myself—every power, every talent, voice, time, money, influence, all—to give to others this knowledge, which has so greatly blessed, cheered and comforted my own heart and placed my feet firmly upon the Rock of Ages.

I have been considering carefully, and praying to be instructed, how to use my various talents more to my Redeemer's glory and for the service of His people—those blinded by human tradition who are, nevertheless, hungering for "the good Word of God," and those also who are naked, not having on the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness, the unjustified, who stand, at best, in the filthy rags of their own righteousness. I have decided that so far as my "money talent" goes, I will follow the rule so clearly laid down for us by the great Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 16:2), and will lay aside on the first day of each week, according to my thankful appreciation of the Lord's blessings during the preceding week. Out of this fund I wish to contribute to the several parts of the Lord's work specified on the back of this letter. Of course, I cannot in advance judge or state particularly what the Lord's bounty may enable me to set apart weekly, and hence you will understand the sum indicated to be merely my conjecture or hope, based upon present prospects. I will endeavor to contribute more than I here specify; and should I not succeed in doing as well, the Lord will know my heart, and you, also, will know of my endeavors.

My only object in specifying in advance what I hope to be able to do in this cause is to enable those in charge of the work of publishing and circulating the Tracts, etc., to form estimates, lay plans, make contracts, etc., with some idea of what I will at least try to do in the exercise of this, my highly appreciated privilege.

My present judgment is that during the coming year, by self-denial and cross-bearing, I shall be able to lay aside on the first day of each week for Home and Foreign Mission Work (to assist in circulating SCRIPTURE STUDIES in foreign languages, and in publishing the OLD THEOLOGY QUARTERLY in various languages, and in supplying these gratuitously to brethren who have the heart and opportunity to circulate them widely, and in meeting the expenses of brethren sent out as Lecturers to preach the Divine Plan of Salvation, and in general to be expended as the officers of the Society may deem best), the amount of.....per week.

To comply with United States Postal Laws, all or any portion of my donation may be applied as subscription price for WATCH TOWER sent to the Lord's poor or others, as the Society's officers may deem advisable.

That the work be not hindered, I will endeavor to send you what I shall have laid aside for this cause at the close of each quarter. I will secure a Bank Draft, Express Order or Postal Money Order as I may find most convenient, and will address the letter to

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,

Allegheny, Pa., U. S. A., or, London, England; or Melbourne, Australia.

(Name)

(Post Office)..... (State).....

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