

The convention concluded with a love feast; and many eyes were tear-dimmed with the sorrow of parting and also with the joy of anticipation of the great convention when we shall be forever with the Lord.

#### AT OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

One unusual feature in connection with the Oakland Convention was that four brethren were sent there from the East, traveling together, serving the friends at Chicago, Denver and Los Angeles en route. At these cities two-day conventions had been arranged, and an average of 500 attended at each place.

About 650 were present at the Oakland Convention, which proved to be a most helpful and enjoyable concourse. It was remarkable for the sweet spirit manifested; and as those present eagerly listened to the discourses or gave their testimony to the Lord's grace, their radiant faces outwardly attested the inward heart-condition. Many and fervent were the expres-

sions of mutual Christian love among the conventioners. Twenty-three were immersed at Oakland.

At all the conventions resolutions were passed expressing love and sympathy for the brethren at headquarters, and pledging co-operation with the Society and its work.

#### OTHER CONVENTIONS

Other two-day and four-day conventions were held at New Castle, Pa., Portland, Oregon, Seattle and Spokane, Boise, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis and Toledo, while still others are proposed. Altogether the year 1918 will be the banner year for conventions. It is expected that the Pastor Russell Memorial Convention at Pittsburgh Oct. 31—Nov. 1-3, will be the principal one of the year. The public activities of the Society being somewhat curtailed at present, these gatherings seem to supply the needed stimulus and encouragements for the friends. Evidently the Lord has wonderfully blest the conventions.

## THE WATCH TOWER OFFICE

The Society's removal to new headquarters in Pittsburgh is now completed, and all departments are now in operation, although it will take two or three weeks more to get fully settled. We have beautiful quarters on the third floor of the Martin Building, with plenty of room, well lighted and well ventilated. We are confident that the removal is providential; for the Lord's hand has been continually manifested in connection therewith. In another column we print an up-to-date

price list of our stock on hand. Please do not order anything not listed, until you see notice of replenished stock in THE WATCH TOWER. Address all letters to the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, Room 310, Martin Building, N. S. Pittsburgh, Pa.

To secure uniformity we suggest that our new headquarters be referred to as "The Watch Tower Office," and that paragraph two of the Vow be changed to harmonize therewith.

## VIEWS FROM THE TOWER

*"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isaiah 55:8, 9.*

The grand truth so succinctly stated in this text is not appreciated by any except the mature Christian; and it takes years of experience in the school of Christ to learn this lesson well. Very few learn the lesson properly; but as a result these enjoy a calm and a peace in their daily life which others do not. These also have a greater confidence than others possibly can have. In the words of the Apostle, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Such have learned that the failure of their own plans, the thwarting of their own purposes, is not an evil nor an evidence of divine disfavor. They have learned that this is the very way which God uses to teach them the lesson that divine wisdom is superior to human wisdom; and what confidence, what hope, what joy fill the hearts of these!

With such mature Christians every trial is but "light affliction," "not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed." When seeming calamities come into their lives, they "sorrow not as those who have no hope"; for they recognize the Father's loving hand in every experience, assigning to them needed lessons, in order that they may be "made meet for the Master's use." This lesson of full submission to the divine will must be learned by us all, ere we can hope to share with our Lord in his kingdom.

The past two years of the church's experience have been fraught with many such lessons. How often the heavenly Father has seemingly hindered the accomplishment of our plans, and afterwards shown us his own grand designs, which we have always found to be higher, grander in every sense, than our own!

#### A SUCCESSION OF SURPRISES

It would seem well at this season, the memorial of the translation of "that faithful and wise steward" from earthly to heavenly activities (Revelation 14:13), to review the Lord's dealings with his people, both individually and collectively, and learn lessons thereby. Two years ago the Lord's people were all engaged in harvest activities, with no thought of any sudden change. Brother Russell had gone on an extended trip. Few realized how near he was to his journey's end. On the morning of November 1, 1916, word had gone all around the world that Pastor Russell had died on the afternoon of October 31. How little did the masses realize earth's loss! How few realized that his work was continuing! None realized his gain.

From that time on, apparently the Lord has been giving to the church a series of experiences different from what we had had before, a succession of surprises, every one of which was needed, that we might learn the lesson of our text. The report of Brother Russell's death came as a shock to us all, and proved a trial of our faith. Most of us had planned his demise at a different time and in a different way. Now our minds were more or less bewildered; and we began to ques-

tion: "Has the harvest ended? Is the door closed? Are we of the great company class? Who will carry on the work now?"

At first we were inclined to mourn our loss unduly, to grieve over Brother Russell's departure. But soon our sorrow was turned to joy; for it speedily became manifest that the Lord had simply exalted Brother Russell, and had given him greater powers and grander opportunities of service than were ever his before. Furthermore, when we realized that his interest in the members of the church remaining in the flesh, and his ability to assist them, had been increased manifold, our joy increased proportionately.

#### THE TEST NOW UPON THE CHURCH

Slowly the majority regained their equilibrium, as the Lord manifested his ability to carry on the work. How much we all needed to learn that lesson in order to stabilize our faith! How grandly the Lord fulfilled his promise to raise up shepherds to care for the flock! How marvelously the work progressed for a time! How strenuous was the activity, and how we did enjoy it for a time!

Suddenly, however, divine providence so overruled that the work should come almost to a standstill. How the Lord's providences seemed to change! How differently events were occurring from what we had expected! Another needed trial was upon the church. While engaged in the activities of the harvest work and while smiting Jordan, we had learned lessons of confidence, humility and patience; but the dear Lord saw that we needed to learn these same lessons from another angle. Would we continue to have confidence, to be humble and patient, when all our activities had practically ceased?

The Lord is still permitting this test to be upon us. Would we lose our confidence now, and conclude that the Lord had deserted his work and his people, when he has told us: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"? Would we lose our humility to the extent that we would assert that the Lord had cast off the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, and was no longer using it as his agency for comforting and blessing his people? Would we become so impatient with the Lord and his ways that we would take things into our own hands and cease to recognize the church as a Scripturally organized body, and consider ourselves at liberty to "draw away disciples after" ourselves? Would we so far lose the Master's spirit and forget his injunction not to judge, not to condemn, that we would thus injure our brother? How could the work possibly continue now? Who could be found with ability to carry it on?

An early demise of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society was predicted by some; and all the dear sheep wondered what would be the outcome. Quietly and grandly the Lord impressed the lesson again, that his work was not dependent upon the ability of man, but that the Father was able to

perfect praise out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. During the past few months the grand old ship, which has weathered the storms of centuries, has passed through some terrific gales. The powers of the air have done their worst to destroy it; but the fact that it is still afloat is due to the other fact that "the Lord is in the ship." Some, fearing the storm, have deserted the ship, forgetful that our safety lies in remaining in it. We pity them, and rejoice that the majority have stood the test.

#### ANOTHER NEEDED TEST

How we needed this lesson, also! A few have been entrapped by the adversary, but we are glad to say that every day's mail brings to the office the assurance that some of them have recovered their balance; and for this we rejoice. It is plainly evident that the friends are gradually learning the lesson that "man proposes, but God disposes"; that God's thoughts, ways and plans are not ours. In this connection we might add that the removal of the Society's headquarters to Pittsburgh is proving to be another test to some of the Lord's dear ones. Very evidently still further lessons of confidence in the Lord are needed. Human wisdom and sentimentality would have dictated our stay in Brooklyn; but divine providence forced us to move; and we wish to say that there are so many evidences of the Lord's providences in the removal that we cannot enumerate them. This work has not been accomplished without severe trials; but we have invariably found that these proved to be blessings in disguise. The Lord has permitted us to be confronted with almost insurmountable obstacles, only to brush them quickly aside at the proper time.

How fitting it seems that the great work begun by our dear Pastor at Allegheny, under the Lord's providence, forty years ago should be finished here! There is every evidence, however, that there is a further work ahead, after a brief resting season; and we counsel all the Lord's people to be patient, courageous and humble. The Scriptures clearly point out a second smiting of Jordan, and some texts seem to imply still further unfoldings of God's Word. In Romans 15:4 we are told that everything written in the Old Testament was for the instruction of the church, while she is in the hoping time—written for her comfort and to help her to learn lessons of patience.

This thought suggests an understanding of all the prophecies before the church shall be glorified. May not the "many like words" "added" to the book which was burned and which Jeremiah rewrote (Jeremiah 36:32) be the corroborative testimony of all the prophets—Isaiah and all the minor prophets? It would not surprise us if this were the case. We believe that THE WATCH TOWER will be used as the Lord's official organ to disseminate his truth until that work shall have been finished. But however this may be, time alone will tell.

During this little resting time let us practise "washing one another's feet," rendering to the various fellow members of the body those loving little services which are "an odor of a

sweet incense" to God. And let us not forget to grow in grace and in knowledge ourselves. Now is the time to put on the finishing touches to our own character and to help the brethren to do the same.

#### A SPECIAL MEMORIAL

This issue of THE WATCH TOWER contains a supplement which should awaken in every loyal heart the blessed memory of the faithful loyalty and loving zeal of that noble man of God, Charles Taze Russell. How grandly his message and his example have encouraged us in the past! How the memory of these encourages us still! How beautifully he always acquiesced to all the divine providences which came into his own life and into the work which he loved so well!

"Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never failing skill  
God treasures up his bright designs  
And works his sovereign will."

And now, dear friends, we warn you that the trials are not ended. We shall need to gird on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in the still more evil days to come. The prophet forewarns us, saying, "Who shall be able to stand?" The apostles declare that every man's faith shall be "tried so as by fire." (Malachi 3:2; 1 Corinthians 3:13; 1 Peter 4:12; Revelation 6:16, 17) All the "wood, hay and stubble" will be "burned." If we would be disloyal under any trial, God will surely permit that trial. If our faith will fail at any point, the Lord will surely give us that test. If we can be induced to injure or to condemn our brother, our test will be along that line. If we are disposed to substitute our plans, our ways, our thoughts for God's plans, ways and thoughts, we are not yet ready for the Messianic kingdom; and God will surely give us opportunities to manifest our true disposition and the intents of our hearts.

#### A WORD OF EXHORTATION

Not in vain did the prophet say: "He shall be like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap," when he shall "purify the sons of Levi." This surely indicates the thoroughness of the test at this time. The Revelator adds: "They that are with him are the called, the chosen and the faithful." Let us leave the disposing of our individual affairs in the Lord's hands, as well as the disposing of the church's affairs, and the Society's affairs, also. The Lord will never desert his people. "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?"

When we shall have learned well the lesson that "God is able to save to the uttermost," that "he who has begun a good work will finish it," and that he chooses his own times and ways for the accomplishment of all his plans, then we shall have learned to distrust our own wisdom, our own plans; and we will submit joyfully to every experience which our Father permits to come into our lives. Then, and not until then, do "we know that all things work together" for our good, individually and collectively.

### SPECIAL DIVINE PROVIDENCE

[Reprint from August 1, 1893, issue which please see.]

#### "IN MEMORIAM"

Beloved one!  
Beyond earth's sunshine and its rain,  
Beyond all weariness and pain,  
Thou art at rest.  
E'en though we mourn our loss, we joy to feel  
Thou art so blest.

O faithful one!  
Now privileged to see unfold  
God's purpose in the scroll unrolled  
By Christ's own hand;  
And thou hast made report: "I've done as thou,  
Lord, didst command."

O radiant one!  
Along the dark and narrow way  
Thy faithfulness casts back a ray  
Of hope and cheer;  
For thou so joyously thy cross didst bear,  
With scarce a tear,

O blessed one!  
We pray for strength to do God's will,  
To wait and suffer and be still,  
As thou hast done,  
Nor faint nor fear, but still run on until  
The prize is won.

### "THY SAINTS SHALL GLORIFY THEE"

[Reprint from October 15, 1900, issue which please see.]

### PURITY A QUALIFICATION OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

"Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord."—Isaiah 52:11.

This unjunction of the Prophet Isaiah was addressed primarily, no doubt, to those who were connected with the Jewish priesthood or identified with the Lord's house, the Jewish Temple. The law required that the priesthood should be clean.

There was an outward cleansing provided for, we remember, both in the Tabernacle and in the Temple service. The priests had the laver of water at which they were to wash before handling the vessels of the Lord's house. Doubtless also the in-

struction included the thought that they should be clean in their lives, in their conduct before the people; for they represented the Lord.

We believe that in a larger and broader sense, in a prophetic sense, this text has application to the church of Christ, the royal priesthood, of which Jesus is the great High Priest, identified with the true temple of God. The vessels of the Lord's house might represent the various truths of the Lord's Word—a variety of truths on a variety of subjects. To a certain extent the term "vessels" might apply to the different books of the Bible. In a way still different the term might be made applicable to the Lord's people themselves, represented as being the vessels of the Lord in that we contain and give forth his word. The Apostle says, for instance (2 Timothy 2:20, 21): "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth and some to honor and some to less honor." He exhorted that these vessels should be kept clean, ready for the Master's use.

In our text, the vessels would seem to represent the truths of God's Word, and those who bear them the priests. The application is quite clear to us who are followers of the Lord Jesus, the antitypical priesthood, the royal priesthood, which St. Peter mentioned. (1 Peter 2:9) We should all be clean. This cleansing began with us before we have become priests. When we purposed to become priests, to accept the Lord's invitation, a certain cleansing of heart and life took place. But in addition to this cleansing from individual shortcomings, we need cleansing from the defilement of original sin, which can be effected only through the merit of the blood of Christ. This cleansing took place after we had presented ourselves to God in consecration. Having thus been cleansed and accepted of the Father to membership in the royal priesthood, it is necessary that we keep cleansed; so the Scriptures again exhort: "Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."—2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 John 1:7.

This cleansing work is one that may well be considered continual; for despite our very best endeavors we find that weaknesses of the flesh still cling to us more or less. It is impossible to put away absolutely every imperfection of thought, word and deed while we are in the mortal body. Our personal cleansing work, therefore, as well as the cleansing of the blood of Christ, must continue as long as we live; and a constant watchfulness to avoid sin and all the defilements of the fallen earthly nature is necessary.

The thought given in this text is to be continually before our minds—that all who attempt to bear the message of the Lord, to be his servants, to speak his truth, should be, first of all, clean, pure of heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." Those who are impure of heart will not be permitted to see God, either in the literal or in the figurative sense. The seeing of God now, the discerning of his character, the understanding of his plan, diligence in copying him—all this comes to us through a purity of heart. The more pure in heart we become, the more our intentions are honest, true and clean, the more we may understand and appreciate our great heavenly Father; for he reveals himself to such, and to no others. Hence the work of cleansing and keeping clean is of the greatest importance.

We must attain absolute purity of heart, of intention; and then so far as possible we must keep our words and conduct free from sin, free from defilement of any kind. If any regard sin in his heart, God will not hear him. This is the positive declaration of his word. (Psalm 66:18) If therefore, any neglect to keep himself in the love of God, he will soon go into outer darkness, the darkness of the world, the darkness of the nominal church. Hence our abiding in the Lord's favor and in the light of his truth is made dependent upon our keeping ourselves in his love, upon our keeping ourselves in this cleansed condition, in purity of heart, and so far as possible in purity of word, thought and deed.

## INTERESTING QUESTIONS

**Question:**—Explain that Scripture which declares that God repented that he had made man, and that it grieved him at his heart.

**Answer:**—This question is based upon Genesis 6:6. The matter is plain when we see that the word repent may mean a change of either conduct or mind, and often refers to a change of course as a result of change of conduct or of mind. In God's case it would not mean a change of mind; for the Scriptures assure us that he knows the end from the beginning. (Acts 15:18) Hence it means only a change of conduct, a change in the divine method of dealing. Up to the time of the Deluge God had pursued but one course with the human family; and then he changed from that course to another. The wickedness upon the earth grieved our heavenly Father in the sense that he is sympathetic, and therefore would appreciate very keenly the troubles coming upon mankind as a result of departure from a right course.

**Question:**—In Luke 13:24 is there a difference between the door and the gate?

**Answer:**—The gate is the way of faith. Our Lord said: "Few there be that find it." Apparently still fewer would care to enter it. Those who have gone in have been misunderstood. Jesus himself was misunderstood. His motives were impugned. So also are those of his followers. The Master was called Beelzebub; and his followers have been called devils. But the time will come when the narrow way to life will be done away with, when the door to the high calling will be entirely closed; for all who will go into the kingdom will then have entered. After that door has closed, people will begin to realize much more clearly just what it has meant to be a foot-step follower of our Lord, just what the election of the church signifies. Then many will be anxious to enter. But the way of sacrifice will be closed, and a new dispensation ushered in.

## JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS

[The first sixteen paragraphs of this article were reprinted from article entitled, "Hated of His Brethren," published in issue of April 1, 1907. The remainder was reprinted from the article, "Hated Without a Cause," published in issue of September 15, 1901. Please see the articles named.]

## "AND THERE WAS A GREAT CALM"

As the green waves bear on their crest  
The foam, and ever shoreward come,  
So, moving surely to our rest,  
Slowly we all like bits of foam  
Come drifting home.

He whom we loved has reached the shore  
In peace; and all the billows vast—  
The stormy waves of life that bore  
Him on—have ceased their strife at last.  
The storm is past!

We thought, because the waves of life  
Were high and rough, the end would be

'Mid scenes of tumult and of strife,  
As mighty billows of the sea  
Break loud and free.

But there was calm instead! The waves  
Of life were stilled, and up the strand  
Slipped noiselessly, as ocean laves  
In quietness the silver sand.  
An ending grand!

How sweet to know his weary life  
At last to rest and quiet wore!  
Oh, may we all through peace or strife  
Be gathered on that silver shore  
For evermore!

## THE VALUE OF DISCIPLINE

"In the still air music lies unheard;  
In the rough marble beauty lies unseen;  
To wake the music and the beauty needs  
The master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.  
"Great Master; touch us with thy skilful hand;  
Let not the music that is in us die.

Great Sculptor! hew and polish us; nor let,  
Hidden and lost, thy form within us lie.

"Spare not the stroke; do with us as thou wilt;  
Let there be naught unfinished, broken, marred;  
Complete thy purpose, that we may become  
Thy perfect image, O our God and Lord!"