

man. On the contrary I have been praying for light, and I think my prayers have been heard; for I feel that there is something in your church worth while considering.

I beg to remain most sincerely yours, E. B.—Md.

FAITH IN GOD'S OVERRULING PROVIDENCE

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. The church at Dallas has voted to extend to you our love and sympathy in this hour of final trial and testing, and to assure you of our prayers and co-operation. We believe the Lord will uphold and guide you in your efforts at service as long as there is any work for the angel of Revelation 8:3; and for this we pray daily. We appreciate your services to us, and we rejoice in the blessings that each issue of THE WATCH TOWER brings.

We do not know just what awaits us; but we do know that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"; and that no weapon formed against his children can prosper in the sense of injuring them as new creatures.

Remembering you daily at the throne of grace, and with much Christian love, we are

Your brethren in Christ, The DALLAS ECCLESIA.—Texas.

THE EXPRESSION OF A NOBLE HEART

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Greetings in the Lord's name; and may grace and peace be multiplied unto you. I am writing you at this time to advise you of my regret at having taken any part in causing to be circulated a certain letter in which surprise was expressed re articles on pages 152, 168 and 174 of the 1918 WATCH TOWER.

Because of certain conditions that have arisen in local classes, the conviction has been growing in my mind that perhaps, after all, the above mentioned articles were right, and that I along with a number of others was wrong. So I determined to reread them with a mind as unbiased as possible. This I did last night and again this morning; and, thank God! I can say from the bottom of my heart: "I find no fault with them." I found that I could unreservedly accept them for what they say, but not for what others think they say. So I haste to write you my apology for having opposed in any sense the words which have come forth from the channel the Lord has so abundantly used in the past.

Your brother in the one hope, J. T. B.—B. C.

"THERE IS NO SCHISM IN THE BODY"

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—

We would like the dear Bethel family to know that they

are daily remembered in our prayers. We are grateful for the continued help given us through the TOWERS, which are still coming through regularly. We ask the Lord's guidance and help for you in these times of difficulty, knowing that we shall be heard, as we believe he will continue to use you as he has done in the past if you remain steadfast and faithful unto the end.

With fervent love in our dear Redeemer,
SEC'Y LONDON TABERNACLE.—Eng.

DAILY PRAYERS FOR HEAVENLY WISDOM

BELOVED BRETHREN:—

The Associated Bible Students of Bristol and vicinity held a two-days' convention here Sept. 21, 22, in which the spirit of the Lord was manifested in a most noticeable manner by all who attended; and we were blest beyond measure. Praise his name!

A motion was made, which carried unanimously, to draft a resolution to send to you, which read substantially:

"Resolved, That we conventioners here assembled at Bristol, Tenn., hereby repledge our loyalty and undivided support to our brethren at the headquarters of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, and most especially to those in direct charge of the work; that our prayers continue to ascend daily for them to exercise the spirit of a sound mind at all times and to be guided by the unerring counsel of the Lord, until our heavenly Father is pleased to place his everlasting arms about us and welcome us to the Great Convention, our eternal home."

BRISTOL, TENN., CONVENTION.

SECOND THOUGHTS ARE BEST

DEAR BRETHREN:—

I am writing this letter to make clear my attitude toward the Society. When I read Brother Johnson's paper, "Harvest Siftings Reviewed," last November, I was so moved to sympathy for him that I resigned from my position at the Tabernacle office force.

Two months later, however, I wrote that I had made a mistake, that I had had the opportunity of thinking the entire matter over calmly, and that I realized that I had permitted my sympathies to get the better of me. Ever since that time my heart has been with the Society; and I am happy to say that, at the present time, in spite of the many influences that have been exercised to swerve me from my position, I find myself in fullest harmony with the Society.

With much Christian love,

Yours in the CRUCIFIED ONE — — N. Y.

VIEW FROM THE TOWER

GATHERING WHEAT—BURNING TARES

"In the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."—Matthew 13:30.

Thus does our Lord call to our attention the two parts of the harvest work, both of which are to be accomplished by the same reapers. The plain intimation of this text is that the latter part of the harvest work is to be the burning of the tares. If at one time we had the thought that the burning of the tares was no part of the harvest work, and that the saints would have no part in the work of "burning" them, a careful study of the above text will convince us to the contrary.

A clear understanding of these two parts of the harvest work is necessary at this time; for the Lord's people are more or less puzzled and perplexed as to what to do and how to do it. How true is the saying, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity"! How many times have we seen this principle illustrated during the past forty or more years of the harvest work!

TABERNACLE SHADOWS came to the church in a time of extremity. The various volumes of STUDIES IN SCRIPTURES also came just as they were needed. Again, the sermons in the newspapers, and the PHOTO-DRAMA as well, were given just at opportune times. In 1914 we thought that all the work had ended; but just at the opportune time again the Lord brought to our attention another work, that of gathering the clusters of the vine of the earth. At the present time another "extremity" is upon the church; and from every part of the field come the queries: "What remains to be done? How can I do more to serve the truth?" We hope that each TOWER reader will ask himself these questions, and then act according to the answers. Furthermore, we wish to assist any and all to the extent of our ability.

MUCH WORK YET TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

Many of the dear friends think that "the door is shut," and that opportunities for service are at an end, or nearly so. The tendency of such an opinion is to make us lax in our efforts and to cause us to cease watching for opportunities of service. The Society does not share this opinion. It is quite probable that the harvest, in the sense that no more will be spirit-begotten, ended in the spring of 1918, except as some will fall out or be rejected, and others take their places. As suggested by Brother Russell:

"We have every reason at present to believe that the number of the elect is not yet completed, because of many crowns having been forfeited. We see coming in, day by day and week by week, some who give evidence of the Lord's acceptance, who give evidence that the Lord is permitting them to lay down their lives in his service. But the time will undoubtedly come in the near future when the number of the elect will be complete. Then only such vacancies as might still occur by some falling out would remain. In that case there might be a number in the consecrated attitude whom God would accept to take the place of some who would drop out. These would receive the begetting of the holy Spirit, and would find opportunities for serving the truth and for suffering for the truth's sake."—Z'14, p. 68.

We remind our readers that the Lord is using the truth, the word which goeth forth out of his mouth (Isaiah 55:11), to accomplish a variety of works. It has been used (1) to gather the wheat, (2) to bind the tares, (3) to gather the clusters of "the vine of the earth," and (4) to smite Jordan.

All of this work we believe is an accomplished fact; and it is our thought that very soon the Lord will use the truth to awaken and enlighten a great company of consecrated believers yet in the nominal systems. On this point we quote "that servant":

"We are not to understand that the harvest is yet wholly finished; for there are two parts to the work—the gathering of the wheat and the burning of the tares. We might have thought that the gathering of the wheat has been accomplished; that if our expectations are true, with the end of the Gentile Times the number of the very elect would be complete, so that no more could enter. We are not positive of this, and we must not go by guessing. The latter part of the harvest work is to be the burning of the tares, and the waking up of the great company and preparing them to go out and purchase the oil for their lamps."—Matthew 25:8, 9.

THE PLOWMAN OVERTAKING THE REAPER

In the above quotation two points should be noticed; namely that the burning of the tares and the awakening of the great company are a part of the harvest work, and that the church will do both these works. We continue to quote:

"In the text of Scripture which speaks of the plowman overtaking the reaper, we are to remember that the reaper is the Lord, and that the plowman is the great time of trouble. This time of trouble will overtake the reaping work and bring it to a close. But the time of trouble will go on, the plowman will keep on plowing, after all our efforts have ended in respect to the reaping. But meantime, before this dark night fully sets in, we are to go right on with the work which the Lord has put into our hands. The truth is designed, not only to perfect the bride of Christ, but to develop the great company class and also to be a witness to the whole world. Any carelessness on our part, or any cessation of activity in the service of the truth while opportunity yet remains, would in our estimation be a great mistake. If we are loyal, the Lord will give us far greater opportunities in the future—the blessing of all the nations, all the families of the earth.—Gal. 3:8, 16, 29.

THOSE CONSECRATED BETWEEN THE AGES

"It is our thought that with the closing of the 'door' of this Gospel age there will be no more begetting of the holy Spirit to the spirit nature. Any coming afterward to God through consecration, before the inauguration of the restitution work, will be accepted by him, not to the spirit plane of being, but to the earthly plane. Such would come in under the same conditions as the ancient worthies who were accepted of God. The ancient worthies came in, no call being opened to them—the high calling not being yet open, and the restitution opportunities not open. But they freely gave themselves up to God without knowing what blessings their consecration would bring, except that they had the intimation that they would, in the future life, have a 'better resurrection' than would the remainder of the world.

"Our thought is that whoever under such conditions as these will make a full consecration to the Lord, to leave all to follow in his ways, and will faithfully and loyally live up to that consecration, may be privileged to be counted as a similar class to those who preceded the Gospel age. We know of no reason why the Lord would refuse to receive those who make a consecration after the close of the Gospel age and its high calling, and before the full opening of the Millennial age.

THE BURNING OF THE TARES

"Whether the overcoming saints will have a part in the burning of the tare class, is a thought that is not very clear at this time. 'This honor have all his saints, to execute the judgments written.' All the saints would include, then, those who would be living in the world when the judgments would be executed, as well as the resurrected saints. Just how any living here would have a share in executing the judgments written we do not see; but we are keeping our eyes open, with the thought that this may be so.

"It would seem that the burning of the tares has now been going on for some time. That is, some who have professed that they were Christians, and who have thought that they were Christians, but who have never entered into true fellowship with the Lord and become of the wheat class, are to be destroyed as tares—shown in their true light. If questioned now as to their consecration these will say: 'I am no saint, but I wish to be right and just in my dealings as far as possible.' Thus such will demonstrate that they have not understood what it is to be a real Christian. This great war in Europe is waking people up to think in a way they have never thought before; and now is the time when the real Christianity and the counterfeit will be differentiated. Many people will come more or less rapidly to recognize this; but there is a large proportion of tares that have not yet been burned, and

the burning will progress to a completion and the true and the false will be completely manifested."—Z '15, pp. 269, 270.

THE WORK CONFRONTING THE CHURCH

Clearly Brother Russell's thought is this: When professing Christians cease to profess to be Christians, and come to recognize and acknowledge themselves to be "worldlings," they will then have been destroyed (burned) as tares. Surely nothing can bring their false position to their attention but the truth; and just as surely this work is in the future, and the church is to do it. And not only this, but another future work, which is to be ours, is the bringing of the truth to the attention of a modern worthy class, who consecrate too late to obtain "the prize of the high calling," but who will be counted in with the ancient worthies, and as a reward for faithful service during the Millennium will get the spirit nature at the end of that age. (Z '13, pp. 52, 53) Many are asking why it is, if the harvest ended last spring, that since that time numbers are consecrating themselves and giving every evidence of appreciating the truth and the privilege of sacrifice. The above thoughts in re the second part of the harvest work and the quotation from Brother Russell (Z '14, p. 68), will clearly explain the matter.

It would be entirely proper for all who will constitute the great company class to come to an appreciation of the truth and to symbolize their consecration. The ancient worthies also appreciated the privileges of sacrifice, and did sacrifice equally as much as do the church. So these modern worthies must also sacrifice, if they would share with the ancient worthies in the grand Millennial work, and at its close reap the glorious reward of the spirit nature.

Brethren, if these things are true, there is a great work just ahead of us—a work in behalf of the great company, a work in behalf of the modern worthies, a work in behalf of the tare class, and one of witnessing to the world, sowing the seed of the new dispensation. It is apparent that all this work will properly and logically be done after the full number of the little flock is made up. What a wonderful incentive to activity, and how thankful we should be for the privilege! Surely the present is not the time to hesitate nor to argue over non-essentials, but for earnest endeavor.

PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES OF SERVICE

For some time the opportunities of service have been considerably restricted, and may continue to remain under these restrictions for a time. While awaiting the Lord's "due time" for these great future services, let us not overlook the fact that there are still some present opportunities. It is still possible to sell the six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. Many are doing this successfully. There are still many opportunities for personal work, in a conversational way; and this can be supplemented with some literature. The Society is preparing some neat little tracts in booklet form, suitable for mailing or for handing to people. These will be reprints, and will as a rule contain but one article each.

There are multitudes of parents who have lost loved ones in battle or by disease, whose hearts can be made glad by "Where are the Dead?" "The Resurrection of the Dead," "Refrain thy Voice from Weeping," etc. Many letters inquiring about spiritism are coming into the office now. Some tracts are being prepared on this subject. What a grand privilege it will be to give to those inquiring just the information they need respecting the great "scourge" which is soon to "overflow" in the earth. The time used for tract distribution in the past, and the money formerly spent for public meetings, may be profitably used in mailing literature. Telephone directories will furnish the names of thrifty intelligent people in city, town and county. Then again, we are of the opinion that meetings for the public can be held in many places, especially in rural districts—country schoolhouses, etc.

Orders for the above mentioned booklet-tracts may be sent in at once. Please do not order more than you can and will use. These will be forwarded prepaid, and you can refund the carriage charges. Here are our opportunities. Let us, dear brethren and sisters, by the Lord's help take fresh hold of the work. The people never needed the truth more than they do now. It is the only thing that will keep them from despair and infidelity! People were never more ready to receive the truth! People realize that some great changes are at hand, and many wish to understand them.

THE LORD'S JUDGMENTS

"When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness [truth, justice]." The effect of the Lord's judgments on the human heart is disciplinary, breaking down pride, arrogance and rebellion. When the divine judgments are in the earth, his dealings with mankind will be entirely changed. In the past God

has permitted man to succeed measurably in his aims and plans; and so the prophet wrote: "Now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." (Malachi 3:15) But in this judgment time "the righteous will be exalted," and the wicked abased.

Under these retributive disciplines, thwarting their plans and punishing their evil deeds, men's hearts will speedily be mellowed, humbled; and they will begin to inquire the reason why these things are so. Their reason will return, as did that of Nebuchadnezzar, after his seven years of insanity. Even now, the Lord's judgments are operating thus. Never before have people been inquiring as now. The opportunity is ripe, and the people are hungry. For a long time there has been a famine in the land (Amos 8:11); and now the Lord is saying to us in no uncertain tones, "Give ye them to eat."

It is the desire of the Watch Tower office to do everything possible, not only to encourage the friends everywhere to greater zeal and activity, but to bring the entire work of the Society up to the highest point of efficiency. Two Colporteur

sisters are averaging the sale of over 400 volumes per month. They sell chiefly Vols. 1 and 4. Their experience gives an estimation of what can be done. In all, there are about two hundred Colporteurs in the service. Some are having excellent success by specializing on the Scenario; and some, by grouping Vols. 1 and 4.

In order that the Pilgrims might render more effective service, and might more accurately represent the Society and its attitude toward religious and secular questions, a four-day conference of all the Pilgrims was held recently in Pittsburgh. Everybody present pronounced it a wonderful event, probably the first of its kind. A great number of questions came up for discussion; and unanimous concurring conclusions were arrived at. We think that great and permanent good will result from this conference. The suggestion was made that a similar conference be at least an annual event. The Society feels sure that as a result the Pilgrims can render a better service, and give a better answer to all questions re the Society and its work. May the Lord bless the work and "labor of love" of his saints everywhere!

VARIATION IN THE APPLICATION OF CHRIST'S MERIT

"He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John 2:2.

Adam, the father of the human race, came under sentence of death because of his wilful disobedience to God, his transgression of the divine command. He alone was tried; he alone was sentenced; for his posterity were as yet unborn. But his children, the whole human family, came into the world under this death sentence. By heredity they partook of father Adam's imperfections, and thus shared his penalty. Hence they could have no relationship with God, except as in his providence he might make some arrangement by which the death penalty could be lifted from the human race.

Immediately after the fall of our first parents, God gave a vague intimation that such an arrangement had been made. In pronouncing the curse upon the serpent that had beguiled mother Eve, the Almighty declared that the seed of the woman should yet bruise the serpent's head. (Genesis 3:15) Two thousand years after man's fall into sin and death conditions God made a covenant with Abraham in which he gave hope of the ultimate blessing of all mankind. Still later, he accepted the children of Israel as his chosen people because they were the natural seed of Abraham (Deuteronomy 9:5,6; Genesis 22:15-18); and by the Law Covenant instituted through Moses at Mt. Sinai he arranged that the nation of Israel should enter into relationship with him as a house of servants.

MERIT TO BE GIVEN TO THE WORLD

At the beginning of the Gospel age God declared his arrangement whereby a certain class, children of Abraham by faith, might come into special relationship with him through Christ Jesus. Then the divine purpose as to the seed of Abraham was made clear. (Galatians 3:8,16,29) All along it had been God's purpose that this seed should be composite—144,000 in all; and as but a remnant of the natural seed of Abraham had proven worthy, the remainder of the spiritual seed were to be chosen from among the Gentiles, hitherto aliens from the covenant of promise. The choosing and the fitting of this class to be the future blessers of the world has been the purpose of the Gospel age.

God has also arranged for the whole world to come into covenant relationship with himself during the age to follow this Gospel dispensation. By the acceptance of the merit of him who "by the grace of God tasted death for every man," all may be recovered, if they will, from the curse of death resting upon the human family. (Hebrews 2:9) These facts are recognized by all who are careful students of the Word of God. The question is: "How is it all to be done? In other words, How can Christ utilize his merit on behalf of the church class in the Gospel age and also apply the same merit on behalf of the world in the Millennial age?"

We answer: No member of the human family could be brought back into harmony with God except through the payment of the ransom price for his sins. Neither Adam nor any of his children could return to relationship with God save as a satisfaction had been made that would cover the sins of the one seeking fellowship with God. But it was just as easy for the Lord Jesus to redeem the whole world as to redeem one man; for all died in Adam. (1 Corinthians 15:21,22) Hence all will be redeemed from that Adamic death and awakened from the tomb because of the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ. All mankind are to have a full opportunity for being raised to perfection of life. The death of Jesus is to offset the sentence of death that came upon all mankind through Adam's disobedience. But the benefit of the death of

Christ is not to be made effective to all of the human race in the same way or during the same period of time.—Rom. 5:15-21; 1 Tim. 2:4-7.

God's dealings with the church class, taken out from among mankind and returned to himself in advance of the remainder of the world, is distinctly different from his dealings with mankind at large. For a wise purpose he has chosen to impute the merit of the sacrificial death of Christ Jesus for this part of the race before it is applied for the residue of men or for Adam himself. The purchase price in the hands of Justice is sufficient for all, but as yet it is not applied for all. To the church at the present time there is merely a temporary imputation of the merit, to be effective during the period of the church's imperfection through the fallen flesh; whereas to the world there will be a giving of the merit of Christ's sacrifice of his humanity.

THE MERIT IN JESUS ALONE

The church of Christ, as members of his body, are to be granted the great favor of being with Christ Jesus a part of the world's sin-offering; hence the necessity of their being first dealt with by God. The merit of the sacrificial death of the body of Christ, which is to be applied for the world, is the merit of Jesus, imputed to the church for this purpose. The blood of the antitypical goat is to be applied for "all the people" (Leviticus 16:33); but the blood of the antitypical bullock gives it virtue. Consequently all the merit is the merit of Jesus alone. Some see this matter in part; but some see it not at all. We wish to make the subject clear to all who are sincerely seeking to be guided by the counsel of the Lord.

When our Lord Jesus ascended on high, he presented to the Father the full merit of his sacrifice. It was all-sufficient for the sins of the whole world; for "he is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins, and not for ours only [the church's], but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) But his merit was not applied for the whole world then; for God's "due time" for dealing with the world as a whole had not yet come. Hence to have applied the merit of Christ Jesus' sacrificial death for mankind at that time would have been to start the whole world on a new basis. Then from that time onward all their sins would have been extraordinary—beyond what had been atoned for; and because mankind had no mediator, God's justice would have cut them off from all hope of future life; for "Christ dieth no more." (Romans 6:9) Having had their share of the merit of Christ, they could have no further opportunity, and would have been without hope of future salvation.

NOT GIVEN, BUT IMPUTED, TO THE CHURCH

For this reason the whole world has been left up to the present time without actual atonement for their sins. But after the church shall have passed beyond the veil, and their sacrifice shall have been finished, our Lord Jesus will make a permanent application of this merit, which is all his own, on behalf of all men. Then God will turn the whole world over to Redeemer, the New Covenant will go into effect, and our Lord will take unto himself his great power and reign for a thousand years for the restoration of the world which he purchased. When this great work shall have been accomplished, and mankind shall have been restored to the original perfection of Adam, then the Redeemer will have given to mankind everything which he bought for them by his death on Calvary.

Let us reiterate: Before giving the blessings of restitution to the world of mankind, the Savior uses the merit of his sacrifice in a special way in the interest of the small proportion of the race which become his church. When he ascended to the Father after his resurrection, his merit was used for this class. (Hebrews 9:24) The church, like the remainder of mankind, were born under the death sentence. But on learning of God's provision for such, this class indicated their desire to come into covenant relationship with the Father, to follow Christ Jesus in the way of sacrifice, to lay down their lives as he had done. They declared their desire to walk in Christ's footsteps.

The Father could not, however, accept them in their natural fallen condition. But as they presented themselves in sacrifice, they came under the arrangement made especially for the Gospel age, when our Lord "appeared in the presence of God for us," the church. Thus they came individually under the merit of Christ's righteousness, imputed to the church in this age, covering their unavoidable weaknesses and imperfections, and canceling all their sins of the past. Then they were accepted of the Father through the Advocate (1 John 2:1) and begotten of the holy Spirit as new creatures in Christ.—2 Corinthians 5:17.

Our Lord did not give his merit to this class, but only imputed it to them. He placed to their credit whatever each one needed; and throughout their earthly sojourn his imputed merit covers all their daily transgressions, their trespasses which are unwittingly committed, if they confess their shortcomings and apply for this cleansing.

NO RESTITUTION FOR THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

Jesus does not give the church restitution. If he were to do so, it would make us perfect human beings, as he was when on earth. But this is not the Father's plan. Our Lord merely imputed restitution to us at our consecration, in order that it might at once be sacrificed. Thereafter the imputation of his merit is sufficient for us day by day, so that justice is satisfied at all times, as far as the church is concerned, if this merit is daily applied for. Otherwise our trespasses remain charged up against us.

What we consecrate, if we do it intelligently, is all that we have; first, our will, then our time, our strength, our influence, our mind, our body, our means—all that we have and are. All things pertaining to the present life are to be sacrificed on the altar of consecration with our Lord Jesus; and thereafter we are to walk faithfully in his steps. In other words, we are to give up, relinquish, that which our Lord's merit imputed, or accounted to us; that is, perfect human nature and all of those restitution blessings which would otherwise have been ours with the remainder of the world. Therefore as men we have nothing left. In this sense of the word we give ourselves up in the same way that our Lord Jesus gave himself up. The only difference is that he was a perfect man, while we are imperfect. But he covers us with the robe of his righteousness, so that we are able to stand before God as though we had received full restitution. Our Redeemer covers us as members of the Adamic race who have laid down all earthly hopes for the more glorious hopes held out to us as members of the body of Christ.

Thereafter we are wholly in the hands of our Lord Jesus. He is our Head, and the One who is to bring us off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors. Day by day we yield ourselves into his hands, that he may give us such experiences as are necessary in order that we may be enabled to fulfill our covenant of sacrifice.—(Psalm 50:5) He stands bound on our account; and his merit cannot be diverted from the purpose for which it has been appropriated—for the church.

THE GREAT COMPANY'S POSITION

The great company are also included in the class for whom Christ utilized his merit when he ascended on high after his resurrection; for all of the church class are called "in one hope of their calling." But since this large portion of the church which is to constitute the great company do not sacrifice their earthly interests faithfully, as they covenanted to do, their flesh must be put to destruction. The great time of trouble which is due at the close of this Gospel age is the "great tribulation" through which this large class must pass in order to "wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Revelation 7:14) These fail to keep their record clean before the Lord day by day. They fail to examine themselves properly and to perform daily their vows to the Lord. They are lacking in the spirit of sacrifice and are fearful of the reproach of the cross.

But if this great company whom no man can number will submit sympathetically to the destruction of the flesh according to the divine provision granted them in mercy, they will be purified and will come up to a place of service before the throne. If, however, they do not submit, then the second

death will be their portion. But in either case they will have lost their place in the throne; for this position of special honor is reserved for those who faithfully "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." (Revelation 14:1-5) The great company's future work for the world will be as servants of the royal priesthood, the body of Christ.

SUMMARY OF THE MATTER

During the present time, then, God's favor to the church is through and on account of the virtue of the imputed merit of Christ's sacrifice. Ours is a justification by faith, which in the divine arrangement serves every purpose for us. But with the world it will be different. God's arrangement for the world, is, we see, a justification by works. Nevertheless, this justification is through the merit of Christ; for mankind can never attain to perfection through their own works alone, but only through the assistance which Christ will give them. Neither could they atone for their sins of the past. These must be canceled through the merit of their Savior Jesus Christ. The application of his merit in the beginning of the Millennium will make satisfaction for the sins of the world, for every child of Adam.

This satisfaction for the sins of the world corresponds to the church's experience. Our sins are forgiven; the slate is wiped clean for us when our Lord Jesus imputes to us his merit. At the beginning of the Millennium the slate will be wiped clean for the world as a whole. Nevertheless, there will be an individuality of dealing; for except by personal co-operation no one will come to perfection. With the church in the present time, it is not sufficient that our sins are forgiven, and that we have Christ's merit imputed to us at the start. We need the continual covering of our blemishes by the merit of his righteousness. And so it will be with the world. Their sins will be forgiven by means of the application of the merit of the Redeemer at the beginning of the age; but they will need the merit throughout the Millennium, until perfected and able to live up to the requirements of the divine law.

The merit of Christ was used as the ground, or basis, on which the church is justified by faith. This same merit will be used by the Father as the means through which the world will attain to actual justification. It will be through the merit of Jesus that they will be enabled to reach perfection. That merit will be applied for the forgiveness of sins that are past; and through the sealing of the New Covenant by his blood, mankind will be covered while they are emerging from the bondage of sin and death.

The Almighty was under no obligation to do this for the children of Adam. It is all of divine mercy, which is not exercised apart from the principles of justice, but in harmony with them, so that justice and mercy are linked together in God's wonderful plan of redemption for mankind.

We should not use the word impute in respect to the world; for the Bible does not so use it. The world will have life as the result of Christ's merit, not by imputation, but by direct application. The merit of Christ secures the human nature; and the human nature secured by the merit of Christ, is to be given to the world. In the case of the church, however, the merit is merely imputed to cover our blemishes up to the time of our glorification, when we shall have our new body, in the likeness of our Lord.—1 John 3:2.

WORK OF THE CHRIST TWOFOLD

The world will have an awakening, and the assistance of the royal priesthood in the resurrection process. Their resurrection will mean much more than the mere awakening from the tomb. To awaken the world, to bring them back to conscious being and to leave them there, would be merely to bring back the conditions which prevail now. Men would soon go to striving and fighting again. Even if the devil were chained, there is enough of the Satanic spirit entrenched in fallen mankind to make this a world of strife. So the work of our Lord Jesus will be not merely an awakening of men to life, but also a work of uplifting, of helping them out of the weakened condition and the evil environment in which they now are through the Adamic fall from divine favor.

The work of the Christ will not be finished, therefore, until at the end of the Millennium he will have given all mankind full opportunity of rising to perfection. This blessing is to come first of all through the kingdom of Messiah, which is to direct the affairs of the world. This kingdom will be in the hands of the Christ, Jesus the Head and the church which is the body. The Lord has promised, however, a secondary blessing; namely, that these kings shall also be priests, to instruct and help mankind, to heal all the weaknesses and sicknesses of humanity. So in the establishment of the kingdom the work of the Christ will have only begun. It will reach its perfection in the work of the royal priesthood, which will bring mankind back to the image of God, lost through Adam's disobedience, but redeemed at Calvary.

LOVE ANEW

Oh, how oft we lack the Spirit
In the little things we tell,
And how oft we lose the import
Of the lessons conned so well!

It is good to grow the graces
Of the Spirit in our head;
But 'tis grievous if our actions
Prove the fruit thereof is dead.

Love exults to see another
Being honored at her side,
And delights to be the agent
If the Lord be glorified.

Love prefers whatever method
God may use, nor questions why;
And for brethren of the Master
Love would even dare to die!

Love will suffer inconvenience
And will have no time to rue;
But with power and prompt obedience
Love will seek to serve anew.

Love, thou bond of our completeness,
Love of God and Christ our King,
Lead us heavenward, to our homeland,
There of love anew to sing!

THE DRAWING OF GOD NOT THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—Romans 8:14; John 6:44.

Very careful scrutiny, very close study, is needful in order that we may be able to rightly divide the Word of Truth. The statement of our first text is quite restricted in its application. The term "as many" implies that only those who are led by the Spirit of God are God's sons. This being so, how few are the sons of God! This declaration of the Apostle Paul makes the matter of sonship a very limited one. And this is in harmony with the entire Bible, which points out that the number of the sons of God in the world is only a "little flock."

Throughout the Jewish age, God was the Instructor and Guide of his people through Moses and the prophets; but they were not sons of God, and none of them had the Spirit of God in the begetting sense. The Spirit was not yet given in this sense, nor could it be until our Lord had provided the ransom price, had been raised from the dead, and had ascended to the Father. During the Master's earthly ministry it could not come, as the Scriptures say, "because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39) In other words, the Spirit of God, as referred to in the New Testament as the possession of the consecrated believer in Christ, is, primarily, a special influence, a power, coming from God upon a special class in a special manner since a particular event—not before that event. The holy Spirit came, was manifested on the day of Pentecost, so that it might stand out in our minds as separate and distinct from anything that had occurred before that very remarkable event.

WHY SO FEW UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

Secondly, the Spirit of God is the mind, the disposition, which the holy influence or power of God operating in the child of God produces in the individual. This spirit, disposition, of God, grows and develops as it feeds upon the Word. The Spirit of God is variously called the holy Spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of truth, the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of sonship. These terms all represent the one possession of the saints of the present age. These are a special company who have taken up their cross to become followers of Christ, and who, on this account, are recognized of the Father and begotten of the holy Spirit. This Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth, so illuminates and permeates the Bible that the revelation of God may be properly understood only by those who have the holy Spirit. They only are able to comprehend the deep things of God, which cannot be understood save by a supernatural illumination of the mind. While others not having this Spirit might get some light from the Bible, only the spirit-begotten can get the real essence of the truth; for they have this spiritual illumination. Thus, these can understand things that are hidden from all others.

We call to mind Scriptures which speak of a leading of God's servants prior to the Gospel age, and hence prior to the begetting of the holy Spirit. In ages preceding the present age, there were a few faithful servants of the Lord who were guided by the holy Spirit; that is, they obeyed God as he made his will known to them. They had the spirit, the disposition, of righteousness. God's Spirit, his power, operated, too, in a mechanical way upon the holy prophets, causing them to utter not only words from God to natural Israel and to certain individuals to whom they were sent, but especially to declare prophetically messages designed of God for the Church of Christ, which was to be called out centuries after their time. See 1 Peter 1:10-12.

But the leading of the Spirit spoken of in the text under consideration is a leading which is not the result of personal revelations from God, visions and dreams, visible ministrations and messages from angels, etc., as with God's servants of old, but is the inspiration of the holy mind to which the saints of the present age have been begotten by God's power within.

WHAT CONSTITUTES THE FATHER'S DRAWING

During our Lord's ministry on earth he made a statement which we think has been misunderstood by many. It reads: "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Let us remember that these words were spoken by our Master before his death, before the holy Spirit, therefore, had come upon any. Some, not having noticed the Scriptural teaching that the holy Spirit did not come until Pentecost, and then only upon consecrated believers in Christ, have asked, "Was it not the drawing of the holy Spirit that Jesus spoke of? Does not the holy Spirit operate upon the heart previous to one's acceptance of Christ, and is it not this that draws him to Christ?" We answer, No. It is not the holy Spirit in the sense of our text. The holy Spirit is given only to believers. It comes only after they have accepted Christ, when God receives them as sons—not before.

What, then, shall we call that which went before? We reply: We should call it what the Bible calls it—the drawing of God. As the Scriptures speak in a specific manner of some being led of the Spirit, we would not be wise to confuse ourselves or others by speaking of it in a different way, but should bear in mind that none can be led of the Spirit until after he is begotten of the Spirit. But the Bible speaks of this desire to come to the Father as the drawing of God; and we would best speak of it in just this way. The drawing which the Father gives, and which many have experienced, seems to be a natural drawing of our human hearts along the lines which belong to the natural man, and is something which we possessed before we were begotten of the holy Spirit. It is nothing supernatural. There is no Scripture for such a thought. It is our own mind that draws us.

HOW MEN ARE DRAWN TO GOD

To explain: When God created Adam, naturally he would love his Creator. Naturally he would desire to be obedient to God, to worship and serve him. These impulses were all natural to him because he was in a natural condition, a pure condition. It is sin that has made man unnatural. But although sin has entered in and perverted the original character which God had given Adam, yet we find in the human heart certain longings for God, even among the depraved. They would prefer to be in perfect harmony with him.

All men have degenerated from the likeness of God; but the desire for worship, the desire for righteousness, the desire to be in accord with God, is much stronger in some than in others. When the message of salvation is presented, some feel an inward response. This is the impulse of a heart from which the original likeness of the Father has been less obliterated than it has been in many other hearts. This natural impulse was God's original gift to man, a heart sentiment which naturally drew men to their Maker. Hence this drawing which still remains is properly called a drawing of the Father.

Among mankind there are some who have not lost their reverence, whatever else they may have lost in Adam. Or perhaps they may have the organ of conscientiousness or appreciation of justice well developed. These qualities draw or incline their possessors toward God; and they feel that they cannot be happy without him. This is the drawing influence. This influence may be illustrated by the effect of a magnet. If a quantity of steel filings were scattered throughout a box of sawdust, and a magnet were held close to the surface, the steel filings would immediately respond to the attraction of the magnet. On the other hand, the sawdust would not be affected; nor would the steel filings respond to any other influence than that of a magnet, exercised either directly or indirectly upon them.

Man was created in the image of God. The fall into sin has greatly marred that image, but no human being is totally depraved. All have unbalanced brains, however, some in one

direction and others in another. When the truth comes into contact with those whose organ of veneration or of conscientiousness is less impaired, they are drawn to investigate it, with the hope of being brought closer to God. But those whose organs of conscientiousness and veneration are more impaired do not have this experience. Such are not drawn unto God, if haply they may find him. Those who are without this drawing influence are not to be blamed, however; for they were born under these unfavorable conditions. Those who are reverential by nature are favored in that whoever would come to God must exercise faith in Christ as their Redeemer; and without this faith there can be no blessing.

HOW TO COME TO THE FATHER

God does not draw any one by any other means than this original power of the human heart which he implanted at man's creation, and which has not been wholly lost by the fall. This is the drawing which each one of us has realized who has come to Christ. In proportion as one desires righteousness and has the natural ability to exercise faith, in that same proportion he is drawn to God. He feels after God, if haply he might find him. (Acts 17:27) We who have responded to the Gospel call had the desire to come before we did so. That desire was something which awoke in us; but it was there before it was awakened. Perhaps some great sorrow or calamity aroused in the heart a feeling that we might take our grief to God, brought us to realize our need of him.

Then perhaps the thought came: "God will not hear me." This would be a very proper conclusion for one who is a stranger to God. This soul, feeling after God, learns that there is no way of approach to God except through the Redeemer whom he has provided. From the Word he receives instruction, learns how to come to the Lord. Just as Cornelius the centurion needed instruction and St. Peter was sent to him, so we need help. We need to learn the terms upon which God will receive us. As we ponder over the Word of God, we hear our Savior say: "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John 14:6.

We truly believe that thousands upon thousands of honest souls have been turned away from God on account of the creedal misrepresentations of his character. Some have been drawn to him in various ways, however; such as the Photo-Drama of Creation, etc. Not long ago we learned of a lawyer who had felt that he had lost his hold upon God entirely; but as the result of seeing and hearing the Photo-Drama he drew nigh to God and made a consecration of himself. The hearing of the true message of salvation as presented in the Bible has led to the Lord and to an earnest Christian life many who had previously been repelled through false teachings.

Not until one has the desire to come back to the heavenly Father is he ready to be directed to the great Advocate or to

be directed by him; for when we come to this Advocate he very plainly tells us: "I can receive you upon only one condition. Take up your cross and follow me." It would not be worth while to explain about the narrow pathway to any one who manifests that he has no drawing toward God.

DRAWING OF GOD NOT WORK OF HOLY SPIRIT

We see, then, quite a marked distinction between the drawing of the Father, that drawing which comes from the remnant of the original image of God not so far obliterated as to find no response to the Gospel message, and that which in the Bible is called the Spirit of God. The life and the testimony of a consecrated child of God often cause a drawing toward God or a feeling of reproof in one who is not a believer. The effect of the holy Spirit in this Christian life thus acts indirectly upon others who are sufficiently honest and sincere to be affected by this testimony; but it never acts from within, in the case of the unconsecrated.

Reverting to our first text, we repeat that only those who have made a definite covenant of sacrifice with the Lord have the spirit of God, only those are the sons of God. And even these are not yet sons in the fullest sense of the word; but they shall be when they receive their resurrection change. Those who are of this class shall be sons of God on the divine plane, if they remain faithful unto death.

During the incoming Millennial age the world of mankind, as they come into harmony with God's arrangements, will be coming nearer and nearer to the standard of sonship, human sonship. Christ will then do the drawing, and will draw all men to himself. (John 12:32. See also *SCRIPTURE STUDIES*, Vol. 5, p. 414, last par., and p. 415, par. 1) In the end of that age those who have met the conditions fully, who have come wholly into harmony with the laws of the kingdom of Messiah, will have attained full sonship. They will then have the Spirit of God which was lost in Adam, not in the sense that the Gospel church has it, however—a begetting and birth to a new nature—but in the sense that they will be in full accord with God's disposition of justice, of righteousness, of love.

A THOUSAND YEARS HENCE

This will then be the disposition of all of mankind who come into harmony with the laws of the Messianic kingdom. They will be earthly images of God. They will have fully regained the condition of perfect mentality and morality, of God-likeness, which Adam possessed when he was perfect, plus the crystallized character for righteousness which Adam failed to develop. All this great blessing the world will receive through Christ. In the Scriptures our Lord Jesus is called "the Everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6)—the Father who gives life everlasting to the world, but not to the church, however. The church receive their life as new creatures from the Father.

JOSEPH CARES FOR HIS KINDRED

[The last paragraph of this article was reprinted from article entitled, "Joseph's Last Days," published in issue of April 15, 1894. Paragraphs 2 to 4 inclusive were reprinted from article entitled, "All Things Work for Good to Them," published in issue of May 15, 1913. The remainder was reprinted from article entitled, "The Close of a Noble Life," published in issue of October 15, 1901. Please see the articles named.]

FAITH VICTORIES

DECEMBER 29.—HEBREWS 11:8-22.

FAITH BEFORE CHRIST CAME—GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE ANCIENT WORTHIES—PROVIDENTIAL CARE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL—THEIR EXPERIENCES OBJECT LESSONS FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAEL—FAITH SINCE CHRIST CAME—ANTITYPES OF JEWISH TYPES.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John 5:4.

We are living in a day when faith is greatly discounted, in a day when people seem disposed to declare: "I do not care what a man believes, if only his life be honorable." Practically this means that faith is of no consequence. Those who thus hold usually put honor of men as the highest goal. Their sentiment, translated into plain English, would be: "With all your getting get money and prosperity; for without these, no matter what you believe or whom you worship, you will never prosper in the present life, where success is the only goal now recognized by an increasing number of people." This argument appeals to the majority of our race.

The Bible standpoint, however, is the very reverse of this. God's Word puts faith first, and builds character upon that foundation. God declares that no human being can do perfect works. Hence he has not made works the standard. Faith is the divine standard; and God assures us that whoever has the proper faith must of necessity have works which will correspond with his faith. In line with this principle, we note that God's favorites of the Bible have all been men of faith. Their faith did not make them perfect, nor were their works always acceptable in God's sight; but he punished them for

evil works and rewarded them for their great faith. Thus we find in the Bible record that some of God's favorites committed grievous sins and made serious mistakes; yet nevertheless they maintained themselves in God's favor by reason of their faith.

Of all religious books ever written or read, the Bible is perhaps the most candid. It tells of the mistakes and the sins of the very characters which it holds up as models and examples of men after God's own heart. Yet the Bible leaves no room for any one to assume that God loves wickedness or that the friends of God are the depraved of mankind. Quite to the contrary, the highest possible standards of righteousness in word, in deed and in thought are inculcated; and we are distinctly told that full acceptance with God can be only along the lines of truth and righteousness.

God tells us that all mankind are sinners by nature. He declares that we could do nothing to clear away our own guilt and the sentence which stands against us as members of the fallen race of Adam. But he also tells us that he purposes to adjust the matter satisfactorily for us; and hence that our responsibility is not for what we cannot do, but for what we

can do. He assures us that the foundation for our noblest endeavors will lie along the lines of confidence in him. This confidence he calls faith. He assures us that without faith it is impossible to please him; and this he has shown us in all the lessons of the Bible.

Let us look into the past, and note the method by which God sought his peculiar people. The first proclamation of the divine purpose respecting humanity was made to Abraham. After Abraham had manifested some faith, God gave him further tests. When in obedience to these tests Abraham left his native land and went to Canaan, he manifested so much faith that God called him friend, and made to him the very first revelation of the divine purposes in respect to mankind.

Abraham knew that there was a curse upon the entire race, under which the whole creation was groaning, going down to the tomb; and God's declaration to him was that the time would come when the curse would be removed and a blessing come instead. To Abraham this meant that instead of wasting away in death men would be restored from their dying condition and brought back from the tomb.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

This was a wonderful proposition, even for God to make. Yet with childlike faith Abraham believed the message. God declared to him that because of his faith he and his posterity would be greatly blessed, so that through him as a father would eventually come children who would accomplish the great work of rescuing all mankind from the power of Satan, sin and death. The briefly epitomized statement of all this was in the words: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—Genesis 12:3.

What did it mean for Abraham to have faith in that promise? Assuredly it meant that henceforth his mind would take in a large horizon, the world of humanity instead of merely his own immediate family, his flocks and herds and his nearest neighbors. It meant that if God would so honor his posterity Abraham would seek in everything to co-operate with God and that great promise.

For many years God tested Abraham's faith. Yet he still believed. After Isaac was born and as yet had no child, God directed that this son of the promise, the one in whom the covenant centered, should be sacrificed. What a test of faith! What a grand development of faith Abraham had acquired when he was ready to obey the divine voice, accounting that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead! Oh, for such a trust in God! Oh, for such appreciation of divine power! What could not be accomplished in the world through the divine message if such faith prevailed among God's children! What would God not do for all who would thus trust him!

It was the same with Isaac and Jacob. They trusted that same promise, and it influenced the whole course of their lives. It made them more like God. It shaped their every interest. Although they understood practically nothing of how God would accomplish so great a blessing, nevertheless their faith laid hold upon that fact. From their posterity God would raise up a holy people to be his agency, his channel, for instructing the world, ruling the world, uplifting the world, resurrecting the dead and bringing mankind back to all that was lost through Adam's disobedience.

If their faith had been weaker, they might have had plenty of opportunities for stumbling. If they had been more worldly-wise, they might have said: "How can God do this thing and yet be just? Having once pronounced a sentence, how can he clear the guilty?" But their faith wavered not. In their hearts they said: "God has promised; and what he has promised he will do; and he will have his own way of accomplishing it."

ANOTHER COVENANT MADE

By and by the nation of Israel as a whole was called the people of God. The nation as a whole entered into a covenant with God through Moses, the mediator of the Law Covenant. Israel was impelled by faith—faith in the promise made to Abraham that God would use his posterity in the blessing of all of Adam's race, both living and dead.

The covenant made at Sinai pledged the people of Israel to be a holy nation, to keep God's law blamelessly. God covenanted that in that event he would fulfill in them the promise made to Abraham. But he knew that imperfect human beings could not keep his perfect law. Nevertheless he would let them try; he would let them learn that lesson; and through it he would give instruction to the angels respecting his own righteousness. Through it he would also give instruction to spiritual Israel, whom he would develop later, and through whom the blessings would actually come. This is explained by the Apostle Paul, who says: "The Law Covenant was added because of transgressions until the promised seed should come."—Galatians 3:19.

In other words God started this work with Israel in a typical manner long centuries before the real spiritual Israel would be developed. But he did not thereby do injury to the people who had covenanted to keep the law, but who were unable to do so. On the contrary they as a people were blessed by their endeavors to keep the law, as well as by the chastisements which came upon them because of their failures and their lack of faith. But God especially blessed all of that nation who shared Abraham's faith. In addition to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the Apostle Paul could enumerate a large number who pleased God because of their faith long before Christ, the spiritual seed of Abraham, came. Those ancient worthies, although they will not be the seed of Abraham in the highest sense, on the spirit plane, will be the seed of blessing on the earthly plane, the channel through which the heavenly blessings will ultimately be extended to all the nations of earth.

What was it that impelled the Jewish people during all those centuries past? Was it not faith that God would fulfill the promise made to Abraham? It surely was! Moreover, that promise still actuates such of the Jews as have not lost their faith; that is, such of Abraham's descendants through Jacob as are still Jews. Those who have lost the faith of Abraham are no longer related to the promise in any sense of the word; for the promise was according to faith.

St. Paul speaks sympathetically of the Jewish nation, in respect to that promise which God originally made to Abraham. He says: "Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come." (Acts 26:7) And all Jews, in proportion as they still maintain that hope, may continue to expect a realization of all and more than they have dreamed of, in God's due time.

THE LONG-PROMISED SEED OF ABRAHAM

The coming of Christ did not change the divine purpose, and therefore did not change the faith of God's people. Jesus and the apostles believed and taught the very Gospel which, according to St. Paul, God preached in the beginning to Abraham. (Galatians 3:8) The apostolic message also was that all the families of the earth were to be blessed through Abraham's seed. But there was an additional feature then due to be proclaimed and to be believed; namely, that God had begun to provide this seed of Abraham, the Messiah; that God had sent the Logos, his Son, into the world to become the seed of Abraham on the spirit plane and eventually to fulfill every feature of the original promise.

All the Jews were in expectation of the Messiah, but they did not all have the proper faith. Therefore God preferred to permit some of them to remain in a measure of blindness on this subject, while others were granted a special anointing of their eyes of understanding, their eyes of faith. To this class Jesus said: "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," the Messianic kingdom, through which the seed of Abraham is to bless all the families of the earth. Then came another step of faith. Instead of reigning in triumph to dispense blessings to the world as a result of his sacrifice, he ascended to heaven. How was this to be understood?

God's answer through the apostles was that "the faith once delivered to the saints" was the same still, but that now under the guidance of the holy Spirit they were to understand that the Messiah would not be one person, but many; that not Jesus alone would be the seed of Abraham; but that Jesus as the Head and the church as his members, or body, would be that seed. St. Paul says: "Ye brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." In this figure Jesus was represented by Isaac's head, while the church was represented by Isaac's body. It has taken the entire Gospel age to develop the body of Christ, which is the church.

Under another figure Jesus was represented in Isaac, and the church in Rebecca, Isaac's bride. According to this figure the antitypical Isaac has entered into glory, but awaits the development of the antitypical Rebecca. At the appointed and appropriate time our Lord will come, the seed of Abraham, and receive his bride unto himself; and they twain will be made one. Then through the one, the Christ, will come through the Messianic reign the blessing promised to Abraham nearly four thousand years ago: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

This is "the faith once delivered to the saints," "the hope set before us in the Gospel," the faith that God will use the seed of Abraham to bless all humanity, and the hope that by faithful perseverance and trust we may become joint-heirs with Jesus, the Redeemer, in all the glorious inheritance of the Messianic kingdom, for which God's people long have prayed: "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven."

QUESTIONS OF GENERAL INTEREST

IN RE-APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS

Question:—What should be the attitude of a competent elder who fails of re-election?

Answer:—The appointment to the office of elder is by vote of the ecclesia, the company of the Lord's people, and is to be the voice of the church. We believe that the proper attitude for each one should be that of willingness to accept the voice of the ecclesia, the church, implicitly. Whoever has become a member of the congregation by casting in his lot with the others has thus become subject to the rules that represent the controlling majority, whether it be a majority of one or a larger per cent. Having done this, he should seek to continue in this attitude, whether chosen as elder or whether another is chosen.

Very frequently a congregation makes the mistake of selecting for elder a brother who does not have the proper qualifications. This sometimes means dissatisfaction on the part of some of the congregation, and often leads to the breaking away of some to form another class. We think that this is not the wise course; for if the original class made a mistake, the Lord is able to overrule it for good. Therefore those who withdraw lose some experiences which would be invaluable.

We are not always sure, however, that in such cases the congregation has made a mistake. How can we know but that the Lord has some lesson to teach in this matter? If we have asked the divine blessing on whoever would be the choice, we should abide by that choice. If the one not chosen has the ability to present the truth properly and knows a number of places where he can be used and useful, we think the brother should take advantage of whatever opportunities may present themselves. He need not leave the class, however, but could perform whatever service came to his hand. Perhaps he could use his time and talent in class extension work, not feeling restricted in this direction because he was not elected elder. He might go out and find opportunities for service. So to the brother not elected or not re-elected the change in elders might mean that the Lord was thus pointing out another field of usefulness. The Lord's providences might be leading him out for wider usefulness and influence.

ADAMIC DEATH TO CEASE GRADUALLY

Question:—When the Millennial kingdom of Christ begins, will the Adamic death be at an end?

Answer:—While the reign of Christ will be one of righteousness unto life, we are not to understand that Adamic death will be at an end as soon as Messiah begins his rule; for the Scriptures declare that "he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet." (1 Corinthians 15:25, 26) It is understood that during the thousand years of the Messianic kingdom the people will be more or less in the Adamic death condition, and will rise gradually out of Adamic imperfection and death to the perfection of human nature.

In Isaiah 35:8 we read: "A highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass [all the way] over it; but it shall be for these" [i. e., for the unclean, those under Adamic condemnation.] The evident thought is that a way of escape is opened up for the unclean, whereby "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come back to Zion," and "obtain joy and gladness," and "sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Again, in Zechariah 13:1 we read: "In that day [the Millennial day] there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness." The thought in these texts is that of a gradual cleansing away of the Adamic condemnation. See also John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth [remaineth] on him."

WHY THE CHURCH MUST SACRIFICE

Question:—Since our Lord's sacrifice was sufficient for the sin of the whole world, why should the church be asked to present their bodies a living sacrifice also?

Answer:—During the Gospel age an invitation has gone forth from the Father asking those who so desire to become partakers with our Lord Jesus, first in his sufferings, and then in the glory to follow. As our Lord was called to sacrifice, so those who accept the divine invitation to follow his steps are also called to sacrifice. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." This is the only way that we can be with him on the spirit plane. If we retain the human nature, we can never get to heaven.

LETTERS FROM AFIELD

ENCOURAGING TO COLPORTEURS

DEAR SIR:—

Being at home for a few days, while my ship was unloading and loading, and looking through the family bookcase I came upon one of your works, entitled "The Divine Plan of the Ages," and found it very interesting, about the best book I have seen. I want to ask the present price of the rest of the Volumes mentioned in the fly leaf. They are there quoted at two dollars; but I notice that the book is dated 1912, and the price may have advanced since.

I do not know whether your Association is in the habit of answering questions; but if so, do you think that I, a young man of twenty-two years, would, if I mend my ways and lead a good Christian life, have a chance of becoming one of the "little flock" your great book mentions? Or does this "little flock" refer to the ministry or to the monastic form of life? I would be very thankful to you for solving this question for me. One of my favorite Psalms is the ninety-first; and I carry a copy of it at all times. It sure is comforting when a fellow doesn't know when he is going to find a watery grave. Thanking you in advance, I am

Yours truly, D. L. E.—*Mass.*

THE REJOICING FAR EXCEEDS THE SUFFERING

DEAR FRIENDS:—

Greetings in the name of our dear Lord!

Just a few lines to refresh your memories of our continued love and interest in you all and the work at the Bible House, which work we think the Lord is still supervising, while the world is rocking to and fro as a drunken man. How blessed it is to be on the mountain top viewing the things below, still hiding in the Rock of Ages, safe in the arms of Jesus, still feeding at the Lord's table! This is still bountifully supplied with nourishing food for the hungry. How the Lord is causing all things to work together for good to all his little flock! And while we suffer with his people in a way, yet we rejoice with them in that they are accounted worthy to suffer for his dear name; for we are persuaded the rejoicing far exceeds the suffering.

May the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all unto the end. Pray for me.

Your sister by his grace, Mrs. J. H. I.—*N. C.*

APPRECIATIVE HEARTS IN THE SOUTHLAND

DEAR BRETHREN:—

The New Orleans Ecclesia wish to extend to you their heartfelt love and Christian greetings and to assure you of their appreciation of your labor of love, not only in their behalf which was manifested recently in the visit of our dear Brother Pickering, but also in behalf of all the body members still in the narrow way. To be sure, the ministries of our brother were appreciated by the brethren whose minds were stirred up by way of remembrance and inspired to run the race with renewed energy, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

Truly are the saints here appropriating to themselves the present truths which enable one to appreciate increasingly the work of the angel of Revelation 8:3, and to thank the Father daily that the TOWERS are still in harmony with the glorious plan of the ages which was so beautifully told us on many occasions by "that servant." Prayers continually ascend to the throne of grace that you, too, may report: "I have done as thou hast commanded me."

Faithfully yours in Christ, Miss P. L.—*La.*

WOULD RATHER DEPEND ON THE PROMISES

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—

I have been a Bible Student now eight months. Living in very poor circumstances, and with very poor health, I could not spare a dollar for THE WATCH TOWER until now. But thanks to a dear sister I have had the privilege of reading it most of the time. I consecrated last New Year's day and symbolized February 10, and realizing that I was getting in late and the time short, I have tried to improve every minute I could; besides I have not missed a study or service of any kind. Oh, how I enjoyed the convention! I truly can say that I never enjoyed anything so much in my life.

I have an acquaintance who is a Portuguese; and as I have explained the truth to her, she is quite anxious to buy the volumes. But they must be in Portuguese; so I wish to ask and urge that you try to furnish me with all the volumes. I have tried to induce our librarian to get them for me, but he is quite busy. I have also tried to answer the V. D. M. questions, which you will find enclosed. I hope they may be satisfactory; but as I have not been in the school of Christ long, I may not have answered them correctly. Please let me know.

We are having our meetings in a park now on account of the Spanish influenza; but nevertheless we enjoy them, and the Lord is protecting the friends pretty well so far from the plague. How grand to be under his protecting care and understand God's plan while the world is so blind! I can not be thankful enough to our heavenly Father for what he has done for me. I would rather depend on the promises to the "little flock" than gain the whole world.

Hope that you are settled in your new quarters and that everything is going on according to the Father's will. We think of you often and remember you in our prayers.

Your sister in Christ, ———.

A VERY GOOD SUGGESTION

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Recently there came to me such a blessing, and at such a small cost, that I feel it my duty to tell you the circumstance and to inquire whether you do not think it a wise course for those to follow who live in sections where "the door is shut" and the night fast settling down. A friend of mine lost a dear boy right in the flower of his young manhood. These good people are staunch Catholics; and the death of their son grieved them very much. I wrote the parents the most sympathetic letter I could, giving them an outline of God's wonderful plan, not only for the "little flock," but for all the world of mankind; and I quoted passage after passage from a Catholic Bible, giving reference in each instance, to prove the resurrection and the blessing of the dead.

A few days after mailing this letter, I met my friend; and he took me by the hand, his eyes filling with tears, and said: "I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the kind and sympathetic letter you wrote our family. We all cried for joy to think our boy would be back with us some day and we would all be so happy." And my joy came when he said: "I looked up those references you gave; and my eyes were opened." I replied: "Praise the Lord!"

May it not be that during the dark, sad hours ahead of those who know not of this wonderful plan we can do a work of real witness for the truth, when the hearts of our friends, and sometimes of our enemies, are touched by the hand of death? May the Lord's blessings continue upon you.

dear brethren, who continue in the work of feeding the sheep through THE WATCH TOWER, is the prayer of

Yours in the Master's service, W. D. A.—Miss.

PEOPLE ARE WAKING UP

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Grace, peace and mercy be multiplied unto you; and greetings in the name of our dear Redeemer and Savior.

Throughout the west many scores of dear people have symbolized their consecration to the Lord in water baptism since April of this year. Many of them seem to appreciate fully the covenant of sacrifice, and grasp and appreciate the hidden mystery. Indeed they enter into the spirit of the truth, and are ready to die for the truth, just like Bible students of years of study and blessing.

Some say the harvest is ended; that the work of spirit-begetting has ceased; that those in are in forever, etc.; and that no more can enter. What is your thought about this phase of the work? Do you recommend the Pilgrims to say from the platform that the harvest has ended? My heart has been made glad to see so many take a definite stand for the Lord within the last few months. Surely we would not be justified in saying, "You are wrong to have such hopes; for the harvest is ended." Neither would we be justified in saying, "You are of the great company."

Several of the Pilgrim brethren have stated definitely from the platform that the harvest is ended; and it causes one to wonder. I would like your thoughts upon these matters. My great joy in serving the brethren is to encourage and comfort from the Word of God. In the west (Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba) they have been greatly blest of the Lord. Since January 1, about three hundred or more have symbolized their consecration to the Lord. Many may have been called long ago; others have only heard lately and have come in promptly.

Your loving brother in the one hope,

G. Y.—Pilgrim.

Our reply to the above will be found in article entitled, "Gathering Wheat—Burning Tares," in this issue.

Editorial Committee.

IN RE ELECTION AND PROXIES

DEAR FRIENDS:

The question of an annual election has afforded discussion without end, and there is quite a diversity of opinion about the matter. The Acting Secretary and the Board of Directors desire to do the Lord's will. Recently a letter was sent to all the class secretaries, announcing that there would be no election. At the time this course seemed to be the Lord's will; but on looking into the matter more thoroughly we have come to the conclusion that such a course would not be pleasing to the Lord; and we herewith give our reasons:

(1) The failure to hold an election would be a violation of the statute of the State of Pennsylvania which makes an annual election necessary.

(2) The failure to hold an election would be a fraud upon the corporation.

(3) If no election were held there would be no officers who could act in a legal capacity for the corporation; for the statute says that an election must be held annually, and by the Shareholders. Again, if it were possible that the officers elected by the Shareholders could hold over, the Charter of the Society makes it impossible for those elected by the Board of Directors to hold over. Therefore, since two of the present Board were elected by the Board, and not by the Shareholders, they could not legally hold over; and hence there could be no quorum.

The legal authority for these statements will be found in "Harvest Siftings," of Aug. 1, 1917, page 15, column 2, first five paragraphs. This legal opinion was given by the firm of lawyers whom Brother Rutherford himself consulted upon the

matter; and precedents are cited for their decision. We quote a part of this opinion:

"Section 17 of the Pennsylvania statute expressly provides that the Board shall be chosen annually by the shareholders or members. This provision of the act is mandatory. . . . Again, where the statute authorizes the election of the Board of Directors, any scheme or organization which dispenses with the statute may be regarded as a fraud upon the corporation. . . . Paragraph 8 of the Charter will be construed to mean what it says; namely, that where a vacancy occurs in the Board of Directors then the remaining members of the Board may, within twenty days, meet and fill such vacancy; but the person so selected could hold office only until the next annual election held by the shareholders. This is the only construction in harmony with the statute."

This is the legal phase of the situation; and we understand that it would be pleasing to the Lord to have us comply with the law. Again, we find that quite a majority of the Shareholders desire such an election; and this seems to us to be another indication pointing to the advisability of having one. Therefore we are sending this letter, stating that in connection with the General Convention at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, January 2-5, the regular annual election will be held Saturday, January 4th, 1919. Proxies will be enclosed in the December 1st, 1918, TOWER. Please properly sign and return proxies at the earliest possible moment to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, 310 Martin Building, Federal St., N. S., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

TELEGRAM SELF-EXPLANATORY

Baltimore, Md., Nov. 21, 2:25 p. m.

Messrs. Bohnet, Spill and Barber:

Convinced error has been made in postponing the election. Now decide definitely election must be held. Carry out first

plans. Get Proxies ready. State in December 1st TOWER that election will be held on January 4th. This action is final.

C. H. ANDERSON.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the annual meeting of the Shareholders of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY will be held at Soldiers Memorial Hall, Bigelow Boulevard and Fifth Avenue, in the City of Pittsburgh, County of Allegheny and State of Pennsylvania, on the 4th day of

January, 1919, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, for the purpose of electing Directors and Officers and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before said meeting.

J. F. STEPHENSON, Acting Secretary.