



ROCK OF AGES
Other foundation can
no man lay
A RANSOM FOR ALL

"Watchman, What of the Night? The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!" Isa. 21:11-12

Vol. XXXIX

JANUARY 1

No. 1.

SEMI-MONTHLY

A. D. 1918—A. M. 6046

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"I will stand upon my watch, and will set my foot upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them that oppose me."—Hab. 2:1.

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

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

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

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

This Journal stands firmly for the defense of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated—Redemption through the precious blood of "the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a *Ransom* [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:18; 1 Tim. 2:6) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to—"Make all see what is the fellowship of the Mystery which . . . has been hid in God, . . . to the intent that now might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God"—which in other Ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed.—Eph. 3:5-9, 10.

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

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

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

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

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

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

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

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

PUBLISHED BY

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
Brooklyn, N. Y., U. S. A.

The Watch Tower Editorial Committee:

This journal is published under the supervision of an Editorial Committee, at least three of whom have read and approved as truth each and every article appearing in these columns. The names of the Editorial Committee are: J. F. RUTHERFORD, W. E. VAN AMBURGH, F. H. ROBINSON, GEO. H. FISHER, W. E. PAGE.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE \$1.00 IN ADVANCE
SEND MONEY BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED

Terms to the Lord's Poor as follows—All Bible Students who, by reason of old age or other infirmity or adversity are unable to pay for this journal, will be supplied FREE if they send a Postal Card each May stating their case and requesting its continuance. We are not only willing but anxious, that all such be on our list continually and in touch with the STUDIES, etc.

NOTICE TO ALL TOWER SUBSCRIBERS—Please remember that as a rule we no longer send a card of acknowledgment for a renewal or for a new subscription. Receipt and entry of renewal are indicated within a month by change in date of expiration of the subscription on the TOWER wrapper.

When requesting change of address, please give old address as well as new. This is very important, saving us much time and unnecessary correspondence.

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I. B. S. A. CONVENTION

Pittsburgh, Pa., Jan. 2-6: This five day convention will be served by many Pilgrim brethren. A good attendance is expected. Election of the SOCIETY'S officers for the ensuing year will be held on Saturday, Jan. 5th. Brother Rutherford will address the public in Princess Theatre at 3 p. m., Sunday, Jan. 6th, on "The Fall of Babylon." Address R. H. Bricker, 1323 Goebel St., N. S., Pittsburgh, Pa.

CANADIAN BRANCH

In view of the disturbed conditions and the difficulty of reaching the various classes and serving them throughout the Provinces of Canada, we have decided to open a branch office of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY at Winnipeg, Manitoba. Competent brethren will be placed in charge to manage the work. All Canadian correspondence, orders, subscriptions to THE WATCH TOWER, etc., will be cared for by that office. A more detailed statement will be given later.

IN RE THE FALL OF BABYLON

Due to the congestion in both freight and express shipping, it is possible that some of the friends may not receive their shipment of B. S. M. No. 99 in time for the Dec. 30th distribu-

tion. Without doubt, however, most classes will receive the papers on time. In event your shipment is delayed, we suggest that you arrange to make distribution on the following Sunday after its arrival, making the witness as general and far-reaching as possible in one day.

PASTOR RUSSELL'S SERMONS

These are now in stock at our printers, in cloth and leather, and a large shipment is now en route to Brooklyn. We are sure the friends will greatly appreciate this volume. Many of the sermons have never before been published, but were dictated by Brother Russell for personal use on various occasions. The book contains several full-page halftones. Cloth \$1; leather, \$1.50 postpaid.

VEST POCKET MANNAS

These seem to have supplied a long-felt want on the part of the friends. They are only 2¼x5¼ in size, and bound in flexible covers, round corners. Cloth, red edges, 30c; leather, gilt edges, 75c postpaid.

TO FRIENDS OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Foreign stamps of all kinds are not usable in the United States and must be sold at large discounts, if salable at all. Therefore do not send us foreign stamps for remittances.

British Postal Notes are not payable in the United States and must be returned to London for collection. Private cheques are not collectible and drafts on London banks are subject to heavy discounts. Remittances by regular Government postal money orders are payable at face value.

British friends are requested to send their renewals for THE WATCH TOWER direct to London office. This saves expense and liability of loss in forwarding to Brooklyn and having to be returned again to London. Reports of all subscriptions are forwarded to us promptly from London; hence there will be but very slight delay in our recording your subscriptions.

IN RE PUBLIC MEETINGS

We strongly recommend the classes everywhere to arrange for one public meeting when a Pilgrim visits your class. Secure a well-located hall and announce an up-to-date subject, such as, "THE WORLD HAS ENDED—Millions now Living may never die!" and give a good public witness to the Truth. Local brethren who are able to give lectures should be used to address public meetings on Sundays. Let us give as wide a public witness as possible. Evidences are increasing rapidly that the dark night is fast approaching when no man can work. Let each and every one bestir himself, doing with his might what his hands find to do while it is yet called day.

The WATCH TOWER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

VOL. XXXIX

BROOKLYN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1918

No. 1

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

"The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer, and above all things have fervent love amongst yourselves."—1 Peter 4:7, 8.

What will the year 1918 bring forth? This question is upon the lips of every class of men. The world looks and hopes for those things which constitute its highest ideals—peace, plenty, health and happiness. The Christian looks for the year to bring the full consummation of the church's hopes. The world says, "How may we attain to our ideals of earthly blessing?" The Christian asks, "When shall we enter the Temple of our God, and see our Lord face to face and be assured of his everlasting approval? And when shall we be permitted by his grace to participate in reconstruction and blessing the human race?" For that blessed time, St. Paul tells us, the whole creation groans and travails in pain; yet the creatures know not how their deliverance shall come. Only the children of the Lord know by faith in his Word.

History is making at such break-neck speed that men of the world go breathless in pursuit. They behold the current events, but understand not why they are so. Christians, watching the transpiring of these events, by the Lord's grace understand them and rejoice to see their hopes about to be realized. The truths of the present day, earthly and spiritual, stimulate the child of God to greater activity in the Master's service.

THE COAL FAMINE

During the severest winter weather the world's metropolis and many other cities face a coal famine. For many days, coal has not been obtainable regardless of the price. Even the wealthy have found their money of no avail. Many such have driven in their expensive limousines to the coal-distributing points and begged the deliverers to load their fine cars with coal, that they might have some comfort in their homes; but they fail to get it. The public press announces that 300,000 families in Greater New York were without fire to warm by for several days. The worldly-minded wonder why such conditions are permitted to exist. The students of God's Word see why and know that these conditions will grow worse as we near the end. Twenty-five hundred years ago, God through his Prophet, referring to the time in which we now are, said, "There shall not be a coal to warm at, nor a fire to sit before." (Isaiah 47:14) Conditions leading up to the fulfillment of this prophecy are mentioned by Dr. Bromley in "The New York Times," October 17, as follows:

"There is plenty of coal in the ground, yet most of Europe is dark and cold. Both Americas are much alarmed over the situation as it confronts them. The present fuel crisis is here because we did not realize soon enough how vital a factor is fuel, when whole nations and not armies alone must become war weapons.

"The cry that there is no coal shortage is dangerous deception. True 509,098.175 tons in 1916 as against 531,619.487 tons in 1915 was the production. But these figures are misleading if one forgets that the world's consumption of coal is greater than ever before."

Thousands of producers have been removed from channels of production and put into channels of destruction. Such conditions will grow worse.

THE THICKENING TURMOIL

Asked what would be proof of the end of the world, the great Master said: "Upon the earth, distress of nations with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear." (Luke 21:24, 26) Today we see the fulfillment of this prophecy. "The Commercial and Financial Chronicle," one of the most conservative amongst financial and business journals, in a recent editorial says:

"A retrospect of the week discloses a series of events, a status of conditions, more momentous and depressing perhaps than any other week of this agonizing war. The grey skies of February grow dark with gloom; and hoping almost against hope, one tries to see some signs of the coming of the end. But a wall of murky, steely cloud, in which pale glimmers of peace flame, only to fade, shuts down upon the world, lighted

by the terrible fires of battle, and seething with the turmoil of man's perverted endeavor. And for that phrase bandied about in a sort of light-hearted contempt, 'Whither are we drifting?' the serious-minded must substitute another, 'To what further and final cataclysm are we drifting?'

"As the search-light of all-seeing Press sweeps the world what do we behold? A new revolution in Russia—sinister with socialism and eloquent of the anarchy which must prevail over wide stretches of that unhappy land far removed from its populace centers—civil blood in the streets of Moscow and Petrograd, the fate of the new attempt to rule hanging in the balance—it may be a matter of days, mayhap presage other feuds to come—a Russia practically out of the war as far as early aid to the Allies is concerned, a fact which may yet prove of gigantic proportions.

"And in our own country, a week of remarkable events and of growing apprehension. Stocks reaching their lowest point in ten years, recording billions of dollars of losses in market values since the beginning of the conflict, showing few signs of any permanent recuperation. Strikes, arbitrations and compromises by and between employees and employers throughout the country in numbers and for demands never before approached in the history of the country. Looming up suddenly is an impending demand and a possible strike for its enforcement, having an estimated 109 million dollars increase in wages, to meet an alleged increase in the cost of living by certain bodies of railway employees in the face of the showing of net losses by the roads upon an increased business or in spite of it.

"Yet, again, a meeting of the National Foundries Association in New York City, which sends a telegram to the President in which it is unanimously declared that:

'Autocracy of labor is fully as disturbing to the welfare of mankind as an autocracy of government.'

"These are a few of the leading events and conditions confronting our people. The insupportable pressure of war is at work, and the turmoil thickens. The time calls for serious thought, closer devotion to every task in hand, and solemn study. Our hope is that we may now be in that darkness which almost precedes dawn."

LABOR SEEKS CONTROL

"The sea and the waves roaring." (Luke 21:25) In every land of earth is observed the fulfillment of this prophetic statement. The discontented, restless element of humanity is fomenting more trouble. Organized labor is roaring out its discontent, and seeking to put its grip upon the reins of power. And the time draws closer when the warring classes feel that they must have it out with the growing aggression of the workers. The annual report of the AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR says:

"Working people have never been properly represented in diplomatic affairs. We insist that this Government provide adequate and direct representation of wage earners among the plenipotentiaries sent to the Peace Congress."

The Chronicle, the spokesman of finance and business, on the above statement comments:

"Here it is again; labor arrogantly setting itself up as a separate factor, an entity to be dealt with; as a class, physically within, but not of the country; as a sort of power which can make terms and conditions on which it will stand more or less distantly behind the Government in the great struggle for national life.

"We have yielded and yielded to organized labor, until the final clinch cannot be longer delayed. We cannot avoid or divert that clinch by the Government undertaking to take over the roads and operate them as military instruments. Such they have been for three years, and the men owning them are virtually soldiers in the ranks. The country must now, in an emergency which brooks no delay and no feebleness, undertake and accomplish the subverting of any organization within it,

or else surrender to this one which defies it the more boldly because of having been suffered to grow by a long series of compromises."

A DEFERRED HOPE ABOUT REALIZED

The Gentile times have ended, and the kings of earth have had their day. The autocratic kingdoms are destroying each other, and their existence is but a matter of days merely. Concerning the Jews, Christ Jesus said: "They shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) Zionism, organized in 1896, has all along had for its prime objective the establishment of a home government in Palestine for the Jews. Through his prophets, God promised to restore Palestine to the Jew; and the great Master said that the beginning of such restoration would be proof that we are at the end of the world. The English have wrested from the hand of the Turk the city of Jerusalem. Commenting editorially, the *New York American* says:

"The conquest of Jerusalem is the final triumph of Zionism. For the first time in nearly two thousand years, not only one, but three great powers stand ready to publicly recognize the Jewish nationality and its right to a land and a home. Zionism means the rebuilding of Palestine by the Jews. Millions of Jews in every land are organized, active and intense in their enthusiasm for the rebuilding of Zion. It is an age-long dream. It is also a practical business movement of today. The English Rothschilds are leading it in London. The French Rothschilds are a part of it in Paris. In New York Nathan Straus, Jacob Schiff, Henry Morgenthau, Max Nordau and Schullman are in its ranks. Justice Brandeis is its apostle in Boston, and in Chicago the large influence and the mighty fortune of Julius Rosenwald is generously behind the movement. Fortunately for the new home-land of the Jews, the people behind them include the greatest financiers in the world and there will be no difficulties in this line which will not be smoothly weathered for the Jewish state."

Max Nordau, scientist and leader of Zionism, says:

"We are at the turning point of the world's history. The gigantic war which is dissolving humanity has inflicted more tortures on us than on any other people. We know our losses, our sufferings and our tears; but we are sustained in the trials of these disasters by the certainty that we are approaching the culmination of our national destiny."

The London *Christian World* published a manifesto issued by some of the English clergymen to the effect that the return of the Jews to Palestine indicates the near establishment of the Lord's kingdom. The *Chicago Herald* interviewed a number of American clergymen upon this question who generally scoff at the nearness of Christ's kingdom. The consensus of opinion by them is expressed in the words of the Rev. Oscar C. Helming:

"My personal impression is that the historical interpretation of the Apocalypse is a mistaken interpretation, of Jewish origin. I feel that the present war condition has no more bearing on the second coming of Christ than other wars and revolutions have had."

"THAT INTERNATIONAL NUISANCE"

The Lord's Word shows his disapproval of the alliance between the church systems, which claim to represent him on earth, and the civil and political powers. Such an unholy union he designates in his Word as harlotry. Even worldly men recognize that the mixture of politics and religion is obnoxious. The *Wall Street Journal*, read by the banking interest of Greater New York, speaking of the Papacy, refers to it as "that international nuisance, the church-state." In Italy the Roman Catholic church is well known to be willing to sacrifice Italian nationality to promote its own temporal power. It is claimed that not all of the weakening of the morale of the Italian troops was due to Teutonic influences. The Paris correspondent of the *New York Times* says:

"No one who has not been recently in Italy would realize the harm done by a propaganda whose theme is America's abstention from war with Austria which, says the Propagandist, proves the justness of the Vatican's pacifism by showing that America also is not in sympathy with the war Italy is waging to complete her national unity. How far that unity is in line with the Vatican's dream of temporal power may be judged by the fact that its heart and center is Rome—the city which the popes regard equally as the home pivot of their rule on earth."

The declaration of war by the United States against Austria was a blow to Papacy's hopes.

The thought that the Papacy is scheming to profit through the present world disaster is nothing surprising to Bible Students; for they are well aware that the word of prophecy points to the part to be played by the "beast" in helping to

establish peace and so ingratiating itself with the world as to make possible again the stealthy riveting of the fetters of intolerance upon all true freedom of religion, of the press, of speech and of thought. But however well such craftiness may succeed and induce the nations of Christendom to give their power and strength unto the "beast" (Rev. 17:12, 13), it will be but transitory; for shortly the "ten horns [nations transformed by revolution] shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire" [anarchy and revolution].—Revelation 17:16.

THE SUN DARKENED

As a further evidence of the end of the age and the bringing in of Messiah's kingdom of righteousness, Jesus said, "The sun shall be darkened." (Matthew 24:29) The sun is a symbol of the Gospel of Messiah's kingdom. On November 12, 1917, two thousand representatives of all creeds and denominational systems assembled at Carnegie Hall, New York. Participating in this conference were Catholic cardinals, Protestant Doctors of Divinity and Jewish rabbis. The purpose of the meeting was to formulate a scheme or plan of Biblical education. The *New York American* quotes Dr. John H. Finley, one of the speakers:

"Here are three steps which we may take: First, the preparation of a book of selections from the Bible by an interdenominational commission appointed by the legislature or by the Board of Regents for use in the schools; second, the formulation of a plan for non-proselyting and cooperation between the schools and various denominations; third, the granting of regents credits for serious work in Bible study outside of the schools. The time has come for Protestants, Catholics, Jews and Gentiles to co-operate to the end that every child may have an intimation at least of his moral and religious inheritance."

Dr. George Albert Coe said:

"We religious people must join with organized labor to compel teaching in the schools which makes for happiness and not for wealth."

The noticeable feature here is that the name of Jesus Christ, his redemptive sacrifice and his kingdom for restitution blessings, are absolutely ignored. Truly this is a fulfillment of the prophecy of the darkening of the sun.

CHURCH FEDERATION

From time to time there has appeared in THE WATCH TOWER much proof from the Scriptures that before the end of the age there would be a federation of the nominal church systems. Such is now practically an accomplished fact. The "beast" of Revelation 13:1 is the Papal system. The "other beast" of Revelation 13:11 is the church of England and Ireland. The United States has entered into an alliance with Great Britain. Thus there is a tacit alliance between civil and ecclesiastical elements. The temporary cessation of the war between the nations with the force of revolution and anarchy becoming more apparent will draw closer together the civil and ecclesiastical powers. Practically all of the church systems with one mind and with one accord are "dancing" before the civil powers. (Mark 6:22) This federation and alliance is "Mystic Babylon" in a most complete sense. In the type the great feast of Belshazzar which preceded the fall of ancient Babylon would seem to represent the rejoicing of the federated systems, particularly when they have gained federal recognition, either directly or indirectly. It seems quite reasonable to conclude that the experiences of John the Baptist with Herod were also typical. Commenting upon this, Brother Russell said:

"Herod would represent civil government and the unlawful wife would represent the nominal church which throughout the symbolic Scriptures is represented as a woman—'Jezebel', etc. Should it prove to be a type by its fulfillment, in anti-type the fulfillment will probably be on something like the following lines:

"(1) A partial reunion of church and state.

"(2) In such case it would become the duty of the true church, the forerunners and announcers of the Messianic kingdom, to reprove the civil powers as well as the nominal church systems and to declare their union unlawful, contrary to the Word of God.

"(3) The effect of this would pretty surely be to awaken the animosity of both civil and religious powers; but it would draw out especially the animosity and venom of the latter.

"(4) The church nominal in her false position would be anxious to stop the reproof and to destroy the reprovers; and the effect would be that the civil power would be induced to pass such legislation as to restrain the liberty of the faithful ones and hinder them from public witness—as John was hindered by imprisonment.

"(5) Jezebel's personal influence being insufficient it may subsequently be gained by the influence of her daughter (United Protestantism), who will be so fully in sympathy with her as to become her tool in the destruction of the most loyal servants of God."—Z. '98, p. 95.

THE WORK BEFORE THE CHURCH

We cannot with certainty know what is just before us, but we feel sure that the Lord is pleased to have us be on the alert and prepared to do with our might what he may put in our hands to do. When the Lord speaks to his church through his chosen servant, then it is reasonable to conclude that he expects the members to be governed by the terms of that message. There have been seven messengers to the church. It seems certain that the Lord purposed their messages as a guide for the church. We believe that we are within the bounds of propriety and taking the position which the Lord is pleased to have us take when we say that in the examination of these important questions due consideration should be given to what Brother Russell as the messenger to the Laodicean church wrote on the subject. Such a position is not deifying the man, but giving due consideration to the Lord for the message which he sends us. That Brother Russell was not infallible all will admit; but he being the messenger to the Laodicean church and being a profound student of the Scriptures his expressions should be very closely scrutinized and given careful consideration at this time.

The tangible evidence that the present order is passing away, and that soon the kingdom of God will be fully established, is overwhelming. Such proof causes the true saints to look up and lift up their heads, with rejoicing. At the same time it behooves them to watch and pray. Before the completion of the kingdom class it seems reasonable to conclude from the numerous evidences that we have, that a strong, vigorous, decisive proclamation of the kingdom message must be given; and that this must be given by the Lord's people, the antitypical "John" class, otherwise designated as "the Elijah class." Then surely it behooves every truly consecrated Christian to view the situation calmly and inquire, What is my duty and privilege at this time?

In 1916 Brother Russell said:

"Until now we have never thought much about Elijah coming down to the Jordan and the important work he did there as having any special significance. But now we see that we went to the Jordan in 1914, and that Elijah and Elisha stood there talking, as we are doing now. After they had talked a while Elijah wrapped up his mantle, evidently referring to some special power coming to the Elijah class; and then he smote the waters. Everything led up to that smiting, and everything went before to prepare for this. Now we see that what preceded has only been preparing the way for this. I am daily looking for what the folding up of the mantle may signify. It looks like as if it may mean a great deal of money. We are trying to wrap up whatever mantle comes. The smiting will probably affect the whole civilized world. They are going to feel the influence of this smiting. Let us be ready."

If this conclusion is correct, then it follows that the wrapping up of the mantle and the smiting of the waters must take place after 1914. It is likewise clear that such work must be done before all the members of the body pass into glory beyond the veil; for it is the members of the Elijah class this side of the veil who must do the smiting. In the above quotation it is stated that the mantle evidently refers to some special power given to the Elijah class, who after receiving that power will smite the waters (the people). Brother Russell suggested that the folding of the mantle might mean a great deal of money. The only purpose of having money would be to get the message widely distributed. If the Lord has provided a reasonable amount of money and other means to distribute the message, it would be just as reasonable to say that such is represented by the wrapped-up mantle.

The mantle, in addition to representing power as above stated, sometimes symbolizes authority or dignity, also identification. (1 Sam. 28:14) The message contained in THE FINISHED MYSTERY—the Seventh Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES—definitely and clearly identifies Pastor Russell as "that servant," the messenger to the Laodicean church, and shows the dignity of his office and his authority to speak as the Lord's mouthpiece. Hence his interpretation of Scriptures bearing upon the question should receive profound consideration. Further commenting upon this same matter, Brother Russell in 1916 said:

"The 149th Psalm evidently pictures a time when the Lord's people on this side the veil would in some way be prominent before the world. It says, 'Let the saints be joyful in glory.' Once we thought this meant joyful in heaven; but now we see that to be joyful in glory need not be on the other

side, but on this side the veil. The Psalmist proceeds to say, 'Let them sing aloud upon their beds.' He declares that the saints upon their beds have a two-edged sword in their hands. The bed signifies a condition of ease, so far as the faith is concerned. We shall, of course, be at ease on the other side, but this evidently means an ease of faith on this side the veil. The two-edged sword means the Word of God. That must mean here; for no one will be smiting anything with a two-edged sword over there. It will surely be here. This two-edged sword in the hands of the saints means that while they are resting in their faith they have the Word of God, sharp and powerful, and with it can oppose everything opposed to the truth.

"These are the saints who execute the judgments written. How? I cannot give all the details. Undoubtedly there will be a great many details when we reach that time. We should be ready to take any part which the Lord may give us. He will give all of his people a share. We shall see what this judging may mean a little later on. The River Jordan means a judgment and the smiting of this Jordan may mean to put the truth in such a way as to do the judging; and Elijah will handle this sword."

The Lord has permitted the compilers of Volume Seven to bring together all the gems of truth upon the Scriptures from Brother Russell's pen as these relate to Babylon. From these gems of truth written by the one having authority and making clear the Scriptural testimony we see:

(1) That just preceding the inauguration of the kingdom there would be a church Federation, that there would be a closer relationship established between church and state, and that the felicitations of the ecclesiastical systems would constitute the antitypical feast which preceded the fall of ancient Babylon;

(2) That such federation and alliance is an abomination unto God, and that it would be the duty of the truly consecrated then on earth to rebuke such arrangement by plainly declaring God's message of truth;

(3) That the Prophets Elijah and John typed the same class, that the class typed by them would administer the rebuke, and that such proclamation of the message of truth would turn the people away from the Babylonian systems, thus constituting a division represented by the division of the waters of the River Jordan;

(4) That everything in the harvest leads up to this climax, and that since 1914 everything has been making for this work;

(5) That the smiting of the Jordan and the use of the two-edged sword are two pictures of the same thing, that the two-edged sword means the Word of God, that Jordan may mean to put the truth in such a way as to do the judging, that the wrapping up of the mantle evidently refers to some special power given to the Elijah class; that the Elijah class will handle the sword with which the smiting is done;

(6) That the smiting of the Jordan represents the dividing of the people and the turning of them away from Babylon, that Babylon will fall, and that this smiting will probably affect the whole world;

(7) That the Lord's people this side the veil will in some way be brought prominently before the world.

Examining these points we see that the federation is practically an accomplished fact; and since the end seems to be so near at hand, the time for the performance of the work above mentioned must likewise be near at hand. When Brother Russell says that the two-edged sword is the Word of God or message of truth, and that the truth may be put in such a way as to do the judging, and that the Elijah class will handle the sword, then it follows that there must be some clear explanation of the prophecies of Ezekiel and Revelation which exposes Babylon, and that this message must be given public witness. We find in the Seventh Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES this identical message. One of two things is absolutely certain—that this is the long promised Seventh Volume with which the smiting is to be done or else there must be another one written; and since this one contains all Brother Russell has written upon the subject it would seem unreasonable to conclude that another is to be written, since the Scriptures do not identify another messenger having authority to write.

If the Seventh Volume is the sword of the truth put in such a way as to do the judging, and if the Elijah class is to do it, then it follows that everyone who fails or refuses to grasp this sword and go forth in obedience to the Lord's direction repudiates the provision made for him and could not be designated as of the Elijah class.

A DAY OF DECISION

Some are having difficulty in seeing their privileges of taking a part in the proclamation of the Seventh Volume message. We suggest to all such that they take the matter to the

Lord in prayer, and then being guided by the principles of his Word, ask themselves these questions:

Is the Lord still the Chief Reaper, directing his harvest work? If so, would he permit the church to be engaged in such a world-wide activity on a line contrary to his way? Would he grant his blessing upon the work unless it is right? Was Brother Russell, as the Master's servant, right when he said that the "two-edged sword is the Word of God, the message of truth, and that the truth may be put in such a way as to do the judging"? Is it true that the Lord describes Babylon, the false systems, in the Books of Revelation and Ezekiel; and is it true that Volume Seven gives an explanation of these books in harmony with the truth revealed by the Lord to the church through his messenger of the Laodicean period?

The point of the sword is sharp on both sides, therefore a two-edged sword. The Psalmist describes the saints with the two-edged sword in their hands. Is it true that the Books of Ezekiel and John constitute the point—the two-edged sword with which Babylon is to be smitten?—Ezekiel 21:14-15; G 464, 466.

Brother Russell said: "The Elijah class will use this sword. We should be ready to take any part which the Lord may give us. He will give all of his people a share." Was Brother Russell right when he uttered these words? If so, am I of the Elijah class if I neglect or refuse to participate in the use of the sword? Do I believe that the words of Revelation 14:18, 19 constitute a command from the Lord? (G 227) And if this is a command can I show forth my love to the Lord unless I keep this commandment? (John 14:15) Is not Babylon the product of Satan? Who would be pleased to have me use the point of the sword against Babylon—Satan or our Lord?

PROSPECTS BEFORE US

Will not a vigorous witness of the truth as set forth in Volume Seven bring persecution? Yes; such is quite probable. If I remain aloof and have nothing to do with the message against Babylon, may I not preserve myself from such persecution? Yes, possibly; but can you afford to take that position?

Long ago there was recorded by "that servant," in Volume III, these words:

"It will probably be in an effort at self-preservation on the part of great Babylon—Christendom—when she sees her power in politics, priestcraft and superstition waning, that the work of truth spreading will be stopped as detrimental to her system; and probably at this juncture the Elijah class, persisting in declaring the truth to the last, will suffer violence and pass into glory and escape from the severest features of the great time of trouble coming—just in the crisis of affairs, when men begin to feel that desperate measures must be resorted to, to sustain the tottering structures of Christendom. Although the exact time of the deliverance or change of the last members of the body of Christ is not stated, the approximate time is nevertheless clearly manifest as shortly after the door is shut."—C 231.

"The door of opportunity to engage with Christ our Lord in the work of the Gospel age will be closed when the night cometh wherein no man can work; and all who have not previously, by faithful service, developed the necessary character and proved their sympathy, devotion, love and zeal for the Lord and his truth will then be too late to do so."—C 210.

The prospects for the year 1918 are thrilling—yea, wonderful! It seems that for us to be indifferent to them by failing or refusing to participate in the proclamation of the truth now due would be nothing short of disloyalty and unfaithfulness to the Lord. Beloved, let us gird on our armor and calmly, fearlessly and joyfully meet the task that he has set before us. "The Lord bless thee and keep thee and cause his face to shine upon thee"—as you go forth to battle.

BROUGHT INTO PROMINENCE

Again we quote that servant: "This smiting will probably affect the whole civilized world. They are going to feel the

influence of this smiting. The Lord's people this side the veil may in a way be brought prominently before the world." How could this be possible? By turning the people away from Babylon and while so doing "sounding out the high praises of God," thereby clearing his holy name from the dishonor attached to it by false teachings of Babylon's system. Such would surely affect the civilized world. But how would the Lord's people come into prominence? Evidently not by becoming popular. One might be brought into great prominence and yet be very unpopular. Such has always been the result of faithful witnessing to the truth. (Hebrews, Chapter 11) Elijah was prominently known far and wide in the realm of Ahab and Jezebel, but was far from being popular and approved by that kingdom and its subjects.

THE SOCIETY THE MESSENGER

In Revelation 14:18 we read: "And another angel came out from the altar which had power over fire and cried with a loud voice to him that had the sharp sickle [the message of present truth] saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe."

Since its organization the Lord has used the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY as the messenger to bear the kingdom message to his people. The "altar" is the place of sacrifice. How aptly the description fits the SOCIETY! It is the only institution on earth maintained by the sacrifice of the Lord's saints. Never yet has a plan or scheme succeeded which had for its avowed purpose the gathering or accumulating of a large sum of money to be used in the harvest work. Clearly the Lord desires his work to be done by the sacrifice of his people. He is rich in all things, and needs no one to devise ways and means for him. All of his people need the opportunity of sacrificing to show forth their love and zeal for him. The financial report of the SOCIETY for the year 1917 shows how his faithful ones have sacrificed in order that the money might be provided for the proclamation of his message. The money the Lord has graciously provided, and with the message of truth which he has also provided, and with the organization for his work which he is directing, the time seems ripe to obey the "voice" of the messenger which "had power over fire." Power over fire means authority to send out the message of truth that is destructive of error. The clear exposition of Ezekiel's and John's prophecies set forth in Volume Seven fills this requirement, and it is being sent out far and wide by the SOCIETY. Everyone who truly appreciates the privilege is participating in this work according to their several abilities.

YEAR TEXT IMPORTANT

Surely the child of God can plainly see that the end of all things of the present order is at hand. The world is in a state of great excitement. Statesmen, politicians, business men, clergy, labor leaders, etc., all are at high nervous tension. Everyone feels it. Soon the "four winds" [evil spirits] will be loosened (Revelation 7:1-3); and what a fertile field they will find in the excited minds and high strung nerves of the peoples of earth. Nervous excitement, anger and lack of sobriety will make it much easier for the evil spirits to possess the mind. One who is in such condition is not fit to give attention to important matters. Never before has it been so important for us to remember the admonition of the Apostle—the words of our year text—"The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent love among yourselves." Let us remember that the victory in the battle is not with the strong alone, but with those who have full faith and confidence in the Lord. "My help cometh from the Lord." In ourselves there is no strength, but he who is our captain is strong. Let us be strong in faith, giving glory to him. Let us be calm, sober-minded, watchful and prayerful, using the Sword of the Spirit to his glory, and he will bring us off more than conquerors—yea, overcomers!

OUR KING IS MARCHING ON

Mine eyes can see the glory of the presence of the Lord:
He's trampling out the wine-press where his grapes of wrath
are stored;
I see the flaming tempest of his swift descending sword,
Our King is marching on.

I see his coming judgments, as they circle all the earth,
The signs and groanings promised to precede a second birth;
I read his righteous sentence in the crumbling thrones of earth:
Our King is marching on.

The "Gentile times" are closing, for their kings have had their
day;
And with them sin and sorrow will forever pass away;
The tribe of Judah's Lion now has come to hold the sway:
Our King is marching on.

The "Seventh Trump" is sounding and our King knows no
defeat,
He will sift out the hearts of men before his judgment seat,
Be swift, my soul, to welcome him; be jubilant, my feet:
Our King is marching on.

JESUS LORD OF THE SABBATH

[This article, excepting the paragraph below, was a reprint of article entitled, "Which Day is Sabbath," published in issue of March 15, 1912, which please see.]

FEBRUARY 3.—MARK 2:23-3:5.

"The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."—Verse 28.

Few seem to get the proper thought respecting the Sabbath. Some consider themselves as Jews under the Mosaic Law. Others go to an opposite extreme and, declaring that we are not under the Law but under grace, repudiate the Sabbath entirely. What we believe to be the correct view is the intermediate one between these two extremes, as we shall endeavor to set forth.

God adopted the nation of Israel, all children of Abraham through Jacob, as his special possession in the world. With

them he made the Law Covenant through Moses at Mount Sinai; to them he sent his messengers, the Prophets, and finally his Son. With them, and with no other nation, it was his agreement that by the keeping of the Law they would abide in his favor and would have divine blessing upon flocks and herds, lands and people, instead of sickness, pain, drouth and dearth. To no other nation was the Law of Sinai given; with no other nation was that Covenant made. As it is written: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth."

JESUS FORGIVETH SIN

[Paragraph 3, 4, 7 and 13 of this article were reprinted from article entitled, "The Forgiveness of Sins," published in issue of February 15, 1906. The remainder was reprinted from article entitled, "Sin Forgiveness and Healing," published in issue of February 15, 1912. Please see the articles named.]

JESUS CHOOSES THE TWELVE

[This article, excepting the paragraph below, was a reprint of article entitled, "Apostolic Succession Unscriptural," published in issue of April 1, 1912, which please see.]

Sts. Paul and John were not only Apostles, but also special messengers to the early Church. The special messenger in the harvest of the Jewish age was the Apostle Paul, who wrote about one-third of the New Testament, carried the Gospel into Europe, suffered almost unbelievable hardships of every description, and died a martyr in A. D. 66, when he was be-

headed by the Emperor Nero. The Lord's mouthpiece to the second stage of the church was St. John, the beloved disciple. He wrote more of the New Testament than did any other, except St. Paul. The Apostle John died at Ephesus at the age of 100, about four years after writing the Apocalypse.

REPORT OF SOUTH AFRICAN BRANCH

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Enclosed herewith you will find a report of harvest work in South Africa during the last eighteen months. We have not been able to put out so many volumes as in 1914-1915; but this is in line, I think, with the work in other parts of the world. Recently, however, the colporteur work in South Africa received a decided impetus by the accession of a dear Dutch Brother to the ranks. In the last three months this dear Brother has put out over 2,000 volumes, averaging about 40 per working day. This unprecedented activity, added to our usual output, has made a great inroad in our stock.

Now, dear Brethren, I will give you a brief outline of the harvest work in South Africa. The number of white brethren—other than natives—we estimate at between two hundred and three hundred. The larger portion of these are divided among four churches—Durban, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town, all towns of considerable size. This may seem a very small proportion of the people; but when we remember that the white population numbers only about one and a quarter million, scattered over 500,000 square miles, an area equal to one-sixth of the United States, but with only one sixtieth of your means of transportation—it will be understood that the difficulty of getting at the people is considerable. Many of our dear brethren are isolated and alone, with no fellowship but the Lord's; yet their letters and their occasional presence at conventions testify how abundantly he is able to compensate for the lack of human fellowship.

Then to these are to be added our dear native brethren. At Ndwedwe we have a flourishing class of about 80 full-blooded Zulus. At Bank Location a class of Basutos meet, numbering about 24; and a smaller class of Makosas meet in the East London Location. Despite the fact that we have no literature in the native languages, the grasp of present truth which these native brethren have is phenomenal. We can only say, "It is the Lord's doing, and marvelous in our eyes." Entertaining, as they all do, a profound respect for the Bible as the Word of God, they have listened eagerly to the truth imparted to them by native teachers able to read the volumes in English and to translate what they read into the vernacular. Having practically nothing to unlearn, they have readily embraced the Lord's message when presented. The intelligence and the sincerity of their consecration have been attested by their sufferings for conscience's sake. Nearly all of these dear native brethren have been solemnly and publicly excommunicated from Babylon—turned out of the Mission reserves in which they were born, and branded as dangerous persons in their Locations, which are their world. Yet none of these things move them; and they count it all joy that they are permitted to suffer for Christ's sake.

In the Nyassaland Protectorate, the truth has a larger and older following. Nyassaland is much further away—beyond all possibility of visiting unless on a special tour which would take about three months of time and about £150 in money, so that our control of the work in that country is not

so substantial. Owing to the lack of white control there, reports from that country are spasmodic. But when they do come, however, they tell of continued interest in present truth on the part of many natives and of large gatherings more or less regularly for convention purposes. The work there has aroused the opposition of the Government, spurred on by jealous missionaries, who see their schools emptied and their churches depleted, with a corresponding loss of revenue. As a result, several of the leading brethren have been deported, and are now interned in Flat Island, Mauritius. Our hearts go out to these dear brethren; and we commend them to him who said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

The fortunes of the Photo-Drama in Africa were varied. On its arrival in this country, difficulties seemed to stop our pathway at every turn. The crowning difficulty came when after showing it to a Bioscope Advisory Committee, composed largely of clergymen and their henchmen, the Provincial Authorities prohibited its exhibition in the Cape Province because, forsooth! it "would offend the religious susceptibilities" of the public! Remembering the injunction, "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another," we at once took the Drama to the Transvaal, where we exhibited it successfully in Johannesburg, Pretoria and several smaller places, and also in the Orange Free State and Natal. While the Drama has not resulted in a great ingathering, it has borne a great witness, and the practical results have been such as to cause us to thank God for its coming to Africa. Before leaving the subject, I wish to say that in addition to other contributions the brethren here raised about £250 to provide halls, etc., in connection with these exhibitions. This was a great effort on their part; for none of them is wealthy.

It is my custom to make three and sometimes four pilgrim journeys each year; and owing to the scattered abodes, long distances, etc., the mileage amounts to considerable. During the past eighteen months I have traveled over 10,000 miles in this work.

Last Easter we held a most stimulating and refreshing Convention at Durban, which was a source of great blessing to the 65 or 70 brethren who were present. God willing, we hope also to have a general convention in Cape Town at the beginning of 1918. About 147 Brethren reported their memorializing our dear Lord's death and their dying with him. But I feel sure that a larger number actually sat down to the Table of the Lord, although they omitted to send word.

Despite our ups and downs we have much reason to thank God for his great goodness to us; and our great desire is to press on, doing with our might what our hands find to do. The work in Africa would be greatly helped by a visit from our dear Brother Rutherford or some other capable brother. If South Africa were united to Australia for the purpose of a pilgrim journey, the services of some of our "mighty men of valor" could well be spared to make the trip. The help to us in the outposts of the harvest field would be enormous.

We earnestly trust, therefore, that your desire to visit this part of the world will grow until it becomes uncontrollable; and that the Lord will speedily provide the opportunity for you to translate the desire into action.

In closing, permit me to assure you of our continued love and loyalty to our dear Brother Rutherford, as the successor to our well-beloved Pastor, and to the SOCIETY as God's espe-

cially chosen channel of communication with his people. We are very jealous for the organization which, under God, has brought us so much blessing in the past, and very suspicious of all that would attempt to divide our affections.

With much love to all the dear brethren at Brooklyn,
Your Brother in Christ,

WM. W. JOHNSON.

"COME, FOLLOW ME!"

"Come, follow me!" the Master said;

"Come, take the way I trod:
And though the path be dark and drear,
And though thy heart may faint with fear,
It leads to home, to love-born cheer—
The mansion of our God.

"But oh! the way is rough and steep,
Beset by many a stone;
But still I hear, through brier and brake,
'Thee will I never leave, forsake;
Beloved one, fresh courage take,
I trod this way alone."

"And oh, he stretches forth his hands!

And oh, he gives me grace!
I see the nail-prints that he bore,
The feet, enstained with dust and gore,
The stripes, the thorny crown he wore;
But oh, that lovelit face!

"Dear Master, now I follow on—

The path I cannot trace;
The way thy love for me hath planned
I take and keep at thy command;
Give me the guidance of thy hand,
The heaven of thy face!"

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

CONVENTIONS RESULTING IN BLESSINGS

DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD:—

Loving greetings in our dear Redeemer! Am troubling you with a line to mention one of the many evidences we have noted that the Lord is supervising every feature of the harvest work. We allude to the real good and blessing that is resulting from this year's conventions. Thank the Lord there are so many of them! Many have gone to these conventions, troubled and perplexed because of the things which have been sent our from Brooklyn and elsewhere—not from headquarters—and have returned at rest and full of confidence that the Lord has not lost control of his work. We are sure it is in the Lord's providences that such a program has been arranged. Praying the Father may continue to guide and bless you in your endeavors to serve him, the Truth and the brethren, I remain, with sincere Christian love,

Yours in Him,

W. M. BATTERSON.—*Pilgrim.*

DRAWN CLOSER TO EACH OTHER IN CHRISTIAN LOVE

DEAR BRETHREN:—

BE IT RESOLVED by the Bible Students in Convention Assembled, That we renew our covenant to our heavenly Father, and to the faithful observance of the instructions of his holy Word; that we pray earnestly for a greater measure of his holy Spirit; that we strive to increase our love to our heavenly Father for the gift of his dear Son, and for the unfolding of his Word to us through that dear servant whom we all so dearly loved; that we will be so inspired by the life he lived that we will be drawn closer to each other in the bonds of Christian love and fellowship, and will put forth our best endeavors that we may make our calling and election sure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we heartily co-operate in the work as mapped out by our dear Pastor, and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY at Brooklyn, N. Y.

EVERETT ECCLESIA.—*Wash.*

ABLE TO APPRECIATE TOWER MORE FULLY

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Am sending \$1.00 to renew my subscription to THE WATCH TOWER, which expires this month.

Am receiving just the same help from THE TOWER that I always have enjoyed for twenty-one years; in fact more, for I am now able to appreciate the articles more fully.

I am in full accord with the management at Bethel and pray daily that love may prevail there.

Your sister by His grace,

A. J. R. H.—*Maine.*

"GIDEON'S BRAVE THREE HUNDRED"

DEAR EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:—

Greetings of love, peace and joy in your daily, yea hourly, service in the Lord's harvest. My heart is full of desire to make known to you my appreciation of your suggestion in the March 1 TOWER, page 67, especially that under the heading, "A Word to the Pilgrims." How we do need this admonition, "that we adhere strictly to the message which the Lord gave through this chosen channel"! God bless you!

I am constrained through the great kindness of a sister, to note the suggestion of our dear Pastor in the Jan. 1 TOWER of 1915, page 10, re "Gideon's brave three hundred." Could

we have in few words a synopsis of that article, that many should drink properly of the water (truth)? When this dear sister wrote me about this article, I was at first puzzled and then, through the wisdom from the Father, for which I asked, he revealed the astounding fact that so few, even I, did not partake properly at all times!

How I have wanted to shout far and wide the fact of how we should drink to his glory and honor, as it is so clearly given in that article. Your suggestion, dear brethren, surely is a direct answer to my prayer and wish. Now by his grace I shall drink of his Water, which is life indeed.

I solicit an interest in your prayers, dear brethren, also remembering you and the harvest work daily at the throne of grace, and those of like precious faith. Daily I realize God's care and promises to his consecrated children.—Num. 6:24-26.

Your Sister by his grace and mercy,

MRS. C. E. NORTON.—*Idaho.*

INSPIRING COMMENTS RE VOLUME SEVEN

Pilgrim Brother C. E. Heard writes concerning a very effective method of colporteur with the Seventh Volume, adopted by a class in a Canadian city, as follows:

"This class has done remarkable work with the Seventh Volume. The friends left a copy in every home in town, with a printed slip inserted in the front telling them to read it and, if they wish to keep the book, to remit 60c. Fully 80 per cent of the homes kept the volume when the friends called to collect."

"I am eighty-two years old and have often wondered, 'Would I live to see the Seventh Volume of the world's most wonderful series of God's mysteries unfolded?' 'Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.'"

G. H., *W. Va.*

"Words can but inadequately express my appreciation of Volume Seven; which will assuredly prove needful, comforting and beneficial to God's dear people and we pray many others. May the Lord bless more and more the Harvest reaping promulgated by Jehovah's Servant."

MRS. E. M. B., *N. Y.*

"I cannot express to you just how I felt on receiving Volume Seven. To think that I should receive the 'penny'! How anxious we all are to circulate the 'penny' just as soon and as fast as we will be allowed. How it draws His little ones together to feed on the wonderful things it contains, causing us each to spring up into newness of life and zeal. It will drive out the dross faster than anything yet given. Thank God for such a stimulus."

L. M. P., *Ohio.*

"I thank the Lord for the long-looked for Volume Seven. We can now see that it came exactly at the right time for the direct need of the church, and for her comfort and encouragement. Therefore we can have now fresh courage and realize to a certainty that the dear Lord has not forsaken us, but has provided for his household meat in due season by that wise and faithful servant, 'Pastor Russell'; and why should we not be thankful and be eager to go ahead with a burning desire to grasp our weapon and go forth to the smiting of Jordan, praising the Lord for this privilege, knowing the kingdom of heaven is AT HAND?"

N. N., *W. Va.*

"I am truly very grateful for Volume Seven and shall eagerly peruse its pages that I may be the better prepared to endure all things, by its strength-giving food served to us by our Lord's dear faithful servant. As I have glanced through it, it already has made me see how deeply he saw our need of great faith in our heavenly Father's love for them that are his. Surely this feast in the Seventh Volume is from the hand of our Lord to cheer and comfort us to the end."

N. C. B., *Mich.*

"We desire to express our appreciation of Volume Seven—the last of the most wonderful books! We feel sure the Lord has sent this for our comfort."

F. K. S., *Mo.*

"On opening Volume Seven I saw at once that dear Brother Russell could not have written it. He was too modest and humble to have stated the facts as they exist—he occupying the important place in the harvest."

W. S. S., *Pa.*

"I was amused at the proviso you put in the little printed notice in Volume Seven, 'if you do not desire to keep the volume, return it!'"

"I believe that no truly consecrated child of God who has waited so long and anxiously for this book, would part with it for any price if he could not replace it. It will certainly cause the 'false shepherds' to 'take notice.'"

"How graciously and bountifully our dear Father provides for our wants! Just what we want, and at the very time that we need it. Praise his holy Name!" F. R. E., *Ohio.*

"Volume Seven has been duly received. Such pleasant surprises have been few in my life of 52 years. I had no intimation that it was in process of compilation much less on the press. When I found it on my table it was hard for me to believe my eyes were not serving me some trick. I read the title over several times before I was fully convinced there was no mistake. It was good of you to send it as you did, thus sparing us the suspense of waiting for it."

H. E. K., *Ala.*

"How faithfully you must have worked to get Volume Seven together and in print, and how wonderful it seems to hear from our dear Pastor after he has passed beyond! It seems to me like a message sent back to us."

M. K. N., *Md.*

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

THE BEGETTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT SUPERNATURAL

Question.—Is the begetting of the new creature a direct act of God or is it through the Word of truth?

Answer.—The begetting of the holy Spirit is not without the Word; it is through the Word. But the fact that it is through the Word does not signify that the Word alone is the begetting power. Without God's message telling us of his character, his plan, our sinful condition and the arrangement for the forgiveness of sin through Christ and the opportunity to be of this special elect class, we would not be in any condition to understand or to receive this holy Spirit. We must first have the knowledge which the Bible gives. Therefore it is through the Word of truth that this blessing comes. But the blessing is not the Word of truth. The world in the incoming Age will have the Word of truth, but they will not receive the begetting of the holy Spirit to a new nature, which the church alone receives.

The fact that the church does not now receive any outward demonstration is no proof that we do not receive a supernatural endowment from the Lord. When our Lord Jesus had made his consecration and was baptized, God caused an outward sign to be seen by John the Baptist, who perceived the holy Spirit in the form of a dove descending and resting upon the Lord. This outward manifestation was given to John that he could testify that Jesus was the Messiah. It was not necessary that all the people should see.

This word unction has the thought of anointing, and of smoothness, lubrication, as from oil. Whoever was anointed to be a priest among the Jewish people was anointed with a special kind of fragrant oil, which typified the holy Spirit. The Scriptures represent Aaron the priest, after having received the anointing oil upon his head, as typical of Christ when he received the holy Spirit at Jordan. In the type this holy anointing oil "ran down to the skirts of his [Aaron's] garment." And so the anointing of the holy Spirit is with the church down to its close. The anointing oil was made up of a number of special ingredients. The people of Israel were not permitted to use these ingredients in such combination under penalty of death. Thus the Lord signified that

the possession of the holy Spirit, which he alone can give is the special designation of those who are to be the priests and kings of his Order, and of them only.

MARRIAGE OF THE DIVORCED

Question.—Under what circumstances would divorced persons (in the truth) be free to remarry?

Answer.—The many inquiries we have on this subject convince us that the presentation on this matter in the Sixth Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES requires supplementing—although we had supposed it to be a very full examination of the question. Indeed, this is still our belief. The fault is not with the presentation, but with the fact that the dear friends forget what they have read, and fail to consult the Volume. We again refer all inquirers to that treatise.

There are laws governing divorce and the remarriage of divorced persons. Each state makes its own laws on the subject, and the Bible sets forth a very particular law. Everybody is bound to meet the requirements of the civil law. All questions, therefore, appertain to the higher law of the Bible. A simple way of deciding all such questions is indicated by the fact that the Bible does not set forth any laws for the governing of the world and its doings. The only persons whose conduct on this and other subjects is regulated by the Bible are the Jews and true Christians.

If the man or the woman were divorced before coming into the family of God, his or her previous course in life, if approved by the civil law, is not interfered with by the divine law. The divine law begins to operate upon the individual from the time he makes a surrender of himself to the Lord and is accepted into God's family. It is the course of the individual after he has become united to the Lord that is regulated by the teachings of the Bible. He or she, if free according to the civil law, may marry—but "only in the Lord." But being married at the time or after coming into Christ, the Scriptures direct that while there may be various reasons for separation, there could be only one reason for an absolute divorce, which would leave the persons free to marry again—that given in Matthew 5:31, 32; 19:9.

INTERESTING LETTERS

VICE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—

True to his promise, Jehovah of hosts has sent the messenger of the Covenant to prepare the way for the establishment of his kingdom upon earth. Blessed, indeed, are our eyes, which have been opened to see the presence of this One in whom we delight. We have watched with ever-increasing interest the progress of the first phase of His preparatory work, the purification of the antitypical sons of Levi—the household of faith. Like unto the effect of the refiner's fire upon gold and silver has been the result produced by the various purging experiences arranged by the Lord for his people during the period of his presence. Little by little, the dross of selfishness in every form has been burned away from the hearts of those whose golden desire is to do the will of God. Viewed as one of these experiences, the recent sad trial, affecting so many of the Lord's children everywhere, becomes an occasion for thanksgiving. We can "count it all joy."

The publication of my name in connection with statements circulated among the friends has brought many requests for an explanation of the seemingly inconsistent stand

I had taken as an officer and director of the SOCIETY. To none of these have I made full reply, believing it unwise to attempt to explain a situation not entirely clear to my own mind; and further believing that such explanation, if made would be justly due all who had read the conflicting reports.

Before the details of the difference were published abroad, I failed to see sufficient cause for the threatened breach between brethren in the Lord who had labored together harmoniously for many years. Consequently, my efforts were bent upon preventing a split and the sore trial it would bring to friends in all parts of the world who have always held the brethren at Bethel in the highest esteem.

When a re-arrangement of the Board of Directors was announced on July 17th, I deeply regretted that such a proceeding was deemed necessary. By signing the resolution commending this action, I had no intention of identifying myself as a party to the controversy (believing that reconciliation could even yet be affected between those at variance), but wished merely to share my portion of responsibility, as an officer of the SOCIETY, in providing an explanation to the comparatively small number of friends who had up to that