

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

DISCOURAGED PREACHERS

Ministers are reported by one of their number to be in a permanent condition of "Blue Monday." The editor of *The Standard* (Baptist, Chicago) informs us that he was told by a friend not long ago that "nine-tenths of all the preachers in his circle of acquaintances are discouraged." This same Jeremiah "asserted that the great majority of pastors are practically hopeless of accomplishing anything worth while; that they are restless and discontented, and heartily wish that they had never entered the ministry." If he is right, the editor of *The Standard* observes, "we may add another to the tabulated reasons why young men do not enter the ministry." The editor thinks that the preacher, under stress of unusual discouragement himself, is mistaken, but the Rev. Dr. Aked, in a recent sermon on the alleged decay of Christianity in New York, practically asserted the same facts as falling under his observation when he first visited America. As quoted by *The Examiner* (New York), his words are:

"One of the things that impressed me most when I came here for a month in the autumn of 1906, was the depression of so many preachers and recognized leaders in the churches of this city. I met many representatives of the denominations, and their discouragement about Christian work in this city seemed very strange to me.

"It was unlike anything I had observed on previous visits, reaching back about fifteen years. It seemed to me, also, so unlike yourselves. The American people are not easily discouraged. There is in you a buoyancy of spirit, an irrepressible vitality, an intellectual and emotional agility which smiles in the face of difficulty.

"We English people have shown through many centuries the grim determination we possess, and our Yorkshire saying, 'It's dogged as does it,' represents a national characteristic. With you it is different. It is not 'grimness' nor 'doggedness' that I find in you so much as a joyous and sunny disregard of difficulty, and the easy assurance of victory everywhere, which itself is more than half the battle, so that this attitude toward the problems of religious life struck me as significant.

"I have heard much of that kind of talk since I came here more than twelve months ago. First, one well-known preacher or worker and then another has shown that in his opinion Christianity is not holding its own in this city. And lately some remarkable utterances have reached the public ear."

The editor of *The Standard* attempts to furnish healing balm to the cases that may come under the preacher's classification. We read:

"To be sure, almost every man, in the ministry or out, has his hours of depression. The minister who goes home from the Sunday evening service after speaking to a handful of people, a majority of whom are not members of his church, somewhat worn by the work of the day, casting about in his mind for something upon which to preach on the following Sunday, carrying in his heart the news, just made known to him, that one of his best families will soon remove to a distant State, will doubtless feel cast down. But even so, his courage is not utterly destroyed. After a good night's rest and a talk with his Master, he goes about the tasks of the new week with a good measure of hope in his heart. The man who is permanently disheartened by one difficulty, or two or three or a dozen, ought not to be in the ministry. In fact, it is difficult to think of a place in this world where he ought to be, for there is not a worthy activity of man that can be continuously prosecuted without meeting obstacles. The lawyer, the physician, the farmer, the merchant—each has his peculiar trials. If he amounts to anything among men he must do his work in spite of discouragements. The minister is no exception to the general rule."—*Literary Digest*.

TOLSTOI AND THE PEASANT

Not long ago a small party called on Tolstoi, of whom Ivanhoff was one. One of the visitors first conversed with the Count about political and social matters. Then Ivanhoff's turn came. He was resolved to hear from Tolstoi's own lips his religious position. The following conversation ensued. "Who are you?" asked Count Tolstoi. "I am only a peasant," answered Ivanhoff. "What have you got to say to me?" was the next question. "I wish to know your opinion about Jesus Christ, and about the Holy Scriptures?" "With regard to Jesus Christ, there is nothing to be said," answered the Count. "His Personality is not necessary to us, only his teaching."

"That is very strange," said Ivanhoff; "if I found a letter in the street, the contents of which interested me, I would do all I could to find out who had written it. For me, at any rate, the writer is of more consequence than the letter. The writer can write one hundred other letters equally good, as this first letter. He himself, therefore, is of more interest to me than the letter. If I do not know him, I can only have this one letter; but if I am acquainted with him, I may be able to receive a hundred letters besides."

"As you really want to know what I think of Jesus, I will tell you," said Tolstoi. "For me, Jesus Christ is a good man, a man such as all men ought to be. You and I ought to be just as he was. But to call him God, that is blasphemy. As regards the Holy Scriptures, take this Bible in your hand. The Old Testament, I don't read it; rather tear it out and throw it away. The Old Testament only causes, as the Dukhabors rightly say, a great deal of work and only leads to trouble. Then there remains the New Testament. Take the book of Acts and the Epistles, and then take Revelation; tear them out and throw them away. You have then only the four Gospels left. Take these Gospels, read them through and think over them. There are words there that Jesus said, and the Apostles have written down; there are also words that the Apostles have written of themselves. All that the Apostles have written, tear out and throw away. Now you retain only the words that Jesus himself spoke. Of these, there are two classes. Some of the words are dim and mysterious, and hard to understand. Lay them aside. It is best for you not to read them. Then you have left only the clear words, especially the Sermon on the Mount. Read it, for it is the teaching of Jesus. In this way, you will become a Christian."

"Leo Nikolajewitsch," answered Ivanhoff, "I have understood what you have said. But you have not given me any right to do that which you have said. In one of the books you left me to retain is a passage spoken by Jesus Christ, that says: 'O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.' (Luke 24:25.) You said to me, that I should throw away the Old Testament; but Christ himself—whom you call a good man—has commanded me to believe it all, therefore also the prophets. I hold that I have no right to throw away any book; yea, even more, that I have no right to throw away any one word that he has commanded me to believe."

Tolstoi was evidently very uncomfortable. He took the Bible from Ivanhoff's hand, threw it on the table, and began walking up and down the room in an annoyed mood. Suddenly he stopped in front of Ivanhoff, and looking him straight in the face said, "It would interest me to know what you think of me?"

Ivanhoff's friend wanted to come to his help, but he held him back saying: "If the Count had asked you, you could answer, but now he has asked me, and I want to answer him myself." He turned to Tolstoi saying: "I will tell you. In one of the books that you told me to take out and throw away, the Acts, is a story about a pious man, who gave many alms and always prayed to God. As you see, this man had the following virtues: He was God-fearing, merciful, did many good deeds, and he prayed—and yet, he was not a Christian. But an angel appeared to him and commanded that he should send to Joppa and call Simon Peter, who would tell him what to do to be saved. And when Cornelius had fetched Peter and heard his words he became a Christian. Cornelius had, as you see, the following excellent qualities: He was pious, God-fearing, benevolent, and he prayed. In you, Leo Nikolajewitsch, there is not even all these, because you do not pray. And as you do not pray, I cannot call you a Christian."

Tolstoi again began to walk to and fro in the room. At last he said: "When a chicken has once come out of the shell, it cannot be put back." With this Russian proverb, the conversation ended.

"I have since told this little incident to several of Tolstoi's admirers," adds Ivanhoff. "They could hardly believe that I had dared to speak out so freely, because Tolstoi is to many thousands of the younger Russians almost an idol. It is said," remarked Ivanhoff at the close, "that Tolstoi has now begun to pray. If this man becomes a Christian, he would be Russia's Luther."—*Quarterly Review*.

MRS. EDDY'S ABSURD IDEAS OF THE BIBLE

Mrs. Eddy's exegetical theories are dealt with in the final article on the history of Christian Science in the June *McClure's*. The writer, Georgine Milmine, makes copious

citations from Mrs. Eddy's famous book, "Science and Health," and connects these by comment of her own. "Mrs. Eddy says that her theory of the universe is founded not upon human wisdom, but upon the Bible," reports the writer, adding, "that so it is, but she uses both addition and subtraction very liberally to get her Biblical corroboration." The account given of Mrs. Eddy's point of view is:

"The Bible may be interpreted in two ways, Mrs. Eddy says, literally and spiritually, and what she sets out to do is to give us the spiritual interpretation. Her method is simple. She starts with the propositions that all is God and that there is no matter, and then reconstructs the Bible to accommodate these statements. Such portions of the Bible as can be made, by judicious treatment, to corroborate her theory, she takes and 'spiritually interprets'; that is, tells us once and for all what the passages really mean; and such portions as cannot possibly be converted into affirmative evidence she rejects as errors of the early copyists. Mrs. Eddy insists that the Bible is the record of truth, but a study of her exegesis shows that only such portions of it as meet with Mrs. Eddy's approval and lend themselves—under very rough handling—to the support of her theory are accepted as the record of truth; the rest is thrown out as a mass of erroneous transcription. Mrs. Eddy's keen eye at once detects those meaningless passages which have for so long beguiled the world, just as it readily sees in familiar texts an entirely new meaning. She explains the creation of the world from the account in the first chapter of Genesis, but the unknown author of this disputed book would never recognize his narrative when Mrs. Eddy gets through with it."

Beginning with the account of the creation, the writer takes her citations from the first edition of "Science and Health," which "remains practically the same in later editions under the chapter called 'Genesis.'" We read:

"To begin with, Mrs. Eddy says, there was God, 'All and in all, the eternal Principle.' This Principle is both masculine and feminine; 'Gender is embraced in Spirit, else God could never have shadowed forth, from out himself, the idea of male and female.' But, Mrs. Eddy adds, 'We have not as much authority for calling God masculine as feminine, the latter being the last, therefore highest idea given of him.'"

"Mrs. Eddy next sets about the creation. The 'waters' out of which God brought the dry land, she says, were 'Love'; the dry land itself was 'the condensed idea of creation.' When God divided the light from the darkness, it means, says Mrs. Eddy, that 'Truth and error were distinct from the beginning, and never mingled.' But Mrs. Eddy has always insisted on the idea that 'error' is a delusion which arose first in the mind of mortal man; what is error doing away back here before man was created, and why was God himself compelled to take measures against it? Certainly the account of the Creation which came from Lynn is even more perplexing than that which is related in the Pentateuch.

"With regard to the creation of grass and herbs, Mrs. Eddy eagerly points out that 'God made every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew.' And that, she says, proves that 'creations of Wisdom are not dependent on laws of matter, but on Intelligence alone.' She admits here that the Universe is the 'idea of Creative Wisdom,' which is getting dangerously near the very old idea that matter is but a manifestation of spirit. Call the universe 'matter,' and Mrs. Eddy flies into a rage; call it 'an idea of God,' and she is serenely complaisant. There was certainly never any one so put about and tricked by mere words; on the whole, it may be said that the English language has avenged itself on Mrs. Eddy.

"Arriving at the creation of the beasts of the field, Mrs. Eddy says that 'The beast and reptile made by Love and Wisdom were neither carnivorous nor poisonous.' Ferocious tendencies in animals are entirely the product of man's imagination. Daniel understood this, we are told, and that is why the lions did not hurt him." The treatment of the story of Adam is thus examined:

"The history of Adam is allegorical throughout, a description of error and its results," etc. Man was created in God's likeness, free from sin, sickness and death; but this Adam, who crept in (Mrs. Eddy does not explain how), was the origin of our belief that there is life in matter and was to obstruct our growth in spirituality. Mrs. Eddy says, 'Divide the name Adam into two syllables, and it reads, a dam, or obstruction.' This original method of word-analysis she seems to regard as final evidence concerning Adam. About the creation of Eve, Mrs. Eddy changes her mind. In the later editions of her book she says it is absurd to believe that God

ever put Adam into a hypnotic sleep and performed a surgical operation upon him. In the first edition she says it is a mere chance that the human race is not still propagated by the removal of man's ribs. 'The belief regarding the origin of mortal man has changed since Adam produced Eve, and the only reason a rib is not the present mode of evolution is because of this change,' etc.

"Not to be warned by the footprints of time, Mrs. Eddy pauses in her revision of Genesis to wonder 'whence came the wife of Cain?' But on the whole she profits by the story of Cain, for here she finds one of those little etymological clues which never escape her penetration. The fact that Adam and all his race were but a dream of mortal mind is proved, she says, by the fact that Cain went 'to dwell in the land of Nod, the land of dreams and illusions.' Mrs. Eddy offers this seriously as 'scientific' exegesis.

"Mrs. Eddy's conclusion about the Creation seems to be that we are all in reality the offspring of the first creation recounted in Genesis, in which man is not named, but is simply said to be in the image of God; but we think we are the children of the creation described in the second chapter; of the race that imagined sickness, sin, and death for itself. The tree of knowledge which caused Adam's fall, Mrs. Eddy says, was the belief of life in matter, and she suggests that the forbidden fruit which Eve gave to Adam may have been 'a medical work, perhaps.'"

Mrs. Eddy, continues this writer, "says that Christ did not come to save mankind from sin, but to show us that sin is a thing imagined by mortal mind, that it is an illusion which can be overcome, like sickness and death. The Trinity, as commonly accepted, Mrs. Eddy denies, though she seems to admit a kind of triune nature in God by saying over and over again that he is 'Love, Truth and Life.' The holy Ghost she defines as Christian Science; 'The Comforter I understand to be Divine Science.'"

Mrs. Eddy is said to have revised the Lord's Prayer "a great many times." The form printed in the edition of 1902 is given and commented on thus:

"Our Father-Mother God, all-harmonious, adorable One. Thy kingdom is within us, Thou art ever-present. Enable us to know—as in heaven, so on earth—God is supreme. Give us grace for today; feed the famished affections. And infinite Love is reflected in love. And Love leadeth us not into temptation, but delivereth from sin, disease and death. For God is now and forever all Life, Truth, and Love."

"In this interpretation the petitions have been converted into affirmations, and Mrs. Eddy's prayer seems a somewhat dry enumeration of the properties of the Deity rather than a supplication.

"This method of 'spiritual interpretation' has given Mrs. Eddy the habit of a highly empirical use of English. At the back of her book, 'Science and Health,' there is a glossary in which a long list of serviceable old English words are said to mean very especial things. The word 'bridegroom' means 'spiritual understanding'; 'death' means 'an illusion'; 'evening' means 'mistiness of mortal thought'; 'mother' means God, etc. The seventh commandment, Mrs. Eddy insists, is an injunction against adulterating Christian Science, although she also admits the meaning ordinarily attached to it. In *The Journal* of November, 1889, there is a long discussion of the Ten Commandments by the editor, in which he takes up both personal chastity and the pure-food laws under the command, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.'"—*Literary Digest*.

AMERICA NEEDS PIETY MORE THAN VAST ENTERPRISES

WILL BEAT TARIFF, RAILWAYS OR BUMPER WHEAT CROPS IN RESULTS

Brother Russell: What think you of this for a characterization of present society and for a prophecy that seems certain of fulfillment,—and from a Wall Street Trade Journal at that? Very cordially yours,

JUNIUS M. MARTIN.

* * *

"What America needs more than railway extension and Western irrigation and low tariff and a bigger wheat crop and a merchant marine and a new navy is a revival of piety, the kind mother and father used to have—piety that counted it good business to stop for daily family prayers before breakfast, right in the middle of harvest; that quit field work a half-hour Thursday night, so as to get the chores done and go to prayermeeting; that borrowed money to pay the preacher's salary, and prayed fervently in secret for the salvation of the rich man who looked with scorn on such unbusiness-like behavior. That's what we need now to clean this country of the filth of graft, and of greed, petty and

big; or worship of fine houses and big lands and high office and grand social functions.

"What is this thing we are worshipping but a vain repetition of what decayed nations fell down and worshiped just before their light went out? Read the history of Rome in decay and you will find luxury there that could lay a big dollar over our little doughnut that looks so large to us. Great

wealth never made a nation substantial or honorable. There is nothing on earth that looks good that is so dangerous for a man or nation to handle as quick, easy, big money. If you resist its deadly influence the chances are that it will get your son. It takes greater and finer heroism to dare to be poor in America than to capture a battery in Manchuria."—*Wall Street Journal*.

AN OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE SONG OF SOLOMON

C. J. WOODWORTH

1:1. The song of songs—The harmony of harmonies—the assembling in one beautiful picture of many of the most beautiful figures of the Divine Word—the song of songs because it expresses the mutual love of Christ and his church in more ways than any other.

Which is Solomon's—Type of Christ in glory, as David was a type of Christ in the flesh.

1:2. Let him kiss me—A form of salutation which has always signified closest fellowship; greet all the brethren with an holy kiss; betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

With the kisses—The oft repeated endearments.

Of his mouth—Of his Word, the Scriptures.

For thy love—Thy caresses, the repeated assurances of guidance, protection, companionship, love and care.

Is better than wine—Wine is a symbol of doctrine. They also have erred through wine. They are drunken, but not with wine. All nations have drunk of the wine. I will not henceforth drink of this fruit of the vine. Be not drunk with wine. Doctrine is not only important but necessary. If any man will do my will he shall know of the doctrine. The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. Speak thou the things that become sound doctrine. Earnestly contend for the faith. Although a sound faith is essential, yet of faith, hope and love, the greatest of these is love; therefore, love is better than wine. The Lord's assurances of love are even more precious to the church than the precious doctrines so vital to her happiness.

1:3. Because of the savour—The sweet perfume.

Of thy good ointments—The holy Spirit, composed of the principal spices of myrrh (wisdom), cinnamon (understanding), calamus (knowledge), cassia (deputyship), the holy anointing oil of the priesthood.

Thy name—Christ, which means "Anointed."

Is as ointment—The holy anointing oil, the holy Spirit. *Poured forth*—At his baptism upon the Head, at Pentecost on the Body.

Therefore—Because of their admiration and appreciation of Christ's holy Spirit.

Do the virgins—The pure in heart.

Love thee—Seek fellowship with thee, aspire to learn of thee, to cultivate thy graces, to be near thee.

1:4. Draw me—No man can come to me except the Father draw him. All mine are thine, and thine are mine. All things are of the Father by the Son.

We will run—Not sit in the seat of the scornful, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor walk in the counsel of the ungodly, but run with patience the race set before us; run for the prize; so run that we may obtain.

After thee—The forerunner. The first-born from the dead. The first to pass over the narrow way. The Head, that in all things he might have the preeminence. Not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The King—The Lord Jesus, typified by Solomon. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty.

Hath brought me—Even in the present life.

Into his chambers—Into the "Holy," the spirit-begotten condition, the first heavenly condition; made us to sit down in heavenly places in Christ.

We will be glad—Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous.

And rejoice in thee—And again I say, Rejoice.

We will remember—Will meditate upon, think of.

Thy love—Thy caresses, assurances of guidance, protection, companionship, love and care.

More than wine—More even than the doctrines so precious to us.

The upright—Those without deceit, the guileless, pure-hearted.

Love thee—Seek fellowship with thee, aspire to learn of thee, to cultivate thy graces, to be near thee.

1:5. I am black—The bride of Moses, Zipporah, type of the Bride of Christ, was an Ethiopian woman.

But comely—The king's daughter is all glorious within; her intentions are pure, spotless in God's sight.

O ye daughters—Professed children.

Of Jerusalem—Of the Kingdom of God. The true Church instinctively recognizes that her detractors are to be found among God's professed people.

As the tents of Kedar—Kedar was one of the children of Ishmael, and the name thus stands for the Ishmaelites, or Bedouins; their tents are their homes, and though outwardly stained and weather-beaten are often extremely luxurious in the interior, being hung with costly tapestries.

As the curtains—Between the Holy and Most Holy.

Of Solomon—Of Solomon's temple. These curtains, or rather a similar curtain which hung in Herod's temple, and which was rent in twain on the day of our Lord's death, was a most wonderful curtain, being some thirty feet long, fifteen feet wide and five inches thick.

1:6. Look not upon me—Look not so upon me (Leeser); the Church kindly expostulates with her critics.

Because I am black—Because I am somewhat black (Leeser); the Church does not deny her imperfections, but is not disposed to admit the contentions of her fault-finders that she is altogether worthless.

Because the Sun—The searching light of the true Gospel which exposes every defect.

Hath looked upon me—Judgment must begin at the house of God. The Church's sins are of the kind that are open beforehand, known to all men. God's Word fearlessly exposes the weaknesses of every noble character whose life is there recorded.

My mother's children—Sitting and speaking against their brother, their own mother's son.

Were angry with me—Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, etc. The brother shall betray the brother to death.

They made me—Elected me, appointed me.

The keeper—Class-leader, Sunday-school teacher, etc.

Of the vineyards—Sunday-schools, Christian Endeavor societies, Epworth Leagues, Young People's unions.

But mine own vineyard—The cultivation of the true vine; I am the vine, ye are the branches.

Have I not kept—Because my Father is the husbandman.

A FATHER'S LETTER TO HIS SON

To My Dearly Beloved Son:—

It has been on my heart for a considerable time to write you a letter, to be opened on your tenth birthday, to endeavor to express something of the feeling of love and tenderness I have towards you, and to point out, for your eternal joy, and for your safety, certain principles, which I hope you will receive into a good and honest heart. At last a favorable opportunity has come, and as my last message to you I beg you to give earnest heed to all that this letter contains.

At the present time your dear mother and myself are in good health, and the affairs of the world are moving along in about the same general way as they have always moved within my lifetime. The world in general expects it to con-

tinue in this way indefinitely, and yet, looking at matters through the Lord's Word, I know that when this letter is read your papa and mamma will have passed from earthly scenes forever, and the great time of trouble, "such as never was since there was a nation," will no longer be a matter of prophecy, but of history.

It is needless for me to tell you, my dearly beloved son, what great tenderness and sympathy I feel for you in the thought that you will be bereft of earthly parents at such an early age, or with what compassion I think of the great suffering soon to come upon the world, and which, to some extent, you must share. But I know our heavenly Father and his goodness too well to think he has ever made a mistake,

and am sure that beyond these special and peculiar trials lie special and peculiar blessings. It is of these blessings that I particularly wish to write.

The reason that your dear mother and myself must die within the next few years is because the sufferings of the "body of Christ" are not yet complete, and we have taken advantage of the great opportunity to make covenants to lay down our earthly lives, and are trying to carry out our covenants, before this great work, which was begun by Jesus himself at the time of his baptism, is forever finished. The time when the suffering shall be finished is now very near, hence it follows that, if we have proved sufficiently faithful to the Lord, the time is near at hand when we shall share with him the glory that is to follow. This means that very soon it will be true of us, as it is true of the Lord, that we shall be changed from earthly to heavenly conditions, and the world will see us no more, forever.

The knowledge that the setting up of the Lord's kingdom is at hand was brought to us by a study of the works of our dear Brother Russell. Ever since the various volumes of *MILLENNIAL DAWN*, and the semi-monthly issues of *ZION'S WATCH TOWER* first came into my hands, I have sought to use all my time and talent in spreading the good news. As soon as you are old enough to understand these books and papers, I trust you will study them with the greatest care. You will be considerably assisted in this if you make use of the comments and other helps which appear in the Bible printed by the *WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY* in the fall of 1908.

At the time this letter is written the Image of the Beast (the federation of so-called Protestant sects, with the Episcopal church at the head) has not yet been developed, and yet, we know from Brother Russell's writings that within a very short time now it will begin its persecuting power, and in a very few more years its work will have been ended, and it, with all of Satan's devices to deceive and enslave the minds of men, will be utterly destroyed. I am telling you this now, so that when this letter is read, the fulfillments may prove to you that there is a God, and that he carries out all of his plans without the least danger of failure at any point. All that has been foretold in the Scriptures will surely be fulfilled, and exactly on time.

I come now to the special object of this letter. The Scriptures indicate that in the year 1915, the year before this letter is read, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and all the holy prophets and patriarchs from Abel to John the Baptist, will have been raised from the dead and will be in charge of the earthly phase of the Lord's kingdom, with headquarters at Jerusalem. The Lord's Word also seems to in-

dicate that this truth, and the fact that there has been a change of dispensation, may possibly not be generally believed until the year 1918. I am writing this to you so that you will not be one of those who will be mistaken on this point, but will understand that, by the time this letter is read, the squaring and straightening of earth's affairs will be in progress from Jerusalem, at the hands of the ancient worthies.

What I now wish to urge upon you, my son, is that you give your whole heart and life unreservedly to the Lord, or in other words that you make a whole-hearted consecration to him who bought you with his own precious blood, and that you grow up with the single ambition to do with all your might all you can to aid in carrying on the work which will then be under way at Jerusalem. I wish you to do this for your own joy of heart, because there is no joy comparable to doing the Lord's will, but not alone for this reason. The Scriptures show that every son and daughter of our race must at some time make an unconditional surrender to the Lord, a full consecration of heart and life to do his will, or else be destroyed.

In addition to this I wish to hold out to you a hope which I feel justified in mentioning. There are some Scriptures which show that, after the close of the Millennial age, the ancient worthies may possibly be given heavenly honors and stations, and there is some reason to believe that, as the child of consecrated parents, you may possibly be counted in with the ancient worthies if you make at once a full consecration of your heart to the Lord. If I understand the matter rightly, you occupy a different relation to our heavenly Father than other children, up until the time when you reach years of accountability, and I am hoping that you will take advantage of this special relationship to place yourself as close to the Lord and his work as it is possible for you to do.

One thing more. Beware, oh beware, of ever resisting the Lord's will even in the smallest way! At the close of the Millennial age there will be many who shall be destroyed, because at heart they are not fully submissive to the heavenly Father's will.

Should it be the Father's will that you be permitted to be counted in with the ancient worthies, be assured, dear son, that a loving father and mother will greet you in the heavenly courts with joy untold, but in any event, you may be sure we shall always watch your course with fondest affection, doing all we can to aid you in carrying out your good resolutions, and hoping in the end to see you attain to perfect everlasting life, under the happy conditions to be obtained in the golden ages to come, after the last enemy has been destroyed. With tenderest love,

Your devoted father,

I. N. COGNITO.

KING SAUL'S IGNOMINIOUS END

1 Samuel 31.—SEPTEMBER 6.

Golden Text:—"Prepare to meet thy God."—Amos 3:12.

Saul's career began under most favorable conditions and terminated most ignominiously in suicide. A man of manifest ability, as a general and a ruler he lacked in one thing, which made his career as a whole a failure. As we have seen, he was not irreverent, nor profane and vicious in the ordinary sense of those terms. In many respects he showed a deep reverence for the Almighty and a considerable desire to do his will. His failure, on the whole, was the result of a double mind. The Apostle remarks that "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Our Lord states that we "cannot serve God and Mammon." King Saul was desirous of serving God, but was also desirous of serving self and Mammon. His proper course would have been full consecration, full submission of his will to the divine will. This is the principal difference between his course and that of his successor, David. Outwardly, perhaps, Saul was as noble in character as his successor; but the latter, putting God first and submitting his own will to the divine will, had the advantage, so that whatever natural blunders he made, whatever natural defects he shared in common with the remainder of the human family, these were offset by that heart loyalty to God which never permitted him to stray far, and which, after every transgression caused him to weep bitterly and to seek divine forgiveness and therefore a closer walk with God. Thus David was a man after God's own heart, not because of his perfection of the flesh, but because of his perfection of intention and heart desire. Saul's character is represented today in many worldly people, who by a full submission of their wills to the Lord, a full consecration, might become saints, but who, in endeavoring to maintain their own wills, make a failure of life and accomplish little that is praiseworthy.

MADE MAD BY JEALOUSY

Saul lamented his loss of divine favor, declared by the Prophet Samuel; but apparently the matter did not strike

him so seriously until he began to notice that the divine blessing was with the youthful David. Jealousy, one of the most intense foes of human happiness, entered his mind and almost bereft him of reason. The more faithfully David served him, and the better the results obtained, the more did Saul recognize that this marked David as his successor in the kingdom under the Lord's providence. This, as we have seen, led to the hate which sought to assassinate him and which later on led to Saul's hunting him as a brigand, with his troops. Various matters associated with the narrative clearly imply that the evil spirit which entered into Saul in connection with his envy of David was a spirit of an unsound mind, an evil or injurious spirit or disposition. There is a great lesson in this matter, not only for the worldly class represented by Saul, but a lesson also for ourselves of the new creation. In our journey through life, almost daily we come to places and circumstances which, wrongly received, may change our entire course from fellowship and relationship to God to sin and opposition to him. What Christian has not realized certain crises in his life in which two voices seemed to speak to him; the one favoring humility and obedience to God at any cost; the other urging self-will backed by pride? If we are advanced Christians, who through numerous victories have gained a position where such besetments are rare, we still need to be on guard and to remember that we have a very wily Adversary, that we have the treasure of the new mind in an earthen vessel, and that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection. These recollections should make us very humble, and lead us to cling closely to the Lord, and to fear and abhor any attitude of conduct and even of thought that would in any measure seem to antagonize the divine will. Even if the Lord's favor seemed to be passing from us to another in certain respects, we should follow the course of

Jonathan and know for a certainty that it would be folly to battle with God, for no blessing could possibly lie in that direction.

THE PHILISTINE INVASION

It would not be correct for us to suppose that Saul's persecution of David occupied all of his time and attention. Undoubtedly as a man of ability he exercised quite an influence throughout his kingdom. This is evident from the fact that for seven years after Saul's death the ten tribes of Israel clung to his successor and declined to recognize David. On the other hand Saul's insane jealousy undoubtedly weakened him personally and also the resources of the people, so that the Philistines considered it an opportune time for an invasion of the land of Israel. The battle was not fought on the borders, and the invaders were not met promptly, but obtained a considerable foothold before the battle began. Meantime the attitude of King Saul's mind may be well judged from the incidents of his visit to the witch of Endor. Poor man! He had sufficient knowledge of God to have faith in him, but equally well for years he knew that he had been cut off from special divine favor, and that he had been vainly striving against God in his opposition to David. But with all this, in his vexation of heart he desired some superhuman counsel. Not only had he been seeking to take David's life, but he had slain the priest for giving David the shewbread, and in general had done everything he could to cut himself off from God's favor, even though he realized his need of it.

VISITING THE WITCH OF ENDOR

The fallen angels, demons, even back in Saul's time, sought to personate the dead, to hold communion with the living by representing themselves as their deceased friends. The Lord distinctly forbade such communications with demons; and the command throughout Saul's dominion had been that witches and those having familiar spirits, mediumship, should be put to death, with a view to driving them out of the land of Israel and thus to put away temptation from the Israelites. But now in his extremity doubtless, King Saul, disguising himself, sought the witch, that through her he might have communion with Samuel, the prophet. Evidently he had come under the delusion which was very rapidly making headway throughout the world, namely, that the dead are not dead, but merely disembodied. On this supposition he placated the witch and made his request for an interview with the Prophet Samuel.

The manifestation that took place may be accounted for in two ways:

(1) An evil spirit may have personated Samuel and foretold the results of the battle on the morrow. Doubtless it would have been easy for any one of mental acumen to forecast the predicted results. Besides we know not what facilities for information on such matters the demons may possess. Many of the things which today they tell through mediums are remarkable for their accuracy.

(2) It is not said that Saul saw anything nor that he heard anything. His communications were through the witch; she saw, she heard, she told. Saul perceived from what the witch said that it was Samuel, recognizing the prophet from the description of his mantle, etc., which she gave him. But his boldness in still attempting to ascertain his future is remarkable. One would think that, with his knowledge of God and with his realization that already he was under divine disfavor, he should have feared God's further displeasure in doing that which was forbidden. There is a lesson, too, for the Lord's people here. What the Lord is not pleased to give us through proper channels we should realize we would be better without. It is in vain that any might endeavor to circumvent the Lord, to get ahead of him in any manner. Our Lord's words, "Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him," would certainly apply in such a case as Saul's, when God had become his adversary,

His proper course would have been to throw himself completely upon the Lord's mercy, assured that he is able to make all things work together for good. This should be our course. Faithfulness to the divine will is the only secure and happy course for us.

SAUL AND JONATHAN SLAIN

The next day the battle raged, and the army of the Israelites was worsted, and Saul and his three sons were slain, besides many of his troops. Our lesson tells of the suicide of Saul. He preferred to die by his own hand rather than to come under the control of his enemies alive. Poor man! The poet describes the anguish of his last hour, saying,

"And the falchion at thy side
To thy heart thy hand did guide;
Crownless, horseless, headless, fall
Son and Sire, the house of Saul!"

The closing verses of the lesson tell us that the Philistines sent Saul's armor piecemeal to their various cities with reports of their victory, and that they fastened his dead body to the wall of Beth-shan. It will be remembered that at the very beginning of Saul's reign, forty years before this, the Ammonites, having made an attack upon the city of Jabesh, overpowered it and demanded the surrender, and would give no better terms than that the right eye of each Jabeshite should be destroyed; and that then King Saul went promptly to their deliverance and rescued them. It is worthy of note that the men of Jabesh, forty years after, had not forgotten Saul's energy on their behalf; so that when they heard that his body and those of his sons were ignominiously fastened to the outer wall of the city to putrify and to be devoured by vultures, they went quite a distance and took down the bodies and burned them, so that no such indignity could further be expressed, and carefully buried the charred remains. Thus they attested their recognition of the king's kindness to them. Kind words and kind deeds can never die, and we are often surprised at what a power they exercise even over those who are not in any special degree the Lord's people. Such evidence of a spirit of appreciation, of kindness, illustrates the fact that, although our race is sadly fallen and bruised by the fall, nevertheless elements of the original image of God in the flesh are still traceable in the words and deeds of natural men. Without this, it might be said there would be nothing to work upon. How glad we may be to suppose that when the new dispensation shall have been ushered in, and when by reason of the binding of Satan and the restraint of evil it will be more easy to do right than to do wrong, then many will fall in line with righteousness and eventually learn to love righteousness and to hate iniquity!

Our Golden Text, "Prepare to meet thy God," is appropriate to everybody in every time. But the right way to prepare to meet God and to hear his decision respecting the character is not, as usually supposed, to begin to get pious when we feel the approach of sickness or death or in the presence of calamity. From the moment we become believers in Christ and turn from sin and seek forgiveness and thus become eligible to God's favor, we are urged to present our bodies living sacrifices to him and thus to receive of him an adoption of his spirit to fellowship. This in turn proves to be but the entrance way to the school of Christ, where they are to be taught as sons of God, to be prepared for the glorious work in association with their Redeemer in his glorious kingdom. As they grow in grace and knowledge, they grow in appreciation of divine favor. As the poet has said,

"Oh, let no earth-born cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

Such as are in this attitude of heart are prepared to meet their God at any time. Indeed their meeting with him has already begun, and anything that will serve in any degree to hinder its pleasurable continuance will be a disaster indeed.

DAVID ATTAINING KINGSHIP

2 Samuel 2:1-7; 5:1-5.—SEPTEMBER 13.

Golden Text—"David went on and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him."—2 Sam. 5:10

David was in his 30th year at the time of King Saul's death. During the ten preceding years he had led a varied life. Banished from Saul's court through envy, hunted by the king as a wild beast, David's experiences were far from what have been considered ideal. Chased as a brigand and looked upon with distrust on the part of the majority of the people, who would know little about him except that while once high in the king's favor and having been the king's

general, he was now in disfavor, it would be difficult for some to consider him otherwise than with mere envy. Others again, failing to consider that God appointed the rulers of Israel, might think David a usurper, seeking to profit himself at his master's expense. As a matter of fact we find that even in the demoralized condition of things which followed the death of Saul and his three sons in the disastrous battle of our last lesson, still the eleven tribes promptly rallied to

the support of Saul's fourth son, Ishbosheth, and never seemed to think a moment of David.

David, as the captain of his band of six hundred men, had been making his home at Ziklag, southwest of Judah. When David heard of the death of Saul, instead of determining what he should do according to his own judgment, he inquired of the Lord. It seems remarkable to us that a young man, driven from home, an exile, hunted as a bandit, and cut off from all the refining influences of life, should retain his reverence for the Lord to such a degree. Alas! how many Christians with every condition favorable, with Bibles in their hands and Bible-study helps, etc., manifest a much less loyal disposition! How frequently the Lord and his will are forgotten, while self decides and directs. Indeed it may be considered an evidence of a quite thorough submission to the Lord and development in grace to find a Christian earnestly seeking to know the will of the Lord in all the important undertakings of his life. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Although the school in which David was trained may be considered a rude one, nevertheless he evidently learned many lessons in it. His first inquiry was, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" The answer was favorable. The next question was, "To which city?" Which city shall be my headquarters or capital? The Lord directed to Hebron. David wisely estimated that the people of his own tribe knew him well and understood why he was persecuted by King Saul. David was not without honor in his own country and not without confidence in his own tribe. But with all this he had special confidence in the divine wisdom and the divine power. He recognized that the Lord was directing him and that the anointing oil had already been poured upon him and that it was only a question of time when the Lord would point out the next step. Nevertheless he recognized it to be his duty to wait on the Lord and not attempt to grasp and take hastily the things which were his by promise. He had waited for more than ten years. He could afford still to wait patiently on the Lord.

How important a lesson for the antitypical David—the Beloved—the Christ! The Apostle testifies this respecting our Lord Jesus, that he thought the kingdom not a thing to be grasped or usurped. He waited the Father's time. He meanwhile humbled himself in harmony with the Father's will and gave evidence that he delighted to do that will at any cost. This faithful and patient waiting was pleasing to God in the One who was to be heir of all things and highly exalted. Similarly we, his followers and members, are to remember the Prophet David's words, "Wait, I say, on the Lord." Some of us have learned by experience that to attempt to go before the Lord in any matter is dangerous. We are not wise enough to guide ourselves. Indeed, as the poet has expressed it,

"We fear to touch
Things that involve so much."

If we could recognize the delicacy of our situation at times, it would make us more modest and cautious. Not only our own interests and eternal glory are at stake, but also the interests of other fellow-members of the body of Christ. A rash word, a thoughtless action, inconsiderateness in any sense of the word might lead to unfavorable conditions of heart, and, even though we gained the promise, it might be by tribulation rather than by the way in which the Lord would lead.

LET YOUR MODERATION BE KNOWN

Some, miscalculating David's temperament and sentiments towards Saul, supposed that they would gain his favor by reciting incidents showing how they had assisted in Saul's overthrow, but such met with prompt rebuke, David in every instance speaking of King Saul in considerate language, not merely because it would be wrong to speak evil of any man, but also because, as king, Saul had been God's representative, "The Lord's anointed," as David himself styled it. Quite to the contrary of any exaltation over the death of his enemy, David sent a special message of appreciation to the men of Jabesh who had given decent burial to Saul and his sons. He wished them to know that he did not regard this as an act of enmity to himself, but rather as an act of decency and loyalty in which he himself would be glad to have had a share. He said, Blessed be ye of the Lord that ye have showed this kindness. And now the Lord show kindness unto you and I will also requite you this kindness. Therefore let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant, for your master, Saul, is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

It may be contested by some that David's course was a case of policy and that he was too wise to antagonize the men of Jabesh in giving Saul and his sons decent burial.

Even if this were the case it would reflect credit on David instead of discredit. It would show that he had the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of a sound mind. But we think it unnecessary to attack the motive of any person who wishes to do a kind act. Instead of attributing the motive to evil, we should "think no evil." The same principle is applicable to the Lord's people. They should not attribute wrong motives to business men who contribute money for benevolences, etc. It may, indeed, be true of some (perhaps of many) that the thought of gain associates with the gift, but it by no means follows that the act is destitute of generous motives and wholly sordid. We are the happier when we endeavor to think kindly in all the actions of life. A blind brother recently remarked, "I have no doubt that my blindness saves me from many disadvantages. When I meet people I endeavor to think of them as looking happy and generous and good; whereas if I had my sight I might consider it impossible to think of them as favorably and generously as I want to."

David's adverting to the fact that he was now King of Judah was an intimation to the men of Jabesh that they would perhaps like to have him king over them, as he was now king in the place of Saul who had hunted him for ten years. It was an intimation that they might go farther and fare worse—all of which was true, as we know.

WE WALK BY FAITH

Quite probably King David expected after his recognition by the tribe of Judah that very speedily other tribes would rally to his banner. Nevertheless we are not informed respecting any move he made to accomplish this. He was waiting on the Lord. Surely it was a long wait, too. Abner, as the general of King Ishbosheth of the eleven tribes of Israel, waged war against the enemies of Israel and to some extent gained victories. King David had plenty of opportunity of wondering whether or not the Lord intended to carry out the programme instituted in his coronation. With the prestige of victories over outside enemies, King Ishbosheth turned attention to the tribe of Judah, claiming it was in rebellion against the lawful head. The result was a civil war, instead of an entrance upon a reign of prosperity. Brothers fought against brothers—one party of God's favored people against another. And this continued for two years, gradually, however, bringing successes to David and his army. Thus we read, "David waxed stronger and stronger and the house of Saul weaker and weaker."

In considering the period of civil war and how one section of the Lord's people sought to injure others, we are reminded of spiritual Israel and the fact that brethren in it sometimes become so estranged and so out of the leading of God's providence that they also become antagonists to each other. Alas, that this should be so!—that the love of God should at any time fail to constrain us so that we would not only turn from his love and fellowship, but that the sword should be used to smite down brethren! Get the picture impressed in our minds and sealed in our hearts of coming days with spiritual Israel, when brother shall be against brother, which the Lord will permit just prior to the establishment of the kingdom. Let us resolve that however others may fight, the weapons of our warfare shall not be carnal and that our battling shall not be against those who are the Lord's by covenant, but against the great adversary. Carnal weapons are not merely guns and swords—but more injurious and death-dealing is the tongue when used to slander and wound. God forbid that our tongues, wherewith we praise God, should work injury to any man, but particularly to any of the household of faith.

KING OVER ALL ISRAEL

Ultimately King Ishbosheth and his general Abner were both foully murdered and we carefully note that David had no complicity in the matter, and that so far as the sons of Saul were concerned, David's oath of friendship with Jonathan was quite sufficient protection to them. However, the death of these men opened the way for the people of Israel to consider matters further and, as they considered, they perceived that God's favor was with David; that he was a man after God's own heart, and that as a ruler he was doing valiant service to the people who had accepted him as their king. The saner thinking amongst the tribes of Israel brought them to the conclusion mentioned in this lesson—"Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was thou that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be prince over Israel." Finally they had come to hearken to the voice of the Lord. No doubt the Lord could have brought to pass such a condition of things before. There was no divine pur-

pose in the way. And so it is with all of our affairs, if we only knew it. God, who knows the end from the beginning, is wisely guiding for the good of his people and particularly of those who are individually his of the anointed class.

Our lesson tells us that King David made a covenant or league with the people of Israel. By this is signified that he agreed to serve as king with a limited monarchy, under a constitution. He made a covenant, a constitution which was explicit as to what constituted the rights of the people and a delineation of what were the rights of the king. This institution in Israel indicates that they were the most advanced people in the world, for, so far as we can learn from history, the kings of that time were despots, who governed according to their own ideas, trampling upon the rights and liberties of the people. The interesting ceremonies connected with the exaltation of David as king over all Israel and the joy amongst the people in connection with David is amply recorded in 1 Chron. 12:23-40.

David's experiences in waiting for the kingdom and the lessons learned and the character developed and the preparation which made him wise and moderate all serve to illustrate a great lesson to the Gospel Church. We also are called to sit upon the throne of the Lord—to rule in his name. We also have been anointed to the office by the holy Spirit, which the Apostle declares is a foretaste of the glory and joys into which we shall enter when the crowning days shall have come. If discipline, self control, faith, moderation and hope were all requisite to make David a king over the Lord's people and to properly represent him in government, how much more severe lessons should be for us, who are called to so much higher a station—to the throne of earth as God's representatives and to the Royal Priesthood, ruling, judging and trying mankind, to the intent that as many as possible of them may be rescued from their degraded condition and be brought into full harmony with God! Surely we may say as David did that our trials and testings are much less than we expected them to be.

If we carefully scrutinize David's character to note what constituted its strongest points, and what, therefore, we should seek correspondingly to cultivate, we shall agree that the strongest point was his will, which was rightly directed. It is difficult to estimate the power of the human will. Apparently God has placed all the interests of the present life under the control of our wills, and, indeed, much of the success in respect to the future life is similarly under the control of our wills. Apparently the will, rightly exercised against sin, is invulnerable. As we read, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Just what kind of dynamic force the mind, the will, can exercise against the adversary, against sin, against sickness and disease, it is difficult for us to understand, but we have the Scriptural assurance that there is such a will, and our own experiences in its exercise have fully demonstrated the truth of our proposition. Strong wills are not confined to God's people. Satan and many of the depraved are strong-willed. Indeed, in this fact lies much of the suggestion of the spirit of wickedness. All who are the Lord's should recognize the value of determination and the unsatisfactoriness of vacillation.

The Apostle declares truly, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Such a person makes a success of nothing. Whatever may come to him above the ordinary will surely be by accident. Herein we see the wisdom of the Lord's method of dealing with the church in this Gospel age. "He seeks such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." He tells them of his goodness and gives sufficiency of help to encourage the person to will aright, with assurances that if he will do the willing the Lord himself will give the necessary assistance and succor in every time of need. And although the adversary is stronger and wiser than we are, he shall not be able to hurt us because He who is on our side is greater than all who are against us. It is to this end that the Lord encourages us to make a covenant with him by sacrifice—to give up our all, our will to his guidance. Happy are they who do this. And these are few comparatively. With the majority there is a continuance of self and much of disputation in respect to things of the Lord—his will. It is in line with this endeavor to fortify the will and strengthen the character that we recognize such vows as would be of assistance. The adversary is watching continually to touch the spots most liable to assault and we must make the fortification strong, striving to keep our sacrifice with the Lord and our wills firm to resist the adversary—to serve the truth and all the household of faith, and to guard our own words, acts and thoughts.

THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

With the inauguration of King David came the usual mirth and songs and exhibitions of joy. Indeed nearly every nation has its national anthem in which it memorializes the king and the kingdom. And is it not so with our Lord's kingdom, which is shortly to be introduced with most wonderful demonstrations? Is not the glorious temple of God—the church—the living stones of which are now being shaped, hewn and polished, hailing the great Capstone? The Head of the church is Christ. Already we hail and crown him Lord of all in our hearts and look forward with joyful anticipation to the time when "every knee shall bow" to the Lord.

Meantime we who hope to be members of the bride class and "joint-heirs with him" are here expected to learn to sing the song of Moses the servant and the song of the Lamb, for "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor and glory, and blessing." "And they sang a new song before the throne: and no man could learn that song," except the anointed. And the Lord will be with him in Mount Zion, the kingdom. Realizing that this song is the tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, we are correspondingly interested to know to what extent we have learned—to what extent we can sing it now. We find indeed that it is a life study to learn this lesson. We rejoice in the privilege to bear witness of our God to all those who have ears to hear, even though doing so brings reproaches, frowns, opposition. Our patience and our faith are to continue, and we are to wait for the kingdom in its beauty and the glorious "change" in ourselves to tell to others more effectively than ever the blessed tidings.

OUR CONSECRATION VOW EMPHASIZED

The friends are getting the correct view of the recently suggested "vow," and their names are coming in freely. Some tell us of the blessings experienced, as they realize that all the features of the Vow were really included in their original consecration "even unto death" in the service of the truth and the brethren; the special features merely representing their appreciation of the strenuous times at hand and the need of safe-guarding themselves and all the dear brethren, against our wily foe, Satan.

One dear brother is curious to know who suggested to us the "vow" and who formulated its phraseology. We reply that no human being suggested "the vow" or its phraseology to the Editor. He believes that the Spirit of the Lord guided him to lift up this high "standard" for the protection of the Lord's people, by showing him that the enemy is about to "come in like a flood," and that the specializing of several features of our consecration will enable many to "resist the devil that he may flee from them." (See Isa. 59:19, 20.) The only modification to the vow was the inclusion of *brothers* and *sisters* as exceptions, at the request of a "pilgrim," who claimed that otherwise his conscience would hinder his kissing his sister, but who desired to join with the others that took the vow. The Editor explained that there is nothing in the vow to

hinder the *kissing* of a brother or a sister, a nephew or a niece, *because* no one need be ashamed so to do before a congregation of the Lord's people who know the relationship; and *that any familiarity more than that would not be advisable*. However, fearing that others might misunderstand the matter similarly, these exceptions were made before the vow was printed in the *TOWER*. Be it understood, however, that only brothers and sisters of blood relationship are meant and understood—the very intent of the last clause of the vow being to erect a helpful barrier between brothers and sisters in the spirit.

Two or three have written asking if it would be *right* to take the vow with certain *other* exceptions and reservations. We reply, that it is each one's own business whether he takes the Vow as published or modified or not at all. Our advice is that it be taken as published. The very fact that anyone feels fearful that he or she might not be able to fulfil its provisions would mean to us that such are the very ones who *especially* need the vow in its very strongest form. It is the weak that need the fortification. Probably by far the majority of those who have thus vowed had little or no need of it, but joined in lifting this high "standard" in the interest of the less strong brethren, and also for the worldly.

The long lists of names coming in caution us that the printing of these in the TOWER will consume too much space. We are therefore discontinuing this method of publicity, purposing (D. V.) that with the close of the year we will publish an Alphabetical List of all who advise us that they have taken the vow.

Continue to send in your names as classes where convenient, and continue to address these vow letters to the Editor. He is specially pleased to receive them and to know of the great joy so many are experiencing in connection with this movement in the narrow way. He would be pleased to acknowledge each letter, but this would be beyond his strength, even if the other interests of the work permitted, which they would not.

Dear Brother Russell:—

Greetings in the Lord. I write you to say how pleased I was to see the TOWER containing "the vow," and to let you and the "family" know I have registered it as mine.

As a colporteur I feel its need, although I have always endeavored to walk circumspectly, but feel much strengthened in mind now by the definite Vow.

I thank our heavenly Father for harvest-work privilege and have much joy in the service, though it is uphill compared with the work in the United States.

Yours in the dear Redeemer,

HERBERT C. ROBB,—Ireland.

Dear Brother Russell:—

I want to tell you the joy which the June 15th TOWER brought. I am glad to tell you that I made the "vow" to the Lord. This is just what I needed.

Dear Brother, I wish you could know how much we appreciate the TOWER. It is to me like a letter from home; my joy is unspeakable. May the Lord ever keep you strong for your willing service.

Yours in the Beloved,

J. H. MARTIN.

Dear Brother Russell:—

It was with great joy and thankfulness to our dear heavenly Father that I read the TOWER of June 15th.

The dear Lord's hand was indeed very evident in the wording of that "vow." It indeed seems to include all the channels through which our great adversary is at present seeking to overcome the elect. I had so earnestly prayed that the dear Lord would in some way make manifest his protection and care over his own, and caution them against the subtle ways of the enemy; for the dear Lord has seen best that I should be made painfully aware of the fact that some associating themselves with the children of God are seeking to take unauthorized liberties, clothing themselves as angels of light, and claiming to be of great assistance.

Words would fail me to express my joy and gratitude when I read the "vow" and saw how indeed the Eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. How evident again is the care of our God in that this "vow" has been published, and all may read and know our attitude.

With joy I say the taking of "the vow" has brought blessing upon blessing, and such an increase of love and joy in the colporteur work. I ask an interest in your prayers, dear Brother Russell, that I may prove faithful unto the end. Thanking you again for all your kind helpness, I am,

Yours in his service,

S. WOLF.

My Dear Brother Russell:—

"Grace unto you and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 1:2.) Although a little late I write to tell you how much I appreciate the article in June 15th TOWER, "Pay thy vows unto the Lord." It appeals to me as being a very timely warning, as I have been so situated in the last two years as to understand the importance of such a warning. The Lord in his wisdom has seen best to place me where the adversary has been busy trying to make the Lord's people believe that if they love one another, as the Word says we should (1 John 3:16), they should show it outwardly. When spoken to about it the dear friends would say that we were evil surmising or perhaps had a great deal of false modesty which we must overcome. I had taken a similar vow before the Lord, but have now taken this one, and feel that it will help me greatly in keeping the sacrifice on the altar, and while I realize my inability to keep it, yet I trust in him who has promised, "My strength is made perfect in weakness."

Now, dear brother, I realize that the greatest test is more love for the brethren and less for self, and I ask that I may be remembered by you in prayer that by the Lord's grace I may stand these tests and fulfil my vows, that by so doing I may be the more able to glorify my dear heavenly Father, which is my chief desire in life.

"Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your heart and stablish you in every good word and work."—2 Thess. 2:16,17.

Your sister by his favor,

NELLIE BUSH.

Dear Brother Russell:—

At first reading I could assent to all the conditions of the vow; yet I have not until today found time to consider them carefully and prayerfully. Having done so, I wrote out the Vow and on my knees registered it as my Vow before the Lord. I have placed the copy where I can see it the first thing in the morning and the last at night. I am sure that all who have taken it will realize that "oneness" that is so pleasing to the Lord and for which he prayed.

I have always remembered all of the Lord's dear people in prayer, but especially those at the Bible House, and realize that the colporteur work and workers are very dear to your hearts, and I more and more appreciate the great privilege which has come to me, "even me," which is just the training and discipline I need.

With much love in the Lord,

T. H. PERKINS.

Dear Brother Russell:—

I write to tell you that I have taken the Vow given in June 15th TOWER, and I ask an interest in your prayers. I consider it a very timely precaution against the wiles of the adversary, especially the various "New Thought" deceptions which are being promulgated with such subtlety, befitting one whose house is about to fall. I consecrated at the age of fifteen, and, realizing how little time I had to give in the service of the Lord, while under obligations to no one, decided I would never increase my obligations by marriage and expressed as much to the Lord in my consecration vow. I have since received so many blessings and profited in so many unexpected ways by this Vow that I do not hesitate to strengthen it by the one given in the TOWER.

I assure you, dear brother, that I remember you daily at the throne of grace, as well as all the Bible House family. With much Christian love,

Yours in his service,

MARY OCTAVIA NOE.

Dear Brother Russell:—

After very carefully weighing "vow" stated in June 15th TOWER, with earnest and thankful heart I desire to have you enlist me as having entered into further covenant with the Lord, through the vow. I shall only delight to remember daily before him all the stipulations contained in the vow.

Am noting with great pleasure the good fruit of your recent visit here at Little Rock.

Yours in Christ,

THOS. F. HUGHES, JR.

Dear Brother Russell:—

I have been thinking of writing you for some time; now that I have made "the vow" to the Lord I shall write. I am so rejoiced for the article in June 15 TOWER it certainly will be a great blessing to the blessed cause. The Father is so thoughtful of our every need, calling our attention to the snares of the Adversary, and bringing forth meat in due season; so we never lack.

May God's blessings be continually showered upon you and all the dear household, is the prayer of a sister in his service,

MRS. J. F. BEARD.

Dear Brother Russell:—

In addition to any action as individuals that we may have or shall take in reference to "the vow" proposed in the June 15th TOWER, as elders of the St. Louis church, we desire to unite in an expression to you of our hearty endorsement and approval of your presentations and suggestions in this regard, as being in our estimation, valuable means of safe-guarding the members of the Lord's flock in a time of particular trial and testing. We would state that we have each, individually, taken the obligation.

With much love in our Head, and praying his blessing