

We believe that with your wide and varied experience, you could give us a few valuable suggestions along this line and we would be glad if you would give us some advice.

Praying the Lord's rich blessing upon you daily, we remain
Yours in his service,
ST. JOSEPH [MO.] CLASS.

In Reply

Where a class finds, after trial, that one or more of its elders or deacons possess good business acumen and faithfulness, it sometimes proves a good plan to make a Business Committee of such and leave much of the business routine to such committee. Care, however, should be observed not to put matters too fully out of the hands of the class. Care also should be observed not to put too much power into the hands of any who evidence a desire to grasp power and to exceed the wishes of the class. In all matters the easiest and smoothest way of obtaining results is advisable; but the authority of the class should be recognized. Any one ignoring the class and its wishes would better be left without any special service as elder, deacon, etc.

DEAR FRIENDS:—

In THE TOWER of February 15, I read some quotations from alleged German sermons, extracted from the *Methodist Times*, and supposed to be faithful translations from these sermons. Since reading them I received a package of newspapers from my home, Copenhagen, in one of which is an alleged truthful explanation of those sermons.

Pastor Loebel, of Leipzig, does not even exist. Professor Rheinhold Seeby should be Seeberg; he denies absolutely to have said anything of the kind quoted; and, while Philippi's expressions are not absolutely denied, their authenticity is very doubtful.

I enclose the article from the Danish paper *Röbenhavn*. If you so think, a correction in THE TOWER might help remove some of the added bitter feelings against Germans in general. My sympathy is rather on the side of France and England; but I desire justice to all.

Yours in his service,

C. PETERSEN.

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No. 14

"LEST WE FORGET!"

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."—Hebrews 12:14.

Although the Lord's people are counseled by the Lord's Word to be peacemakers, and to pursue peace, nevertheless they are forewarned that they must fight. On the surface these injunctions seem paradoxical. It seems strange that we should be admonished to be peacemakers and then be told that we are to fight. These conflicting statements may be harmonized however. If we are loyal to the Lord and to his cause, our loyalty will bring us into opposition with whatever is contrary to God. It is not that we are to strive with people; but the very fact that we are counseled to be peacemakers implies that there will be opposition.

How is it that when one wishes to do right and is doing this to the best of his ability he meets with opposition? It was so with our Master. Although he was perfect, yet he had opposition. We need not be surprised, then, if we who are imperfect should have similar experiences. What did Jesus do to cause people to do evil toward him? He did only good and sought to bless all. His loyalty to the Father, however, made it a necessity for him to rebuke sin and error. This brought upon him the antagonism of those who upheld these sins and errors. The darkness hates the light because it is a constant rebuke to the darkness.

Then we not only have the opposition of the spirit of the world, but also the opposition of our own fallen flesh and the virulent opposition of the great adversary and his hosts. What a power this all means! At one time in our lives we did not know what it meant to have the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil; but we are learning what this means, dear brethren. Our great adversary is a very wily foe, and is on the alert to seize every opportunity to ensnare and entrap us, to put our enemies in antagonism against us, and to stir up all kinds of persecution and opposition. One might think that Satan would be satisfied to have taken the wrong course himself; and that he would ere now have been ready to say, "I have had enough of it." Why does he not say this? It is because he is so implacable a foe to God and to all that is good. He has so hardened his heart to all that is holy that he cannot be renewed to repentance, to change about and take an opposite course.

LET US TAKE WARNING FROM SATAN'S COURSE

What a solemn warning this should be to use to resist stoutly and unequivocally the very beginnings of sin, to resist the approach of temptation to be disloyal to God in the slightest degree, by hastening to the throne of grace in every time of danger! The adversary's designs seem to be especially against the saints of God. He steadfastly opposes all those who desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, rather than those who walk according to the course of this world; for the latter are already more or less under his control. He does not seek to run after them or seek to entrap them. All he needs to do is to keep them from the light.—2 Cor. 4:4.

Satan does not wish the glorious light of God's goodness to shine into men's hearts; for wherever the light of truth goes it brings a transformation. We become changed men and women as soon as the truth shines into our hearts; and this transformation goes on day by day. When Satan sees this, he exerts all his power to blind the one who has gotten out from under his domination, and to weave his web around him again. When the fly begins to struggle to escape, the spider

at once proceeds to strengthen the web around him. If the fly escapes the snare, the spider will again entrap him, if possible.

But in spite of the foes with which we have to contend, the foes without and within, we are perfectly safe so long as we keep close to the Master. Stronger and greater is he that is on our part than all they that are against us. We have learned something of the character of our heavenly Friend. At first we saw that God was a great Being, deserving of our reverence; but now we are coming to see more and more how just he is, how wise he is, how loving and lovely he is. As we come to thus appreciate his glorious character, it inspires within us a great desire to be like him, and we find that the injunction of Scripture is that we should be like our Father in heaven. Jesus was like him, and we are instructed to become copies of God's dear Son. "Be ye followers of us," said the Apostle, "even as we are followers of Christ."

SELF OUR SPECIAL BATTLE-GROUND

We are now God's special representatives in the world, fighting a good fight of faith against sin and evil, especially in ourselves. We are not at all commissioned to clean up the world. The Bible gives us no such instructions. The Lord will use us to do this work by and by, when we reach the kingdom. We cannot now quite get ahead of the evil that we find in our own flesh, and so we need to turn our forces against sin entrenched in our mortal bodies. We need to exercise great care lest, while we preach to others, we ourselves should become castaways. What a thought that is, that, after having told others about God, his love, his power and his salvation in Christ, we should ourselves become castaways from this glorious salvation!

As new creatures we should be very vigilant, should continue to grow, should increase in power to overcome the flesh. Then we shall be safe. Self is to be our special battle-ground. Many of the Lord's people have a great deal of natural combativeness. This is a good trait if controlled and turned in the right direction. Combativeness is necessary, or we could never overcome. But we need to restrain ourselves that we do not fight the brethren; and we are not to enter into a personal combat with the devil. We are no match for him. But we are to resist him. The Lord will soon take hold of him and bind him up for a thousand years. He will conquer the adversary and will undo all his works. But it will require the entire thousand years to accomplish fully that work. We need not hope to overthrow Satan or his works while we are in the flesh. It is not our mission. What the Lord has given us to do is to conquer ourselves, to control this body which is of the fallen race of Adam, to keep ourselves that that wicked one touch us not.—1 John 5:18.

We all have natural inclinations toward sin. It is necessary, therefore, that we overcome the inclinations of the flesh, the disposition of the flesh—all these things that war against the spirit. From the moment that we surrender ourselves to the Lord and were begotten of the holy Spirit, we were new creatures. Old things have passed away, and all things have become new. We no longer belong to the old family, the family of Adam; we are an entirely new creation. We have passed from death unto life, from condemnation to death in Adam to a new life in Christ. The continuation of this new life will

depend upon our faithfulness as children of God. We must show our loyalty to the Lord by resisting everything that pertains to the old life.

SCRIPTURAL ENCOURAGEMENTS TO COME OFTEN TO GOD

None of us can fully do the things that we would. Some are more and some less fallen by nature. If we think we are succeeding fully, it is because we are more or less blind to our own deficiencies. We would do perfectly, but we cannot. But by fighting a good fight, we are to prove to the Lord that we are doing the best we can. We are not merely to make a little effort, but are to put forth all our strength, which will be supplemented by the grace of the Lord. If, then, in spite of our best efforts we come short, as we surely shall, what then? "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Thus we are to continue "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." This does not mean that we are to keep from ever getting any spot or wrinkle upon our garments; for we could not avoid so doing. But God's wonderful arrangement is that we may come to him and claim the merit of the blood of the Savior who died for us. We need not permit a spot or wrinkle to remain so as to blemish our glorious wedding robe. When we first came into the Father's family we received merit to cover all our past sins; but we have weaknesses and sins of the present, and we need the blood for these also. Thus the Lord has provided for our need. With this knowledge of the love of the Father and of our Lord Jesus, we are to come boldly—courageously—to the throne of heavenly grace.

Some may feel that it is rather presumptuous to come thus to the Lord for continual cleansing from all earthly defilement, for the forgiveness of our daily unwitting transgressions. But we are instructed to the contrary by the Apostle. We need the encouragement of God's Word thus to come to the Lord to be forgiven. The flesh says, "Do not go very often to the throne of grace." When we first made a mistake it was comparatively easy to take it to the Lord. We came without much difficulty, or perhaps without any. We told the Lord that our transgression was not wilful, and that we were sorry; and we realized his forgiveness. But the second time it was not so easy; and it becomes more difficult the oftener we have to come, every time we sin. We told him at first that we would try to be more careful; yet we continued perhaps to come short of the standard which we recognized. So we were tempted not to come to God with the matter.

NEVER PRESUME UPON GOD'S MERCY

We all need to refresh our minds with the promises for our encouragement in continuing to come for mercy and grace to help in every time of need. Thus we are made stronger for the difficulties of the future. We are not, however, to presume upon the mercy of the Lord by becoming measurably careless as to our words and thoughts and deeds; for if the Lord sees anything of this spirit, he will not readily forgive us and restore us to favor. He will withhold the assurance of his forgiveness; and we may come to him again and again before we realize the sense of his love and blessing. This will make us more careful not to be thus derelict another time.

The condition of those who fail to keep their record clean before the Lord is a very sad one. After the first or second offense they say to themselves, "I cannot go to the Lord again; I will go to sleep and forget it." They wake up in the morning out of harmony with God. But they think, "Well, I cannot help it." At night the thought that all is not right with the Lord comes again. "I know that I have had plenty of difficulties today and more failures; but I cannot go to God. It is of no use." So the breach widens. They forget the great mercy of the Lord. They forget that he has said, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust."

This is a wrong course, fraught with extreme danger. We should clean up our accounts with the Lord every day. We should retire every night just as we should wish to do if we knew that we would not wake up in the flesh. In the morning before we arise our first thought should be, "How can I please the Lord today and be helpful to others, and especially how can I overcome myself?" Some who fail to take advantage of the grace offered for every time of need gradually get so far off from the Lord that by and by they scarcely think about it any longer. They have a reverence for God, but they do not love him. He is not close to them, and they know it. They know the right way, but they feel that they cannot walk in it. They realize that they have spots on their robe, but they try to put the thought behind them. If this course continues, where will it end?

These are not the things to put behind us. The things that

the Lord has forgiven should be put behind us; but the things for which we have not sought forgiveness should trouble us until they are settled. It is not a good plan to wait until evening to go to the Lord if we realize that we have displeased him. If we can go to our closet at once, we should do so. If not, we might close our eyes for a moment and get into communication with our Father in heaven through the merits of our Savior. Let us keep in constant touch with the Lord, and tell him about all our affairs, our mistakes, our unwitting trespasses. There are probably many trespasses committed by us that we do not recognize. But daily application for the blood of cleansing will keep our garments clean and white.

CARELESS ONES UNFIT FOR THE KINGDOM

Those who get spots upon their robes and leave them there will not be fit for the kingdom of God; for the bride of Christ will be composed of only those who will be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Jesus is to present this class blameless and unreprouvable before the Father. They did not walk perfectly, without a blemish; but they were careful to keep their garments unspotted by going often to the Lord. They let nothing keep them away. This is the spirit of the bride class. We each wish to be of that class, dear friends. If any of us are not sure just now as to our standing with the Lord, let us make haste to go to him and see that the record is cleared by our dear Redeemer and Advocate. Let us not wait, but go at once.

The faithful class is pictured to us in Revelation 7:3, 4 and 14:1-5. These are the 144,000 who have the Father's name in their foreheads. They sing the new song, which none can sing but these 144,000. Oh, we long to be among them! We cannot afford to be anywhere else. The outcome is all in our own hands whether we succeed or fail, after God has given us his holy Spirit. It will be our own fault if we miss the kingdom. There will be no blame to attach to the Lord; for he has arranged for our continual cleansing day by day. His grace is provided for us at every step of the way; and his loving, protecting providences are continually about us if we are trustful and obedient to the best of our ability.

The other class who allow spots to accumulate upon their robes, is a "great multitude, whose number no man knoweth." (Revelation 7:9); that is, they are not of an ordained or fixed number as is the bride class. These must through great tribulation wash their robes, all spotted and soiled, in the blood of the Lamb. These will then stand before the throne, will serve God day and night in his temple. The bride class will be The Temple; or, in another figure, they will be seated upon the Messianic Throne with their Lord and Bridegroom. These different figures give different phases of the honored position and work of the Body of Christ in glory. These are spoken of as wearing crowns, the others as merely carrying palm branches, indicating final victory.

How glad we are that our dear heavenly Father has mercifully provided for those who through lack of sufficient zeal and faithfulness lose the "Prize of the high calling"! We rejoice that even the "foolish virgins" do not lose all, but will through tears and travail of soul yet come wholly back to the Lord. They will finish their course in death. There is an enforced destruction of the flesh. Although they covenanted to sacrifice it willingly yet they failed to do so. They love the Lord and love righteousness, but not sufficiently to be thoroughly loyal and faithful; and so they must be severely scourged, that their spirits may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

EARNEST EXHORTATION TO FAITHFULNESS

No one has been called of God to the Great Company class. "We are all called in one hope of our calling." Let us then walk with the Lord in white every day, dear brethren and sisters. Let us keep our robes spotless. It is easier to get spots on them than to get the spots off, and each spot will be more difficult than the previous one. We understand spots to be the result of a measure of carelessness. "It is impossible for me to keep my robe from ever getting spotted," you say, "but I am very thankful that the Lord has provided a way whereby the spots may be removed when I earnestly apply for the cleansing."

Each experience of this kind should make us more humble, more careful, more alive to our weaknesses and more watchful to avoid getting spots on our white robes. Otherwise the Lord will chastise us by withholding for a time his peace, lest we think that we may be careless, and then may have the spot removed without any trouble. The Lord wishes us to realize that this is no light matter. Then let us each be very faithful, that we may soon hear the Master's sweet "Well done!"

WHAT IS UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION?

We are asked whether or not we believe in universal redemption, and what we consider to be the full scope or meaning of the term. We reply:

To our understanding, many who use the expression, "Universal Redemption," fail to understand clearly its signification. They mean universal and eternal salvation, which is another matter entirely. We believe that the Bible teaches universal redemption in its statement that Jesus Christ, "by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," and that he "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (Hebrews 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6) Again, "He is the propitiation for our [the church's] sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) All these texts speak of the redemption of mankind; and all clearly and positively declare that it will be universal—that is, that it will apply to every member of our race.

The universality of the redemption, having been thus established, our next question would properly be, What is included in the word redemption? The answer is that in the Greek, as well as in the English, the word has the significance of purchase—of the acquiring of something by the giving of something else in its stead. This thought is emphasized several times in the Bible. Not only are we told that we are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Jesus, but we have Jesus' word for it that he gave himself a corresponding price for sinners. (Matthew 20:28) The word used in the Greek is *lutron-anti*, signifying a price in exact offset. St. Paul gives exactly the same thought when he says, "the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom-price [anti-lutron] for all." (1 Timothy 2:5, 6) St. Paul again emphasized the same thought when he says, "As by a man came death, by a Man comes also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive."—1 Corinthians 15:21, 22.

Thus we have the matter of redemption and the redemption-price for mankind emphasized and particularized. It surely is universal; it covers every member of our race. The sin came by one man, and he alone was sentenced by the great heavenly Court to die. His wife and his children share with him in this penalty—not by direct sentence, but indirectly; for the measure of life which we have come from Father Adam, and it was only a spark, its right to exist having been forfeited before it came to us. It was thus, however, that our great Creator provided universal redemption. By this decree against one person he made it possible that one perfect man might redeem the condemned one. It was to this end that our Lord, the great Logos, left the heavenly Courts, humbled himself and was made flesh, the Man Christ Jesus, who tasted death for every man. His death is sufficient for the satisfaction of the claims of Justice against the first man; and all the results of that sentence in that man's race are provided for.

UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION DEFINED

In order to see what Adam and his race may expect as a result of this universal redemption, we must notice what Father Adam was before he sinned; for redemption implies the bringing of him and his race back into the condition in which he was before he sinned. Note, therefore:

- (1) Adam had fellowship with his Creator.
- (2) He lived under divine blessing, which provided for his every need and maintained him in life as long as he was obedient.
- (3) His claims had not been decided as respects eternity. He was in the school of experience, gaining knowledge, and was assured of a continuance of his life as long as he remained obedient and used his knowledge in harmony with his Creator's will.
- (4) He was, therefore, a probationer for eternal life. It is our understanding that had Adam continued obedient under certain tests he would have been recognized as a graduate in the school of experience and as no longer properly subjected to tests and trials. But he never reached this position. He failed in this trial time, and never attained his graduation therefrom.

Universal redemption, therefore, means a bringing of Adam and his race back again to the probationary state in which Adam was when he sinned. That which was lost is that which was redeemed, and which is to be restored. God's provision, the Scriptures tell us, is for "times of restitution"; and those times, or years, of restitution are for the bringing of Adam and his race back to all that they at first had. The Scriptures intimate very clearly that the experiences of mankind—first, under the reign of sin and death; and secondly, under the restitution blessings of Messiah's kingdom—will give

such ample knowledge of God and of his plan that at the conclusion of Messiah's reign every member of the race will have had his probation in full—full knowledge, full opportunity.

The Scriptures show us that some, when granted all these blessings, will resist them and, sinning wilfully, will be accounted as unworthy of any further favor of the Almighty, and will be destroyed in the second death. They show us clearly that in the end of the Millennial age, some, even of those who will attain full human perfection, will not be accounted worthy of eternal life, but on the contrary will be destroyed in the second death, because, having enjoyed their share in the universal redemption, they have not improved the opportunities for such character development as would meet the divine requirements. Their destruction is shown in Rev. 20:7-10. It is also pictured in the destruction of the goat class in the parable of the sheep and goats.—Matt. 25:31-46.

UNIVERSAL SALVATION EXPLAINED

But some one will inquire, Will not the redemption which God has provided still pursue them and recover them from the second death? We answer, No! During the Millennium Christ will give to all every assistance necessary and proper. "The world will be judged in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) Besides, to suppose anything further to be done for these after they have gone into the second death through their own wilful course, would imply another sacrifice for sins. The sin which brought death to Father Adam was wilful sin. This the death of Jesus will fully offset; but the sin which will bring the second death will be individual, wilful sin on the part of every one who will die the second death; and the cost of redeeming each one of those sinners would be the death of a sinless one as a sacrifice for each.

The case of Adam is altogether different from what it will be with the race then; for each one of those sinners would be equally as guilty as was Adam himself; and each one will be personally condemned to the second death. If each one were to be redeemed again, he would need a personal Savior. The Bible intimates a considerable number of goats at the end of the Millennial age, who will come under the second death penalty; and it would require an equal number of perfect sacrifices for their redemption from that sentence. What good would that do if they had not profited by all the experiences of the present life and all the experiences of the Millennial restitution time? We could not imagine their profiting by any experiences.

Evidently, therefore, the divine plan is the only wise one; and no redemption will be given for the recovery of such from the second death, nor is there any kind of hope for them. Who would die for them? Who would redeem them? Not Christ; for the Apostle distinctly points out, "Christ dieth no more." (Romans 6:9) Would a company of the holy angels voluntarily die for them under all these circumstances and conditions, seeing that they had sinned against such light, knowledge and loving provision? And would any of the church, the bride of Christ, die for them? We believe not. Would any wise or intelligent being give his life a corresponding price for one who was incorrigible under such favorable conditions? We think it unreasonable so to suppose.

A WORD OF WARNING

It surprises us that any who have once tasted of the good Word, and have been made partakers of the holy Spirit, should be liable in any degree to be entrapped by such sophistries of the adversary. We are to remember, however, that the adversary is very alert at the present time to find snares for the Lord's people. We are led to write these words by the inspired suggestion of St. James, "Brethren, if any of you err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he that converteth such from the error of his way [course] will save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins." (James 5:20) This does not signify that God's people might not be more or less ensnared with errors; but it does signify that the course or tendency is to lead off more and more from the truth, from the way of life into the way of death.

We are in the day of the Lord mentioned by the Apostle; and instead of casting aside the armor or of trying to make some improvement upon the plain statements of the Word of God or of permitting ourselves to take our own or other men's philosophies instead of the Word of God, we must be buckling on the breastplate, fastening our helmet, girding up the loins of our minds, grasping the shield of faith and taking a firm grip upon the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, in order that we may be able to keep standing in this evil day; and not only so, but that we may help others to stand against the wiles of our great adversary.—Ephesians 6:12-18.

"CALLED"

"Partakers of the Heavenly calling."—Heb. 3:1.

"Holy brethren, called and chosen by the sovereign Voice of
Might,

See your high and holy calling out of darkness into light!
Called according to His purpose and the riches of His love;
Won to listen by the leading of the gentle, Heavenly Dove!

"Called to suffer with our Master, patiently to run His race;
Called a blessing to inherit, called to holiness and grace;

Called to fellowship with Jesus, by the Ever-Faithful One;
Called to His eternal glory, to the Kingdom of His Son.

"Whom He calleth He preserveth, and His glory they shall see;
He is faithful that hath called you; He will do it, fear not ye!
Therefore, holy brethren, onward! thus ye make your calling
sure;
For the Prize of this High Calling bravely to the end endure."

"THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD"

[The first two paragraphs of this article were reprinted from article entitled, "Love is the Principal Thing," published in issue of February 15, 1903. The remainder was reprinted from article entitled, "The Greatest of These is Love," published in issue of August 1, 1909. Please see the articles named.]

THE GRACE OF GIVING

"In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts 20:35. R. V.

GIVING TO THE POOR—LENDING TO THE LORD—THE SECRET OF ISRAEL'S BLINDNESS TO THE GOSPEL—THE BETTER CLASSES OF THE GENTILES ATTRACTED BY THE TRUTH—SYSTEMATIC ALMSGIVING BETTER THAN SPASMODIC CHARITY—GENEROSITY INCULCATES BREADTH OF MIND AND HEART—DEGREE OF PROSPERITY SHOULD BE MEASURE OF OUR CHARITY.

Christian benevolence—almsgiving—is the lesson inculcated in today's study. The general disposition of the fallen nature is to give adherence or support to the strong and to expect weaker ones to rally around and uphold us. This is self-pleasing—the way of the fallen nature. But the method of the new creature in Christ is to be the reverse of this. He is to be on the lookout for the welfare, the interests and the comforts of others, especially of those in his own family and of the weaker members of the household of faith. The stronger of the brethren in Christ should take pleasure in helping the weaker and the less able, and so far as possible in bringing all up to the stature of manhood in Christ.

Our study is addressed to the Corinthian Church, and is on behalf of the Christians in and about Jerusalem. Naturally the question arises, "Why should collections have been then for the Christians in Jerusalem any more than for the Christians at Corinth? There were three reasons why this should be done: (1) A severe famine had prevailed in the vicinity of Jerusalem; (2) Jerusalem was not a commercial city, and therefore money was less plentiful there; (3) Apparently those in and about Jerusalem who received the Gospel were chiefly the poor.

Moreover, from the open persecution of the truth there we can readily judge that there was also a great deal of quiet opposition to all who sympathized with the Gospel of Christ. As small shop people, they were probably boycotted; and as laborers, they were probably rejected as far as possible, except as necessity might demand their services. On the contrary, the cities of Asia Minor, Macedonia and Achaia were prosperous; and as far as we may judge, the class which accepted the Gospel was in many cases the better element. For instance, we recall the conversion of Sergius Paulus, the deputy governor at Paphos; that of Dionysius, one of the professors in the University of Athens; that of Damaris, of the same city, that of Justus, of Corinth, and of Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue of that city.

BLINDED BY RELIGIOUS PRIDE

The question naturally arises, Why should the same Gospel attract the well-to-do classes in Asia Minor and Greece and repel the majority outside the poor class in Judea? The answer would seem to be that amongst the Jews, who had been long acquainted with the true God and his gracious promises of Messiah, a religious pride had developed, especially amongst the wealthy and the learned. Moreover, because their religious system was in advance of every other religious system in the world, the learned attributed a like superiority to themselves individually. They "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others."—Luke 18:9.

This was the secret of Israel's blindness to the Gospel. The religious leaders and theologians were so self-conscious, and relied so implicitly upon their interpretations of the divine promises as centering in themselves, that they could not regard the humble Nazarene and his unlearned followers except as impostors. Later, when the Gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles, the opposition of the Jewish theologians was increased; for it was utterly contrary to every thought of their religious pride that God would accept either the humble Jews or the Gentiles to his favor, and reject themselves, the leading representatives of his cause and work.—John 7:43-53.

Amongst the Gentiles, however, the case was very different. While the illiterate masses were firmly bound by the superstition of their various religions, those who were of an honest mind amongst the better educated were quick to discern that many features of their own religion were merely superstitions. Probably they had been somewhat attracted to the Jewish religion as being much more reasonable than their own; for we find that the Gentiles readily resorted to the Jewish synagogues. But the Jewish religion would necessarily be unsatisfactory to them, since it would appear to be very narrow, limiting the divine blessings in a special manner to Israelites only—a people whom the Greeks considered rather inferiors in the arts of that time. But the Gospel, throwing wide open the door to those who desired righteousness—of every nation, people, kindred and tongue—would naturally commend itself to the class whom we are describing as being the most reasonable explanation of the Jewish doctrines and their grand eventual outcome, the meaning of which had long been hidden.

THE BENEFITS OF SYSTEMATIC CHARITY

At all events, the saints at Jerusalem were poorer than were the saints at Corinth. Therefore it was appropriate that the Apostle should suggest to the latter the propriety of sending a gift to the former. Living at a time when the conveniences for transferring money were very inferior to the very poorest known today, the various congregations could send their gifts only at the hand of the Apostle when he should go to Jerusalem the following year.

St. Paul's words intimate that the suggestion which he had made to the Corinthian brethren nearly a year before had been well received, and the collections zealously entered upon. For this reason it was superfluous for him to write in this connection any of the particulars respecting the necessity for this collection. But he hints to them that there was a bare possibility that the work zealously begun a year before might not have been patiently carried out; and that after he had boasted somewhat to others of their love and zeal for the Lord, he would regret, when he came to them en route to Jerusalem, if it should be found that, after all, they had failed to have their donation ready.

In his previous letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle had suggested methodical charity, saying, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given instructions to the churches in Galatia, even so do ye. One the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there is no gathering when I come."—1 Corinthians 16:1, 2.

It was the Apostle's experience, as it is the experience of all thoughtful people, that systematic charity is better than spasmodic giving. Not only is the result generally larger, but the influence upon the giver is more beneficial; for it keeps before the mind an object, a service to be rendered as unto the Lord. With many, almost the only opportunity for serving the Lord's cause is that of contributing money. Of course, where a consecrated child of God can do so, it is far better that he should give to the saints after the manner of St. Paul and his traveling associates—giving spiritual gifts and blessings, either by public preaching or by house-to-house visiting—presenting the truth either by the printed page or by tongue or both.

But there are those so circumstanced in life through lack

of talent or of strength or of opportunity—hindered by prior mortgages upon their time in the way of family obligations—that practically their only chance for serving the Lord and manifesting their love for him is through their gifts to his cause and to his people. For such to be deprived of the opportunity of exercising themselves in the Lord's service in this manner, either through lack of a case needing their assistance or through lack of instruction respecting this method of divine service, would be to deprive them of an important opportunity of service, and correspondingly to deprive them of the blessings which follow every service rendered to the Lord.

LIBERALITY AN INDEX OF LOVE

We notice, therefore, that the Apostle felt very free to recommend to the church the grace of giving and even to press upon them the fact that their liberality, in proportion to their ability, would in a large degree be an index of their love for the Lord and for the Gospel. But here we note, in contrast, the fact that the Apostle did not ask alms of these believers when first they received the Lord's grace, lest they should in any degree get the impression that the Gospel was being preached from mercenary motives—for filthy lucre's sake. Accordingly we find that rather than mention money the Apostle preached to these very same Corinthians for more than a year without even a suggestion as to remuneration; that rather than be chargeable to any, he labored with his own hands at his trade of tent-making.—2 Corinthians 11:7-9.

Let us also note the change which the full appreciation of the Gospel wrought upon the believers at Corinth. At first they were so negligent of their privilege that seemingly they never even thought of volunteering financial assistance to the Apostle while he was serving them by the labor of his own hands and receiving some assistance from believers in other places. But after the grace of God had entered more fully into their hearts, they began to appreciate the value of the truth which they had received and to realize that it had brought them priceless blessings of hope, joy, faith and character. Then they had a zeal, a "forwardness," to do something financially in the Lord's service.

And now that the Apostle was absent from them, and after his course had proved to them that he sought not their money but themselves, to do them good, he felt free to draw their attention to the great blessing which would result from liberality in the Lord's cause in proportion to their ability and love. To impress this matter, he gave them a parable, saying, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully." This reminds us of the proverb, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is proper, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Proverbs 11:24-25) The evident lesson is that the Lord is pleased to see his people cultivate breadth of heart as well as of mind—generosity in proportion to their knowledge of him and of his generosity.

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF OUR GIFTS

The Scriptures nowhere declare that cases of absolute privation amongst the Lord's people are proofs that at some time in their past life, when possessed of means, they failed to use a portion of it in charity, in the Lord's service. But the inspired words above quoted come very close to giving this lesson. At all events, it is profitable that we lay this testimony to heart and that every child of God henceforth shall be earnestly careful that out of the blessings of the Lord coming to us day by day some measure be carefully, prayerfully and lovingly laid aside as seed to be sown in the Lord's service according to the best wisdom and judgment which he will give us.

How many have such carefulness for themselves, either in using every penny as fast as it comes or in being so interested in laying by for the outworking of future plans that they feel that they can spare nothing for charity! How many such can afterward see that they made a great mistake in so doing! When their accumulations suddenly vanish, either through sickness or through accident or bank failure or otherwise, then they have good reason to regret that they sowed no "seed" after the manner described by the Apostle in Verse 6 of today's study.

Our Lord showed us how he measures our gifts—that he esteems them not according to the amount given, but chiefly according to the spirit which prompts the gift—when he drew attention to the poor widow who cast two mites into the Temple treasury. (Luke 21:1-4) From the standpoint of his estimation, that poor widow had cast in a larger sum than had any of the wealthy who had given merely out of their abundance,

and not to such an extent that they felt it. How many of the Lord's people would be more "fat" spiritually today, if they would give attention to the exercise of this talent, this opportunity for service, we cannot say. The Lord alone knows. But today's study makes it incumbent upon us to point out a privilege in this direction which is within the reach of the very poorest of the Lord's people.

A THANK-OFFERING TO THE LORD

Seldom is it necessary to caution people against over-much giving. Yet in some instances such caution is proper; and in some instances in Scripture giving has been restrained. No one should give to the extent of causing privation to those dependent upon him. Nor should any one give to such extent as to bring upon himself financial bankruptcy and cause losses to others. The Apostolic rule for giving we have already quoted. The "laying by on the first day of the week" should be general—"according as the Lord hath prospered him." The degree of our prosperity should be the measure of our charity. Upon this, as upon every subject, the Scriptures inculcate the spirit of a sound mind.

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Gifts bestowed in any other than a cheerful spirit might just as well not be given; for they will bring no blessing. The Lord does not appreciate such giving. In his estimation it has no "sweet odor." To be appreciated of the Lord, the gift must be a thank-offering, prompted by a realization of our debt of everlasting gratitude to him from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift. And to such, the Apostle assures us, "God is able to make all grace abound." Whoever gives anything in the divine service—time, talent, strength, money or influence—will find himself proportionately abounding in the different graces; for such are in the right attitude of heart to grow in grace.

The Apostle seems to imply that such will have "sufficiency in all things," as well as be able to "abound in every good work." Sufficiency may not mean luxury and every comfort; but "all sufficiency" is gained always where there is "godliness with contentment." In proof that he is inculcating no new theory respecting the divine care over those who are seeking to scatter to others a portion of the blessings that come to them, whether temporal or spiritual, the Apostle quotes from Psalm 112:9.

In Verse 11, the Apostle speaks of "being enriched in everything." We are not to understand him to mean that all of the Lord's people will be enriched financially. St. Paul himself was an example of the fact that the Lord's people do not become wealthy. He is speaking of the enrichment of the heart. In another place he speaks of himself and his co-laborers in the Gospel work, "as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Corinthians 6:10) These faithful servants of God made many rich in hope, rich in faith, rich in love and in all the various concomitant graces which these qualities imply.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the grandest Example of self-denial in the interests of others. He was rich in the possession of the spiritual nature with all its glory and honor. Yet for our sakes he became poor, taking the human nature in order that he might redeem mankind. To this end he surrendered life itself at Calvary, that through his sacrifice we might become rich—possessed of divine favor and the riches of divine grace in Christ—even joint-heirship with him who now is our exalted Lord at the right hand of divine Majesty. But to attain this joint-heirship with him, we must study to be like him, to have his spirit and to share with others whatever he may give us of either temporal or spiritual favors—either to feed or to clothe others (particularly those of the household of faith) temporally or spiritually, as circumstances may dictate.

"Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift!" That Gift is our Savior, our Redeemer. (John 3:16) In this connection it is impossible for us to tell the riches of divine grace toward us—the numberless blessings and mercies which are ours through our Lord. He represents to us the very fullness of every divine provision for our eternal welfare. As the Apostle elsewhere says, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Deity bodily." (Colossians 2:9) As yet, only the church can now give thanks to God for his unspeakable Gift. But by and by the whole world of mankind will be in a condition to recognize that Gift and to render thanks. When, at the close of the Messianic reign for the restoration of the Adamic race to their original perfection, all wilful sinners shall have been destroyed, then "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God." Then every creature in heaven, on earth and in the sea shall be heard saying, "Praise, glory, honor, dominion and might be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, forever!" for the Unspeakable Gift.

OFFICE OF ADVOCATE AND MEDIATOR CONTRASTED

The fact that the church is "the Mystery of God" has become more clear within the last twenty years. We know that Christ and the church are separate and distinct from the world in every particular. They are neither under the old Law Covenant nor under the New Law Covenant, but are a peculiar people, called, sanctified, developed, under a special covenant by themselves, in which none of the world will ever participate. This the Scripture styles the covenant of sacrifice: Gather my saints [holy ones] together unto me [saith the Lord]; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) This special class of saints, or holy ones, who make the covenant of sacrifice have as their Head the Lord Jesus himself. When this company shall have completed their covenant by sacrifice, this present age will end. Moses of the Law Covenant given to Israel represented specially the Law Covenant which will be given to the world through the antitype of Moses—The Christ. In other words, the Mediator of the Law Covenant was one man; but the Mediator of the New Law Covenant of the Millennial age is the new Man, of which Jesus is the Head—and the Apostle declares that the members are made up of those elected both from Jews and Gentiles.

From the time of Jesus down, the Mediator of the New Covenant has been in process of selection, and the "better sacrifices," as the basis for the New Covenant have been in process of offering. During this Gospel age Jesus has not exercised his office as Mediator for the world; and the world has no relationship with God, but still lies in the wicked one. The Mediator himself has been in process of development. As the Apostle declares, God raised up Jesus first and since has been raising up the church, and soon will finish the raising up. It is this Mediator or Prophet of whom St. Peter speaks in Acts

3:22, 23. (See also 1 Timothy 2:5, 6) No mediating can be done until the Mediator of "many members" has qualified for the office. His qualification consists of his sacrificing, according to his covenant of sacrifice. The Christ, Head and body, are, therefore, the Mediator for the world in a prospective sense—in the same sense as Jesus, the Babe, could be spoken of as the Savior and the King. He is only now becoming the King and has yet saved only a few of his people.

There is a wide distinction between the work of a mediator and the work of an advocate. The Great Mediator between God and man—The Christ of glory—will fill his mediatorial office for a thousand years and complete it only by the end of that time, when he will deliver over to the Father, fully reconciled, all who can be brought into harmony with the divine arrangement. The work of an advocate is different, and according to the Bible, relates only to the work which Jesus accomplishes on behalf of the church during this age. The church will need no advocate in the future. The world has no advocate now. "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." It is Jesus individually who is the Advocate for us—"the church, his body." He advocates our cause—first of all by imputing to us the merit of his sacrifice, thus making us presentable in the Father's presence and acceptable as sons of God. Because of this Advocacy, we have received the holy Spirit and are new creatures in Christ. As new creatures we still need our Advocate, because we cannot do the things that we would—perfectly. We have imperfections of the flesh, which, as new creatures, we cannot fully control. Hence we need a throne of grace and an Advocate through whom we may maintain our present relationship with the Father, and thus not be condemned with the world.

CONSCIENCE AND THE WAR

In perhaps all the armies participating in the present war men have been shot or imprisoned as a penalty for refusing on conscientious grounds to take up arms as soldiers. We are not, therefore, to think of the British course at the present time on this subject as extreme. The fact is that, so far as we are aware, the United States and Great Britain are the only countries which have proposed by their law to recognize conscientious scruples on the part of their citizens as a reasonable basis for being excused from military duty.

Of course, no country forces aliens into the army; and were it recognized that true Christians are aliens as respects earthly governments, the whole question might solve itself. The Bible Students' claim is that the followers of Jesus have their citizenship in heaven, and that by giving their obedience to the heavenly Lord they renounce in a degree their allegiance to earthly kings—governments. It is for this reason that we have long advocated that the fully consecrated abstain from voting on political issues. If they so vote, they are identifying themselves with the earthly kingdoms, and might properly enough be called upon to shoot as they vote—to support the government which they helped to create.

On the other hand, the Scriptural proposition is that while our citizenship is in heaven and we are aliens, strangers and foreigners in the world, with allegiance to the heavenly King, nevertheless, like all other foreigners, we are to be subject to the powers that be—subject to the laws of the country in which we may be living. But if obedience to the laws does not imply military service on the part of the foreigner, so obedience to the laws on the part of Bible Students does not imply military duty. Similarly with the oath of allegiance required by those who enter the Army—they are required to swear allegiance to the king and obedience to the officers of the king in all things. This oath is not required of aliens, foreigners, and is objected to by Bible Students, not because they are opposed to law and order or unwilling to be regulated by the government under which they live, but because they have already given allegiance to the higher power—the heavenly Lord. To them his words his commands, etc., are paramount.

Of course, such aliens could not object to deportation, nor make any stand for personal rights which any other alien of any other government might not request.

PUBLIC SENTIMENT AROUSED

The papers inform us that the matter of conscientious objectors to military service is deeply stirring the British people and has led to several wordy battles in Parliament. The claim made is that the laws of Great Britain provide for the consciences of all British subjects and that while these laws seem to be complied with by the appointment of commissioners to hear the conscientious objections, nevertheless the laws are really disregarded, because the judges appointed are military

judges, whose interests are not judicial but military. Some of those who refuse on conscientious grounds were sentenced to prison for two years at hard labor. Others were forced to put on military uniform, and were kicked and bruised by companions in the ranks, either because of their conscientious loyalty to the Word of the great King or because they refused to swear allegiance to the British king and obedience to his officers. Others were sent to the army in France, the threat being made that if they did not do their duty they would be shot forthwith.

All this is arousing British sentiment on this subject—for and against warfare. No doubt the courage, the witness, the martyr spirit on the part of the Lord's consecrated people will exercise a great influence and will lead to a more careful study of the commands of our King and the rules governing all who are under his banner. Whatever hardships may come to these dear brethren, we believe that a blessing will result in showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

In the meantime, it is not for us to exert force in opposition, nor to shout loudly about our rights. We are to remember that, in becoming soldiers of the cross, we voluntarily gave up all earthly rights in order that we might be participators with the Captain of our salvation, who permitted all of his rights to be taken from him, even unto death. As the followers of Jesus are made a spectacle to the world and to angels, they are also permitted to strengthen and build up one another in the most holy faith by their love and zeal for the Lord and his message. We may well remember our privilege of praying one for another under such circumstances. We may not pray for the Lord to hinder others or ourselves from having trials or tests along these lines, for it is for the divine Wisdom to determine what these shall be, but it is our privilege to pray for each other and for ourselves—to pray for that grace to help in every time of need which the Lord has promised he will grant.—Hebrews 4:16.

May a very faithful witness, then, be given with great humility and with great sympathy to those who take a different view from ourselves! They hold that Christ's kingdom has been set up; and that the present kings of Europe are of divine appointment, as they claim upon their coins, and that for them to be at war is for God's kingdom to be at war; and that their soldiers are God's soldiers. Inconsistently they fail to see that if their contentions be true, God's kingdom is divided and God is fighting against himself! A little while, and the dawning of the new dispensation will be clearer. Then all nations will come to see that the need of mankind is the rule of the heavenly Lord with all power. By that time the bride of Christ will have passed beyond the veil. Crowns of glory and palms of victory will have been bestowed, and the time for blessing the world of mankind will have come.

AT PEACE AMONGST YOURSELVES

We have all heard the proverb, "Diamond cut Diamond." All jewels are very hard as well as very pure. This hardness enhances their value. The Lord's people are all jewels—not only are they purified by the Lord's grace, but they have crystallized characters. This being true, as we have previously pointed out, there is more danger of cutting and scratching when they are together than there would be with materials less hard. Putty and clay do no cutting—neither do characters of putty-like quality.

Remembering this, the Lord's people should be very sympathetic with each other and very appreciative of each other. We learn to appreciate, as the Lord does, positiveness of character, strength of character, fixity of purpose, even though at times these qualities of character may cause some trouble. No wonder then that Berean Bible Classes have their difficulties sometimes, as well as do worldly organizations!

THE LORD'S PEOPLE NOT STRIFE-BREEDERS

Nevertheless, the Lord's people are to remember the special injunction of their Master that they should be peace-makers and not strife-breeders. It requires no great skill to stir up trouble. It requires considerable of meekness, gentleness, patience, and the other qualities of the holy Spirit amongst the Lord's people to prevent strife, even with only the best of intentions prevailing. How much we all need to be on guard lest the adversary tempt us, mislead us from the paths of peace!

It requires considerable experience and the wisdom that cometh from above to enable us to judge rightly whether a matter of difference between others and ourselves is a question of principle, where some fundamental truth is at stake, or whether it is merely a question of opinion and preference without principle being involved. In the latter case, we should be willing to submit to practically anything for the sake of peace, whereas we could not do so where principles would be involved. However, the delusion is often presented to us that our preferences are always backed up by principles of truth and righteousness. We must learn from experience that this is

a mistake, and must critically examine every such suggestion, asking the Lord's wisdom to enable us to see the difference between that which is merely our preference and those questions which involve principles and teachings of divine origin.

For instance, in a class there are often brethren or sisters who critically insist on a matter being done in a certain way, because that had been the previous custom or because they believe it to be the better way. They are ready to precipitate a quarrel unless their preference is followed. The wiser course is to waive our preference in favor of the preferences of others, if they are insistent, provided the right result is reached—namely, provided the will of the class is really attained; for the will of the class is to be taken as the will of the Lord—or if not that the Lord will overrule the matter and bring a lesson to us of it for the class.

Each and every member of a class should earnestly strive to promote in a class fruits of the holy Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love, joy, peace. This promoting is to be done by remembering these qualities and exercising them ourselves, thus setting an example to others and showing forth the influence of the holy Spirit operating in our own hearts and lives.

A FREQUENT MISTAKE

Too often the mistake is made of thinking that the whole weight of responsibility rests upon us—forgetting that our responsibility ends when we have exercised our judgment and have acted upon it.

Lack of faith in the Lord is closely associated with the error of bringing strife into a class on some technical grounds. We should remember the Lord's interest in the class and in all of his people, and that he is able and willing to overrule our experiences for good—likewise the experiences of others. If, therefore, matters are not going exactly to our pleasured in the class, it will be better for us, and often for all, that we take the matter to the Lord in prayer, rather than that we should be continually nagging or fault-finding with that which is or which appears to be, satisfactory to the others, or at least to the majority of the class.

MILITARISM AND CONSCIENCE

While Christians are enjoined to be subject to the "Powers that be"—the kings, governors, magistrates, etc.—nevertheless this is not to be understood as meaning the renouncement of our fidelity to the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is our Over-Lord. Our allegiance to earthly lords and powers and their commands is merely to the extent that they do not conflict with the commands of our Over-Lord. The Jews in renouncing Jesus cried, "We have no king but Cæsar"! The Christian's position is, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, but unto God the 'things that are God's.'" Whenever Cæsar and his laws conflict with the divine requirements, all true soldiers of the cross are left no alternative.

It is not for us to set up standards for others. Conscience is an individual matter. It would be as wrong for Bible students to antagonize earthly governments, and to oppose enlistments in the army and navy under the call of earthly governments, as it would be wrong for others to force their opinions upon Bible students, contrary to our conscience. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. Bible students are to remember that they are citizens of the heavenly kingdom and are not to specially insist upon their earthly rights, except such as might be reasonably expected by foreigners. Messiah's kingdom is not to be established by the sword of Bible students, nor by their angry declamations against others, nor by their violation of the laws of the land in which they may be residing, nor by any hostility to the governments which undertake to guarantee their lives and happiness. We are to be subject to these governments. We are to appreciate them. But all this will not break our relationship to the heavenly King and his commands. These come first with Bible students—each according to his own conscience in respect to the meaning of the Lord's Word.

At the present time in Great Britain many of the dear brethren are enduring trying experiences with great loyalty. Imprisonment at hard labor is severe punishment for a law-abiding alien who merely refuses to engage in war because his Over-Lord has so commanded. Yet the sufferings of the faithful are, perhaps, still greater in other directions. One is in a very trying position when the finger of scorn is pointed at him; when he is proclaimed a coward; when he is discharged from the employment which brings him daily bread, while others who take to the sword are cheered. Not questioning the valor and courage in the latter, we believe that it requires still more courage to be in the ranks of the former—to stand loyal

to the King of kings when opposed by the scorn of our neighbors and friends.

We are sure, nevertheless, that the Lord is bringing a blessing to all who are seeking faithfully to know and to do his will. We believe, moreover, that a witness is thus going out in a great land to a great people—to a God-fearing people as a whole—such as they have not had since the days of persecution. How much the Lord may use present experiences for the finding and ripening of the wheat class of the British people is not for us to say.

The brethren of the London Office have very properly bestirred themselves to meet the conditions prevailing around them. They have sent out letters to the different classes advising that the regularly-elected elders of the class may properly claim exemption from military duty as ministers of the Gospel, and advising that they so report when called upon and that the classes report the names of their elders. A petition signed by about five thousand has been forwarded to the government as follows:

A PETITION

TO THE RT. HON. H. H. ASQUITH, M. P.

SIR:—We, the undersigned members of the International Bible Students Association, beg to present this Petition on behalf of the young men associated with us in Christian fellowship, who are affected by the Military Service Measures now in operation, but whose deep religious convictions prohibit their engaging in such service. Many have already proved their fidelity to conscience by suffering, and their numbers are being augmented daily. We know of none who, were they given the opportunity, would refuse work of National importance under the supervision of the Committee appointed by the Government.

We earnestly petition that those who conscientiously feel bound to refuse military service of any description may be recognized as loyal and law-abiding citizens, and be given an opportunity of effecting service for the country apart from the machine of war, and that they be not treated as criminals.

Your good offices and influence to end the present intolerable situation will be ever greatly appreciated by each of the undersigned.

SIGNED BY 5,000.

Accompanying this petition and signatures went the following letter. We have not yet learned the outcome. Our prayer is that the Lord's will shall be done, that his name shall be glorified and that his people shall be sustained with the neces-

sary strength and grace to meet whatever divine providence may permit. The situation of our brethren in Great Britain may possibly find some parallel later amongst the brethren in Australia and in Canada. And who knows but that the same conditions may ultimately prevail in the United States? How thankful we are for the divine promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness"!

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

TO THE RT. HON. H. H. ASQUITH, M. P.

SIR:—As a British Chartered Association known as The International Bible Students Association, and as law-abiding citizens of the United Kingdom, we desire to petition you, the Head of His Majesty's Government, craving your good offices to secure consideration at the hands of the Government for those members of this Association whose consciences will not permit of their undertaking Military duties of any description, to the intent that they be granted permission to undertake work of National importance as prescribed by the Government Committee, and already granted to some other citizens who are also Conscientious Objectors on similar grounds. We think it right to explain that no pressure of any kind against Militarism is brought to bear upon its members by this Association; all alike are free to act as led by their own conscience, so that their cases are those of genuine personal conviction.

At the present time there are at least 40 of our members in Military Prisons under sentences varying from a few days to two years with hard labor, and we are informed that eight have been sent to France. These men state that nothing can cause them to change their attitude towards Militarism, and their actions, thus far, are in harmony with this statement. Almost every day adds to the number incarcerated, and the extension of the Act to affect married men will increase the number still more in the future. Permit us to submit for consideration the fact that these men are at present an expense to the country and a trouble to the authorities, whereas their services are available for the public weal if permitted to undertake work apart from Military control.

We feel it is only proper to state that this Association, which is affiliated in its religious work with the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY of America, is not allied with any other body—political or religious—which is opposed to Militarism, and to state further that we have no intention of allying ourselves with any such body.

Accompanying this we send lists containing 5,000 signatures to this Petition; also a list of names of those of our members known to us as being incarcerated, praying the Government to extend to these their clemency by granting them also the desired exemption from Military control.

Yours faithfully,

INT. BIBLE STUDENTS ASS'N.

BEREAN LESSONS AND PILGRIM VISITS

Some inquire what they shall do when a pilgrim visit happens to be on the same night as the regular Berean study—explaining that sometimes they must get behind as to Berean lessons. Our advice is that unless there is some essential reason against it, the Berean lessons should take precedence and the pilgrim brother conduct the meeting, giving example of a profitable Berean lesson. The same thing applies to the Wednesday evening prayer and testimony meeting. This should go on as usual, the pilgrim leading, unless for some special reason; as, for instance, if the pilgrim's appointment be but for one night. We esteem that there are not more important services held by Bible students than these two, and regularity is an important feature in connection with these meetings.

We take this occasion to express the hope that all the dear friends who have taken the Vow read it publicly or privately every morning, and that the MANNA Text every morning be not forgotten. Some additionally read the MORNING RESOLVE. Thousands of letters from dear brethren and sisters all over the world testify the great blessings in connection with these endeavors to keep close to the Lord. The prayer circle formed by the Vow is perhaps one of the most wonderful

things that has ever been in the world. Think of it! approximately twenty thousand consecrated people of God praying for one another and for the harvest work every day. The blessing that this is bringing to them is almost inestimable; it is a blessing that maketh rich indeed.

Those who are not using the Manna daily are losing a great blessing; and those who do not participate in the Wednesday evening testimony meeting whose topic is the Manna Text of the preceding Thursday are missing a rich blessing. As many as believe that we are now in the evil day of special trial upon the church of God should appreciate these meetings—drawing very near to the Lord and to each other daily. If you have not done so before, we urge that you make a start forthwith.

While thus exhorting, we are prompted to remind our dear readers in general that quite a good many are making it a practice to read at least twelve pages of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES each day, thus completing the entire six volumes every year. Reports show that great blessings of knowledge and of grace follow this course.

PILGRIM BARTON GONE HOME

Brother Benjamin H. Barton has been on the pilgrim staff of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY for quite a good many years, and is widely and very favorably remembered by our readers. Although always apparently frail, Brother Barton had a strong voice, and by the Lord's grace was able to do very efficient service up to about June 1st. We then heard from him that he had not been very well and was obliged to cancel future appointments in Oregon. He was kindly entertained by the friends, and everything possible for his comfort was attended to, but he continued to grow weak and, without special pain or suffering of any kind, so far as we have learned, passed away on Saturday, June 24th. His remains were shipped to the residence of his parents in Philadelphia, where they were interred Monday, July 3d.

The Editor has most kindly remembrances of dear Brother Barton, not only as a faithful servant of the Lord, of the truth, of the brethren, but also as a personal friend. The knowledge of the truth, heart-abounding grace, the spirit of a sound mind, all contributed to the development in Brother Barton of a very noble character, highly esteemed amongst the friends in general and especially amongst those who knew him best. We will miss him greatly; nevertheless we also greatly rejoice on his behalf, believing that he has passed beyond the veil, has experienced his resurrection change, and with the others of the faithful will henceforth be forever with the Lord. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Revelation 14:13.

As one by one the number beyond the veil increases and the members this side correspondingly decrease, the great privilege of being servants of God and being found faithful as such looms larger and larger before our mental vision. We know not which of us will next be called to enter into

the joys of our Lord in full, but we trust that all of the truly consecrated are in the waiting attitude, expecting, hoping, longing for the resurrection change, which the Apostle assures us is necessary, because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom," shortly to be established.—1 Cor. 15:50.

It is remarkable that as we near the consummation of this age, and the completion of the church, the opportunities for serving the household of faith seem to increase. And while old, active servants are passing beyond, new, loyal, zealous successors are being found by the truth. Thus the work on this side the veil is going grandly on.

Well did the Apostle write that the Lord's true people, enlightened, encouraged and fortified by the promises in the divine Word, "sorrow not as do others" in the presence of the great foe—DEATH.

BROTHER BAKER'S REPORT

This morning, June 24, at Portland, Ore., Brother Barton passed to his reward at 1:15. His end came suddenly, even though his low vitality and weakness gave evidence of his grave condition. Friday he appeared somewhat brighter than usual, sitting up for twenty minutes, after which he asked to lie down to sleep, as he felt tired. That evening he ate a hearty meal (for him), and talked hopefully of starting home soon. The brother's mind was apparently clear until the last, but he could not articulate well, owing to trouble due to a slight stroke of paralysis about four weeks ago. As death approached the cares of his season of illness seemed to vanish and his features relaxed, and, with a smile on his lips, he passed into the kingdom. Friday afternoon he expressed to Sister Baker his love for the brethren at the Bethel and particularly for dear Brother Russell, and that it was his hope to see them again. His only care has been his mother. The desire