



THE WATCH TOWER

Glad
Herald of Christ's Presence

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

"Watchman, What of the Night?"
"The Morning Cometh and a Night also!" *Isaiah 21:11*

SEMI-MONTHLY
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"I will stand upon my watch, and will set my foot upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them that oppose me." *Eiab. 2:t*

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

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

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

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

This Journal stands firmly for the defence of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated.—Redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to—"Make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which . . . has been hid in God. . . to the intent that now might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed."—Eph. 3:5-9, 10.

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

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

- That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship;" that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of his Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.
- That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8.
- That the Basis of Hope, for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Ileb. 2:9; Jno. 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.
- That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.
- That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.
- That the hope for the World lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35.

CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Editor.

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If you have occasion to reply to one of our letters and see it marked "File A." or "File R." etc., please include this in the address on the envelope, so that your letter may reach the correspondent who wrote to you.

We thank our readers for interesting clippings sent in from time to time during the past year—especially for those which gave the date and name of paper from which they were clipped.

We have Volunteer matter ready now for 1916. Orders are being filled as received. Do not allow valuable time to slip by unimproved. The people are hearing and reading now as never before.

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STUDIES III-IV

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Week of February 13..Q. 29 to 36 Week of February 27..Q. 1 to 7
Question Manuals on Vol. III, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, 5c each;
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THE EUREKA DRAMA VERY SUCCESSFUL

The dear friends who are reporting on the EUREKA DRAMA are sending in excellent reports. The public are very appreciative of the DRAMA and many cards are being handed in. We regret, however, that we hear from only a small proportion of the DRAMAS that are in your hands. We hope that none of you are allowing this talent in your possession to lie idle. The winter season is a very favorable time, especially in country districts; and school boards will, doubtless, be very glad to co-operate by furnishing schoolhouses. Court-houses are also desirable. In many places where the law does not permit the showing of the moving pictures on Sundays, Picture Theatres are obtainable for the FREE DRAMA at practically the cost of light and janitorage.

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BROTHER RUSSELL AT THE TEMPLE

Answering many inquiries, we announce that Brother Russell endeavors to serve at the New York City Temple on the first Sunday of each month. In the forenoon of such days there is a baptism service, with every provision for those finding it convenient to be immersed at that time. A Congregational Meeting for the consideration of the activities of the church is appointed for the Saturday evening preceding the first Sunday of each month. This meeting is appointed for the Temple, W. 63d St., New York.

TWO DUTCH BOOKLETS

We have a small quantity of small Dutch Booklets:
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(2) "The Hope of Israel in the Divine Plan."
Five cents each, postpaid.

The WATCH TOWER and Herald of Christ's Presence

VOL. XXXVII

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No. 1

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Naturally enough, one influence of the great European war is to turn the minds of some toward religion and the consideration of a future life. The fact that sons, brothers and husbands are in danger or wounded or dead or prisoners in a foreign land—all of them beyond human protection—naturally turns the minds of many toward the Almighty Creator. Hence reports from the warring nations indicate an increase of religious sentiment—larger church attendance, more people praying, etc.

To the extent that such religious activities are inspired merely by fear and helplessness, they of course amount to very little, for the public, mistaught, know not that there is no access to the divine ear, no authority for prayer, no ground for claiming protection for loved ones, except through the great Advocate whom God has appointed. Neither do they understand that he is not the world's advocate, but merely the church's; and that no one is a member of the church who has not, through knowledge of the Lord, through repentance, made a full consecration of himself to do the Lord's will. Hence, those not Scripturally informed—and they include the vast majority of all denominations of Christians—cry aloud to the Lord in their troubles; but in the absence of trouble or danger are worshipers at the shrines of pleasure, of wealth, of selfishness, of lust, or of appetite.

We cannot hope that this class will receive any permanent benefit at the present time—any more than would the heathen. It will be a little later on in this great trouble, in the revolution and anarchy which the Lord indicates will follow each other, that they will begin really to wake up and to realize that unless those days be shortened, no flesh would survive. (Matthew 24:22) Then they will begin to seek the Lord, not merely in a form of godliness, but with truly broken hearts.

JEHOVAH CHASTENING THE WORLD

The Lord's provision will then opportunely come to them. The Redeemer, through whose blood of the New Covenant there is to be a full atonement made, will then take to himself his great power and reign as the Mediator of that New Covenant; and the glorious Millennium will be fully established. Under its beneficent arrangement the darkness of the present civilization and the gross darkness of the heathen will disappear before the rising Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams.

Then the Lord, who is now speaking to them in his anger, chastening in his sore displeasure, and revealing himself in the flaming fire of the near future, will be ready to speak to their chastened hearts words of comfort, of mercy, which because of ignorance and superstition and misconception they are not able and willing to receive now. The Lord will turn unto his people the pure message, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent. (Zephaniah 3:9) Thus "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth"—ocean deep! (Habakkuk 2:14) As a result of the heart-breaking experiences, followed by the greater knowledge, all knees will be bowing and all tongues will be confessing to the glory of God. And those refusing to come into harmony with that supreme and glorious Reign of Righteousness, we are told, will be sure to be destroyed from amongst the people.—Acts 3:23.

There is, however, another class of religious people, who undoubtedly are being influenced much more deeply, intelligently and profitably—true Christians, who in the past have been lulled to sleep, or who as babes in Christ have not been

thoroughly nourished with the Word of Truth. These are now having their senses exercised as never before, and every day are getting more awake and inquiring what these things mean—things so different from what they have been taught, and what they had expected. Already they are asking, "Where is the hope we had of the conversion of the heathen to the glorious standards of our Christianity?" They are inquiring, "Has there not been some mistake made when we called these kingdoms of Europe kingdoms of God and kingdoms of Christ—Christendom?" They are awakening to the fact that we have long been under a great delusion—that these kingdoms are merely kingdoms of this world; that the prince of this world is still the ruler; that Messiah, the Prince of Light, is only now, and through this great tribulation, taking to himself his great power to begin his reign of righteousness.

It requires a little time for all this to germinate in the hearts of those who have been so seriously misinformed by the ministers and teachers whom they trusted. At first apathy, a feeling of doubt on every subject, comes into the minds of these people, but as they go to the Lord in prayer from earnest, consecrated hearts they are guided, enlightened. They find indeed that the faith they built was largely "wood, hay and stubble" material—human traditions, theories and creeds. The burning, or destruction, of these leaves them, however, that much better prepared for the erection of a better faith-structure of the gold, silver and precious stones of divine promises. The burning of their "wood, hay and stubble" structure of errors, having been built upon "the Rock Christ Jesus," themselves "shall be saved so as by fire."—1 Corinthians 3:15.

JEHOVAH'S ACT—HIS STRANGE ACT

Note the difference between this class and the one first mentioned, who have never been consecrated to the Lord, but who are merely nominal Christians, children of error and typical "tares." The burning of their false faith will leave them nothing; for they never were properly on "the Rock Christ Jesus." It will reduce them merely to the level of the world, of which they have always been a part; but, misled by wrong teachings, they thought themselves Christians. And by many they were mistaken for Christians, even as tares may be mistaken for true wheat.

It is this extraordinary effect of this day of wrath upon the world in general, and especially upon professed Christians, which the Lord evidently refers to through the Prophet Isaiah: "The Lord . . . shall be wroth, . . . that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act." (Isaiah 28:21) It will surely be a strange procedure on God's part, as viewed by those not taught of the Lord, when they shall see all the religious systems of the present time go down and the world heading straight for chaos.

The cry of the people at that time will much resemble the cry of the apostles, when on the Lake of Galilee the great storm arose. Then came to Jesus to the hinder part of the boat, apparently asleep, crying, "Master, Master carest thou not that we perish?" Immediately, when they have learned their dependence upon the Lord—which many do not now very fully appreciate—immediately when they cry to the Lord from the depth of their hearts is astonishment and fear, he will be ready to answer them graciously and to deliver them.

Man's extremity will be God's opportunity! As Jesus arose, he rebuked the winds and the waves; and immediately there was a great calm on the Lake of Galilee. So in the midst of the awful trouble and human perplexity—"men's hearts

failing them for fear, and for looking after the things coming"—Messiah's kingdom, "the desire of all nations," will take control of the situation; and immediately the storm of human passion and anarchy will cease. Then men will "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more."—Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3.

GLORIOUS OPPORTUNITIES AT HAND

Manifest now, and increasingly so as the days go by, the minds of thinking people will be opening to a realization of the truth. Now, as never before, they will need the Lord's saints to point them in the right direction—to bring the Scriptures to their attention and the various helps for Bible study which the Lord has been providing, and which are already in the hands of many. As society and religious systems will be reeling as a drunken man, as the Bible explains, these undeveloped saints of God will need the very help we by God's grace are enabled to render them. Surely there never was so favorable a time as the present for rendering assistance to this class! More and more, as these find that they have been misled by the shepherds of the nominal systems, they will be as sheep without a shepherd.

To those who have the knowledge of God, of his Word, of his plan, the present and the near future offer certainly the most wonderful opportunities of which we could conceive. Whoever loves the Lord will love the brethren. Whoever would serve the Lord will be intent upon serving the brethren; and the more their need, the better the opportunity; and the greater our zeal, the greater the results for others, and the greater the blessing for ourselves. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit into life eternal."—John 4:36.

It will be seen from this that, so far from thinking our work ended, we have wonderful expectations in respect to the year 1916.

SMITING OF JORDAN BY ELIJAH

We have already called attention, in *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, Vol. II., to the fact that Elijah, the Prophet, typified The Christ—Jesus the Head and the church his body—in their fleshly experiences; and that the taking up of Elijah into heaven, typically represents the final passing of the church from the earthly conditions to the heavenly. We have seen, too, that when Elijah's time for translation came, he was sent from Gilgal to Bethel, from Bethel to Jericho and from Jericho to Jordan; and that these different points were measurably disappointing; yet that Elijah and Elisha were not discouraged, but went on—Jordan representing the end of the Times of the Gentiles, 1915. As Jordan was the last point to which Elijah was directed, so 1915 is the last point to which the church has been directed. As Elijah went on, not knowing any further place, so the true church is going on without any definite time-point before it.

Soon the chariot of fire will separate the Elijah class from the Elisha class. The fiery chariot seems to mean severe trials or persecutions. A little later, the Elijah class will be taken up in the whirlwind. Elsewhere in the Bible a whirlwind is apparently used to symbolize the great time of anarchy. The lesson possibly is that the Lord's faithful of the Elijah class will be amongst the first in civilized lands to suffer some kind of violence through lawlessness and anarchy.

We know not how soon this culmination may come, nor need we be concerned, since it is our Lord who is at the helm, and since we are expecting that he will require each one to be "faithful unto death." The thing which especially concerns us now in another part of the type: when Elijah and Elisha reached the bank of Jordan, Elijah took his mantle and, folding it together, smote the waters of the river; and they divided, and the two crossed dry-shod. What does this mean? What experiences are typified thereby? Apparently it refers to something in the immediate future—something which seemingly should be beginning at once.

We may not be too sure of what is meant by this feature of the type. We are to remember, on the contrary, that Bible prophecies are rarely understood much in advance of their fulfilment. This was so at the Lord's First Advent. Prophecies were fulfilling on every hand, yet the disciples did not perceive them until later—as our Lord's death and resurrection. After his resurrection, he explained to his disciples many of the things; and we read that "then he opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke 24:45) It may be so here. We may witness the fulfilment of this feature, and not discern its application until completed.

Our conjecture respecting the meaning of this picture is this: Elijah's mantle represented divine power operating through him; and similarly God's power operating through his elect now. In Bible symbology, water stands for truth and also for people; and we see no reason to object to its standing

for both of these in this picture—a division of the people through the proper and right dividing of the truth. Jordan also signifies trial, test or judgment. Taking these three things in combination, we have a forceful figure. If the interpretation proves to be a correct one, it will mean something like this: that God somehow will exercise through his enlightened people a power which will have an effect of causing a division amongst the people in respect to the truth, and which will be a test upon them in this dividing.

Not knowing what will be the opportunities, nor what the method of exercising those opportunities, we must wait for the Lord and the leadings of his providences. But meantime, surely it is for the Elijah class to be thoroughly alert and actively interested, ready, watching, waiting for the Master's guidance!

With these things before us, we urge all the Lord's consecrated people who have a knowledge of these things to "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:13) We urge them not to become entangled in worldly matters, but to keep themselves in the love of God and in the service of God, the truth, the brethren.

We remember that after our Lord's crucifixion, many of his disciples were inclined to go back into the fishing business—a very natural course. We remember how the Lord gave them evidences, however, that his blessings could be with them, and that all success depended upon him; and that without him they could do nothing. This lesson was deeply impressed upon those who first started in the fishing business. They toiled all night, but caught nothing, and in the morning saw Jesus on the shore with fish already cooked. Apparently they never forgot that lesson.—John 21:1-10.

Deeply interested in all of the Lord's dear brethren, we have felt a sort of solicitude for them as we have noticed how some who have been zealous for the colporteur work under much less favorable conditions than the present and the future are going into worldly business. We have probably one hundred less colporteurs today than we had a year ago, although the financial conditions everywhere show that rather we should have twice as many colporteurs today. It is not for us to complain—and we are not complaining. We are merely calling attention in this general way, rather than in a private or personal way, to the fact that the love of some must be growing cool, and that they may thus endanger their gaining "a full reward."

We do not know what power the Lord may put into our hands for causing a great division of the people in respect to the truth. It may be a financial power, that was represented by Elijah's mantle in this case, or it may be something else. We are waiting to see. Meanwhile we are endeavoring to keep all the branches in all lines of the work well in hand, so as to be ready to smite when the opportune moment shall come. We trust that this is the spirit of all the Lord's dear people who are awaiting the kingdom—a spirit of alertness, a spirit of zeal, and of energy, and of a sound mind—counting the things of this present time as "not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."—Acts 20:24; Philippians 3:8; Romans 8:18.

One of our arrangements for the near future is to set aside some of the pilgrim brethren who have special ability for addressing the public, that they may give their time constantly in this direction, or to whatever extent the Lord may open the way—going from place to place in longer journeys to serve those classes which will indicate to THE WATCH TOWER Office their ability and decide to have public meetings in some of the best auditoriums in each case. This will not interfere with other classes and their being served by other brethren—some of those brethren who have no special talent for public speaking, but who have exceptional ability for semi-public meetings and for parlor meetings, where they would be addressing chiefly the Household of Faith, versed in present truth.

We remind all who have opportunity, or who can make opportunity for engaging in the colporteur work, that there are millions of homes still not supplied with the *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* and many more millions which have not been blessed with the *CREATION SCENARIO* and the *DAILY HEAVENLY MANNA*. Here are fields of usefulness which must be gone over surely before we may hope to be taken in the whirlwind. Let us be alive to our privileges, our opportunities, that there may be no faint-heartedness, but a zeal for God and his message and for the brethren who need our help—yea, and for some who have a hearing ear and some who have been coming rapidly into the truth within the last few months. With these things in mind, we have selected as our year's text for 1916 the following:

"STRONG IN FAITH"—Romans 4:20

We have provided these in a cheap form that all who desire may have them. We can send two of the cards for five cents, postpaid, or any larger number at a proportionate rate.

We own to a trepidation when writing on this subject. Our friends on both sides of the conflict, naturally enough, feel touchy. We have had three letters from Germans, claiming that we are prejudiced and do not give them justice. We have had four letters from our British friends, making similar complaint. We believe, however, that the majority of our friends on both sides do understand us; and we assume that the seven letters came from persons comparatively new in the truth. Those familiar with our position need not to be told that we have no sympathy whatever with the German invasion of Belgian territory, even though they claim that Belgium was under-handedly associated with the Allies. We have no sympathy with acts of violence and murder in Belgium or elsewhere. We have no sympathy with the destruction of non-combatants and commercial vessels by submarines, even though the vessels did carry munitions of war. We have no sympathy with the dropping of bombs from the sky, either in London or Paris or in German and Austrian cities. We have no sympathy with the war at all.

However, on the other hand, regarding the nations as not Christian, we are not surprised that they should be engaged in an immoral warfare. We are not surprised that under stress of apparent necessity for victory, all the nations engaged in this war are trampling upon the laws of nations, to which they all agreed. We can no more excuse the British, French, Russians and Italians for such violations of the rights of others than we can excuse the Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Bulgars and Turks. We see wrong perpetrated in every direction; divine laws entirely set aside by these so-called Christian nations—Christendom.

Surely it is not in vain that the Scriptures say, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him"! (Romans 12:20) And when professed British Christians break and violate the Master's instructions, and try to starve the professed German Christians, we are not surprised that the latter retaliate in every way that they can—whether by Zeppelin raids or submarine raids or otherwise. These nations, from our viewpoint being unchristian nations, could have no higher motto than is expressed in the sentiment, "Necessity knows no law." The Germans decided that if the British starved their wives and babies and aged non-combatants, they would be right to retaliate by destroying everything British that they could reach, including non-combatant passengers on steamers.

We see that it would have been wiser for the British to have kept the law of nations, and to have held to the instruction of Jesus; and yet, realizing that we are still under the dominion of the prince of this world, Satan, and that he, as the god of this world, is still working in the hearts of the children of disobedience, nothing that they could do would much surprise us. Do we not know from the Scriptures that the heart of man is exceedingly sinful; that his anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, bitterness, are works of the flesh and of the devil; and that these are being manifest on every hand, notwithstanding the number of churches, preachers, etc.?

St. Peter wrote of the followers of Jesus—the consecrated church: "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people [a people for a purpose, Diaglott], that ye should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of the darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9) This new nation—God's nation—is in the world, but not of it. Its members cannot be loyal to the prince of this world, and to the Prince of Glory, both. They must choose between the two. This will make them "peculiar" in the eyes of the majority of people, who do not understand the matter, but who believe the kingdoms of this world to be kingdoms of Christ—even though they be perplexed as to why one kingdom of Christ should seek to blow the other off the land and off the sea.

All of the nations realize that they are impoverishing themselves of their best blood and virility and of their wealth—placing the grievous burden of debt upon generations yet unborn—unless their debts should be repudiated, which would mean revolution and anarchy, such as the Bible seems to foretell. No wonder there is a movement for peace in all these countries. It is a sad spectacle. How strange it must appear to them as well as to ourselves! The greatest nations are bleeding to death, severely wounded. More than twenty millions of men are now under arms and expense and are non-producers, besides the terrible loss already sustained through the wounds and death of nine millions.

But will the nations be wise enough now to turn from war? Their admirable courage and their inestimable pride seem to answer, Nay! And this seems to be in full accord with Bible prophecy. As we have pointed out for twenty-five years past, the war is to continue until more and more will be involved, and all the participants be weakened and made ready for the great earthquake of social revolution and the fire of anarchy which will follow that with horrible desolation. Verily, the Scriptures correctly declare, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Proverbs 16:18) From history we may judge that the world aforesaid was no less viciously intentioned, but that God's providence interfered, as though he said, "Thus far shalt thou come, but no further." (Job 38:11) Now, however, we have apparently reached the time when the Lord is saying, "Let loose the winds of strife!" These winds are blowing more and more, and eventually are to become a great whirlwind of trouble, as pictured in the Scriptures.

The possibilities of conflict are extending over to Persia, and thence down toward India. While all the nations will be glad to have peace, each is afraid to show a white feather for fear of the loss of prestige. The Spirit of the Lord is not anywhere manifest, nor should we expect it, for the time has come for all to realize that these great nations are not Christian nations, but merely kingdoms of this world and under the prince of this world, who now "worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience" to anger, wrath, hatred, envy, strife, bitterness. The primary element of the Lord's Spirit is humility: "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Peter 5:6) This spirit the world does not recognize as its standard; and hence we do not see the Spirit of Christ, explained by the Apostle—"meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly-kindness, love."—Galatians 5:22, 23.

Indeed, we entreat all the Lord's dear people to remember that there are but the two great Masters; and that we have enlisted on the side of our God and his Christ, and are to prove loyal to these in the midst of a crooked and perverse people, blinded by the god of this world and filled with his spirit of pride, boastfulness, animosity, hatred and strife. It should be our desire to be neutral as between these contending factions of Satan's empire. We love them all; we wish for them all great blessings. We have a message of hope for all who have ears to hear that eventually their extremity will be God's opportunity; and that Messiah's Kingdom will roll away the curse, and instead roll on to mankind the blessings of the kingdom of God's dear Son.

Let us never forget our neutrality. Let us be just toward all, kind, generous. Let us avoid as far as possible any discussion of these matters with those who would not be able to understand and appreciate our position. Otherwise, we would be doing what the Master admonished us not to do, when he said, "Cast not your pearls before swine; lest they trample them under foot and turn again and rend you." (Matthew 7:6) Our worldly neighbors have not the viewpoint that we possess, and cannot understand our arguments or reasons. In due time they will understand. Now the Lord's consecrated people should be unobtrusive, not strife-breeders, not partisans, not bigoted, but wonderfully sympathetic toward all, realizing the true situation, as others are not able to do.

As the facts gradually leak out, it is noticeable that none of the nations at war possess all the virtues and none of them possess all the vices. As between the opposing forces in this great war, the dishonors are probably not unequally matched. While everybody noted the great injustice done to the Belgians in the German invasion, the very ones who were loudest in rebuking that injustice have been guilty of a similar invasion of a weak state—the invasion of Greece by the British and French, who crossed her territory to assist the Servians. And whatever may have been the atrocities of the Turks against the Armenians, whom the Turks claim were arming and entrenching against them, nothing could have exceeded the bestial ferocity of the Russians against the Jews, who, so far as we know, were seeking to be neutral.

While people of all nations are suffering directly or indirectly from the present great war, the poor Jew seems to get the worst of it everywhere. He is to be found in all the different armies—sometimes as a volunteer, sometimes as a conscript. It appears that in Galicia, where the Jews are very numerous and where they are very thoroughly hated by the Russians and Cossacks, they have suffered tremendously—and are still suffering. The fortunes of war swept them from one side and then from the other—back and forth. Surely these poor people, of all the people of earth, will soon begin to pray, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in heaven!"

We give below an extract from the *Maccabaeans*, a Jewish

journal published in New York City. It gives a little glimpse of the sufferings of the war-swept region—a glimpse which should horrify the most hardened. Surely the Lord is preparing the world to acclaim Messiah's Kingdom "the desire of all nations"! (Haggai 2:7) The excerpt which follows gives the testimony of one of the distressed, a Rumanian Jew of Bukowina:

"Day before yesterday, early in the morning, the Cossacks fired my house until it burned like tinder. When they came to us into the mountains as victors, the sacking of houses was common enough. They simply took whatever they could lay hands upon. But we didn't drain the full measure of evil until they returned beaten and in retreat. It was then that they overran us in hordes, drunk with rage. They demanded provender in a hurry, hay and oats for their horses, and food for themselves. First came the order to fire the house of the town judge. Then they dragged the Jewish inn-keeper into the street to dispatch him. One of the horsemen speared him with his lance, another finished him by shooting him through the head. Then the villagers came in a mass and begged to have their houses protected against looting. They were speared by the soldiers and knocked down. It was terrible. And with the inn-keeper slain, brandy was flowing freely from casks in an ownerless inn. The soldiers drank themselves into a state of furious madness, and then went into the house to gratify their bestial lusts. To me they came as they did to the others—I don't know to how many houses in all. They outraged my wife in plain view of the children, and violated my little girl. They bound me with ropes and threw me under a bench, so that I might witness my shame without power of interfering; that I might be poisoned and not die; that I might live the most miserable of mankind. At last they fired our house. The women ran about distracted, wherever their feet would carry them. And when the conflagration ceased, when we saw our life's work laid in ashes, we went through a snowstorm into the wide world."

"Multiply this experience with ten thousand, and scatter these ten thousand instances of Cossack rule over the whole of Galicia and Bukowina, and you will have a picture—a very imperfect one—of what these two provinces, and particularly its Jewish population, had to suffer under the sway of the Russian invasion.

"In Jablowitz, Bukowina, a house was fired by the soldiers who strictly prohibited any salvage. Not to freeze to death during a cold night, the unfortunate owner, a Jew, took two blankets from out of the burning house. He was cruci-

fied by the soldiers, and a guard posted below the crucifix until he expired. In Fuczka several Jews were hanged, one because he wanted to save his wife from violation. In Storozynetz, south of Czernowitz, Isaak Fellermyer, a Jew, was dragged out of bed in the dead of night, by four soldiers, who, without stating any reasons attempted to hang him. The rope broke and the soldiers cut his throat, gouged out his eyes, and threw the naked corpse into the snow.

"The Russians in Galicia reintroduced into modern warfare the Tartar bestiality of using helpless human beings as a cover in marching against the enemy. To be sure, these human beings were Jews. Not prisoners, mind you, but non-combatants, not men only, but old men, young men, women and children of both sexes. It was at Nadworna where the unnamable, the indescribable portent took place. The Russians huddled together one thousand five hundred Jewish families—octogenarians, old women, young matrons with infants at their breasts, school children, pell-mell, some seven thousand souls in all and drove them as a human cover against the Austrian battlefield, marching right in the track of their victims. There are no words in any language emphatic enough to characterize such an exploit.

"Try and depict, if you can, the situation—strive to bring the unthinkable close to your imagination! Fifteen hundred families, seven thousand heads, none of them able to bear arms, all the capable having been mobilized long ago, a huge swarm of the old, the sick, of women and children. These Jews, incapable of bearing arms, had been tortured for months by all the miseries of war; they had suffered hunger and cold, the Russians had looted their dwellings, burned their houses, destroyed their property; they had robbed, scourged and tormented them. And now they were lashed to the shambles like oxen—forward! pashol! They are fired at from the rear with revolvers and machine-guns, their backs are scourged with the knout, their loins are pierced with Cossack lances and their skulls battered by the butts of Cossack carbines, and thus they are driven against three hundred volcanoes, roaring and belching fire all along the Austrian front. The Austrians hear the tremendous outcry of the victims, the groaning of the mutilated and the dying, but they cannot help their misery; they must keep on firing ceaselessly, for behind this human holocaust the enemy is crouching for a spring; if they cease firing, the Russians will be upon them and the battle lost. And in this manner seven thousand souls, men, women and children, are slaughtered on the battle-line between two contending armed forces, unarmed themselves and perishing without a fighting chance in a Tartar welter of execution en masse."

1915—FOREIGN BRANCH REPORTS—1915

REPORT OF BRITISH BRANCH

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

It is our pleasure and privilege to send you another Annual Report of the British harvest work. We are very thankful for the continued opportunities of service during a time of uncertainty and of the world's strife. The accompanying figures show that the war has not shut the work down, though it has interfered with its progress. On a broad summary it may be said that our output of books and tracts for the year is about two-thirds of that of last year, and not much less than that of the year 1913. During the current year we have circulated in Britain 90,700 of the STUDIES OF THE SCRIPTURES, and 64,300 books and booklets (SCENARIOS, MANNAS, and the pamphlets TABERNACLE SHADOWS, HELL, etc.) The free distribution of volunteer matter, free SCENARIOS and BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY amounts to nearly eleven million copies.

COLPORTEUR WORK STIMULATED BY DRAMA

The colporteur work has been greatly aided by the PHOTO-DRAMA. Indeed had it not been for the DRAMA the output of books would, to all appearances, have been very much less. The regular colporteur work lost some of its most successful workers soon after the outbreak of the war, when the first pinch of money was felt. We cannot but feel sorry for this, for the country recovered from its panic when the demand for war material began to be felt, and since then there has been plenty of money in circulation, and the people are perishing for need of the truth. We still think there is plenty of room for good colporteurs, and it is still true that ground already gone over can again be canvassed to advantage.

The volunteer work has gone on well. Of the various issues provided for this privilege of service, the friends have distributed about seven and a half million copies. There is, however, a drop in the number of B. S. M.; for the class-extension work was almost discontinued after the war began and after the advent of the DRAMA. There are some indications of the work reviving.

There have been 207 exhibitions of the PHOTO-DRAMA, and the recorded attendance is 593,659, and there have been signed cards handed in at the finales to the encouraging number of 26,860.

The number of Associated Bible Classes has greatly increased during the year and appreciation of the truth is being maintained in them. The younger brethren show keen interest in the glorious hope and are making advancement in knowledge and piety, whilst those more advanced are remaining steadfast in the faith and are rejoicing continually. All the classes are receiving pilgrim visits as regularly as the circumstances permit.

Many newspapers continue to publish the sermons, and the message continues to do good work, as is seen by many evidences.

The office work continues brisk, as the above figures will show. The letters in and out for the year total 53,995. There are prospects of work for some time to come before us, and we continue to serve and wait and pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Ever praying the Lord's blessing for yourself, we are, dear brother,

Your servants in the Lord,

MANAGERS OF BRITISH BRANCH.

BRITISH BRANCH ACTIVITIES FOR 1915 SUMMARIZED

Volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES.....	98,410
MANNAS, SCENARIOS etc.....	64,305
Free literature, B. S. M., etc.....	10,784,871
Letters received and sent out.....	53,995

REPORT OF AUSTRALASIAN BRANCH

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

It is with gladness that we can again report a year of progress; in fact, it is the best year yet, and much better than could have been expected in many ways. The circumstances of the year have, of course, been exceptional all over the world; but besides the dislocation of trade and unusual conditions through the war, there was the severe drought to contend with.

Thousands of cattle and sheep were lost, or sold to be slaughtered and put in the refrigerators; thus the price of meat was kept up. Expensive horses were simply given away to save them from starvation. Foodstuffs for cattle brought enormous prices, and of course provisions went to great prices; for instance, butter reached 60 cents a pound. There was lack of employment, and hard times seemed upon us. The war, however, has kept certain trades busy, such as clothing, munitions, etc. At the same time the war has taken many men out of the country; their wives and dependents being provided for, so much distress has been averted. Counteracting the scarcity of money and uncertainty of things, the colporteurs have found that these strenuous times (this terrible war and universal trouble which so clearly mark the ending of the "present evil world" and the inauguration of "the world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness") have made people begin to consider and inquire as to the divine purpose. Had not some of our best colporteurs been taken from their work to help the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION for a time, many more volumes would have been placed.

ALWAYS OPPORTUNITIES IF WE WATCH

We still have a noble band of colporteurs, and the work goes well, even over ground which had been covered several times before. While some have seemed to slacken in their zeal, as though they had made up their minds that the work ought to stop now, because they had expected it would, others take the wiser view, namely, that it will be time to stop when we cannot go on. No doubt the Lord can and will stop the work in his own due time; but even if the general harvest work should stop, it would seem that the Lord will never leave his people with nothing to do. Surely there will always be some opportunities of service if we watch for them! When the Harvest ends, it will soon be time to "turn the pure language [message] to the people," whoever may be here to do it.—Zephaniah 3:9.

"So on we go not knowing,
We would not if we might;
We'd rather walk in the dark with God,
Than go alone in the light."

PHOTO-DRAMA: In Australia there have been about 286 exhibitions, with a total attendance of about 295,000. In New Zealand 63 exhibitions with attendance of about 50,100. In Fiji, 25 with an attendance of 6,800.

These figures may seem small to you as compared with the U. S. A. and England, but our conditions are so different. Our territory is larger than the U. S. A., and yet the population of Australia is only about five millions, a little more than the population of Greater New York.

The one DRAMA operating in Australia has traveled some 5,000 miles to visit from Queensland to West Australia. Good work has been done, and while it is surprising how many can see it without seeming lasting good, yet there are some in every state now rejoicing in the truth and giving evidences of thorough consecration as a result of this work.

The friends everywhere have contributed to this feature of the work generously, and what is included in the statement does not take into account several hundred pounds which have been spent in this connection by the classes. The Perth Class ultimately paid all the expenses of producing the DRAMA for West Australia; the Adelaide friends did the same for South Australia, and New Zealand practically did the same for that country. The other classes did remarkably well according to ability.

PATIENTLY WAITING FOR THE LORD

Notwithstanding all the extra expenses of the DRAMA, the contributions to the general Tract Fund and Good Hopes have been maintained; thus you will be pleased to see how much in earnest the Australasian brethren are.

There has been considerable growth in grace as well as in numbers. While possibly one or two here and there may seem to have slackened in interest, because they expected to have been with the Lord by this time, it is beautiful to see in others the opposite effect, the mellowing character, the submission to and patient waiting for the Lord, willing to serve him either here or there, this or the other side of the veil, simply biding his time.

There has been more than usual response to the general distribution of the papers, throughout the year, but if as you intimate, we are to make this branch self-supporting in future, we may have to curtail our expense in this direction. However, it is good to realize that the Lord is overruling the work, and is able to provide what is necessary to the accomplishment of his will, and we desire to do no more than please him.

We desire a continuation of your prayers and the prayers

of all the Lord's people, that we may have wisdom and divine guidance as we seek to continue the work to the Lord's glory and to the assistance of the body waiting for the deliverance.—Romans 8:23.

With Christian love to yourself and all coworkers,
Yours in the Service of Christ,

AUSTRALASIAN BRANCH.

P. S.—WATCH TOWER subscribers number 1,150. B. S. M. subscribers number 1,350.

Many of the latter subscribe for hundreds and some for thousands of copies monthly.

PHOTO-DRAMA is now having a splendid run at Sydney.

SUMMARY OF AUSTRALASIAN WORK

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES (cloth).....	37,419
“ “ “ (paper).....	3,026
Booklets	3,517

Total	43,962
PEOPLE'S PULPIT (B. S. M.), free	1,192,930
WATCH TOWER.....	6,411

Total	1,199,341
Letters received	4,388
Letters sent out.....	5,315

EXPENDITURES

Deficiency to Brooklyn to October, 1914..	£1482:11: 2
Cost of Free Literature.....	337: 2:11
Postage on same.....	39:12: 9
Freight, postage, etc.....	70:18: 1
General Expense: Gas, Rent, etc.....	43:15: 0
Pilgrim and extension work.....	92: 9: 4
PHOTO-DRAMA Operations.....	876: 3: 7

RECEIPTS

	£2942:12:10
Donations received:	
Tract Fund	£560: 3: 2
Special for PHOTO-DRAMA.....	422:15: 5
Deficit due to Brooklyn.....	1959:14: 3
	£2942:12:10

SWEDISH BRANCH REPORT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

As the season for our yearly balancing of accounts has come round again, and we—contrary to earlier expectations of many in our ranks—still are human beings, and still, while in this "weak" condition, have the blessed privilege to partake in the service of the truth and in the wonderful joys and sufferings connected with that service, I have herewith the great pleasure of sending you some statements from the work accomplished through the Society's Swedish branch during the last year.

Looking around us in this part today, we cannot but feel very, very humble and thankful indeed, seeing how merciful and good the dear heavenly Father has been toward his people in this country, amongst whom we have the greatly appreciated privilege to serve as a representative of yourself—his chosen and faithful servant.

The fact is, that in spite of the many hindrances and difficulties (financially and otherwise) directly and indirectly caused by the present European war, the Lord has held the "doors" of opportunity wide open for us during the whole year, and never in the past did so many of the Swedish people in one year have the true explanation of God's Word set before their minds. We have also in this year witnessed very encouraging proofs that this labor has not been done "in vain." A good number of the Lord's people in "Babylon," as well as some out of it all over the country, have got their eyes of understanding opened to see the wonderful plan of God. Nearly a hundred of these have already symbolized their full consecration to the Lord and to obedience to his holy will.

One of the primary means to accomplish these results was your wonderful PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, which has been publicly presented in from one to five places at the same time on 279 days out of the 365 of the year, with a total attendance of more than 400,000. Although our economic circumstances caused the stopping of the DRAMA a few weeks ago, we have still a good hope, D. V., to be enabled to start this branch again very soon. The dear colporteurs have also, by their energetic and faithful labor of love for the truth, succeeded to such an extent that we have circulated 8,157 more cloth-bound copies of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES than we did during the previous year. One single colporteur sister—physically not very strong—has sold 5,962 copies of the STUDIES this year. During the last three years and three months the same sister has sold 18,662 copies.

The free tract distribution, the newspaper work and the regular pilgrim service have also been carried on with the

usual success. Six Swedish brethren have taken part in the pilgrim service, and their work has been highly appreciated among the friends everywhere. The same can be said also respecting our conventions, quite a number of which have been held in different parts of the country. Although a considerable decrease in the number of foreign subscriptions on the Swedish WATCH TOWER has taken place in the year, still the total number of its subscribers has not decreased in the least, but exceeds all previous figures.

Our office work has grown immensely. As the book stock here was nearly exhausted just after October, 1914, we have during this year republished all six volumes of the STUDIES (in seven editions, or 73,500 copies), the MANNA book (4,000 copies), the DRAMA textbook (two editions, 13,000 copies), the free SCENARIOS (four editions, 248,000 copies), pamphlets, etc. The correspondence has also grown to a considerable degree. The following figures will show you as to the exactness of these things.

Respecting the future of our work, the outlook is (as we have chronologically passed our last Scriptural "landmark," and are surrounded by the roaring of the towering waves in the eddy of which present governments and institutions, already shaking and trembling, will soon be overthrown) more hidden than at earlier times, and our prospects are correspondingly in a still fuller degree built wholly and only on faith. Yet, we are of good courage, knowing that the Lord himself shall never leave nor forsake any of those who are truly his, but shall overrule and make all things serve their highest and eternal interests, according to his own wisdom and love. To-day the truth friends in Sweden are not less (but probably more) determined than ever by the Lord's grace to remain faithful toward him and his cause, and to use all opportunities still remaining to proclaim his glorious truth, until their final end, that we also, with yourself and all of his faithful followers, "in due time," may hear his blessed "Well done, good and faithful servants."

We are continually more grateful than words can tell you, our beloved Brother Russell, for all the blessings and helps we have received through your faithful and important ministries in the Lord. You have indeed a large room in our hearts, and you are always with thankfulness and joy included in our prayers before the throne of heavenly grace.

Humbly but heartily conveying to you the warmest Christian love and greetings from all the Swedish brethren, I am

Your brother and fellow-servant in the Lord,

AUG. LUNDBORG.

SUMMARY OF THE SWEDISH WORK

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, circulated at cost	41,280
DRAMA SCENARIOS	11,993
Various other books and booklets, MANNA, TABERNACLE SHADOWS, etc.....	7,134
Total	60,407
EKO FRAN TALARSTOLEN (BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY), issued free.. ..	370,560
Other free tracts and copies of the Swedish WATCH TOWER	69,286
DRAMA SCENARIOS in Paper form, free.....	295,600
Total	735,446
Amounting in tract pages to.....	18,309,024
Subscribers to the Swedish WATCH TOWER... ..	2,363
Sets of the SWEDISH TOWER, cloth bound and unbound	480
Subscribers to EKO FRAN TALARSTOLEN.....	262
Regular subscriptions for the Sermons in Swedish Newspapers	1,208
Meetings held under the auspices of the Society	1,557
Public PHOTO-DRAMA presentations.....	1,256
Miles traveled in preaching tours.....	177,399
Letters and cards sent out.....	10,104
Letters and cards received.....	8,434
Total number of various sendings out from the office	62,608

EXPENDITURES

Pilgrims, Conventions and other meetings	Kr. 9,942.58=	\$ 2,687.18
Translations, printing, binding, paper, etc.....	51,835.43=	14,009.58
Freight and postage.....	5,632.71=	1,522.35
Helps to poor Colporteurs...	2,246.82=	607.25
The newspaper service.....	1,444.30=	390.35

Office expenses, rent, light heat, etc.....	7,121.32=	1,924.68
The PHOTO-DRAMA service..	49,457.12=	13,366.79

Total Kr. 127,680.28=\$34,508.18

RECEIPTS

Voluntary donations to Tract Fund	Kr. 26,413.03=	\$ 7,138.65
Voluntary donations to DRAMA service.....	12,653.64=	3,419.90
Swedish WATCH TOWER subscriptions	5,960.98=	1,611.08
Sold books, pamphlets, etc...	50,524.08=	13,655.16
Total	Kr. 95,551.73=	\$25,824.79
Deficit	32,128.55=	8,683.39

Kr. 127,680.28=\$34,508.18

REPORT FROM FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND

The Society's representative in its Geneva Office writes as follows:

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—It is with great joy and heartfelt gratitude toward our God and Father and toward our Savior Jesus Christ that I forward to you the yearly report of the French work. We have learned in Christ's school to love our brethren. Our great wish is to progress in this line and, above all, to love the one whom our Savior has chosen as our pastor to give us "meat in due season." We have at heart the French work, which we both cherish. It is, therefore, with special gratitude that we are able to thank our God, who has designed to allow us to glorify his name amongst his French children, and to gather by means of the sharp sickle of truth all those who are desirous of making a covenant of sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5) This last year shows an increase in every branch, especially as regards public lectures, the total attendance being 30,795. Below find a statement of the Society's work during the past fiscal year:

Letters and cards received.....	2,320
Letters and cards sent out.....	1,397
Volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES sold....	854
Various booklets sold.....	5,200
Bibles and Concordances sold.....	102
Free literature (B. S. M.) distributed.....	83,000
Public meetings held.....	209
Numbers in attendance.....	30,795
Expenditures for public meetings.....	2,811 Frs.
Total cash receipts.....	16,303.76 "
Total expenditure.....	16,237 "

Balance cash on hand..... 66.76 Frs.

REPORT FROM BIBLE STUDENTS, HUNGARY

BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I am very glad to write you, by the grace of the Lord, regarding the spreading of literature and books this year (1915), and of the many joys and blessings which God has bestowed on us in all the trials and testings of the past:

SUMMARY

Books circulated.....	1,650
Booklets	600
WATCH TOWERS.....	6,000
BIBLE STUDENT'S MONTHLY, etc.....	40,000
The issuance of Vol. II.—THE TIME IS AT HAND (Hungarian)—is in progress.	

Incoming letters, 957; outgoing, 725.

207 have made a covenant with our Lord.

Public meetings held.....	90
Parlor meetings.....	4,700
Meetings in the country.....	30

A good number of Rumanian publications were circulated.

We have received the books sent, and are very thankful.

With great love, hope and faithfulness,

Your colaborer and brother, CHARLESZ SZABÓ.

JAMAICA MISSION REPORT

Number Pilgrims at work.....	5
Places visited (no classes).....	7
Public meetings held.....	17
Total attendance.....	777
Number semi-private meetings.....	300
Total attendance.....	2,944
Number parlor meetings.....	104
Total attendance.....	810
Number of miles traveled.....	3,471

Volumes of STUDIES IN SCRIPTURES sold..... 500
Free matter—BIBLE STUDENT'S MONTHLY..... 60,000

WORK FOR THE BLIND

GOULD FREE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND, S. BOSTON, MASS.
(Watch Tower Supervision.)
Chapters of SCRIPTURE STUDIES loaned out... 10,654

WATCH TOWER, Pamphlets, and BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY..... 3,174
Weekly Sermons 2,581
Letters received..... 1,484
Letters sent out..... 2,176
Sermons mailed to England..... 3,833
Expenses \$1,073.90

HE ASCENDED, LEADING CAPTIVES

JANUARY 2.—ACTS 1:1-14.

FIVE SPECIAL POINTS OF THIS STUDY: (1) THE NUMBER OF APOSTLES LIMITED TO TWELVE; (2) THE IMPORTANCE OF THE KINGDOM TO COME; (3) IT WAS NOT THEN DUE TIME TO EXPLAIN THE TIME OF THE KINGDOM'S ESTABLISHMENT; (4) BEFORE THE KINGDOM WOULD COME THE DISCIPLES WOULD HAVE A GREAT WORK TO DO IN PROCLAIMING IT THROUGHOUT THE EARTH; (5) AS THE LORD'S ASCENSION WAS KNOWN TO FEW AND WAS WITHOUT COMMOTION, SO HIS SECOND COMING WOULD IN LIKE MANNER BE KNOWN TO FEW AND BE AS A THIEF.

"When he ascended on high, he led a multitude of captives, and gave gifts unto men."—Ephesians 4:8.

Our lesson is from the pen of St. Luke, as indicated by the first verse. (Luke 1:3) There are five special features to the study. First is the declaration that the Apostles were only those whom Jesus had especially selected to that office—St. Paul, by divine arrangement, subsequently taking the place of Judas. This is in contradiction to the claim of the Bishops of England and of Rome that they are Apostolic Bishops, with apostolic powers, but it is in full agreement with the Master's statement that all others claiming to be apostles are "liars."—Revelation 2:2.

The second point of the lesson is that Jesus, before leaving his apostles, instructed them concerning the kingdom of God. This is in full accord with all the records of his previous teachings. Nearly all of his teachings were in respect to this wonderful kingdom of God which will be established when he will come in power and great glory, and of which his invited disciples and followers are to be members—sharing his glory and his throne, as joint-heirs.

The third point we notice especially is referred to in Verses 6 and 7. The apostles inquired respecting the kingdom and the time for its blessing of Israel; but Jesus informed them that it was not for them to know the times and seasons respecting the kingdom (Acts 1:7)—that the matter was entirely in the Father's hands. The fourth point of our study centers in Verse 8, where the Lord declares that prior to the establishment of his kingdom his church would witness to it throughout the earth—after receiving the blessing at Pentecost. The fifth point of special notice centers in Verse 11, in the statement of the angels, "This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

WRONG VIEWS OF THE KINGDOM

Peculiar and conflicting views respecting the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Messiah, are held by Protestants. Much more logical, but equally unscriptural, is the view held by Roman Catholics. The confusion of Protestants is lamentable. Some hold that somehow the kingdom of God began at Pentecost; others hold that somehow it began when Jerusalem was destroyed; and yet all of them realize that the promises made by Jesus respecting his second advent must still be future.

Roman Catholics hold that they set up the kingdom of God about the year 800 A. D.; first, by dividing between clergy and laity, and exalting the clergy to be a special class; then, the Roman Church having great power, and the kings of the earth being comparatively weak, Papacy established a spiritual rule over the kings and princes of the earth in the name of Christ—the popes being recognized as Christ's vicegerents, as reigning instead of Christ, as his substitutes.

The kings and princes of earth were informed that they might continue to rule the people if they would be obedient to the Papacy; that in that event they would be kingdoms of God; but that if they should fail to be obedient to Papacy, the latter would inform the people that such kings were no longer to be recognized, but were disowned by God's spiritual kingdom, and would appoint other kings and other princes in their stead. The rulers of Europe readily assented to this partnership, by which the people would recognize them as having divine authorization to rule. Matters have progressed in this way for eleven hundred years. Austria and Hungary still assent to the divine power in Papacy—though others of the kingdoms of Europe have more or less broken the pact.

Great Britain was one of the first to break with Papacy, under the leadership of King Henry VIII. He had a dispute with the pope, and forthwith proceeded to organize the British people as another kingdom of God and the Church of England as a separate spiritual kingdom from Papacy; and the king himself and his successors became the heads of both the church and the state. Lutheranism made similar progress in Scandi-

navia and amongst the German States. These acknowledged Lutheranism; and Lutheranism in turn acknowledged them as kingdoms of God. Thus today the kingdoms of this world are still kingdoms of God on the authority originally from Papacy and subsequently through Protestants.

AN ERROR—CHRIST'S KINGDOM FUTURE

All intelligent people, Catholics and Protestants, now perceive that a serious mistake was made—that the kingdoms of this world never were kingdoms of Christ, and that the name Christendom has been misapplied to them. That name signifies Christ's kingdom; and it is very inappropriate to apply it to the warring nations of Europe, now seeking to blow each other off the face of the land and off the face of the sea. Moreover, the Apostle declares that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," and tells us that the Spirit of Christ is manifest in meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.—Romans 8:9; Galatians, 5:22, 23.

We are sure that in all those warring nations there are saintly people who manifest the Spirit of Christ; but we are equally sure that the warring kingdoms themselves do not manifest this spirit, and are "none of his." On the contrary, they manifest what the Apostle styles, works of the flesh and of the devil—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, bitterness. Bible students are convinced that the great war now started in Europe is the beginning of that great trouble which the Bible calls "Armageddon" and which the Bible declares will prepare mankind and usher them into the kingdom of God's dear Son, which will be "the desire of all nations" (Haggai 2:7), and through which a reign of righteousness will be established throughout the whole earth.

Jesus did not pretend to tell his people how long or how short the time would be before the establishment of his kingdom. He declared the matter fully in the divine care and not proper to be revealed to God's people then. But elsewhere he did tell them of certain indications that would be given them at the proper time, by which they would know, and be enabled to lift up their heads and rejoice, realizing that their deliverance was drawing nigh.

Similarly we are not to understand that the apostles expected Christ's kingdom in their day, before their death. On the contrary, we remember that St. Paul, while foretelling his own death, declared that some of the Lord's people would not sleep in death, but would be alive at the second coming of Christ and be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Corinthians 15:51, 52) Similarly St. Peter, without attempting to tell of the times and seasons, declared that he put his message into writing and committed it to holy men for the benefit of the church after his death.—2 Peter 1:15.

Our Lord's words in Verse 8, to the effect that his followers would give a witness throughout the entire world, was a further demonstration that the kingdom would not come in a few days or a few years, but would be long enough away to give opportunity for a full testimony of the Lord's favor to all people, nations, kindreds and tongues. And so it has been.

"THIS SAME JESUS SHALL SO COME"

Bible students are coming to notice the exact wording of the Scriptures more carefully than formerly. The statement that Jesus would so come again in like manner as they saw him go into heaven, has been generally taken to mean that Jesus would come a fleshly or human being. This would be a contradiction of the statement that he was put to death in flesh, but quickened, made alive, resurrected, in spirit. (1 Peter 3:18) It would also contradict the Master's words that he was about to ascend up where he was before—to the spirit plane, or condition. It would also contradict his declaration,

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye shall see me."—John 14:19.

In a word, the entire tenor of Scripture is to the effect that when Jesus left the heavenly glory and was made flesh, it was not the divine intention that he should remain a fleshly being forever, but quite the contrary—that he took this earthly condition for the suffering of death and would not need it afterward. Adam was a fleshly, human being; and, in order to be the Redeemer of Adam and his race, Jesus needed to be a perfect human being—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Hebrews 7:26) But there could be no reason why he must continue to be a fleshly being and out of touch with all the heavenly conditions.

When we remember that the perfect Adam was a little lower than the angels, we must see that the perfect man Jesus was also a little lower than the angels. But that he did not keep this lower condition is fully asserted by St. Paul, who, after telling about his faithfulness even unto death, declares, "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name above every name." (Philippians 2:9, 10) The exalted Jesus is a spirit being of the very highest order—"of the divine nature"—who sat down at the Father's right hand, on the Father's throne, waiting for the time when he would make his own throne, establish the Millennial Kingdom and associate the church with him in his throne as his bride. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father in his throne."—Revelation 3:21.

During the forty days after his resurrection, Jesus appeared some ten or eleven times, mostly for a few moments each time. Our lesson tells us that during these visits to his faithful he gave them instructions. He did not appear to them as a spirit being to strike them down with the glory of his presence, shining above the brightness of the sun, as he subsequently appeared to Saul of Tarsus. (Acts 26:13) On the contrary, he appeared as a man, sometimes in one form and sometimes in another form—as a gardener, as a traveler, etc. On two occasions he appeared in bodies similar to the one in which he had been crucified, showing the spear marks and the nail prints. These bodies were materialized in the upper room when the doors were shut; and of course clothing was materialized at the same time, for he was not naked.

These manifestations of Jesus were for the purpose of demonstrating unquestionably to his disciples the fact that he was no longer dead. His appearance in different bodies was to prove that none of these bodies was his real spiritual body, but merely a manifestation. The Bible tells us of previous

manifestations of the same kind when our Lord was a spirit being, before he became a man. Away back in Abraham's time, the Lord with two angels materialized and talked with Abraham and ate with him. (Genesis 18) When Jesus arose from the dead, quickened in spirit, he had gotten back again to where he was before. The description of the resurrection change of the church fits equally well to the Lord. He was sown (in death) "in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor [a companion to thieves], raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body."—I Cor. 15:42-44.

"COME IN LIKE MANNER"

It should be carefully noted that the angels did not say, "come in like form." The Lord departed from them in some kind of fleshly form, or body, which would enable them to see him ascending into the clouds as they could not see his spirit body. The manner of Jesus' going did not appertain to his form. Our Lord's manner of going was quiet, secret, unknown to the world, known only to his disciples, without noise, without ostentation, without trumpets or bugles. He will so come in like manner—unknown to the world. He will be present as a thief in the night; and none will then know of his presence except his disciples.

How contrary all this is to what we once supposed, when we thought of our Savior as forever degraded to human conditions, which at their best are a little lower than the angelic! How sadly we misunderstood the matter when we used to sing:

"Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly plead for me!"

When we thus sang, we evidently did not understand the methods of the Lord's intercession for his saints any more than we understood his glorification as a spirit being, "far above angels."

Now we understand that the seventh trumpet, with which he comes, is not a literal trumpet, but a symbolical one; and that like the preceding six, it makes no noise upon the air. Now we see that the world will not be conscious of the Master's second advent during the thief stage, nor until the Great Time of Trouble, when he shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance. (2 Thessalonians 1:8) What the world will then see will be the trouble; and gradually they will come to understand that the great King is identified with the trouble which will be making preparation for the establishment of the Reign of Righteousness by the overthrow of everything that is unrighteous.

THE SPIRIT AT PENTECOST

JANUARY 9—ACTS 2:1-13.

WHAT THE PENTECOSTAL BLESSING WAS—ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE CHURCH THEN AND NOW—THE LESSON IT TAUGHT—HOW UNDERSTOOD BY SOME AND MISUNDERSTOOD BY OTHERS.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"—1 Corinthians 3:16.

Pentecost was a notable day in the Jewish calendar. It marked the fiftieth day in the harvest—after the gathering of the first ripe sheaf. Our Lord in his glorious resurrected condition was the antitype of that sheaf, the First-fruit of God in the great plan of redemption. The first forty days, as we have seen, were used in giving occasional lessons to the disciples—helping them over the difficulties of their position, getting them properly started, with proper faith in the resurrection, to make a good witness and to gather out the Lord's jewels from amongst men. But when Jesus left them at the end of forty days, he instructed them not to begin their ministry at once, but to wait until they would be endued with power from on high—by the holy Spirit.

Accordingly, they waited ten days, and then their waiting was rewarded by the outpouring of his Spirit upon them in the upper room on the fiftieth day, Pentecost. They did transact just one item of business during those ten days; but it was without authority from the Lord, and was never recognized by him. It consisted in casting lots for a successor to Judas. As they cast lots on only two men, it followed that one of the two must be the choice of the lots. But the Lord never recognized the matter, and we hear nothing more of Matthias whom they chose. Instead, in due time God brought forth St. Paul—"not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles."

APPEARED IN GOD'S PRESENCE

When our Lord ascended, the Apostle declares, he appeared in the presence of God for us—for his church, for all who would comply with the terms and conditions of discipleship. (Hebrews 9:24) He did not appear for the world, but merely

for us. He loved the world, he died for the world, and he is yet to bless the world; but the time for the blessing of the world must wait until first the divine program in respect to the church shall have been carried out.

How much of our Lord's time was spent in going to the heavenly throne, and how much of the ten days was necessary for the return of the holy Spirit, we do not know, but we do know from the Apostle's words that the holy Spirit sent forth upon the waiting disciples in the upper room was the testimony to them that Jesus' work was satisfactory to the Father, that the Father gave the holy Spirit to him for his church, and that Jesus shed it forth.—Acts 2:33.

The events of that day of Pentecost were very valuable to the church at that time, but have been equally valuable to all of the Lord's members. The Scriptures represent that all who are received into God's family receive a begetting of the holy Spirit; and this begetting was what Pentecost means to those waiting ones in the upper room. From that time onward they were sons of God; and "if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ" their Lord. (Romans 8:17) And so it is with us who have come into the body of Christ since Pentecost. We do not receive special manifestations of divine power, such as the cloven tongues that came upon those disciples; but we do receive from God the same holy Spirit which they received.

MEANING OF THE PENTECOSTAL BLESSING

The Lord represents Jesus and his church under the figure of a great priest—Jesus was the Head of that priest; the apostles were the first members of the body, under the head; and

all the church of Christ from then till now are members in particular of the same body, the same church. The holy Spirit came with an outward manifestation upon Jesus, the Head of the church, that we might know thus that he was accepted by the Father. Then at Pentecost the holy Spirit came with an outward manifestation upon the disciples, in order that they might know that they had been received into the same fellowship, as members of the same body.

But it is not necessary for us to have an outward demonstration today; for this pouring out of God's blessing was upon the church as a whole; and we come into the church of Christ by a full consecration of our hearts to do the Lord's will, and with full trust in the work of Jesus, we receive the Spirit and are counted as members of that church body, though without any outward demonstration whatever.

We can see a necessity for the outward demonstration in the case of the apostles for two reasons: First, they were Jews, and had believed in Jesus, had made their consecration and had been received into discipleship by him. But the Father could not receive any into sonship until after Jesus had died. Additionally, the Father could not recognize any human beings as his children and grant them forgiveness of sins, full reconciliation and an entrance into his family, until Jesus, as the great High Priest, had not only died, but had ascended up on high and proffered or made applicable the merit of his death on our behalf. And so we read respecting the apostles before Christ's death: "The holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."—John 7:39.

There had been no human sons of God recognized from the time Adam, the first of these sons, sinned, until Jesus came as the Son of God. The Jews were members of the house of servants, as we read: "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house are we." (Hebrews 3:5, 6) The Pentecostal blessing, therefore, was the beginning of the recognition of the followers of Jesus as sons of God and heirs of God's promise.

GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Another matter: At Pentecost the Lord gave gifts to the apostles, and to the remainder of the church through them. These gifts were represented in the ability to speak with various tongues and in power to perform miracles—heal the sick, etc. Evidently these gifts were necessary for the establishment of the church; but they must have all expired when the apostles, through whom alone they were bestowed upon others, fell asleep in death. But while God has not continued the gifts with the church, he has promised something better; i. e., the fruits of the Spirit. The fruits are more valuable than the gifts, because they represent character and not merely powers.—1 Corinthians 12:31; 13.

The fruits of the Spirit are meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love; and these evidence that the individual possessing them has become a member of the church of Christ and has been begotten of the holy Spirit. Much therefore as we rejoice that the apostles had the gifts

and afterwards cultivated the fruits, we are glad that we now have the fruits of the Spirit.

One of the gifts of the Spirit was manifested by one of the apostles immediately—the power of speaking with unknown tongues. They were all Galileans, and therefore used to only the one dialect. The testimony, however, is that under the divine power of the holy Spirit they spoke in various languages so that the people of the countries represented by those languages understood clearly and were astonished, saying, "Are not all these which speak Galileans, and how hear we every man in our own tongue?"—Acts 2:7, 8.

We are not to understand that the miracle was in the hearing, but in the speaking. It was not that all the people from the different lands heard the same utterance, as though it had been in their own language, as stated for them, but that the different apostles speaking these different tongues were all heard by the people and appreciated by the people who used those tongues. It was a miracle, surely, and had the designed effect. Not merely was it a convincing power and experience for the apostles themselves and for the other believers of that time, but it became a witness to the holy Jews who had gathered at Jerusalem from all the nations of the world.

These annual gatherings at Jerusalem were directly commanded by the Lord through Moses, and were observed by all the Jews who remained loyal to God and his Word. If they had moved into other countries and were located there for business reasons, they nevertheless came regularly every year to Jerusalem to worship the Lord. It was these reverential people who were especially blessed at Pentecost. For although some of the number tried to explain away the phenomenon by saying that the apostles had evidently drunk too freely of grape juice, new wine, nevertheless, apparently the majority of those who heard were provoked with such an interpretation and took more readily to what the apostles said, and realized in time that they were telling the same glorious message of the love of God, though telling it in various languages, so that all present might understand.

A TEMPLE OF GOD

The figure of a temple is variously used in respect to the church. Each Christian is spoken of as being a temple of the holy Spirit after he receives the begetting of the Spirit. Each congregation might be considered the temple of God. And the church as a whole when gathered to the heavenly condition will be God's temple, in that God will dwell in them. According to another figure, each Christian is a living stone in preparation for the great temple of the future, now being chiseled, polished, made ready for his place in the temple above.

The thought is that as God in olden times was represented in the Tabernacle by the Shekinah glory of the Most Holy, and was also represented in the literal temple of Jerusalem, so he is represented now in all those who are begotten of his holy Spirit, and will be represented further by all who walk in harmony with their spirit-begetting and continue to abide in the Lord's love.

ST. PETER'S PENTECOSTAL SERMON

JANUARY 16—ACTS 2:21-39.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PENTECOST—SPEAKING WITH OTHER TONGUES—ST. PETER'S EXPLANATION OF THIS—DAVID NOT ASCENDED TO HEAVEN—HE SPAKE NOT OF HIMSELF, BUT PROPHETICALLY OF HIS RESURRECTION—PRICKED TO THE HEART—OTHER FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS—NONE TO BE SAVED IN IGNORANCE, THOUGH JESUS DIED FOR ALL.

"Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Acts 2:21.

Today's lesson is a most interesting Bible study; for it covers a wide range of truth. The apostles, in harmony with Jesus' instructions, had waited in the upper room for the Pentecostal blessing, as necessary to their qualification before beginning their great work as the representatives and mouthpieces of Jesus and Jehovah. It came on the fiftieth day after Jesus' resurrection, in harmony with the type.—Leviticus 23:15-21; 1 Corinthians 15:20.

The Apostles received the begetting of the holy Spirit and with it certain outward manifestations of miraculous power, which in turn they were privileged to communicate to all believers by the laying on of their hands. These special "gifts of the Spirit" were evidently intended to assist in the establishment of the church and to mark the apostles as the special representatives of God. These were but eleven in number, until St. Paul was received of the Lord, and became "not one whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles." (2 Cor. 12:11) We have these apostles still with us, represented by their teachings.

Although, later on, certain bishops of the church claimed to be apostles also, they never have had any authority accord-

ing to the Bible, never have been able to convey any of the miraculous gifts and are referred to by Jesus as falsely claiming authority which they do not possess. (Revelation 2:2) With the death of the apostles and the death of those to whom they had committed these gifts, all such gifts necessarily ceased, being supplanted by the fruits of the Spirit, developed through knowledge, faith and obedience.

SYNOPSIS OF ST. PETER'S SERMON

The eleven apostles, exercising their gift of tongues, began to talk to the assembled crowd of Jews who were worshipping at Jerusalem—not merely residents of Palestine, but thousands from all parts of the world, gathered at Jerusalem at that season in harmony with the demands of the law, to worship the Lord. From their dress, etc., the apostles were recognized as Galileans. Much astonishment therefore was manifested when they were heard talking in the various tongues of the various nations. At first some thought that they were intoxicated and uttering merely peculiar sounds; but presently the multitude began to gather themselves to one and another of the apostles as they heard their own language spoken. This not only called attention to the apostles, but also manifested a