

Dear brethren, continue the good work. The Lord has said: "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord."—Isa. 54:17.

We do hereby express by unanimous vote our confidence in the integrity of the present head and management of the Society.

Your brethren in the Lord, HOUSTON ECCLESIA.—Tex.

IN RE SEVENTH VOLUME STUDY

Section 22 of Title XI of the Espionage Act provides: "Whoever in aid of any foreign government shall knowingly or wilfully have possession of or control over any property or paper designed or intended for use or which is used as the means of violating any penal statute or any of the rights or obligations of the United States under any treaty or the law of nations, shall be fined not more than \$1,000, or imprisoned not more than two years, or both."

United States District Attorneys and other local officers,

we are informed, have compelled the brethren to surrender their personal copies of Volume VII of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and have broken up Bible classes. If such surrender is being compelled without search warrant, or such meetings broken up without proper complaint filed charging that such meetings are in violation of law, then such surrender and such breaking up of meetings are in violation of law.

The Seventh Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES is a commentary upon the Bible. We do not understand that the Government desires to interfere with such study at all, but some over-zealous local officials have interfered as above, which we believe is in violation of their instructions; and this matter is being called to the attention of the Department of Justice at Washington. We have no information that the Department of Justice has ruled that the possession by any member of our Association of a copy of Volume VII is in violation of the Espionage Act; and we do not believe that department has made such ruling. We make this statement upon advice of counsel.

KINGDOM NEWS No. 3

KINGDOM NEWS No. 3 is now on the press and will be ready for distribution within a few days. You will receive the same number of copies that were sent to you of the B. S. M. No. 99. We advise that the Volunteer Captains arrange the work and get these papers into the hands of the people as quickly as possible. We regard No. 3 as one of the most important issues of the Volunteer matter, especially at this time. We have had each issue of KINGDOM NEWS carefully gone over by lawyers and other competent persons and are certain that

these papers contain not one word that is in any way violative of the law of the land; and therefore there should be no difficulty in putting them out. Where local officers raise objection, ask them to read the paper carefully and then they will see that it is entirely proper, in the interest of the people and the nation, and contains a great deal of information which is particularly pertinent to the time in which we are living. Be diligent and get these issues out quickly. The "dark night" is near at hand, when no man can work.

IN RE PUBLIC MEETINGS

The persecution of the International Bible Students Association has aroused a great desire in the minds of many to know what we believe and teach. We strongly recommend to the friends the great importance of well located halls and properly advertised meetings. This door of opportunity should

be quickly entered, that the people may have the truth concerning the Lord's kingdom, which is at hand. One public address should be given in each place on "THE WORLD HAS ENDED—MILLIONS NOW LIVING WILL NEVER DIE." Let us be zealous in proclaiming the truth while we have opportunity.

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART OF REVELATION

We now have in stock Blue Print Charts of Revelation similar to the one in the Question Booklet of Vol. VII. Size

3 ft. x 6 ft. printed on linen. Price per chart \$2 postpaid. These charts are very helpful in class study.

VOL. XXXIX

BROOKLYN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1918

No. 10

FAULTLESS BEFORE HIS PRESENCE

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."—Jude 20, 21.

While the storm against God's little ones increases in fury, those who are anxious to see the heavenly Father's face are setting the things of their house in order, that in due time they may be presented faultless before the presence of his glory. That will be the climax of all Christian experience. The child of God loves to contemplate that blessed time. At the moment of awakening in the morning, the first thought is: "Dear Father, keep me this day so near to thee that, if this be my last on earth, it may please thee to permit thy child to see thy glorious countenance." And when the day's tasks are done, when we have squared our accounts with the Lord and know that all is well, then, as we are folded in the embrace of sweet rest, our last thought is: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

Seeing by faith this glorious prospect before us, what can we do to make sure of attaining that prize? The above Scripture answers: "Keep yourselves in the love of God." The importance of being kept in the love of God cannot be overstated. St. Jude emphasizes this by pointing out certain stumbling stones or pitfalls that will take God's children out of his love, and announces certain rules which, if followed, will keep one in the love of God. The writings of all the apostles are for the building up of the church on the foundation of holy faith. They wrote aforetime for the benefit of those upon whom the end of the age has come. Jude was not an apostle of the Lord, but one of his brethren, and his epistle contains a message of great value to the church. How like the loving Father to make provision for his dear children, that they might be sustained in the hour of greatest test upon them! With eager mind and thankful heart should each consecrated one avail himself of such provisions.

HUMILITY OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

The first essential to serving God in an acceptable manner is to have a proper appreciation of one's own self, and to have in mind always that Jehovah is the great first cause, with whom none can be compared. It is he who measures the waters of the deep in the hollow of his hand, and metes out the heavens with a span; who comprehends the dust of the earth and weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in the balance; with whom the nations of earth are counted as the small dust of the balance—he who is the author of the great plan of the ages that is working out in an orderly progressive manner, each attribute acting in its proper time and in exact harmony with the other attributes. His love was so wonderfully manifested by sending his only-Begotten Son to die, that man, the very worm of the dust of the earth, might have life and partake of the riches of glory.—Isaiah 40:12-17.

Such contemplations enabled Brother Jude to have a proper appreciation of his position. He was a preacher of God's Word; yet he applied to himself no high-sounding titles, such as Right Reverend, Doctor of Divinity, Bishop or Cardinal, but delighted to designate himself a slave of Jesus Christ. To be the Lord's slave is much to be preferred to all the titles, honors and emoluments that can be conferred upon one man. From this example of humility manifested by Jude we learn a lesson of much value. As our knowledge of the character of our loving Master increases, the more we rejoice to be his slaves. That such an attitude of mind is pleasing to the Father, we are assured by St. Peter's words: "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Pride and ambition, the very opposite of humility, have been the cause of many falling away from the love of God. With confidence, then, we can say that humility is of first importance to keep

ourselves in the love of God. The more we realize our dependency upon the Lord, the safer is our position.—1 Peter 5:5.

"Keep thou my way, O Lord;
Myself I cannot guide;
Nor dare I trust my faltering steps
One moment from thy side."

MERCY, PEACE AND LOVE

Jude, the loving slave of Jesus Christ, addresses his words not to the world, nor to those who have merely named the name of Christ, but "to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. Thus we are sure that the entire epistle applies to those who claim, at least, to be in the Lord. Sweetly to the brethren, he says, "Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied." Clearly, then, this shows that one who would be kept in the love of God must be merciful to his brethren, not magnifying the faults of his brother and holding him up to the ridicule of others; but looking with loving compassion upon his brother's shortcomings and weaknesses, and having always a keen desire to render him aid as a new creature in Christ Jesus. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." St. Jude makes it clear that mercy is one of the essential rules to observe, saying, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

The degree of one's consecration is often determined by the sincere effort made to keep the commandments of the Lord. The servant of God is enjoined that he shall not strive with his brethren. Strife indulged in would ultimately exclude one from entering the kingdom. (Galatians 5:21) Sad it is to note that some of those who profess full consecration to the Lord seem given to strife and contention. After having been long in the narrow way, after the brethren have traveled together in harmony for a long time, suddenly strife arises amongst them. This is one of the means the adversary seizes upon to keep the Lord's little ones away from him and to keep them out of God's love. St. Peter wrote: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Would that the dear friends, who have desired to see the Lord, would keep this admonition ever before their minds!

We offer the suggestion that whenever strife arises in the class those engaged in it at once meditate upon the question: Will this help me or prevent me from being presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy? "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Following this rule, peace would prevail amongst the brethren. God has made it clear that he will grant life everlasting to none except those who grow in love. Those who will be granted the privilege of seeing his face must develop the highest degree of love—a love that leads one to sacrifice his own rights, privileges and comforts, yea, even life itself, that others may be blessed. Such is the kind of love manifested by Jesus, who died for us. To those who will be the members of his body and whom he will present faultless before the Father, he says: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another even as I have loved you." With these Scriptures before us it is easy to see why St. Jude says that mercy, peace and love should be multiplied unto those who are following in the Master's footsteps.

FAITH OF THE SAINTS

Only the faithful unto death will be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with joy unspeakable. The positive promise is that such shall see the Lord in his beauty and glory. (Hosea 2:19, 20; Revelation 2:10) Then the author of the epistle emphasizes the necessity of continuing faithful: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

The common salvation here mentioned is not an ordinary one, but is that salvation which is common to all the saints. "Ye are all called in one hope of your calling" to membership in the royal family of heaven. None is called to any other position. Our hope of attaining to that exalted place is based upon faith in God's arrangements, all of which radiate from the great ransom sacrifice. The faith once delivered to the saints the Apostle Paul specifically mentions in 1 Corinthians 15:3-5. To contend for this faith does not mean that one should indulge in strife or manifest a bitterness of spirit; but it means steadfastly holding to the great doctrines of truth which the Lord has graciously given to us. Every doctrine or theory offered can be measured and its truth or falsehood definitely determined by the ransom. If out of harmony with the philosophy of the ransom, then we may always know that it is

false. Holding fast to these fundamental truths is absolutely vital to keeping ourselves in the love of God. Abiding in him faithfully to the end will assure us of being presented faultless before the glory of his presence.

ENEMIES OF THE TRUTH

Satan has seized upon every means to destroy the seed of promise; and one of the methods he has employed has been to corrupt the faith once delivered to the saints. Jude mentions this in verse 4 of his epistle. First there came into the church, at the instance of Satan, heathen philosophers, who embraced the name of Christ for a purpose, but who denied the merit of his sacrifice. Such men substitute their own theories, acquired from Satan, for those of Christ Jesus and the apostles. Stealthily they came in, until they acquired power; and then they boldly proclaimed their God-dishonoring doctrines before the world. Satan's original lie—the doctrine of inherent immortality of man—came prominently to the front; and then his kindred doctrines—the mass and the trinity—followed quickly after, these denying the wonderful and beautiful plan of God, and indirectly, if not directly, denying the value of the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It has ever been the policy of Satan to thrust in amongst good men some ungodly men, against whom St. Jude in this epistle warns the church at all times. He describes them as "ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness." Lasciviousness means looseness; and therefore the words mean a loose handling of the Word of God, or wresting the Scriptures for a selfish purpose. It seems that the Adversary has at all stages of the church succeeded in getting some such men amongst the true sheep. How may we know them? "By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matthew 7:16-20) Such manifest the fruit of the flesh and not the fruit of the spirit. (Galatians 5:19, 20) Only those who accept and serve the truth in the love of it and who continue in the faith unto the end are safe from this snare of the Adversary; and such only will ultimately receive the approval of the Lord.

FOREWARNED OF PITFALLS

Jude then enumerates a number of things which will take the Christian out of the love of God and that will make it impossible for him ever to be presented faultless before the presence of his glory. Verses 5-16, inclusive, give examples of these things. Unfaithfulness and disloyalty lead certainly to disaster. The experiences of Israel foreshadowed such results. The people of Israel in Egypt typed, or illustrated the church in the world. The Christian is here reminded that after God had miraculously delivered the Israelites out of Egypt, he destroyed them because they believed not; that is to say, because they failed to continue faithful to the Lord. The child of God has been translated from the kingdom of darkness (of this world) to the kingdom of God's dear Son; he by faith dwells in the light of heavenly things. To fall into the pit of unfaithfulness means certain destruction. All the trying experiences through which the Christian passes are permitted to test his faith and loyalty. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith."

DEMONS AS EXAMPLES

"The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." It seems clear that this fact concerning the demons is here recorded to teach a valuable lesson to the new creatures in Christ Jesus. These angels at one time were creatures of glory and beauty. The first estate of such was that of usefulness, in which Jehovah placed them. Having assumed human bodies, they yielded to the baneful influence of Satan, debauched the daughters of men and filled the earth with violence. So great was their wickedness that God imprisoned them in *tartarus* until their judgment time, at which time those continuing in wickedness will be forever destroyed. The Lord Jesus, through the Revelator, foretold the loosing of these angels and intimated that such loosing would take place after the saints of the living God were sealed. It seems clear that the sealing is now completed and that the demons are loose. The evidence of this is daily increasing. Without a doubt the judgment of these evil ones is now in progress.—1 Corinthians 6:3.

The first estate of the Christian is that of blessedness, as by faith he rests in the finished work of Christ Jesus and looks forward to the time when he may possess his glorious body and be faultless. From the time he is begotten and anointed he may be said to be a spirit being. "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, all things have become new." "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you." (Romans 8:9) Truly, then, he is a spirit creature, having his habitation in an earthly vessel. Should

such a new creature willingly return to the things of the world, he may for a time be kept in darkness concerning God's great plan. He may come to the point where he will even deny that there is such a thing as the second death. Satan and the fallen angels may induce him to believe that God will save every one and that, therefore, he is in no danger of destruction. He may continue in this attitude and condition of darkness until his final judgment. This is explained how some, once rejoicing in the merit of Christ's sacrifice, become blind. The safety of the Christian from such a pitfall is to avoid all demon influence or fellowship with any one who is under the influence of demons, not even engaging such in conversation. "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me."—Psalm 39:1.

Further illustrating pitfalls, the writer of the epistle refers to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, who, "giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Fornication as applied to the new creature refers to illicit relationship with things inimical to the new creature. Once enlightened with the truth and tasting of the heavenly things, any voluntary fellowship with evil spirits would lead such a one ultimately into destruction. Even the beginning of this for the satisfaction of curiosity is exceedingly dangerous. Our vow of faithfulness particularly emphasizes this point, and we call upon the Lord to enable us to resist everything akin to spiritism and occultism, knowing that such influence is from the Adversary.

SPEAKING EVIL AND DESPISING DOMINION

"Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves." Christ is the head of the church; God is the head of Christ. "God has set the members in the body as it pleased him." Any arrangement the Lord has made in the church is therefore a part of his dominion. The disposition to despise the Lord's arrangement, disorderly conduct, walking disorderly, all lead to the pitfalls here mentioned.

A dignity, or dignitary, is one who stands high amongst the people. All the members of the body of Christ will ultimately be kings and priests unto God and unto Christ. Those this side the veil who are faithfully running for the prize are counted in as members of the body, being designated now as "the feet of him." Therefore all such are "dignitaries" within the meaning of this text. To speak evil, then, of such means to speak evil against the Lord. The Lord loves the members of his body, and Jehovah looks upon all of them as the apple of his eye (Zechariah 2:7, 8); and thus we can understand how displeasing it is to the Father and to the great Master for one claiming to be consecrated to speak evil of the brethren. Discussing this same matter, the Apostle James says: "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?"—James 4:11, 12.

Law means a rule of action. God has provided his own law as a rule of action which governs and controls the members of the body of Christ. Therefore any one who speaks evil against God's children speaks against the law of God and sets himself up as a judge of God's law. And any one who takes this position cannot be fully obedient to the law; for it is contrary to God's law to indulge in evil-speaking. Thus the Apostle makes it plain that Jehovah is the lawgiver and he has the power to destroy, and that he is the judge, and that no member of the body is authorized to pronounce judgment against another.

In verse 9 Jude says that Jesus in his prehuman existence as God's representative did not indulge in a railing accusation even against Satan, but merely said, "Jehovah rebuke thee." From this we gather the lesson that the new creature in Christ is never to indulge in bringing a railing accusation against any one. It is not our business to rebuke or pass sentence upon others. The province of the Christian is to proclaim the message of God's truth always manifesting the spirit of love, remembering that Jehovah is the judge. "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."—Romans 12:17-19.

In verse 10, St. Jude proves that one who indulges in evil-speaking is using the natural mind, the mind of the flesh; and that in thus doing he corrupts himself as a new creature in Christ. Basing a conclusion upon evil surmising and giving expression to that surmising by evil words shows an evil condition of heart. Without a pure heart it would be impossible to be kept in the love of God. Therefore we are admonished, "Speak evil of no man." "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

THREE CLASSES DESCRIBED

In verses 11-13, inclusive, St. Jude gives a description of three classes that come in amongst the Lord's people, namely, Cain, Balaam and Core. Cain yielded to evil suggestions from the Adversary and permitted his heart to be poisoned against his own brother. Hatred was developed there, which led him on to murder his brother. The new creature in Christ who is once illuminated, and who afterwards harbors evil in his heart against another, may be led to the point of hatred. Of such St. John says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."—1 John 3:15.

Balaam was a teacher of falsehoods for profit. And thus is pictured a class who, even though enlightened and knowing better, willingly teach that which is false, that they might receive profits from men in the way of emoluments and honor, or position and preferment. Thus is the Christian warned against taking any course that is prompted by a motive other than that of a pure, loving desire to serve the Lord and his people.

Core, or Korah, pictures a class that refuses to hold the head; that is to say, who have not the proper respect or regard for Christ Jesus, the head of the church, but who walk after their own selfish desires and insist on their own selfish ways. These at one time had places amongst the elect in the church. The Adversary injects into the mind a thought leading to the desire to have one's own way; and where such a one manifests a selfish and stubborn disposition he is in danger of the pitfall described in Core's experience.

How many of the Lord's people may be drawn into one of these classes is not known, but we hope very few. To enable his people to escape these pitfalls, the warning evidently was recorded in the Scriptures. It is always helpful for each one to examine himself or herself to see that none of these examples apply, that he is free from any such manifestations of the wrong spirit.

"SPOTS IN YOUR FEAST"

If one finds himself disposed to go to the class for any selfish purpose, as for instance, for the purpose of asking catch questions, for criticism, or fault-finding, or for the purpose of entrapping or confusing any of the Lord's little ones, he should awaken to the fact at once that this is a pitfall into which the Adversary is leading him. St. Jude describes such as "spots in your feasts of love, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without reverence." Any assembly of God's people for the purpose of building one another up on their most holy faith is a feast of love; and any one who permits himself to mar such a feast by a wrongful course is here described as a spot upon such feast of love. Continuing in such a course would take him out of the love of God. The Apostle admonishes all of the Lord's little ones, saying, "By love serve one another."—Galatians 5:13.

Again, these unruly ones are described as "clouds without water." Clouds are vessels bearing water, and are distributed over the earth that they might drop the refreshing rain upon the fields and flowers. In the hot, dry seasons, when refreshment is needed, a cloud without water is useless. Water is a symbol of truth. The Lord's people are vessels for bearing the truth one to another to refresh the thirsty souls. Concerning such, the Apostle says: "Be ye filled with the spirit," meaning that we should be full of the Lord's love and his message of truth and gladly give it out for the refreshing and blessing of others. Thus the new creature grows and develops by serving others in love.

The writer also pictures this class as "trees without fruit." If a tree fails to bring forth fruit the gardener digs it up by the roots and casts it into the fire for destruction. One of the Lord's little ones that fails, after much opportunity, to bring forth the fruits and graces of the spirit is useless, and therefore would be removed. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." (John 15:8) Those who have been once enlightened by the Holy Spirit and who afterward lose it are described in verse 13 as "raging waves, . . . foaming out their own shame." And thus are we warned against any development of spirit which leads in this direction; and thus may we know how to avoid those who are manifesting the wrong spirit. One who repudiates the truth and turns against the Lord's lit-

the ones becomes far more violent and more severe in persecution than those who have never known the Lord.

"MURMURERS, COMPLAINERS"

The three classes above mentioned are again referred to in verse 16 as "murmurers, complainers, walking after their own desires; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." Such prefer the approval of men rather than the approval of God. They murmur and complain when they have not the honor and approval of men. Verses 14-16 clearly show that this epistle has its special application in the close of the age. The Adversary has even sought to destroy The Christ; and it is reasonable to expect that he would make a last desperate effort to destroy the "feet" members. This is particularly borne out by the words of the Lord addressed to Satan, "Thou shalt bruise his heel." The "heel" members are the last of his body to pass beyond the veil into the kingdom. The lesson, then, which we gather from this warning of St. Jude is that we should avoid the spirit of murmuring or complaining; that we should not seek our selfish desires; and that we should not desire to please men, but rather to please God.

Lovingly, then, Brother Jude reminds the church of the words of admonition and warning spoken aforetime by the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ; "How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." This describes a class once having a knowledge of the truth, who later repudiate the messenger and the message of the Lord sent to the church through him. Moved by a wrong spirit they, he stated, would manifest the cunning disposition of the wolf, not sparing the flock, but seeking with perverse talk to draw away disciples after themselves. "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, not having the spirit." Such forsake the truth in its beauty and simplicity. Such depart from its spirit and, exercising the fleshly mind, gratify the ambitions and tastes of the old nature. Warning against such a disposition and showing that such a spirit would take one out of God's love, St. Jude adds: "But ye, my dearly beloved, building yourselves up on the basis of your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves safe in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, which will result in life everlasting."

Then St. Jude clearly intimates that there will be some who will have a greater degree of wilfulness, and these will succeed in entrapping others to follow after them. He then advises that there is a clear distinction which we should observe in dealing with them. In proportion as we find the brethren to be copies of the Lord in heart, in motive, in intention, in loving zeal for righteousness and truth, we should manifest greater love and consideration for them. The Lord Jesus set us an example in this behalf. He thus shows us that he desires his followers to treat such as walk after the flesh in a different manner from that in which we treat those who manifest a greater degree of his spirit. Toward all we are to be tender-hearted, and even though their garments are much spotted, our efforts should be by word and precept to try to save them as brands plucked from the fire. "Above all, exercising fervent [overspreading] love, because such love covers a multitude of defects." (1 Peter 4:7, 8) With fear and trembling should we walk before the Lord, watching and praying, being at all times of sober mind, avoiding the pitfalls and observing the rules that will keep us in the love of God.

At times the journey becomes wearisome and we long for home. Our wise and loving Father knows just what things we have need of that we might be made meet for his use in glory. He is too wise to err and too loving to be unkind. The conditions imposed are exacting upon all who will ultimately occupy the favored position of joint-heirship with Christ Jesus in his kingdom. Snares and pitfalls are many along the way; yet a means is provided of escaping from them all. The rules for keeping ourselves in the love of God are made plain and explicit. Constant vigilance and diligent perseverance are required; and these are accompanied by many fiery trials, under which conditions the child of God must serve. And yet, all is but a reasonable service. We must share the ignominy of our Lord and be faithful followers in his footsteps that we might share his dignity and majesty.

Often we feel so weak, so inadequate to meet our enemies, because they are legion and very subtle. We know we must continue this warfare even unto death. We know we must suffer persecution. And yet, when we look at self, we often think, How could God perfect one like me to be meet for his use in glory? And then there comes to us great consolation in the words of St. Paul: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption [immortality]. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural [animal] body; it is raised a spiritual body." And then we know that if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence with rejoicing firm unto the end, such glory, and immortality will be our portion, through the merit of him who bought us and justified us before God.

All who have fled for refuge to this glorious hope set before us find great consolation in the promises upon which this hope is based. With abiding confidence we feel that our anchorage is sure within the veil, in Christ Jesus, our Lord and head. The character of each one in the body of Christ must be perfected by fiery experiences, that the dross might be destroyed and the gold made manifest. How beautiful, then, will these creatures be! God predestinated that it should be so. The beloved St. Paul strengthens and consoles us with the words, "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be [ultimately] holy and without blame before him, in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, . . . that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."—Ephesians 1:4-11.

"BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF HIM"

Dear, loving, tired feet members of the body of Christ, despised and rejected as was the Head, hated of all nations for his name's sake; yet beautiful they are and how blessed their portion! Beautiful as they declare the message of Messiah's kingdom to the nations of earth now in travail. Beautiful as they bear the reproaches that fall upon them because of their faithfulness and loving devotion to the cause of their king! Beautiful as they bring good tidings of good, declaring the kingdom of heaven at hand! Blessed is their portion, soon to be inherited.

In the final conflict upon the members of Christ's body, are they able to stand alone? No, not in their own strength; but there is One who is able to make us stand and to keep us from falling. "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deuteronomy 33:27) Weak and imperfect now, yet by the eye of faith, behold the conditions of glory awaiting the faithful ones; and be of good courage. Soon that kind, wise and loving Bridegroom will present all the members of his bride faultless before the presence of Jehovah with exceeding joy. Will there be no flaws then? No, not one. No fear? No sorrows? No disappointments? No, not even the thought of such things. Faultless then shall we be, because we shall be like him—he who is the fairest of ten thousand, the one altogether lovely—and be with him, Yea, "in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Let us, then, forget the things that are behind. Be not dismayed with the trials that now abound; but with the eye of faith behold his beauty and glory and the unspeakable joy of being in his presence forever.

"Oh, what wondrous visions wrapped me!
Heaven's gates seemed opened wide,
Even I stood clear and faultless
By my dear Redeemer's side.

"Faultless in his glory's presence!
Faultless in that dazzling light!
Christ's own love, majestic, tender,
Made my crimson snowy white!"

"THE DUST OF HIS FEET"

In beautifully poetic language the Prophet Nahum describes Jehovah's part in the present distress of nations: "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet."—Nahum 1:3.

Certainly clouds, which have long since ceased to be the size of a man's hand, hang thick over human affairs. To the

worldly these clouds are sources of uncertainty, apprehension, dread; but to the watchful child of God these "clouds and darkness" are sure harbingers of the establishment of Messiah's reign. Like children at evening who watch for their father's return from the fields and know him from afar by the cloud of dust raised by his equipage, so the Lord's peo-

ple now have keenest interest in all the happenings in the world, even though some of the dust is blowing into their eyes, ears, noses and throats. They recognize the Lord even through the clouds, first, because the time has come and, secondly, because of the character of the work which is being performed.

Our Master warned us and told us we need not expect to be spoken well of by all men, because the majority of men, being dominated by self interest and selfish institutions, lavish their approval upon "the false prophets." (Luke 6:26) Whatever the Lord's people do, they will not be understood by the world, because they have different standards of judgment, as well as different aims in life. But while the world is losing more and more even that measure of good judgment which was formerly possessed by it, the Lord's people should strive more and more to keep steady heads and to order their conduct with sobriety—giving no reasonable occasion for offense.

Our attitude on the war, Red Cross, Liberty Bonds, etc., has been misunderstood by many people. Few persons do much thinking in war time and what little they do is mostly in line with their natural emotions. We cannot therefore expect much calm and dispassionate thinking now from the worldly. Therefore in our honest effort to render our proper dues to the Government under which we are privileged to live we should be doubly careful not to "speak evil of dignitaries" nor to do anything which would avoidably embarrass them in the solution of their weighty problems. See Matthew 17:25-27; Luke 20:22-25; Romans 13:7; 1 Peter 2:13-17.

OUR STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

Statements have been recently made to several newspapers which requested an expression from us. But the statements, if printed at all, have been so garbled as to be well nigh incoherent. We therefore print below in full a statement prepared by the President of our Association for the *Brooklyn Eagle* at its request:

"On my return to Brooklyn I learned of the unpleasant occurrence at the Brooklyn Tabernacle last Sunday, April 28th. Mr. W. T. Baker was in the pulpit and at the conclusion of his discourse a request was brought to the platform that the congregation hear a speech by some one on the Liberty Bonds. Mr. Baker put the matter to a vote and the majority voted in the negative.

"I am sure this action was not intended as any reflection on the Government, nor to be taken as against the Liberty Loan. Those who worship at the Tabernacle believe in worshipping the Lord in spirit and in truth. To them a religious service is the most sacred; and while at religious service they always refrain from discussing temporal matters. This congregation at no time ever held a social tea, a grab-bag party, a bazaar, or anything of that kind in the church. The Tabernacle auditorium is used exclusively for religious matters, especially on Sunday. No previous request had been made to use the Tabernacle by any one in the interest of the Liberty Loan campaign. The worshippers had just listened to a helpful spiritual lesson on the Bible. They desired to withdraw from the building with these sacred thoughts in mind and therefore deemed it inappropriate to discuss any temporal matters whatsoever, or to hear them discussed by any one else. We are pleased to grant the use of the Tabernacle for a meeting in the interest of the public when the same does not interfere with our religious services.

"The people of our Association are not against the Government, nor against the Liberty Loan. Our thought is that the Liberty Loan is not a religious question, but purely one pertaining to the affairs of the Government; and that each person should be left to the free exercise of his individual conscience as to whether he will or will not purchase Liberty Bonds. Our views are very well expressed in a statement given to the public press some weeks ago, as follows:

"The International Bible Students' Association is not against the Liberty Loan. Many of its members have bought and hold Liberty Bonds. Some have not money with which to buy.

"The Liberty Loan is not a religious question. It has solely to do with the Government. Every person who mails a letter supports the Government to that extent by paying the additional postage on account of the war.

"The International Bible Students' Association is composed of Christians. Every Christian gladly obeys the law. The United States has always stood for religious liberty and freedom of speech. Every Christian appreciates the privilege of living in such a country and gladly meets his obligations in the payment of taxes. When the Government asks to borrow his money and gives its promise to pay in the nature of a bond, if he can do so he should buy the bond.

"The Association has no power to direct members thereof with reference to buying Liberty Bonds. It certainly will not and has not advised any one to refuse to buy bonds. That is an individual matter which each person must determine for himself according to his ability. The Association believes in supporting the Government in every way it can and each one should do so according to his ability and his conscience."

"Some members of the Brooklyn Tabernacle congregation had previously purchased Liberty Bonds. Doubtless all had been personally solicited before that time. They are surrounded on all hands by opportunities to purchase, and to them it seemed inappropriate to transact business in the church on Sunday. There are six days in the week for the transaction of business and Sunday is regarded by them as a day for sacred worship of the Lord.

"It is to be regretted that one representing the public press should so disgrace himself as publicly to encourage mob violence against inoffensive people. It seems that any one wearing the uniform of the United States Army would have more respect for that uniform and for law and order than to disturb the peace by loud and uncouth language and in encouraging mob violence. We cannot believe that any responsible person in the Government would approve of such action.

"As to the members of the Bethel Home, it is well known that those who labor there receive merely their food and lodging and a small allowance for incidental expenses. This was thoroughly aired in the *Brooklyn Eagle* libel case, as the record shows. At that time the amount received was only \$10.00 per month, which since, on account of increased cost of necessities, is now \$15.00 per month. At the opening of the Third Liberty Loan campaign, a very elegant gentleman of the Borough of Brooklyn called on me with reference to soliciting the members of the Bethel Home to buy bonds. I invited him to see each one of them personally. He questioned me as to their ability to buy; and when I told him of the amount they received monthly he said, 'Then they cannot buy on that amount and it is useless for me to see them. I am sure you must be doing much good here in your own way when men and women sacrifice their time for such a small allowance.' It is a well known fact that there are other institutions that are not asked or even expected to buy Liberty Bonds because of their financial inability.

"Members of our Association who have some personal means have bought Liberty Bonds, including Tabernacle workers who are paying 25 per cent. of their monthly allowance to purchase a bond. We do not believe the Government would expect any one to purchase bonds who receives barely enough for his daily expenses.

"The picketing of the Bethel Home on last Sunday morning and accosting every one who passed out and demanding that they buy Liberty Bonds seems to be a very uncalled-for and unusual thing, when any one authorized to solicit for bonds can have free access to the Bethel Home to interview any person there at any reasonable hour during the day or evening. As above stated, a gentleman had called for that purpose some days ago. The action of the men on Sunday morning seemed not only wholly uncalled for, but was taken designedly for the purpose of placing the members of the Bethel Home at a disadvantage. We cannot believe that order-loving, law-abiding people of Brooklyn at all approve such action or conduct."

BEGINNING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

JULY 7.—ACTS 16:13-15, 25-34.

THE GOSPEL CALL A LIMITED ONE—THE RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE A SYMBOL OF RESTITUTION BLESSINGS—WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN—TESTS OF DISCIPLESHIP—RELATIVE VALUE OF THE SACRIFICE PRESENTED BY THE CHRISTIAN—CONSECRATION A DEFINITE, POSITIVE CONTRACT WITH GOD—BLESSING OF WORLD AND CHURCH CONTRASTED.

"He that will, let him take the water of life freely."—Revelation 22:17.

We have already pointed out that according to the Scriptures there is no river of the water of life flowing at the present time, nor will there be until the church is glorified and the

kingdom established. Then the river of life will flow from the throne, the Millennial kingdom power and authority established in the earth, and then it will be the glorified bride of

Christ with the holy Spirit that will give the invitation to the world in general. We have also pointed out the Master's words to the effect that whoever now has the water of life receives it not from a fountain or river or pool, but from the Lord himself, "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) Since there is no river of water of life to which to invite any at the present time, our Golden Text must belong to the incoming Messianic age.

In our day, when the public teachings of the ministry of nearly all denominations is so different from the teachings of the Bible, we believe that the degeneracy of faith and practice would be much more rapid than it is were it not that very many feel obligated to read a portion of the Scriptures daily, even though understanding little of their meaning. In such readings the lines of true discipleship are often so distinctly drawn that the mere nominal professor is made to shudder as he determines by the grace of God to seek so to conform his life that he may become more and more a copy of God's dear Son.

The general thought of our day as expressed in the pulpits, in private conversation and at funerals seems to be that in civilized lands everybody is a Christian and sure to go to heaven eventually, except moral reprobates, such as are to be found in prisons and penitentiaries; and even for these the hope is entertained that ere they die they may express some regret for their misdeeds. Such regrets are seized upon by their friends as evidence that the erring ones became Christians and went to heaven.

NATURAL CONSEQUENCE OF FALSE DOCTRINE

While condemning this view as wholly wrong, nevertheless we sympathize with those whose confusion of thought is manifest. Their unscriptural views as to what constitutes a Christian are the result of two things: (1) Teachings of the dark ages handed down through the creeds of Christendom, creeds inspired by those who in bygone centuries persecuted one another to the death because of differences of opinion on doctrinal subjects, who tortured one another with rack, sword and fagot. (2) To this bad foundation of error there has come within recent years a larger spirit of enlightenment and generosity, in which we rejoice. But the errors of the past and the generosity of the present make a very bad combination of doctrine for modern churchianity, a doctrine which seeks to be reasonable with itself, but which in so doing runs counter to a great many Scriptural teachings.

It is only when we rid ourselves of the smoke, darkness and confusion resulting from the creeds of the dark ages, and return to the pure, unadulterated teachings of our Lord and the apostles, and by the grace of God have the eyes of our understanding somewhat opened, that we can see these matters in their true light.

With all kindness toward those who are deceiving themselves and others, the truth compels us to acknowledge that the vast majority of those professing Christ are not Christians at all. Remarkably few members of any denomination know what they believe. We would not be misunderstood. We are not complaining that there are not noble people connected with all the churches. On the contrary, we compliment them upon their education, their refinement, their wealth, their influence, their humanitarian sympathies, as represented in hospitals, asylums and other benevolences. But all these things are shared by people who are not church members. Participation in good works is by no means a proof that one is a Christian. A Christian is a person who has entered into a very special relationship to God through Christ; and this relationship exists without respect to education, wealth, color or sex.

ONLY THE TRUTH IS CONSISTENT

In his discourses our Lord constantly reiterated the fact that he was seeking for some who should be accounted worthy to constitute his kingdom, to sit with him in his throne, to be his joint-heirs, to rule and to judge Israel and all other nations. Not until we learn to differentiate between this kingdom class, otherwise styled his bride, the members of his body, his church, and the world that is to be ruled and judged by this class in due time, can we get a clear conception of the divine purposes progressing throughout this Gospel age.

From this viewpoint we can most clearly see that no one can be of this kingdom class unless he reach a standard of faith and character development above and beyond that of the world in general. We can see why this class should be called upon to bear the good fruits of character in a superlative degree and to walk the narrow way of self-denial and self-sacrifice, in order to be fitted and prepared for the great work which the Lord has for them to do for the world during the incoming Millennial age. It seems peculiarly difficult for the

majority of people long blinded by false doctrines to see the heavenly Father has special times and seasons for the development of the various features of his plan of salvation.

During the present time the world is getting a certain kind of experience which will be very valuable in the future, when God's due time shall have come for blessing all the families of the earth. Meantime, with those experiences come the disciplines of the laws of nature, under which poverty, sickness and mental and moral derangements follow excesses of evil doing even as pain follows contact with fire. And it is not unreasonable to hope that with the lessons of the present time before them, the world will act more wisely during the Millennial age than at present; that under the favorable conditions then prevailing many will not only rejoice in the great plan of salvation but will also avail themselves of it; for many are now careless in such matters because they can neither see nor walk by faith.

SURRENDER SELF—SACRIFICE TO GOD

According to the Bible no human being is fit for fellowship with God or fit for life eternal, for the reason that all mankind are sinners. The explanation for this condition is that father Adam sinned when he was perfect, in God's image, and so came under the death sentence; and that, cut off from God, Adam's posterity deteriorated as a race, imperfections of mind and body passing from parent to child. Imperfect beings would be altogether out of place among the perfect; and as long as imperfection continues, sin will continue, and with it of necessity sorrow, pain and death; for these are the consequences of sin.—Romans 5:12, 19; 1 Corinthians 15:21.

God declares his sympathy for the sinner, and has made provision through Jesus Christ for man's recovery from his present deplorable state. Not only so, but a time has been set for that recovery; and the Bible tells us that human uplift from sin and death conditions will be accomplished by Messiah during his Millennial kingdom. We pray: "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," not with the thought that God will neglect his promise to establish that kingdom, but by way of acknowledging the fact that the Messianic kingdom is the hope of both world and church.

The church's hope in the kingdom is that of becoming sharers with Christ in the glory, honor and immortality of that kingdom, for the blessing and uplifting of mankind out of sin and death. At the present time there is no attempt being made on God's part to convert the world. Few now hear the Gospel message, and still fewer believe it. Mankind are deluded by the adversary into thinking that for the past six thousand years God has been trying to convert the world, but has made a miserable failure of it all along; and that if anything is done, man must do it for himself. Thus has unbelief been cultivated, and trust in God and in the teachings of the Bible thrust aside.

For nearly nineteen centuries the Gospel message has gone hither and thither, quietly, unostentatiously. The world and the nominal church would say that it had accomplished nothing, that everything worth while had been accomplished by them. But we prefer to stand by the Bible and to recognize that God's consecrated ones have indeed lifted up a light which the world has hated, and on account of which the light-bearers have frequently been put to death, have had their names cast out as evil or have been boycotted socially or otherwise. If their hopes were merely in the present life, these light-bearers would be making a miserable failure of their opportunities. But not so. They are waiting for their reward in the future, in the glorification of the church.

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

The question asked by the jailer of Philippi, "What shall I do to be saved?" is one which presents itself to earnest souls who are seeking for rest of heart and mind, who desire to draw near to God, if haply they can find him. St. Paul's reply is one which commends itself as the proper one. The one seeking salvation should believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as his Redeemer, as the one who died on his behalf, through whose stripes he might be healed, saved, and through whose sacrifice he might rejoice in atonement with God. Having thus believed with all his heart, whether it required a moment or an hour to explain and to understand the simple first principles of the Gospel, the jailer's next step was to consecrate himself, to be baptized into death with his Redeemer, and to symbolize that consecration into death by a water immersion. Moreover, he was encouraged to hope that his family might be sharers with him in his salvation, to become disciples of Christ.

Let us learn from this brief statement of the Gospel made by the Apostle Paul the wisdom of simplicity and directness.

He might have preached a long discourse about the Jewish failure to keep the Mosaic Law. He might have discussed the various philosophies of the false religions of the Gentiles. But while these themes might be proper at the right time, evidently this was not the time suitable for them; and hence the Apostle confined his remarks to the general statement that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, that he had died for the world, that he must be laid hold upon by faith, and that to all who thus laid hold on him he became the power and the wisdom of God.

To become a disciple of Christ is to become his follower, his pupil, to walk as he walked. The proposition is self-denial, self-effacement. To become a Christian is to give one's self wholly to God. As the Apostle has said: "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1) No one needs to go far to make his consecration. Each, at his own bedside, can give his little all to God.

COUNTING THE COST

It should not require long to count how much more we shall receive than we give; for we have only a condemned and dying existence to give. We give mental, moral and physical imperfections; and Jesus our Savior, by imputing the merit of his sacrifice, makes ours of value in the sight of God. But in exchange we receive riches of grace in the present life—peace, joy, blessing of heart which the world can neither give nor take away; and in the life to come we shall receive glory, honor and immortality, joint-heirship with our Savior in the heavenly kingdom which shall dominate the world for a thousand years, for the blessing and uplift of the Adamic race.

Really, after counting the cost, there is a danger that we would feel so ashamed of the littleness of our offering that we would fear to come to the Lord with it. We gain courage to present our bodies a living sacrifice only by a knowledge of

the Word of God and by a realization of the mercy and favor which has prompted his kind invitation for an exchange of something of little value for great things of inestimable value. But unless we take this very step and definitely and positively enter into a contract with the Lord, we have neither part nor lot with him. We are still a part of the world, however much we may try to pattern our lives after decent models and to avoid the grosser and the finer sins. The covenant with the Lord is the beginning of the Christian life; and to each covenant there comes "grace to help in every time of need."

But says some one: "Surely this is not the only way of coming into God's family, of becoming a Christian!" Yea, we reply, it is the only way. "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) Jesus is the only one who can save mankind from their condition of condemnation and bring them back into the family of God. The Master himself makes the distinctive terms that in order to have the privilege of discipleship we must become full disciples.

The limitations and obligations of the Christian are clearly defined in the Scriptures. With regret we must say that the facts have been hidden from the people by the clergy, who have sought to set aside the words of Jesus because these conflict with their theories. For this reason many who have been seeking the truth have been unable to find it in the nominal churches. Therefore we urge all to return to the Bible simplicity of a fully consecrated church of Christ.

The blessing upon the world will be earthly restitution to perfect human nature, instead of a change to the divine nature, as promised to the church. All who refuse both the call of the present time and the opportunity of the future restitution will die the second death, which St. Peter declares is like that of the natural brute beast.—Acts 3:19-23; 2 Peter 2:12.

READING GOD'S WORD

JULY 14.—ACTS 8:26-31, 35-39; Psa. 19:7-11.

THE FREEDOM WHEREWITH CHRIST MAKES FREE—KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH NOT INSTANTLY ACQUIRED—THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD—DIVINE METHOD OF REVEALING THE TRUTH—THE MOST PROFITABLE WAY TO STUDY THE BIBLE—THIS METHOD ILLUSTRATED—HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR TRUE STUDENTS.

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—John 8:32.

God's approval should be the highest aim of every one who professes to believe in him as the Creator, and especially of those who have begun the Christian life, who accept Jehovah God as their Father, and who claim to hold the precious relationship of children to him. His will should be their highest law; and it should be a part of their daily and hourly pleasure, as it is their privilege, to seek to know his will and to do it. This implies study, consideration, not a mere formality of thoughtless reading or of perfunctory worship, but the diligent use of every available means to learn what is the will of our heavenly Father.

Divine truth is found only in the divinely appointed channel, the Word of God as set forth by our Lord, the apostles and the prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in the inspired writings we must study them, meditate upon them, trust implicitly in them and faithfully conform our character to them. This is what is meant by "continuing in the Word of God," and is entirely compatible with the heeding of all the helps which the Lord raises up from among our brethren in the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14) All through the Gospel age the Lord has raised up such helps for the edification of the body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member carefully to prove the teaching of these helps by the infallible Word of God.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord as earnest, sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the truth," be "established in the present truth" (the truth now due) and be rooted and grounded in the truth. (2 Peter 1:12) Thus we shall be firm in the faith, "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us," able "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," to war a good warfare, to witness a good confession," and firmly to "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our conflict.—1 Peter 3:15; Jude 3; 1 Timothy 6:12, 13; 2 Timothy 2:3.

HOW WE ATTAIN THE TRUTH

We do not come into the knowledge of the truth at a single bound but gradually, step by step, are we led. Every step is one of sure and certain progress to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in established character. The truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power, bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every

grace, which time and cultivation ripen to a glorious maturity.

Not only shall the true disciple thus know the truth and be sanctified by it, but as the Lord said, the truth shall make him free. Those who have received the truth of God's Word know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of the truth is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance, superstition and fear. Its health-restoring beams begin to penetrate the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorate the whole being. It quickens our mortal bodies.

It is good to meditate upon, to ponder, the Word of God; for only in so doing can we receive the nourishment it is designed to give. A hasty reading of the Scriptures and a quick return of the mind to other thoughts and pursuits makes a spiritual dyspeptic, incapable of assimilating the spirit of the truth, and lacking the strength and power of mature, developed Christian character.

GOD'S WORD AND ITS EFFECT

Psalms 19:7-11 refers us to the superior glory of God's special written revelation of himself, given through his inspired human agents, the prophets and the apostles. This testimony not only declares the existence, power and wisdom of Jehovah, with a silent intimation of his goodness and grace, but with overwhelming force it bears to the thoughtful mind the convincing testimony of all his glorious attributes and of his love toward us in Christ.

Other influences may lead to temporary and partial changes of course and action; but nothing else equals God's revealed truth in producing a change of being, character, soul. It is because other converting agencies and powers are so often used that there are very many glossed-over, nominal Christians, as compared with the few whose entire beings are turned and fully consecrated to the Lord. People may be converted from savagery to civilization by a general knowledge, or from intemperance to sobriety by a study of the advantages of the latter over the former, or from dishonesty to honesty by learning that "honesty is the best policy." But none of these are soul conversions. Only God's truth can produce soul conversion, as also our Lord indicates in his prayer: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth."—John 17:17.

The testimony of God's Word is not doubtful, but clear

and positive, making wise the single-hearted who have no will or plan of their own which they wish the Lord to adopt, but who seek the Lord's will only. His statutes, his appointed plans, are right, rejoicing the heart. Yes, indeed! God's glorious plan of the ages rejoices the hearts of all who have come to a knowledge of that blessed arrangement. The precepts or teachings of the Lord are clear, showing us the unmistakable course and end of righteousness and of unrighteousness. The reverence of the Lord is a pure and lofty sentiment based upon love and gratitude, not upon a servile recognition of tyranny and power; and this proper fear, or reverence, will endure forever.

Once, when following the leadings of mistaken teachers and of catechisms, we thought of the judgments of the Lord, his "eternal decrees," only with horror, supposing that they provided for the salvation of but a mere handful of our race and for the everlasting misery of the masses. But what a change of sentiment has come since our eyes of understanding have been opened to the truth! Now God's decrees are sweet to our taste; we appreciate them greatly; we see that he has decreed a great Savior and a great salvation, open to the acceptance of every child of Adam; and that he has provided that all shall be brought to a clear knowledge of the truth, that they may have the fullest opportunity for everlasting life upon the only condition that God can make, that of righteousness. Moreover, the thoughtful servant of God who meditates on God's decrees, judgments, is warned thereby; and in remembering and obeying them there is great reward.

GOD'S METHOD OF TEACHING

In the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch we have an illustration of the divine method of teaching the Word. Many believe and teach that God teaches by impressions made upon the mind rather than by the written Word, the Bible. Others hold that God teaches by impressions which illuminate the Bible to each individual student. But the lesson of the eunuch's experience agrees with all the teachings of Scripture on this subject, and sets forth God's usual method. He uses his inspired Word as the text, and sends especially qualified representatives to expound it as the due time for understanding it approaches.

The hand of divine providence is here again manifested in the choice of the Scripture reading which the eunuch did not understand. Beginning at that portion of Isaiah's prophecy, Philip showed him how Jesus' sacrifice was the propitiation for the sin of the whole world; how that in the dawn and vigor of manhood our Lord was cut off from life without any posterity to perpetuate his name, and yet is to have a numerous posterity; for God raised him from the dead, and in due time would make him the Everlasting Father of all mankind, who would be brought back from the dead under the uplifting conditions of the Messianic kingdom.

Philip's teachings must have been very comprehensive. He had evidently progressed from the foundation doctrine of justification by faith in Christ as the Redeemer to the doctrines of the resurrection of the dead and the restitution of all things, and then to the special privilege of the fully consecrated during the Gospel age, that of becoming joint-heirs with Christ and in due time sharing his crown if now they willingly bear his cross. This seems evident from the fact that the eunuch was anxious to be baptized at once. His promptness in this respect was another evidence of his acquiescence in the will of God and of his desire to be in full accord and cooperation with the Lord.

The eunuch's meek, teachable spirit made it easy for him

to receive the Gospel message in its simplicity and beauty. He was already a believer to the extent that he knew the truth. He was already justified by his faith in the Redeemer promised. Now that justification became actually his, as his mind and his heart grasped the thought that the Crucified One was the Son of God who bought us with his own precious blood. He was already devoted to the Lord as far as he knew the divine will. But now, with clear knowledge sent directly to him through Philip, his consecration was revived, renewed, enlarged, applied.

It is not so much the amount of time given to Bible reading that counts, but the amount of study done and the information gained. We all know people who have spent days, weeks and years in reading the Scriptures, but who have learned little or nothing about God's plan for human salvation. It is a great mistake to think that Bible study is merely the time spent in handling a Bible and in reading so many chapters per day.

ADVANTAGES OF TOPICAL STUDY

THE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES are not merely comments upon the Bible, but are practically the Bible itself in an arranged form for topical study. Our thought is, therefore, that these SCRIPTURE STUDIES are a very valuable help in the understanding of the Word of God. These books will be of no practical value to us, however, unless we see in them loyalty to that Word and, as far as our judgment goes, see them to be in full harmony with the Scriptures. Therefore in reading them for the first time, and perhaps the second time, and before we accept their teachings as our own personal faith and conviction, we should prove every point by the Word or disprove it, as the case may be. We should be satisfied with nothing less than a thorough investigation of the Bible from their standpoint.

This is not a putting of the SCRIPTURE STUDIES as a substitute for the Bible; on the contrary, the STUDIES continually refer to the Bible. Whoever, therefore, is doubtful as to any reference, or has forgotten any point in any degree, should refresh his memory, and should make sure that his every thought is in harmony with the Bible, and not merely in accord with the SCRIPTURE STUDIES, although we firmly believe them to be in full accord with the Word of God.

Quite a considerable number of the friends make it a rule to read from eight to twelve pages of the STUDIES daily; and we might say here that we do not know of one who has followed this course and made use of the various means of grace provided by the Lord—such as the different meetings, the Berean lessons, the Manna text, etc.—and who has gone out of the truth.

Furthermore, we would suggest that merely reading a given number of pages of the SCRIPTURE STUDIES would not be studying in the proper sense of the word. A proper study would be to think of the meaning of every word and every sentence. The thought is not to see how much one can read, but to make sure that one goes no further than he understands, whether that means one page or twenty pages. We would not consider it a Scripture study in any sense of the word unless our thought has grasped the matter from the standpoint of seeking to know what the Scriptures teach on the subject under consideration. Whoever will faithfully do this will not be merely reading, but studying; and whoever reads a few pages of SCRIPTURE STUDIES daily, with the suggested texts connected with those pages, will do more Scripture studying in that time than he could by any other known method.

CHRIST IS ALL

Though all thy life seem full of care
And trials seem too hard to bear,

Upon thy Father call.

He'll from his Word send message meet
And grace sufficient, promise sweet;
For Christ is all in all.

If little tests thy walks harass
And troubles small thy way compass,
In these thou must not fall.

Thy Father lets thee have them, so
Thy character may stronger grow
And Christ be all in all.

If for a while thy life be bright
Nor foes assail nor storms affright
Nor darkened hours appall,
In heaven above still find thy joy.
Earth's good is but a transient toy;
Let Christ be all in all.

"LET PATIENCE HAVE HER PERFECT WORK"

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James 1:4.

Patience is the fruitage of enduring trust. To many minds the thought behind the word would be better expressed by constancy, perseverance, or cheerful endurance. Patience is often confused with long suffering. That word is suggestive of meek, uncomplaining endurance of suffering, with humble res-

ignation. But patience is more positive; it is a trait which indicates strength and self-discipline. It cannot be predicated of inexperienced persons, but only of characters which have been subjected to trials or affliction, pain or loss; and it always shines brightest when manifested under the glowing heat

of severe affliction. This trait takes a very prominent place in the galaxy of Christian virtues; for without it the heart would grow faint, the head weary, and the steps would soon falter along the narrow way in which the Church is called to walk.

"In your patience possess ye your souls," said the Master, implying the danger of losing our souls, our existence, if we fail to cultivate this grace which is so very necessary to our continuance in well doing.

The Apostle James does not overstate the matter when he intimates that the perfect work of patience will make its subjects perfect and entire, wanting nothing; for the Apostle Paul assures us that God, who has begun the good work of developing character in us, will continue to perform it until the crowning day—the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6) All his children will be subjected to just such discipline as they need for the correction of faults, the implanting and developing of virtues, and for their training and establishment in righteousness, so that they cannot be moved. "If ye be without chastisement [discipline and correction], whereof all [true sons of God] are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye [patiently] endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"—Hebrews 12:8, 6, 7.

DEVELOPMENT A SLOW PROCESS

This great work of developing and training character is necessarily a slow and tedious one, and not infrequently it is a painful process; and the patience that cheerfully submits to it is begotten of a high appreciation of the ends to be attained. Patience is begotten of a love of righteousness, truth and godliness, and is therefore most noble and praiseworthy.

But how can we let patience have her perfect work? Just by meekly doing the best we can each day, and doing it cheerfully and well; making the best of every thing and going forward daily with true Christian fortitude to act the noble part in every emergency of affliction, pain or loss. Today's trial may be a light one, perhaps almost imperceptible; or today may be one of the sunny days in which God bids our hearts rejoice in his overflowing bounty. Tomorrow may bring its cares and its petty vexations that irritate and annoy. Another tomorrow may witness the clouds gather above our heads, and as the days follow each other the clouds may grow darker and darker until we are forcibly reminded of that strong figure of the Psalmist—"I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." Yet never will the valley grow so dark that the patient, trusting one cannot triumphantly exclaim: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou [my Lord] art with me: thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." Yes, there is comfort in the "rod" (of chastisement), as well as in the "staff" (of providential care); for both are designed for our ultimate profiting.

TRIBULATION WORKETH PATIENCE

The Apostle Paul tells us plainly that tribulation is necessary for the development of patience. "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." (Romans 5:3, 4) Consider how your own experience has verified this, you who have been for some time under the Lord's special care and leading. How much richer you are for all the lessons of experience, and for the patience that experience has developed in you! Although, like the Apostle, you can say that "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:11) In the exercise of patience the lessons of experience have made you stronger. They have increased your faith and drawn you into closer communion and fellowship with the Lord. They have made you to feel better acquainted with him, to realize more and more his personal interest in you and his care and love for you. And this in turn has awakened a deeper sense of gratitude and an in-

creasing zeal to manifest that gratitude to him. Gratitude and zeal deepen the sense of fellowship with God, and give confidence to the hope of final and full acceptance with him as a son and heir, worthy through Christ.

"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down and [strengthen] the feeble knees"—"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

The Apostle James urges that we take the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering affliction and of patience. Then he cites the example of Job and the manifest end or purpose of the Lord in permitting him to be so sorely tried: how the Lord was really very pitiful and of tender mercy, although the pity and mercy were not manifest except to the confiding faith that said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him"—until the long and painful discipline had yielded the peaceable fruits and the subsequent rewards of righteousness.

MORE THAN POLICY

There is little virtue in the patience that endures merely from motives of worldly policy, though even that often has much advantage in it. Men in business dealings with fellow-men well know that an impetuous, turbulent disposition is greatly to their disadvantage, while patient consideration, temperance in judgment, and good self-control are of immense value, even from a worldly, business standpoint. But the patience that is begotten of deep-rooted Christian principle is the kind that will endure all trials and shine the brighter for every affliction through which it may pass.

Job, the servant of God, was accused of selfish policy-motives for his remarkable patience and faithfulness; and it was boldly affirmed that if he were tried by adversity his mean motives would be manifest; that he would curse God to his face. But God knew better; and it was in Job's defense that he permitted him to be tried to the utmost that the loyalty of his heart might be manifest. Some of his poor comforters viewed Job's afflictions only in the light of chastisements, failing utterly to comprehend the divine purpose, and this only added stings to his afflictions but through them all the Lord brought his servant and most fully vindicated him in the eyes of all the people.

Thus will God ever do with all who patiently maintain their integrity and trust in him under affliction. If any man recognize affliction as a chastisement of the Lord for the correction of some evil way in him, let him be quick to learn the lesson and repent; or if it be refining discipline, let patience under the tedious process have its perfect work.

PATIENT ONES OF OLD

The Apostle Paul (Hebrews 11) calls up a long list of patient, faithful ones who endured cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonment, who were stoned, sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, who wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; who wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. All this they endured patiently for righteousness sake, looking by faith to God for the reward of their patience and faithfulness in his own good time. Then again, says the Apostle (Hebrews 12:3), "Consider him [Christ] that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Yea, consider him, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." He left us an example that we should follow his steps.

While we see the great necessity for pruning, cultivating and discipline in the development of character, it is manifest that none will be able to endure it unto the desirable end of final establishment in righteousness who do not from the beginning diligently devote themselves to the exercise of patience. "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." "In your patience possess ye your souls."

NON-COMBATANT SERVICE DEFINED

Many have written asking us what constitutes non-combatant service within the meaning of the Selective Draft Law. We have recently procured a copy of President Wilson's order and take advantage of this first opportunity to publish the same for the benefit of any who desire to know. It is dated Washington, D. C., March 20, 1918, and reads as follows:

EXECUTIVE ORDER

1. By virtue of authority contained in Section 4 of the act approved May 18, 1917, entitled, "An act to authorize the President to increase temporarily the military establishment

of the United States," whereby it is provided—

"And nothing in this Act contained shall be construed to require or compel any person to serve in any of the forces herein provided for who is found to be a member of any well-recognized religious sect or organization at present organized and existing and whose existing creed or principles forbid its members to participate in war in any form and whose religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of said religious organizations; but no person so exempted

shall be exempted from service in any capacity that the President shall declare to be non-combatant."

I hereby declare that the following military service is noncombatant service:

a. Service in the Medical Corps wherever performed. This includes service in the sanitary detachments attached to combatant units at the front; service in the divisional sanitary trains composed of ambulance companies and field hospital companies, on the line of communications, at the base in France, and with the troops and at hospitals in the United States; also the service of supply and repair in the Medical Department.

b. Any service in the Quartermaster Corps, in the United States, may be treated as non-combatant. Also, in rear of zone of operations, service in the following: Stevedore companies, labor companies, remount depots, veterinary hospitals, supply depots, bakery companies, the subsistence service, the bathing service, the laundry service, the salvage service, the transportation repair service, and motor-truck companies.

c. Any engineer service in the United States may be treated as non-combatant service. Also, in rear of zone of operations, service as follows: Railroad building, operation and repair; road building and repair; construction of rear-line fortifications, auxiliary defenses, etc.; construction of docks, wharves, store-houses and of such cantonments as may be built by the Corps of Engineers; topographical work; camouflage; map reproduction; supply depot service; repair service; hydraulic service; and forestry service.

2. Persons ordered to report for military service under the above Act who have (a) been certified by their Local Boards to be members of a religious sect or organization as defined in Section 4 of said Act; or (b) who object to participating in war because of conscientious scruples but have failed to receive certificates as members of a religious sect or organization, from their Local Board will be assigned to non-combatant military service as defined in paragraph 1 to the extent that such persons are able to accept service as aforesaid without violation of the religious or other conscientious scruples by them in good faith entertained. Upon the promulgation of this order it shall be the duty of each Division, Camp, or Post Commander, through a tactful and considerate officer, to present to all such persons the provisions hereof with adequate explanation of the character of non-combatant service herein defined, and upon such explanations to secure acceptances of assignment to the several kinds of non-combatant service above enumerated; and whenever any person is assigned to non-combatant service by reason of his religious or other conscientious scruples he shall be given a certificate stating the assignment and reason therefor, and such certificate shall thereafter be respected as preventing the transfer of such persons from such non-combatant to combatant service by any Division, Camp, Post, or other Commander under whom said person may thereafter be called to serve, but such certificate shall not prevent the assignment of such person to some other form of non-combatant service with his own consent. So far as may be found feasible by each Division, Camp, or Post Commander, future assignments of such persons to non-combatant military service will be restricted to the several detachments and units of the Medical Department in the absence of a request for assignment to some other branch of non-combatant service as defined in paragraph 1 hereof.

3. On the first day of April, and thereafter monthly, each Division, Camp, or Post Commander shall report to the Adjutant General of the Army, for the information of the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of War, the names of all persons under their respective commands who profess religious or other conscientious scruples as above described and who have been

unwilling to accept, by reason of such scruples, assignment to non-combatant military service as above defined, and as to each such person so reported a brief, comprehensive statement as to the nature of the objection to the acceptance of such non-combatant military service entertained. The Secretary of War will from time to time classify the persons so reported and give further directions as to the disposition of them. Pending such directions from the Secretary of War, all such persons not accepting assignment to non-combatant service shall be segregated as far as practicable and placed under the command of a specially qualified officer of tact and judgment, who will be instructed to impose no punitive hardships of any kind upon them, but not to allow their objections to be made the basis of any favor or consideration beyond exemption from actual military service which is not extended to any other soldier in the service of the United States.

4. With a view to maintaining discipline, it is pointed out that the discretion of courts-martial, so far as any shall be ordered to deal with the cases of persons who fail or refuse to comply with lawful orders by reason of alleged religious or other conscientious scruples, should be exercised, if feasible, so as to secure uniformity of penalties in the imposition of sentences under Articles of War 64 and 65, for the wilful disobedience of a lawful order or command. It will be recognized that sentences imposed by such courts-martial, when not otherwise described by law, shall prescribe confinement in the United States Disciplinary Barracks or elsewhere as the Secretary of War or the reviewing authority may direct, but not in a penitentiary; but this shall not apply to the cases of men who desert either before reporting for duty to the military authorities or subsequently thereto.

5. The Secretary of War will revise the sentences and finding of courts-martial heretofore held of persons who come within any of the classes herein described, and bring to the attention of the President for remedy, if any be needed, sentences and judgments found at variance with the provisions hereof.

[Signed] WOODROW WILSON.

Local Boards composed of men of different temperaments have not ruled uniformly in cases where application has been made for deferred classification on account of religious belief. President Wilson, however, has provided for such contingency in the aforementioned Executive Order, as follows:

"Persons ordered to report for military service under the above Act . . . who object to participating in war because of conscientious scruples but have failed to receive certificates as members of a religious sect or organization from their Local Board, will be assigned to non-combatant military service as defined in paragraph 1 to the extent that such persons are able to accept service as aforesaid without violation of the religious or other conscientious scruples by them in good faith entertained."

It is not the province of THE WATCH TOWER to tell any one what he should or should not do; but we can and do say that every Christian should be obedient to the law. The order of the President is a part of the Selective Draft Law. Where one in good faith has applied to the Local Board for classification and the Board has not issued to him a certificate granting non-combatant service, then when called he should readily respond to the call by going to the cantonment and presenting himself to the commanding officer, who, under the President's order, has the power and authority to issue to him a certificate assigning him to non-combatant service.

The President further provides that it is the privilege of such conscientious objectors to request assignment to some branch of non-combatant service aside from the Medical Department.

INTERESTING LETTERS

WRESTLING NOT WITH FLESH AND BLOOD

DEAR BROTHER:—

Acting on advice I am writing to you of my experience with the fallen angels.

For seven years my brain has been in a vise, my head feeling like a rock weighing thousands of pounds—a dull intense, drawing sensation much worse than pain. My mind seems full of colors—green, yellow, blue, pink, and then suddenly the whole head will seem to turn blood-red, producing hysteria, intense fear, and my mind becomes flooded with thoughts vile beyond description, with a total absence of faith in God. On page 127 in Vol. 7 this same condition is described precisely.

Will give you a brief synopsis of my life. At twelve I consecrated and joined the Methodist church, but becoming

disgusted I backslid. Living in a lonely, desolate country town, nothing to think of besides eternal torment, very easily I fell prey to Spiritism. First it seemed a light frivolity, a mysterious truth, but I became deeper involved to the extent of developing into a clairaudient, clairvoyant, writing and trance medium, giving complete will to the good (?) spirits. In four years time I read extensively the *Progressive (?) Thinker*, studied deeply "Occult Life of Jesus,"—what a deadly insult to our dear Lord—and many books written by the "departed"; at eighteen I found I was being made a dupe, because these people became weak, degenerate and immoral. My life was ahead of me. I dropped Spiritism like a hot cake but too late. An indefinite something began bothering me, affecting my mind. I next looked into Evolution, Reincarnation, New Thought, Palmistry, Phrenology, to drop them all as empty.

Walking streets and fighting insanity, eventually in a public library I picked up "Science and Health." I read it—ah, here is the truth at last, I thought—was healed (?) almost instantly, laid off glasses and was transformed into another girl. I lived in the clouds for two years, joined the church and got along lovely with occasional trials which "Science" always met. Then I became wise to the fact that again I was duped. Two-thirds of these people made jackasses of themselves, became silly, dishonest, and off their balance, and usually got some ailment, finally, which "Science" couldn't meet. Then one day suddenly my head went off. I fought desperately for three years, was insane; tried thirteen different "Science" practitioners, all told me I was "making something of it." Asking what "it" means, was told "it" was an illusion, a belief in another power opposed to God, principle. That left me in the dark, and I continued having violent raving spells. Next I tried medical doctors, chiropractors, etc., and finally went back to Christian Science but it was empty as a gourd and had a "missing link" which no one could explain. Now I know this missing link to be found in Isaiah 14th chapter, 12th to 14th verses, which clarifies the whole thing.

After five years of this misery and no solution anywhere, desperation followed and suicide was attempted different times. One Sunday at dinner table I suddenly felt myself taken hold of and pushed out. Like a flash I thought, "This is no illusion, something having power and intelligence is possessing me"; but I knew not what it was and went into a violent spell. But in that spell came a confession beginning with the words, "She has caught me. I have been here twenty years."

Will not go into details. I had three spells in which this "thing" talked. It was vicious, evil-loving, sexless, nameless, said it was thousands of years old and hated God; but "it" couldn't use me to do the worst of evils, which it cursed about. I was too high-minded.

We all thought this was just delirium. A few weeks after a colporteur sister called with Volume I SCRIPTURE STUDIES. I was pacing the floor, putting down my hair, fighting this demon (as I now know). She pulled out the chart in front of "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Here was something I never looked into. I sat down, mother went out, and I fired questions at the sister, which she answered satisfactorily. She took up my case, read the volumes to me, and instructed me orally. Although the booklet on Spiritism was read, the friends did not credit the demon confession, but thought it was merely physical trouble. I again grew worse, felt abandoned and made a desperate effort at suicide, but failed. Then I said, "Lord, whoever thou art, I'll give myself to thee"; and I fully consecrated. A Seventh Volume, with page 127 marked was sent me through the mail. I was astounded at that page describing minutely my case.

Some friends in this city who had experience with fallen angels heard of my case and tried to reach me to help. Events transpired that led me to come here to stay with them. I have been here five weeks studying, praying, making special study of Volume 7 and "Spiritism" booklet, but so far my "head" condition cannot be helped nor will the demon let me alone. It threatens, torments me and I have been thrown into several spells, which are less violent in the presence of God's people. Brother Bohnet was here and made my case a matter of special prayer.

These demons seem in appearance to be beautiful, fascinating, but their character is vile. They do not desire to return to their "first estate" and say they will do more and worse evils now, so many minds being open. Well, they are having their trial now, and if I must endure them for a time what a help I may be, in the coming age, to the poor mental and moral

wrecks that have been made by them! My prayer is for grace to endure if God doesn't see fit to remove this torture. It may be valuable some day, otherwise I would destroy myself. Please excuse mistakes. A presence at elbow, is being fought with to get this written—badly, I know, but will send it on. Too nervous to rewrite.

May the dear Lord bless you and the dear Seventh Volume that is so misunderstood. I didn't accept it at first, but now it is the biggest comfort I ever had.

Your sister in Christ,

L. M. W.—Iowa.

PERSECUTED BY GERMAN CLERGY

DEAR BRETHREN:

You will be pleased, dear brethren, to know that the Lord's work is progressing here, notwithstanding the pressure of prevailing conditions. In Germany, however, the brethren report great difficulties, owing to the opposition of the clergy, who are making their influence felt in a greater measure than ever before. But the truth is gaining headway nevertheless; the "stone" of Daniel's vision is rolling in upon and smashing one stronghold of the adversary after the other; and all who are truly the Lord's rejoice.

Wishing you the Master's grace and continued blessing and praying that we may all be counted worthy of a share in the kingdom soon, I remain with much Christian love to you all,
Your fellow servant in the Lord,

C. C. BINKELE.—Switzerland.

STRENGTH FOR THE LAST STAND

DEAR CO-LABORERS:

I cannot refrain from asking a precious moment or two to express my appreciation of the recent TOWERS.

After reading the greater portion of the last one (Apr. 15th) aloud to Mother, whose eyes prevent her from reading much for herself, I exclaimed: "How can any one read that TOWER and not read the spirit of Brother Russell and the spirit of Christ in every word of it? How can one help recognizing that God is using it to feed, strengthen, encourage, advise and sustain his little ones for their last, strong stand!"

Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.—2 Thess. 3:16.

Yours "hid with Christ in God," E. S. L.—N. Y.

HOPES STILL BRIGHT IN FRANCE

(Translation)

DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD AND BETHIEL FRIENDS:

Yesterday we, 21 brethren and sisters, had the blessed privilege of commemorating the death of our beloved Savior, our own participation in the experiences of his body and in the cup of suffering, while still waiting for the real participation in the kingdom. It is a sweet thing to think that under such circumstances as these we can remember the dear people of God scattered here and there over all the earth, and meditate upon the grand drama which has been in process of enactment for nineteen centuries.

The friends at this place and in various other parts request me to advise you that we no longer receive the French WATCH TOWER, or other literature, from Geneva, on account of the restrictions on matter coming from Switzerland. Brother Freytag informs us that he has taken the situation up with the military authorities, but we feel dubious about his success. But we do thank the Lord for this much, that everything sent us from Brooklyn or from London has come to hand regularly.

The Lord bless you and guard you and the other members of the Editorial Committee—such is our daily prayer.

With much love, your brother in Christ, our Hope.

LEQUIME SAMUEL.—France.

WILFUL SINS OF THE WORLD

Question:—Do you understand that the only sins which the sufferings of the great company will expiate on behalf of the world will be deliberate sins against the Lord's people?

Answer:—Yes.

Question:—Is it your opinion, then, that all other sins of the world will be ignored; i. e., will be atoned for by the merit of Christ?

Answer:—Yes; except that each man, as we have said, keeps an account in his own mind and his own body. Whoever violates the laws of nature brings the penalty upon himself, as a result of his course or his action. It is just as when one eats too much food at a meal, or eats what does not agree with him; he will have some distress, some impairment of health, whether he is a saint or a sinner. His discomfort will

be the natural result of a lack of the exercise of proper judgment or of the necessary knowledge. It is a matter of judgment on God's part, an automatic penalty.

We understand, however, that in the great time of trouble now coming upon the World, God is judging the nations as nations; and, of course, this will mean much suffering to the individuals of the world. God's time has now come to supplant all these earthly arrangements and institutions, based upon selfishness, and establish his own righteous government for the blessing of all mankind—the living and the dead. This procedure will be something unique, never before known. God will here judge down, judge to destruction, everything that is not in perfect harmony with his righteous laws. But it will be for man's good, even though involving much suffering and trouble.