STAND FAST—STRIVING TOGETHER

"Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."—Philippians 1:27-29.

No text of Scripture is more applicable to the time in which we are now living than are the above words of St. Paul to the Philippian church. Perhaps also no other passage has been more comforting to the feet members of the body of Christ during their experiences of the past year than has this one. Surely all have been called upon to suffer much, and we may have further privileges along this line. Yet it is not the suffering that especially concerns the Lord's people, it being a "light affliction" compared with "the glory that shall follow," if we prove faithful. When we realize the great favor that has been bestowed upon us in our being appointed ambassadors of the great Messianic Kingdom, now being established upon the ruins of the old order, we count it indeed a privilege to endure hardship and trial in connection with this glorious message. Such was the spirit of St. Paul, in the words of our text. He had been held up to ridicule and scorn, beaten almost to death, thrown into prison and his feet made fast in the stocks. Yet in it all he was able to sing praises to God for the privilege of suffering for Christ's sake, for the truth and for the brethren.

THE MESSAGE OF THE HOUR

The first statement in our text is especially important now. Not merely the admonition to "stand fast," but the manner in which we should stand is the thing of essential value. The admonition must be taken in its entirety. The Apostle would have us understand that to be pleasing to the Lord we must "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel." We find some today who claim and probably think that they are standing fast; but instead they are turning aside and not striving together with their brethren in proclaiming the full message of the Gospel. Because of some difference of opinion respecting secular matters, they apparently feel it their duty to raise questions that cause division in the ranks of the Lord's people, and then start independent movements that tend to confuse the minds of the saints and to give rise to roots of bitterness. Let us, dear brethren, avoid any and every spirit that would hinder our striving together in the dissemination of the truth now due. Nothing would please the adversary more than to have the ambassadors of Christ's kingdom contend one with another on non-essentials, thereby to have their minds distracted and their efforts slackened regarding the real work to which they have devoted their lives; namely, the proclaiming of the message regarding the utter downfall of Babylon and the overthrow of Satan's empire.

The commission of the Christ, Head and body, is found in Isaiah 61:1-3; and the special message of the feet members is the proclamation of "the day of vengeance of our God." The evidence that this particular message would be given by the last members of the body of Christ on earth is emphasized by the fact that our Lord omitted this portion of the prophecy when he read from the book of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-22), and then declared: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." His thought manifestly was that only the portion of the prophecy which he had read to them was fulfilled at that time, and that the portion which he had failed to read would be fulfilled at a later time by his body members. It is therefore the duty, as well as the privilege, of the Lord's people at this time to "proclaim the day of vengeance of our God"; and if they fail to do so, the very stones would cry out; for the prophet's words are inspired of God and must be fulfilled.—Luke 19:40; Zechariah 9:9.

"ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS!"

It is with sorrow that we see some retreating from the front ranks of the battle. It is not surprising to find some such excusing their action by claims of steadfastness and special courage. The faithful and triumphant in battle do not desert in the hour of need, however, but strive together with one spirit and one mind, as the Apostle enjoins. Those who are looking for pretexts to turn aside will surely find a motive satisfactory to themselves for their course, while those who are anxious to do the Lord's work will be looking for opportunities through which they may vigorously co-operate in the closing work of the church in the flesh.—Isaiah 52:7.

A few in certain localities, under the influence of leading minds, have felt obliged to withdraw their support of the Society on most trivial and unbelievable grounds. Some have magnified and distorted certain statements in THE WATCH TOWER, and under the misconception thus developed have withdrawn from classes and have sought to draw away others after them. The more influential in the service any such has been, the more disturbance his course causes among the dear sheep when he thus deflects. Some have even found fault with the statement in the TOWER of May 15, 1918, which said: "When the government asks to borrow his money, and gives its promise to pay in the nature of a bond, if he can consistently do so he should buy the bond." Reference to the article in question will disclose the fact that this is part of a statement given to the public press, and properly showed that our Society was not opposed to the methods used by the government in carrying on the war, and that its work is strictly a religious one. All such questions are matters of individual conscience; and nobody can or should assume to regulate the conscience of another in such matters. This has ever been the policy of THE WATCH TOWER, as our readers well know.

Occasionally some one, not sufficiently appreciative of his privileges and apparently seeking to avoid Christian hardships, will write us respecting our dear brethren who are now suffering in a special manner for Christ's sake, and ask: "Could they not have avoided their experience?" We answer: Yes; they could have avoided it. So could Jesus have avoided his suffering. Likewise St. Paul, St. John and other faithful martyrs of the past nineteen centuries. All of them could have avoided much suffering had they failed to disseminate the truths then due. But why should we speak about avoiding such experiences when the Lord's Word clearly indicates that hereunto are we called, and that we shall be "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that we suffer with him"? And why did Jesus suffer? Because he held forth the message of truth and reprobated the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, the clergy of his time; because he called them whited sepulchers; because near the end of his ministry he went into the Temple and drove out the ecclesiastical money changers; because he went against the common thought of the day! Thus it was that he suffered. "If so be that ye suffer with him, ye shall be glorified together" with him. "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."

WHY WE WERE ILLUMINATED

Why did the Lord permit us, in the end of the age, to come to a clear conception of the divine plan? Why do we enjoy a better understanding of these things than did the early church? Is it merely for our own enjoyment that we are thus illuminated? We think not. If so, doubtless God, who is no respecter of persons, would have been pleased to give all the members of his church an equal knowledge of his plans and purposes throughout the age. We believe that our heavenly Father had a twofold object in giving us a clearer understanding of his great plan at this time: first, that we may have the broadest possible foundation for our faith in this "evil day," thus enabling us to stand; second, that by means of our knowledge of the immediate establishment of the kingdom and of the time of trouble incident thereto, we may be able to co-operate more intelligently in the great work which he has for his saints to do now, prior to their glorification.

Seeing, therefore, that the commission of the feet members of the body of Christ is "to proclaim the day of vengeance of our God" (Isaiah 61:2), it behooves every one who aspires to membership in that body to take advantage of present opportunities for proclaiming this very message and the glad tidings of the kingdom which shall follow shortly. We are to tell the people that Babylon is tottering to its fall, and that on the ruins thereof Christ's true kingdom will be erected. We are to tell the great company of "foolish virgins," the majority of whom are still in darkness in the Babylonish systems, that the Lord has great things in store for them and for all humanity. We think that those are making a grave miscalculation who have folded their hands and concluded that there is nothing more to do on this side of the vail in respect to proclaiming the kingdom message. Perhaps ere long the Lord will show us that instead of there being nothing to do, a mighty work is just before us—the bringing of the message of truth to the thousands upon thousands of "foolish virgins" who are still slumbering and sleeping, so far as a knowledge of the divine plan is concerned.

The Lord's people, the feet members, are the only ones

on earth who now possess a knowledge of present truth. We stand upon the very threshold of the Messianic kingdom. Within a comparatively short time the Lord purposes to bring about the downfall of ecclesiasticism, acquaint the great company class with present truth, glorify the last members of the church, and then install into office beyond the vail that great multitude of servants of the bride, her companions who shall follow her. If this be the work of the immediate future, whom will the Lord use to bring the message of truth to the foolish virgins? Manifestly he would not use anybody as a teacher of the plan who did not himself understand the plan. Who in all the earth is equipped to carry this message to our brethren in darkness, unless it be the remaining members of the Christ on this side the vail? Some have been disappointed to find that the church is not yet glorified. But undoubtedly the Lord, who knoweth the end from the beginning, has had a purpose in keeping us on this side the vail beyond the date of our earlier expectations. Surely great privileges of service are just ahead.

Just how the Lord may bring about the conditions for a world-wide witness for the truth ere Babylon's final downfall is accomplished is not for us to say. But we know that he is very resourceful. He has unlimited means of accomplishing his great designs. It is not at all improbable that the persecutions of the Lord's people, past, present and future, may be used of him in arousing such an interest in the truth as we have never before witnessed on earth. Already much interest is manifested in the case of our brethren in bonds, and numerous questions are being raised as to why these brethren should be confined without even being admitted to bail pending a hearing of their case! The Lord in his own due time and way will fully answer these questions.

SEVERAL PERTINENT FACTS

It is a well known fact that our brethren now in bonds have given the best years of their lives to religious work, and to that exclusively. They were so busily engaged in it that they had not even taken notice that an espionage law had been passed by congress. It was called to their attention for the first time when objection was raised to "The Finished Mystery," and then the publication of that book was immediately stopped. The government counsel during the trial admitted that he could point to "no vindictive spirit" against the government existing in the minds of any of these brethren. In view of these facts it is not surprising that great interest is now being taken in the case by people who otherwise may not have known of the existence of the International Bible Students Ass'n. It is not strange that they should now be asking why these men should be held in prison without even the privilege of giving bail pending their appeal, kept away from their friends, away from the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and from doing the great religious work to which they have devoted their lives, and have done so for years without financial remuneration. What is the purpose of keeping them in prison? What good can be accomplished by compelling highly refined Christian gentlemen to daily associate with thieves, robbers and murderers regarding whose conviction there could be no doubt? These are questions which demand an answer. Newspapers are taking it up. Undoubtedly the Lord is working out some grand design, and it is for everyone who loves the truth to hold himself in readiness to co-operate with the Lord in whatsoever way he may indicate. In this connection we quote from an article clipped from a Chicago magazine of recent date, under the caption "Persecution on account of Religion":

"We hope our readers have read and carefully noted the opinion pronounced by Judge H. B. Howe, of the U. S. District Court in Brooklyn, N. Y., in the case of the "Russellites," tried under the Espionage Act. Perhaps nothing more startling has come from the Federal bench since the Dred Scott decision. The condemned men are sent to jail for twenty years not only for conscience's sake, but for preaching, under a somewhat novel and perhaps despised name, a form of religion to which in substance many thousand people are devotedly attached, for which many would willingly die. Whether it should be called "Christian" or not, makes no difference. It appeals to the highest and most frequently published teachings to be found in the religious writings of the world. Whether the defendants in Judge Howe's court were too close literalists or not does not matter. Their form of religion, like that of the Society of Friends, does not depend upon the letter of any Scripture, so much as upon the spirit of many great teachers at their best. The only heresy of the believers in this religion is that they really believe and try to do what millions of people say, but neither do nor believe.

"Take for instance that passage in the Sermon on the Mount in which man is bidden to let 'the light' in him, that is, good will, 'shine' like God's sunlight, at all times 'upon the evil and the good.' Suppose a man catches the spirit of this remarkable teaching and finds that he is simply inhibited from going to war. Must we treat him, as the Roman government treated such people, as an enemy of the State? Suppose you have the ingenuity to explain away the passage above; suppose, as some do, you make, 'Blessed are the peace-makers' mean: 'Blessed are they who fight and punish their enemies'; nevertheless the sublime law of the good will, the one profoundly civilizing force in the universe, comes some day surging back upon your mind more incontrovertible than ever. What more substantial is every day of the war proving than the vast need of men to obey this vital law of our humanity?

"And now we are told by a judge that men who try thus to obey are criminals! Whether this is good law or not makes no difference. The result is exactly what we abhor in Kaiserism, namely, persecution for conscience's sake. If this is necessary in the name of Liberty, we begin to wonder next, What is Liberty? What ought those men to do who, though loving their country with all their hearts, are bound by the mightiest of human forces—the inward vision and conviction; must they obey God or man? We had thought hitherto that we had an answer, preserved inviolate in the Constitution of the Republic. We had not thought that any judge, fallible and subject, like other men, to human passion and prejudice, could set the rights of men's conscience aside. We should suppose that the nation had better uses for men of moral courage, simply proclaiming what every man deep in his heart wishes that all other men might believe, than to shut them up in our vile jails. Do we like to publish to the world that a hundred million of us are so afraid of the spread of religion of brotherhood as to discover a terrible national peril in the effort of a handful of men to persuade the rest of us to believe the greatest things in the Bible?

"What now if this 'war to end war' proves, as history has often shown, that the despised people were nearer to practical wisdom than the statesmen and prime ministers! What if they are the humble forerunners of a new movement of humane and spiritual religion, which shall put an end to war, as the preachers of violence, compulsion and punishment have never been able to do with their superior might? Old Gamaliel was no enthusiast, but he was the one wise man among the rulers of his people."

PUNISHING FELLOW MEMBERS

Some of the dear brethren who are earnestly striving to conform their lives to the divine Word are noticing from the reading of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Volume 6, more clearly than ever before the divine regulations respecting methods of procedure as set forth in Matthew 18:15-17. Of these, some need to be reminded that it is not necessary for them to follow out all the regulations therein set forth. If they choose to overlook the brother's fault, it is their privilege to do so. But if they cannot overlook the fault, if it continues to injure them, they may not speak of the matter to others, but must follow the Lord's direction there given as the only method by which they can seek redress.

Some inquire respecting the kind of punishment to be meted out to those who are contumacious, who will heed neither the private cry of the brother against impositions nor the counsel of two or three brothers nor even the voice of the church. "What punishment should be applied to these?" we are asked. Our reply is that we are not at liberty to punish our brother at all. The Lord purposes to do that himself. He tells us that at the present time we are not competent to judge the degree of each other's weakness according to the flesh, and consequently could not judge the degree of each other's responsibility as the Lord would justly measure it. It is our privilege to seek to stop the injury which is being done us; but we may not execute any penalty on account of things of the past.

The whole lesson of our Lord's direction in Matthew 18:15-17 is to the effect that we are to strive thus to regain our brother's love and to stop him from further injuring us. If we succeed in so doing, in the same measure we regain him as our brother, we recover him. It is not the thought, then, that the brother should be brought before the church to be punished; but merely that as a last resort he be brought before the ecclesia for reproof, for correction, in order that he may see the error of his course and acknowledge it and cease to do wrong. At every step the effort should be to turn the

brother to a right course, not to expose him, not to injure him, not to punish him; for the Lord has said: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay."—Romans 12:19-21.

According to this Scripture the very most that the church could do would be that, after having vainly endeavored to get the brother to repent and reform, it should withdraw special brotherly fellowship from him until such time as he would express willingness thereafter to do right. Then he should be received again into full fellowship.

Even treating the brother for a time as "a heathen man and a publican" would not mean to do him injury, to castigate him, to pillory him, to expose him to shame or contempt before the world. We are not permitted to do any of these things to heathen men or to publicans. In the meantime the brother may merely be treated in the kindly, courteous way in which it would be proper for us to treat any publican or Gentile, withholding the special rights or privileges of greetings or voting opportunities that belong to the church as a class.

THE LAST TO WELCOME THE KING

"And King David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house?"—2 Samuel 19:10, 11.

We stand today at a time in earth's affairs that is aptly illustrated in an incident of Israelitish history which occurred nearly thirty centuries ago. The kingdom of Israel had been thrown into a state of confusion through strife and war, rebellion and threatened anarchy. Through long years of deep scheming and subtlety the wicked Absalom had divided the sentiments of the people and had alienated their hearts from King David his father, and now had headed an open revolt which rent the realm from Dan to Beersheba. In fear of the consequences King David had left Jerusalem and had fled to the region beyond Jordan, accompanied by a few loyal, faithful subjects. When the battle took place between the opposing forces, the king's army was victorious. The rebellion was subdued; and Absalom the would-be usurper met a violent death.

King David, however, did not thereupon attempt to repossess himself of the kingdom, which was rightfully his. On the contrary he waited for Israel to express a desire for his return. In consequence of their being left without an official head, conditions waxed worse and worse. The record says: "All the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel." (2 Samuel 19:9) Finally the people in general began to deliberate upon the state of affairs; and they recalled that David had delivered them out of the hands of their enemies. Then they saw their mistake in joining the rebellion, especially now that their leader Absalom was dead; and they began to clamor for King David's return.

But the elders, the very ones who should have been the first to welcome the king back to Jerusalem and to see that order was restored, delayed to perform their solemn duty in behalf of the people. The people approached the elders and said: "Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?" Furthermore, King David himself sent word to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, asking them to inquire of the elders of Israel as to why they were the last to welcome him back to Jerusalem.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CLERGY TODAY

The elders of Israel fitly correspond to that class which occupies the position of lords and reverends before the peoples of Christendom at this time; namely, the Catholic and the Protestant clergy. From the beginning it has been the natural order of things for mankind to look to their respected leaders for guidance. At the first advent of our Lord the question was asked on every hand, "Have the rulers [the Jewish priests, scribes and elders] believed on him?" Just so it is in the world today respecting the declaration of our Lord's second presence. Some indeed rejoice to know that the King is here, and that soon he will bring out of confusion order and everlasting blessing to all the families of the earth. The vast majority, however, have waited for some expression of approval of the message from their elders, the clergy. But as a class the clergy are the last to welcome back the King. Indeed, many of them are "willingly ignorant" of his presence.—2 Peter 3:5.

For the past forty years the great King of kings and Lord of lords has been sending to the peoples of earth the message of his second presence, through the antitypical Zadok (meaning righteous; i. e., members of the little flock) and their associates, who have had the light of present truth. Furthermore, it has been the duty of all such to administer a rebuke to the clergy class for their willing ignorance of the Lord's return. With all the advantages of education, time and money with which the great teachers of Christendom have been endowed, it might be reasonably expected that they would have been the very first to discern from the Lord's Word the time and the manner of his second advent. They have been relieved of the worry and the hardships of ordinary business life in order that they might have abundant time and opportunity to study the Bible and to give forth its comforting and timely messages to their flocks, who pay them liberally for such service. They have taken the money; but many of them have indeed utterly neglected to fulfil their part of the contract. They have ceased to study the Word of the Lord, except to criticize and destroy it. Meanwhile the people have been fed upon husks instead of the bread of life, the only satisfying portion.

Now, after nineteen centuries of waiting, our Lord Jesus, the rightful King of earth, has come to establish his long-promised kingdom. But the multitudes of Christendom, led and dominated by their false spiritual guides, neither recognize the right of Jesus to the throne of earth nor desire the establishment of his kingdom. Doubtless many would prefer that the King of kings might not reign, lest they might be torn from their pedestal of honor and disadvantaged in the eyes of the people through the vengeance of the New Ruler, occasioned by their part in the rebellion against him.

CHURCH AND STATE

In times past the civil and the religious powers of the world have been yoked together for mutual support, and have defended each other. As far as the state was concerned, it mattered not whether the religion was a true or a false one, as long as it kept the people in subjection to the ruling powers. Civil rulers have ever favored the religious system that has best served this end. Ecclesiastical rulers have in turn looked to the civil powers for compensating favors; and in the days of their power they have exacted much. Thus the two were in affiliation.

Around these two there has always been gathered a privileged aristocracy of wealth, brains and education, which has ever kept them at the head of social influence and power. The tendency has been toward corruption, in both civil and ecclesiastical circles, not because the people themselves have necessarily grown worse—though this is indeed true in many instances—but because enlightenment has become more general, and with it temptations to cupidity have greatly increased. Thus social order has been menaced; while true religion based upon the atoning work of Christ has descended to a low ebb. Hence many in Christendom today find the words of the prophet expressing their disconsolate sentiments precisely: "We hoped for peace, but no happiness is here; for a time of cure, and behold here is terror. When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint in me. . . . Is the Lord not in Zion [Christendom]? Is her King no more in her?"—Jeremiah 8:18,19.

From the standpoint of Christendom there is indeed little to be seen in the way of encouragement. The clash of conflicting creeds and their discord with the notes of the Divine Revelation are most painfully manifest. In consequence of this and of the general awakening and the mental activity of our day, which discredits the creeds, we find faithlessness bold and outspoken, rampant in every denomination; while, ignoring the Bible doctrine and its terms of salvation for the church now and for the world during the "times of restitution," the clergy instead preach politics, morality and humanitarianism as the only essentials of the Christian life.

THE WORD OF GOD PROFANED

The Bible account of the fall of the race in Adam, and hence of the necessity of its redemption through Christ, having been thus discredited, the entirely antagonistic theory of human evolution has been substituted—that man was evolved from lower animal forms of life, by his own efforts aided by chance and circumstance; that he has now reached a higher plane than was ever before realized; and that he will continue to make progress indefinitely. The clergy have instituted what they are pleased to term a "higher criticism" of the Word of God, by which the sacred record has been whittled and trimmed to fit the modern state of development of human philosophies and sciences (often falsely so-called) thereby to lend seeming sanction to the idea that the philosophy and the science of today are the climax of perfection and the essence of wisdom. They slash the ruthless scissors of criticism

into the miracles of Jesus and the inspired writings of the apostles, and whittle out of divine testimony such words and thoughts as best serve their scientific conceptions of truth and of Christianity. They have placed the Bible and its holy writers down on a par with all profane history and historians, declaring that much of the Word of the Lord is fiction, and that it is impossible for any other than "higher critics" to determine where the dividing line between truth and fiction lies.

But soon the tide will turn; and the people will see that they have been deceived concerning the truths of God's plan by those whom they have looked to as leaders in religious thought. Then they will turn in disdain to all who have been "willingly ignorant" of the Lord's presence—the clergy—those who have not wanted the Lord to reign; and they will inquire and will demand an answer to the question, "Why are ye the last to welcome back the King?"

THE RETURN OF THE KING

The very nature of the present distressing world conditions, as well as the sure word of prophecy bearing thereon, convinces us that lasting relief to suffering humanity will come neither through human uplift nor through socialism nor through governmental regulation nor through any league of nations, however, desirable such an arrangement might be, but only through the power of the Christ, Jesus and his church, bringing order out of chaos by the establishment of the universal kingdom of peace and righteousness, now even at the door. We wait not for the new King as the sweet babe of Bethlehem; nor yet as "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all"; but we wait for him who, having been "put to death in flesh, was quickened [made alive] in spirit"—raised from death a spirit being, whom Jehovah hath highly exalted above his former condition as a man, yea, higher even than was his spirit condition before he became a man. "Him hath God highly exalted" to the divine nature, far above human nature or angelic nature or any other nature than that of God himself. Such are the nature and the majesty of earth's new King, for whom the whole groaning creation longs and waits, whose presence and kingdom will bring to mankind the blessings of life purchased with his own precious blood, given when he was a man.

The same King whom Herod and his soldiers crowned with thorns and mocked with royal robes, the same King whom Pilate crucified between two thieves at the instigation of the Pharisees and the elders of Israel, and over whose dying body was placed the inscription, "Jesus, the King of the Jews"—this same king we now look for, but no longer in a body of flesh and humiliation; for that body was prepared for our sin-offering, and was laid down in death for man's redemption. He comes now "in power and great glory," the express image of the Father's person, and in the glory and the majesty of the Father's person, and in the glory and the majesty of Jehovah, "whom no man hath seen nor can see" (1 Timothy 6:16), the same whom Saul of Tarsus saw miraculously, but whom his companions saw not. Earth's new King is that same wise, sympathizing, loving Savior who wept and died, but who now is greatly changed in nature and glorified by divine power; a new organism, but the same being; not flesh, but spirit; not weak, but powerful; not corruptible, but incorruptible; not human in any sense, but the divine Lord, to whom has been given "all power in heaven and in earth."—1 Corinthians 15:20,42-44,50; Philippians 3:10.

As men come to realize, through troublous experiences now upon the earth, the futility of lasting happiness amidst human selfishness and depravity, the number of those who will long to welcome back the King will increase. They will come to appreciate that the eradication of selfishness from the earth is a work for the great heavenly Physician, far beyond the power of imperfect mortal man.

THE TIME OF TROUBLE

And now, particularly since the end of Gentile times, the "Good Physician" has begun to lay bare, cut and scrape the evils of a selfish society, exposing depths of corruption never before realized by the patient. As he continues to cauterize proud flesh, we realize that he purposes to spare no pains to make his work effective. The patient will again suffer and groan, and for a time he may prefer the disease to the cure. But the exposure and the eradication of human selfishness must progress; for our Lord is a good physician. Eventually the balms and ointments of love and righteousness will be applied. Even these may smart for a time; but soon they will begin to strengthen and heal, and the poor sin-sick world will be restored to health and everlasting happiness.

But while some would rejoice to see enemies bound and society relieved of many of its selfish, life-sapping ulcers, nevertheless they seem to realize that so just and impartial a Judge might also cut off some of their own long-cherished ambitions, and might pain them by touching their personal selfishnesses and their lust for power and for reverence. And they are right. This new King is bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, and will correct private as well as public selfishness and sin. He will lay justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail of hard truths shall sweep away the refuge of pharisaical lies, while the waters of truth shall overflow the hiding places of error. (Isaiah 28:17) Who would not say that this very work of overflowing the hiding places of Babylon by the waters of truth has been in progress for some time? And may not we expect the Lord to permit his people to continue their efforts in this respect until Babylon's utter downfall is accomplished? Surely, dear Brethren, great privileges of service are just ahead.

The message to the clergy of Christendom at the close of the Gospel harvest, even as that which Jesus administered to the rabbinical class at the end of his earthly ministry, is one of scathing rebuke for their unfaithfulness. A prominent characteristic of the clergy is their desire for special honors and titles. They are known as Reverend, Right Reverend, Very Reverend, Divine, D.D., etc., etc. But Jesus said: "Be not ye called Rabbi, neither be ye called Master; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."—Matthew 23:8.

PERSECUTORS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

When the various denominations began their existence, having more of the spirit of Christ than they now have, they recognized no distinction between clergy and laity, even as the Bible knows no distinction. All were brethren in Christ Jesus. Even in the days of the Reformation the faithful ones whom God used as his special servants were not known as Reverend, D.D., etc., etc., but merely called themselves Peter Waldo, John Wycliffe, John Knox, Martin Luther, etc. Unpretentious, like Jesus and the apostles, they were intent upon serving God, and therefore became the servants (ministers) of the church. But now the clergy of all Protestantism, as well as of Papacy, are far from being servants. They are lords. They have itching ears, loving the approval of men. As pride and worldliness have come in, godliness and power have gradually departed. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace [favor] to the humble [-minded]." (I Peter 5:5) For this reason they have lost their power to expound the divine Word; and today we find them forced to confess their ignorance of the plan of God. They appeal back to the early reformers for their information and confirmation, and thus confess that they have less light than had their predecessors. They do not teach the truth themselves; nor will they permit it to be taught by others, if they can prevent it.

Throughout the age the Lord's consecrated people have been more mercilessly persecuted by the clergy class than by any other body on earth. It is even so today. The Second Psalm shows that they would "take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed [the Christ body]." This has especially been true since the beginning of the "rage" of the nations, at the end of Gentile times. Because of this unjust and wicked course of the rulers of ecclesiasticism, the Lord said that he would "have them in derision" and would "vex them in his sore displeasure." (Psalm 2:2-5) True to his promise the Lord has sent the message whereby they would be held in derision. The prophecy of Ezekiel and the symbols of the Revelation are filled with this very message from the Lord. It is likened to "hail" (hard, distressing truths) as it has fallen upon the clerical heads of Christendom. (Revelation 16:17-21) This work will undoubtedly continue, in the Lord's providence, until Babylon's utter downfall is accomplished. It is his program for this day.

No wonder the "elders" of ecclesiasticism, the clergy, have been the last to welcome back the King! Nevertheless both the King and his kingdom are coming. In fact, they are already here! The present troubles in church and in state are the results of the influence of the long-promised kingdom of Christ, now in process of establishment. Worldly men know not of this; for this kingdom "cometh not with outward show" or display. But the Lord's children have been forewarned, and have known what to look for. They have known that "the day of the Lord would so come as a thief in the night."—Thessalonians 5:2.

THE WORLD'S ONLY HOPE

Those who know that the Christ and his kingdom constitute the only lasting remedy for the wrongs and the woes of men should be pointing the groaning creation to this fact rather than to the poultices of human contrivance, which can do no real good. Tell them about the return of the King. Tell them that he is the great Prophet, Priest and King whom the world needs; that as Prophet he, together with the church his body, will cause an accurate knowledge of the truth to

fill the whole earth; that as Priest he will be ready to succor and pardon all who, under that knowledge, shall turn from sin to righteousness. Tell them that his death was the redemption price for all mankind; and that the return of the King is to bind Satan completely and to set all of his captives free, if they will accept the liberty of sons of God under the terms of the New Covenant. God pity those who are the last to welcome back the King!

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings;
Speak of the time of rest that nears;
He who was slain on Calvary's mountain
Soon is to reign a thousand years."

GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE

Almighty God, the Lord of heaven and earth,
O thou, the Source and Center of each sphere,
The Lord of being, throned afar, whose hand
Upholds the weight of words, yet, wondrous thought!—
Nor day nor night too occupied to note
E'en when a sparrow falls to earth, whose eyes
A watch-care keep o'er every child of thine;

Whose guardian angels daily shape the course
Of those who love thee more than life itself;
Whose chastening rod doth guide them in the way
That leads to endless life!—how sweet to feel
Thy presence ever near, to know that thou
Dost never sleep nor slumber while thy child
In time of need doth feebly cry to thee.

O thou in whom no shade of turning lies,
Thou changeless and unvariable One!
Though all unfaithful prove, yea, though the earth
And heavens depart, by faith we clasp thy hand,
We calmly rest our weary hearts on thee,
Assured that thou wilt ne'er forsake, that we
Shall be forever precious in thy sight!

LOVE'S VICTORY OVER FEAR

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear."—1 John 4:18.

Our text seems to tell that love and fear are opposites, that to whatever extent the one prevails the other is impossible. We cannot imagine that among the angels there is any fear of the Almighty or of one another. They are perfect. Their relationship with God is perfect. According to the divine arrangement and regulation, where there is perfect love there is no fear in the sense in which this word is used in our text.

When sin and the divine sentence of death entered the world, this matter was well understood. The penalty may have caused fear, but not of an abnormal kind; for God's penalty is just and reasonable, and even the pronouncement of that penalty was accompanied with a hint of ultimate deliverance. We find, however, that the great adversary of God and man has largely taken advantage of mankind and has planted in the human mind an erroneous fear, especially as respects the Almighty God. The Scriptures speak of this fear and say: "Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men." (Isaiah 29:13) These precepts of men which misrepresent the divine character, attitude of mind and purpose have been largely the result of false teachings which, the Bible declares, have come from the adversary himself. The Apostle Paul says: "Many shall depart from the faith [the true faith], giving heed to seducing spirits [evil spirits] and doctrines of devils." (1 Timothy 4:1) These doctrines have come down to us in the creeds formulated during the dark ages; and because of their influence the whole world is more or less in fear.

THE FEAR THAT BRINGS WISDOM

This same abnormal fear of our Creator is manifested among the heathen, where it has been engendered by the same evil spirits. The heathen have more or less dread of the future and of whatever they think has power over them. Many of the heathen seem to realize that the demons have great power; for they offer sacrifices to propitiate these evil beings. St. Paul intimates that this was the case in his time, saying that the heathen sacrificed to devils and not to God. (1 Corinthians 10:20) Thus by means of deluding the minds of men, the adversary has brought the whole world to the place where fear is the controlling power. Indeed, in some parts it has been true in the past; in others it is true to a considerable extent now; and in the near future it may be true that the civil power will hold that any religion which does not teach something of future torment will be an unsafe religion for the people to have.

There is a totally different kind of fear, however, which is eminently proper and Scriptural. As we come into the family of God, and grow in grace and in knowledge, we begin to get the right focus upon the heavenly Father's character and plan. From the Scriptures we learn that "the fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom." (Psalm 111:10; Job. 28:28) We do not understand this to mean the unreasonable fear, the slavish fear, which brings torment, but rather that fear which is properly of the Lord and which is enjoined in his Word. That proper fear, or reverence, teaches us true wisdom. Then we begin to get things right before our minds, to see what God really has said and what he has not said; and as we come to learn of the justice of God, the mercy of God, the love of God, the provision which he has made for man's salvation, a deeper and deeper love for him comes into our hearts.

In proportion as love comes in, it casts out this wrong kind of fear. Then by the time any one has reached the condition of perfect love for God, complete love, he will possess a complete and perfect understanding or appreciation of our heavenly Father's true character, and will have no trace of that abnormal or slavish fear which characterizes the world in its fallen condition. Therefore whatever degree of this wrong kind of fear remains in a child of God, it is a sign that love has not yet finished its work.

WHOLESOME KINDS OF FEAR

In one place the Apostle Paul speaks of fightings without and fears within. (2 Corinthians 7:5) What did he mean? What did he fear? We are not to understand that the great Apostle was having fisticuffs with anybody, nor that he was fighting in any earthly army. No; he was fighting as "a good soldier of Jesus Christ," contending not with carnal weapons, but with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." He was contending with those who opposed themselves to the truth and to the cause of God. He found plenty to oppose him in an outward way; and even in his mind he had more or less to contend with in the way of fears.

St. Paul does not specify what kind these fears were. They might have been fears to meet his opponents, fears that he might not be faithful or fears that he was not approved of God. As he does not state the nature of his fears, we are left at liberty to conjecture. He may indeed have had all these three kinds of fears. He was not perfect in the flesh, so that he might be without more or less timidity in the presence of the adversary, even though he displayed great courage on numerous occasions. His fears as to his own success and as to whether he might not fail to win the prize may have been with him, as he suggested to us when he wrote: "Let us fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." (Hebrews 4:1) Here he refers to a fear or careful watchfulness in respect to a failure to attain the things promised.

This kind of fear is different from that which would be natural to us as human beings. It is a proper fear of not coming up to our glorious privileges. But surely the Apostle's fear was not a dread of a vengeful, unloving God, a kind of fear which would manifest a lack of loving trust and confidence in the Heavenly Father; for St. Paul's faith in God was strong and unwavering.

LOVE TRIUMPHANT OVER FEAR

Our Lord Jesus had an experience with fear. The Apostle says that when on earth the Master "offered up strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him out of death, and was heard in that [matter] which he feared." (Hebrews 5:7) We believe this is a reference to our Lord's experience in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the night in which he was betrayed. Apparently he feared that he might not have come up to the full requirements of his consecration vow, that he might have come short to some extent of the Father's will concerning him. He waited for some assurance of divine approval; and when he received it, his heart was made glad.

This latter text is in harmony with the one just preceding; for the two refer to a similar kind of fear—that of offending God or not doing our best. But with the true Christian there must be a conquest of love over fear. In the case of our dear Master we see that his perfect love for the Father and his unwavering confidence in God resulted in his receiving the Father's blessing and smile, and in being delivered from the fear that he was not wholly acceptable.

This fear on our Lord's part was not sinful. It was a fear such as we also who are striving to walk in his footsteps are told to have, lest we fail to realize the precious promises vouchsafed to us upon conditions which are positive and unalterable. It was a fear, not begotten of doubt of the Father's ability and willingness to fulfil all his promises, but of a knowledge of the righteous principles which must in every case govern the Father's course of action, a knowledge of the inflexible law which righteously affixed the reward of eternal life and glory to our Lord's fulfilling his covenant of sacrifice. At the same time the Master began to realize that of himself as a human being, though perfect, his heart and his flesh would fail unless reinforced by grace divine. The Psalmist expressed this fear of Jehovah, and the source from which his help came, when he said: "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." —Psalm 73:26.

Previous to his being made flesh, the evidences of our Lord's loyalty to the will of God were his acts of delightful service in co-operation with the Father in the works of creation and in all things appertaining thereto. The humbling to human conditions was gladly and cheerfully undertaken. Then followed the trials of his earthly life; and finally the severe test of Gethsemane and Calvary. Here was a test of his fidelity to God which would cost him all that he had. Beyond this he could hope for nothing, except through the mercy and the love of God, to whose care he commended his spirit. (Luke 23:46) It was indeed a crucial test; and although at the time he evidently could not see the necessity for every feature of this experience, he nevertheless knew that the love of God was too great to permit a needless pain to be inflicted upon his beloved Son; and therefore he could trust the Father even where he could not at the time trace the inscrutable ways of the divine providence.

A SERIOUS LOSS TO THE SAINTLY

While it is true that "perfect love casteth out fear," it is also true that perfect love is a very scarce commodity on earth, even among the Lord's people. The fear which we are to lose entirely is "the fear of man, which bringeth a snare." Whoever loses the fear of God and the fear of failing to attain to the great prize which God has held out before us, is in a very dangerous position. He is likely to become self-conscious and self-satisfied, and readily drops into the condition where he does not believe even in the just sentence against sinners—the second death; and where he is proportionately careless respecting the keeping of his own words and thoughts and deeds in strictest alignment with the principles laid down in the Word of the Lord. Having lost his fear of God, he rapidly loses carefulness in respect to the Scriptures, and inclines to lean more and more to his own understanding, becoming blinded to his own faults and weakness.

There are many Scriptural injunctions as to a proper kind of fear. Through the prophet God says that those who fear his name are the ones who speak often together, and of whom a book of remembrance is made. Again, he promises: "To you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his beams." (Malachi 3:16; 4:2) The lesson of these various references to fear is that to lose the fear of God, in the sense of losing fear of his displeasure or fear of coming short of the grand possibilities which he has so graciously put within our reach, would be a most serious loss; for it would probably cost us our eternal existence. Those who have lost this fear are like steam engines which have lost their governors, and are apt to run with too much liberty to unfitness for service and to self-destruction. Hence, as the Apostle again says to the pilgrims who are seeking a heavenly country, "if ye call on him as Father, . . . pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Peter 1:17), not in levity, nor in worldly frivolities, nor in sensualities, nor in land and money grabbing, nor even in carelessness and slothfulness, but in earnest watchfulness of every word and act, to please the Lord, to copy his character, and thus to make sure your calling and election to a place in his kingdom, when it shall be established in power and great glory.—2 Peter 1:4-11.

TRUE LIBERTY IN CHRIST

Fear, ignorance and superstition must vanish before the light of truth. What a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions are still under the galling yoke of fear, the "fear of man which bringeth a snare." Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation; for their oppressors hypocritically claim divine appointment. Moreover, mankind in general have been made to fear God as a vengeful tyrant, who would consign the vast majority of his creatures to eternal torment. Thank God, we who have received the truth have escaped that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan is broken!

We are also made free from the fear which we see coming upon the whole world, as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long prevailed are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of the near future; and their alarm will increase as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more visible. Yet in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God that during the next decade the world will pass through "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation," the true disciples of Christ are not afraid. On the contrary they rejoice; for they know that God's object in permitting the storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world; and that after the storm there shall come, by divine providence, an abiding peace. Instructed in the truth of God's Word, they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the divine power that can make even the wrath of man praise him.

Few are the clear, strong spirits who can bear
To look on Truth in her unclouded blaze;
Few are the high heroic souls, who dare,
Above the low pursuit of gain, to raise
Their firm, unbending purpose. Few can gaze

At Virtue on her pure and awful throne.
Ah! few can love the ethereal coin she pays.
But they must love it; for the souls alone
Who master self can claim her birthright as their own,
And her untarnished crown of glory wear.

GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

[This article with the exception of the paragraphs below, was a reprint of article entitled, "Training for Membership in the Kingdom," published in issue of April 15, 1913, which please see.]

APRIL 6.—MATTHEW 6:24-34.

WORTHY AND UNWORTHY AMBITION—HEAVENLY TREASURES PREFERABLE TO EARTHLY ONES—THE VALUE OF HAVING A TRUE VIEW OF MATTERS—BLESSINGS FOR THOSE WHO FAITHFULLY SERVE THE LORD—OUR HEAVENLY FATHER'S ABILITY TO CARE FOR US ILLUSTRATED IN NATURE—PROPER CONCERN NOT WORRY—THE CHIEF CONCERN OF ALL TRUE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST.

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."—Matthew 6:9.

The Great Teacher taught no extravagance. Energetic himself in the Father's business, he instructed his followers to be "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Nevertheless his teaching in today's lesson is to the effect that our energies are not to take the selfish form of laying up earthly treasures, but that we are to lay up heavenly treasures instead. Notwithstanding his reference to moth, rust and thieves despoiling earthly treasures, we understand the Master's teaching as rather on a higher plane, although the principle is a broad one. All will admit that it would be folly to lay up clothing or food far in advance of need, except under very peculiar circumstances. But gold might be treasured, or money in the bank, or bonds or stocks, or farm added to farm and house to house; and the same principle would be involved.

Although no moth could touch the bank account, nor rust injure the gold, nor thieves steal the title to the property, yet the principle is the same. Treasures of every kind may lose their value—do lose their value to us when we die, if not before. Death, corruption, touches everything earthly under present conditions, no matter how careful or thoughtful the provis-

ion. "Naked came we into the world, and naked must we leave it." (Job 1:21) Intelligent people are generally agreed that God has provided a future life beyond the tomb, attainable in the resurrection morn. And the Scriptures teach that the degree of our blessing then will stand related to our use of the present life. It is this point that the Great Teacher emphasized in the study of today. All intelligent minds assent to the reasonableness of this teaching.

Let us not take the extreme view entertained by some. Let us not suppose that the Master taught that people might not make reasonable provision for their own comfort, and so arrange matters that they might not be dependent upon charity in their old age. Let us not suppose that he meant that parents should be neglectful of their duties toward dependent members of their own families. The Bible distinctly teaches that "he who provides not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, hath denied the faith and is worst than an infidel." (1 Timothy 5:8) The proper thought, then, is that it is right to economize and, as St. Paul expresses it, "to lay by in store" for our own future needs or in order that we may have wherewith to lend to others in need. God's people are to be frugal, to avoid debts, to be "forehanded," to be with some reserve of capital.

KEEN SPIRITUAL VISION INVALUABLE

Moreover, earthly things are not to be the treasures of their souls, but merely their servants, conveniences, always ready for use, for every emergency, freely, whole-heartedly. He who follows this course will rarely have large earthly wealth. Only by making wealth a treasure and setting inordinate desire upon it can one become miserly or very rich. Setting the affections on things above would signify so loose a handling of worldly riches as would hinder the accumulation or preservation of great wealth.

The Master's word is that whoever sets his affections upon earthly treasures will become sordid, selfish, earthly; but whoever sets his affections upon the things above will correspondingly become heavenly, spiritual, blest, generous. We have two eyes; and if they be not properly adjusted with relationship to each other our vision of things will be distorted. Hence we seek to correct such a difficulty in order that we may get the true view of matters. So it is with the eyes of our understanding. They have both a present and a future outlook, an earthly and a heavenly view. It is important that we get these rightly adjusted, in order that we may see matters in their true light, in order that we may see the great value of the future life in comparison with the present one, and be correspondingly guided to the setting of our heart affections there and, in general, balancing all the interests of life wisely.

As in the natural body the eyes may become darkened or blinded, so it is with our eyes of understanding. And if this blindness come upon us after we have once seen and enjoyed the divine promises, our case would be all the more pitiable. How great that darkness would be!

There is still another lesson for us along the same line. A man may endeavor to serve two or more masters, but no one can be a satisfactory servant to more than one master at a time. No two interests are so completely one that the service of either would not more or less detract from the service of the other. One of the two masters to whom our Lord refers is the heavenly Father; the other is mammon, selfishness and sin, together with all that is connected with unrighteousness, everything contrary to God and his righteousness.

As a matter of fact we were born in slavery to sin. The Scriptures inform us that we were sold into this slavery through the disobedience of our first parents. Therefore sin has a hold upon the entire world of mankind. They are a race of slaves. It is impossible for them to deliver themselves from the thraldom of this slavery; for it is everywhere, the world around. Some are loyal to the interests of evil; but the great majority of mankind are at heart disloyal to mammon, realizing that in serving self they are opposing God. But at the same time those who serve mammon, selfishness, get the best in the political sphere, the best in the ecclesiastical sphere, the best in the social sphere and the best in the financial sphere. At the present time selfishness succeeds. All human arrangements are along the line of selfishness. Whoever, then, works along the line of self serves himself better than if he were not selfish. Otherwise he would have his fellow creatures in opposition to him, misunderstanding him, etc.

LESSONS FROM ALL OF LIFE'S EXPERIENCES

But our Lord inaugurated a new order of things. He declared that God is ready to receive unto himself all who forsake sin and believe on his Son; and that as many as will accept his gracious arrangements for salvation will be set free. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." While the service of mammon might bless us during the present life, yet it would be injurious to our future interests. But the service of God would prepare us for future influence. And although obedience to God may cost us the loss of the pleasures of sin and of some legitimate blessing in the present time, nevertheless there is a blessing even now to those who are faithful servants of God and righteousness. Moreover, there is the glorious prospect of the future. It is necessary, however, for us to choose between the two masters; for we cannot serve both. As Joshua did, so let us determine: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord."

CHRIST OUR SAVIOR

[The first eleven paragraphs of this article were reprinted from an article entitled, "Following the Lamb Whithersoever He Goeth," published in issue of January 1, 1899. The remainder was reprinted from article entitled, "We Have Found Him, Eureka," published in issue of February 1, 1900. Please see the articles named.]

IN THE FURNACE

He that from dross would win the precious ore
  Bends o'er the crucible an earnest eye,
The subtle, searching process to explore
  Lest the one brilliant moment should pass by
When, in the molten silver's virgin mass,
He meets his pictured face as in a glass.

Thus in God's furnace are his children tried.
  Thrice happy they who to the end endure!
But who the fiery trial may abide?
  Who from the crucible come forth so pure
That he whose eyes of flame look through the whole
May see his image perfect in the soul?

Not with an evanescent glimpse alone,
  As in a mirror, the refiner's face,
But stamped with heaven's broad signet, there be shown
  Immanuel's features, full of love and grace;
And round that seal of love this motto be:
"Not for a moment, but eternity!"

LETTERS FROM AFIELD

THE HUM OF ACTIVITY HAS NEVER CEASED

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—

Greetings of love in our Lord. The December 1st issue of THE WATCH TOWER has just come to hand; and my heart goes out to you as I read of your hopes of present and future service for our King. I believe your clarion call will find response in the hearty co-operation of the brethren. Surely all will leap to lay hold on these grand opportunities, carrying such weight of privilege now and of glory to follow.

We in this country have not been restricted so much as you have of late; and our thoughts have risen in prayer that you might stand in the peculiar and fiery trials, including a measure of inactivity, which the Lord saw good to permit. We frequently wish that we might know more of your state and of the detail of the experiences through which you have passed, so that we might the more fully sympathize and understand. We shall be glad when the vail which covers these things from our sight can be lifted. I have found myself longing to bear some of your burdens; and I now assure you of my love and of my desire that you may have wisdom from above to organize the harvest work yet remaining, and the while to continue to supply that meat in due season for which the brethren look to the Lord through you.

In the London Tabernacle the hum of a busy ministry has never ceased. Indeed, so far as public lectures, etc., are concerned, I think we have never been so busy. The Lord has

graciously given us many opportunities of service. In every avenue great activity has prevailed; and although the war has inevitably restricted in some directions, it has served to stimulate interest greatly; and we are glad to be here still and to find so much to do. By the Lord's grace and help we will go on. When he takes us home, we shall be glad to leave this human state with its many weaknesses for that full companionship with our dear Lord Jesus and those with him; and our works will follow after, accompanied by conditions of power and perfection, for which we earnestly strive. May our Father's favor be your portion now and forever.

Your brother in Christ. H. C. THACKWAY.—*England.*

EXCELLENT RESULTS FROM PASTORAL WORK

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—

Loving greetings in his name. In the Dec. 1 WATCH TOWER it is stated that some booklet-tracts are being prepared; and as we noted the titles of these we were glad, because we had just been expressing a desire that such tracts would be issued. The sorrows caused by death, maiming, etc., in the war are tremendous in this country; and the sisters in the pastoral work have found that a little booklet would be read in many cases where the larger book, "The Divine Plan of the Ages," is refused. The pressure on life is so very great at present that most we meet with find that they have no time for reading a book; but many who have desires for God think that they could read a pamphlet. So the pastoral workers in Glasgow will be very gratified if you will kindly send some of those new booklets. I enclose £2 to cover cost of transit and also to help pay for the booklets.

You will be glad to know that the pastoral work is still going on in Glasgow; and the Lord continues to bless it. We trace 201 as now attending the central meetings through the work started on two years ago. With love in the Lord and best wishes for 1919. May all your labors be blest and guided of him!

Yours in his service. MINNA EDGAR.—*Scotland.*

FOR BRETHREN IN THE ARMY

DEAR BRETHREN:—

I write you a few lines, as it might be of interest to you to know where the young brethren are who are in the military service of the U. S. A. I am from the Chicago Ecclesia, and was drafted into service last May, sent to one of our training camps, and was placed in the medical department of the 106 Engineers. At one time there were four of us brethren there from different towns, but I am the only one who passed for overseas duty, the rest having been discharged because of physical disability.

In September we left Georgia for Long Island, where we stayed for a time, and then were shipped to "somewhere in France," not knowing just where. But I knew that I was safe in the Lord. After a thirteen-day voyage, we landed at Glasgow, and from there went to Winchester, where we remained several days. We left England from Southampton, about sixty miles from London. I wished that I could have had the opportunity to visit the friends there. We traveled through many French towns, but remained no length of time at any of them, until we arrived at Brest. Our engineers were stationed there, to build a receiving camp, which is now one of the largest in France. We have not seen any actual fighting at the front, however, although the work of the engineers has done a great deal for the men. We surely are in the days of the falling of the kingdoms. It does not need much faith on the people's part, as they can see the fulfillment of prophecy with their literal eyes.

I do not know of any other brethren here, except Brother Stanley Olson, whom I have located through the mail. I wish I knew of others also. Our desire now is to go home to our beloved ones there. The Lord willing, I may be homeward bound in a couple of months. I ask an interest in your prayers that we boys may remain faithful and strong in the Lord. With Christian love,

Your brother in Christ, FRANK GANS.
Medical Dept. 106 Engineers,
A. P. O. 716, Base 5, Brest, *France.*

LOYAL CO-OPERATION PLEDGED

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Greetings in the name of our dear Lord and Master, from the Petersburg Ecclesia, by whom I am instructed to send you the following message:

At the beginning of the new year, which we trust will be full of opportunities for service to the truth and to the brethren, we desire to express to each individual member of the old Board of Directors our love and appreciation of the work they have performed, and to pledge to the new Board our prayers for their successful guidance of the affairs of the Society, and to assure them of our fullest co-operation in every respect, believing that this will be one of the greatest years in the history of the world for the dissemination of the truth and for the furtherance of the establishment of the kingdom through the power and grace of our Lord and Savior.

Yours in his service. R. A. GAMBLE, Class Secretary.—*Va.*

GREAT JOY AT THE RESULT OF THE ELECTION

DEAR BRETHREN:—

After reading the report of the annual meeting of shareholders in the Jan. 15 WATCH TOWER, we wish to express to you our great joy at the result of the election. We thank the dear Lord for so clearly manifesting his will; and we hereby renew our pledge of hearty support and co-operation. We also wish to participate enthusiastically in supporting the resolution passed by the shareholders in re our brethren in prison.

We take this opportunity to tell you of our gratitude for the privilege of feasting upon the "meat in due season." Truly the Lord has prepared a table before us, upon which all our needs of spiritual food are supplied. We are ready, yes, anxious to co-operate with you in any and every way possible; and we continually pray the Lord's guidance and richest blessings upon you.

Yours in the glorious hope. J. J. PICKERING, Secy.—*Mass.*

GROWTH OF SPIRITISM TREMENDOUS

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—

Loving greetings in Christ our Lord unto you all from Camp ——. With sorrow we notice the tremendous growth of spiritism. Ouija boards are used freely as a pastime and innocent amusement. When we called attention to the seriousness of having any communication with the evil spirits, and explained that many who started with curiosity ended in the insane asylum as the result of these wicked spirits possessing their minds—their only aim and purpose in communicating with human beings—our warning was considered very lightly. Then we thought how handy it would be to have on hand some timely tracts on spiritism, and so to do our utmost to warn those in danger. With warmest Christian love to you all, and especially the dear brethren in charge of the Lord's work, I remain. Your brother in Christ. H. I., C. O.

VOL. XL PITTSBURGH, PA., MARCH 15, 1919 No. 6

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Bible students are aware that since the year 1799 we have been in "the time of the end." "The day of his preparation" is another name given to the same period, because in it a general increase of knowledge and numerous governmental and moral changes pave the way for the Messianic Kingdom, which is now being established upon the ruins of the existing order. The many lessons which the peoples of earth have been forced to learn during the period of the war have no doubt been real blessings in disguise. The lessons in economy have been especially beneficial. Jehovah is a great economist. Jesus taught his disciples the lesson of economy when he instructed them to gather up the fragments of the loaves and the fishes after having fed the multitude of five thousand. We think it reasonable that the recent necessary restrictions in luxuries, fuel, food, etc., have been overruled of the Lord, and are incidental lessons in this period of preparation for the kingdom of Christ on earth.

INVISIBLE FORCES AT WORK

Among the sudden and sweeping changes in this preparatory period in which we are living, none has been more remarkable than the recent prohibition legislation. When the eighteenth amendment to the United States Constitution, forbidding the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors within the United States and its territories, was proposed by Congress in the autumn of 1917, few indeed expected that it would be ratified by the required two-thirds of the states in so short a time as one year. In fact, the third section of this amendment provided that the States should have seven years in which to ratify it; and that should it not be ratified by the legislatures of the several States within that time, the article should be inoperative. The fact therefore that the amendment has been ratified by more than two-thirds of the States, within practically one year from the date of its submission to the legislatures by Congress, has been mystifying