out submitting same to the Board of Elders for their sanction.
Yours in the Master's service. E. A. McCOSH, Secy.

PRESERVING THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

DEAR BRETHREN:—

It is with pleasure that we write to inform you that we here are of one mind and still believe that the Lord is using the Society, guiding its affairs. The last Pilgrim's visit was much enjoyed, and his talk on Faith was strengthening indeed. We all wish to continue faithful, ready to do whatever the Lord privileges us to have part in. May God keep and comfort those who have charge of the Society's affairs now, and bless all his little ones everywhere!

Yours in the Master's service, LINTON ECCLESIA.—*Ind.*

VOL. XL PITTSBURGH, PA., APRIL 1, 1919 No. 7

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

ROLLING TOGETHER AS A SCROLL

The subject of church unity now takes a most prominent position in the pages of the public press. All eyes are turned toward the visit of the committee of Episcopal bishops to the pope of Rome in behalf of the proposed "League of Churches." Bishop Weller of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, Bishop Anderson of Chicago and Bishop Boyd Vincent of the diocese of Southern Ohio, sailed on the steamship Aquitania on March 6th for Rome, where they will interview the pope in an effort to gain his coöperation in the union of all Christian churches. The commission is an official body of the Protestant Episcopal Church, authorized by the general convention held in Cincinnati in 1910. As a result of that convention a committee was appointed and was preparing to sail for Rome in the autumn of 1914. The great war which broke out at that time, however, delayed the movement, which has now sprung up with increased vigor with the coming of peace.

That the pope is not averse to the idea is indicated by a dispatch from Rome under the date of March 6th and published in the *New York World* as follows:—

"It is learned from the Vatican that the Holy See is preparing an exhaustive memorandum, in which it explains its attitude toward the American projects for a pan-Christian conference and for a union of all Christian churches. The memorandum will fix those points upon which the Pontiff is prepared to support the American scheme."

Bishop Murray, of the diocese of Maryland (Episcopal) comments upon the project in *The Baltimore Sun* of March 5th as follows:

"We are trying to get a working agreement among the various churches to find a common ground of operation. We are not trying to emphasize the points in which the various Christian bodies differ, but to develop and make prominent those things on which we can all agree. All of the churches are parties to the negotiations and I feel that we have a right now to expect success."

The Most Reverend Patrick Joseph Hayes, Archbishop of New York, is reported as saying that the proposed league of churches is "a very encouraging thing, as a sign of the times at the close of the war, to have such a movement toward effecting unity of faith in one fold with one shepherd." He is quoted as saying further: "It is especially gratifying that this commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church is going to the Catholic Center of Christendom, where I am sure it will receive a welcome."

Bishop Weller, a member of the commission to the pope, in an interview with the newspapers in New York before he sailed, said:

"Our duty is simply to see that the general conference comes together and that the basis for action is established. Already in this country the Baptists, the Congregationalists, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Moravian Brethren, the Disciples of Christ, Methodist Episcopalians and other Protestant sects, the Old Catholics of Europe and the Non-conformists throughout Great Britain are definitely committed to the world conference plan. The sects have already appointed their commissions. These commissions are ready to attend a conference. Once we have secured the adhesion of the Catholic Church, there remains only the task of appointing a time and a place for the gathering."

Bishop Weller explained that the Roman Catholic Church and the Holy Eastern Church, alone among the Christian sects, had thus far failed to accept the invitation to a world conference, and that if the present mission could secure their coöperation then the last obstacle to a world conference would be removed. He said the commission intended to visit the patriarch of the Greek Church and also the head of the Russian Church in addition to their visit to the pope.

According to Dr. Charles D. Williams, Bishop of Michigan (Episcopal), the Presbyterian church—the denomination to which President Wilson belongs—is now really at the head of the present American plan for a league of Churches. In an article in the March issue of *Reconstruction* he said:

"The leadership in the movement towards organic unity has long been in the hands of the Protestant Episcopal church. Those of other communions who have been interested in that movement have long been sitting with amazing humility on the steps of the Episcopal House of Bishops, awaiting such crumbs of comfort and hope as might fall from the Masters' table.

"The Presbyterian General Assembly picked up the abandoned leadership. On their initiative the representatives of thirty-five million American Christians met recently at Philadelphia, appointed committees of preparation and summoned a great meeting in the near future, not later than 1920, to take action for such a practical organic unity of American Protestantism as shall be consistent with individual liberty."

WILLING TO SACRIFICE NAME AND CREED

That the Presbyterian Church in America is especially interested in the church unity project is corroborated by the following dispatch from the *Pittsburgh Post* of March 12th:

"The merger of the Presbyterian and United Presbyterian churches was put forward as the logical forerunner of a great religious unifying movement which should bring in all of the ten or twelve Presbyterian denominations and possibly some of those not Presbyterians, at last night's session of the prayer conference on union. Dr. Robert E. Speer of New York, member of the board of foreign missions of the Presbyterian Church, and spokesman for his church at the gathering, ventured the prediction that in any union with the United Presbyterian his church would be willing to sacrifice name, forms and prerogatives which need be sacrificed to further the union. A great gathering of Christian bodies under one head was the ideal that Dr. Speer set forth."

The foregoing is clearly in fulfillment of Bible prophecy as interpreted by Pastor Russell more than thirty years ago. Through THE WATCH TOWER, and particularly in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Volume IV, page 258, written 23 years ago, he said:

"The 'sure Word of prophecy' indicates very clearly that the various Protestant sects will form a coöperative union or federacy and that Catholicism and Protestantism will affiliate, neither losing its identity. These are the two ends of the ecclesiastical heavens which, as their confusion increases, shall roll together as a scroll for self protection—as distinct and separate rolls, yet in close proximity to each other. (Isaiah 34:4; Revelation 6:14) For this desired end Protestants show themselves ready to make almost any compromise, while Papacy has assumed a most conciliatory attitude. Every intelligent observer is aware of these facts; and every reader of history knows the baneful character of that great anti-christian system that now sees, in the great confusion of Protestantism, its opportunity for readvancing to power. And though realizing in itself a strength superior to that of divided Protestantism, the great Papal system also fears the approaching crisis, and hence desires most anxiously the union of Christendom, Papal and Protestant, civil and religious."

"IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS"

Bible Students are familiar with the account of King Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the great image whose head was of gold, arms and breast of silver, belly of brass and legs of iron, and the feet of which were iron smeared with clay. The Prophet Daniel gave an inspired interpretation thereof, indicating that the four metals composing the great giant typify four great world-empires, beginning with Babylonia, which was represented in the head of gold. (Daniel 2) History shows the fulfillment of the vision. There have been just four universal empires of earth, namely, Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. The feet smeared with clay (ecclesiasticism) resembled stone rather than iron. Thus the "Holy Roman Empire" was a counterfeit of "the stone cut out of the mountain without hands"—the true church.—Daniel 2:34, 45.

The ten toes of the image typified ten divisions of ancient Rome, which would be in existence in Europe when the Fifth Universal Empire would be established—the Messianic King-

dom. Having this in mind, one of our readers has called our attention to the list of delegates at the Paris Peace Conference, as published in the *Official U. S. Bulletin* of Feb. 8, 1919. Although there are thirty-two powers and dominions represented at the Peace Table (with from one to five delegates each, and the total delegation numbering exactly seventy), the brother who sends us the *Bulletin* thinks it sufficient that there are just ten European powers in attendance at the Conference, and that these ten are the only governments in Europe that have participated in the drafting of the League of Nations. With just ten European powers possessing charter membership in the coming League of Nations, the brother asks whether we may not expect soon to see a very literal fulfillment of Revelation 17:12, 13. The text reads: "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet [not yet crowned or approved by Papal Rome]; but receive powers as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind [leagued together under one head], and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." The ten European powers having accredited representatives at the Peace Table are: Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, Serbia, Greece, Roumania, Portugal, Poland and Czecho-Slovakia.

In this connection it may be interesting to note that Rome is already taking credit to itself for President Wilson's celebrated "14 points" and the League of Nations idea developing therefrom. The *Pittsburgh Post* of Feb. 25, 1919, quotes Father R. L. Hayes of Pittsburgh as follows: "President Wilson's 14 points, which were presented to the central powers as grounds on which a cessation of hostilities could be granted, were originally propounded by the pope. Point for point, the document on which peace was finally brought to the world follows the plea of our Holy Father offered two years ago. At that time it was not acceptable, but its principles lived to finally bring about peace."

FAMINES—PESTILENCES—EARTHQUAKES

When Jesus answered the question of his disciples: "What shall be the sign of thy presence and of the end of the age?" he declared among other things: "Nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places." (Matthew 24:7) This remarkable prophecy, as Bible students know, has been in fulfillment for the past several years. Since the end of Gentile times we have seen kingdom rise against kingdom, which was followed by famines and pestilences and earthquakes (revolutions) in rapid succession. Indeed, these various elements of the great "time of trouble" have intermingled so that the famines, pestilences and earthquakes now ravish the human family simultaneously. We quote a British dispatch of March 7th, published throughout the world, reading as follows:

"George H. Roberts, the food minister, said today that he could state on absolutely unimpeachable authority that the situation with regard to food conditions in great areas of Europe was nothing less than tragic.

"'It is not too much to say that Roumania is starving, that Serbia is starving, that Austria is starving and that Germany is starving,' he declared. 'Ever since the armistice was signed the Allies have been doing what they could to relieve the situation, and food is being sent to all the countries that I have named. But it is not enough, and the question now arises whether we shall be able to get sufficient food to those countries in time to prevent a catastrophe.'"

In addition to the famines the Lord mentioned that pestilences would be specially manifest in the earth at this time. It is even so. The influenza epidemic has swept the entire earth from the frigid zones to the equator, from the Esquimaux of the extreme north to the Hottentots of the torrid regions. In the short space of one year this pestilence alone has claimed twelve million lives, which is in excess of the combined casualties of the four and a half years of war.

In the prophecy above quoted the last mentioned item is "earthquakes in divers places." It is well known to students of prophecy that an earthquake is the Biblical symbol for revolution. Hence the Lord was indicating that the great war that was to precede the Messianic Kingdom would be immediately followed by revolutions in many places. There have been literal earthquakes of great violence in recent years, also. Doubtless others will follow.

The revolutionary period began in Russia in 1917, and has rapidly swept over Europe. We quote from the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* of February 26th, 1919, the following:

"Yesterday three men to whom the people of the United States are accustomed to pay heed were reported as saying without previous consultation, practically the same thing. The three men were President Wilson, Ex-President Taft, and the British Premier, Lloyd George. The statement on which they agree we may perhaps find best put in the arresting words of Ex-President Taft at Omaha:

> "'Today is more serious in Europe than the day upon which the German hordes came nearest to Paris. It is the crisis of the world. Should Europe go to pieces America would be involved in another world war without the least doubt.'

"There is no question whatever that the ever-seething volcano of social unrest in Europe approaches the eruption point. It may not burst forth. Lloyd George is pressing the British Parliament to 'railroad' an emergency measure for the purpose of averting 'civil strife' in the United Kingdom. This, remember, is in a victorious country which is to get and not to pay indemnities, which is not blockaded, which is well supplied with food and whose industries are being transferred to a peace basis as rapidly as possible. But in spite of all these advantages, the wrenching, wrecking, dislocating effects of four years of war, tearing apart the old relations between wages and prices, burying the old economic runways, tossing the old systems into chaos, have produced so serious a situation that even the British Premier must appeal to Parliament to take swift measures to prevent 'civil strife.'

"And he means just that. It is well known that if the miners strike, a total industrial tie-up will follow; and that the other trade unions, notably railway men, stand ready to prevent troop movements. The government will be pinioned, industry will be paralyzed and the chief victor of the war may stagger through universal distress into disaster."

In this connection we are reminded of the ominous words of President Wilson in his Boston address on his recent return from Europe:

"When I speak of the nations of the world I do not speak of the governments of the world. I speak of the peoples who constitute the nations of the world. They are in the saddle, and they are going to see to it that if their present governments do not do their will some other governments shall, and the secret is out and the present governments know it."

At this juncture we find the Roman pontiff coming forward and offering his service as arbitrator or advisor. An Associated Press Dispatch from Paris under date of March 11th reads as follows:

"It has become known that Pope Benedict has addressed an appeal to the powers emphasizing the urgency of the speedy conclusion of peace with Germany. It is understood that the Pontiff states that the Vatican possesses reliable information that the situation in Germany, socially and economically, is very grave, and that he fears the spread of Bolshevism with such rapidity that it might result in the establishment of a Bolshevik state, which, in turn, might become allied with Bolshevik Russia."

WONDERFUL WITNESS FOR THE TRUTH

Our readers are familiar with the teachings of the Scriptures which indicate that the Lord's people in the end of this age shall appear before kings and rulers and statesmen of earth in giving their final witness as ambassadors of the coming kingdom. (Revelation 10:11) We have often wondered what means the Lord may use in arousing the attention of the ruling class so that they would look into the teachings for which the saints are now obliged to suffer. It seems evident that at least one of the circumstances which the Lord uses in permitting his people to gain audience with those in authority, is the case of our leaders who are now suffering imprisonment for having taught the doctrines of Pastor Russell.

During the past few weeks a country-wide agitation has been started in behalf of these brethren, who were not only given a severe sentence because of their sincerity, but have even been denied bail, pending the appeal of their case. This has aroused the attention of newspaper editors, Congressmen, Senators and Governors, and many of them have signed petitions for the release of the Bible Students from prison. As a sample of numerous letters which Congressmen have written in response to letters received by them, we quote the following from Congressman M. Clyde Kelly of Pennsylvania, received here on March 1:

"In response to your letter of the 25th will say that I am interested in securing justice for the men in whom you are interested. I have gone into the case thoroughly with those who know the situation and am asking for a full report with view to action."

Also a letter from Congressman E. W. Saunders of Virginia has been received, reading as follows:

"I am in receipt of your letter relating to the case of the Bible Students now in confinement at Atlanta. I beg to say that I favor the pardon of these men, and will be very glad

to join in a recommendation to that effect. These people are not criminals in the ordinary sense of the word, though they may have been guilty of a technical violation of the law. But the war is over now, and we ought to try to put it beyond us as rapidly as possible."

We have received copy of letter from Mayor Henry W. Kiel of St. Louis, Mo., which he has voluntarily addressed to President Wilson, reading as follows:

"Allow me to add my individual request to those already forwarded to you asking that Messrs. Rutherford et al., of the International Bible Students Association be admitted to bail pending a final decision of their case in the higher courts, and if possible that pardon be granted in these cases."

Many letters of request for further information and expressing kindly interest in the case of our brethren have been received from Governors of the various states and other men in public life. Many Congressmen and other officials, state and national, have signed the petition calling for the release of our President J. F. Rutherford and his seven associates in bonds. Thus a wonderful witness for the truth is being given through the petition and publicity work. Public men, ordinarily difficult to reach, are showing much interest in having justice done to our brethren, and also are having their attention drawn to the truths for which the brethren stand.

LOYALTY TO THE BRETHREN

"We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16.

The Lord's will concerning all his followers is that they should love one another as he loved them. St. John expressed this sentiment, saying that as Jesus loved the church and laid down his life for the church, so also his followers should lay down their lives for the brethren. If this is the love standard that the Lord has set for his people, how sorely some will soon be disappointed in respect to his will if they have ignored this requirement! If, instead of loving the brethren and laying down their lives for them, they say all manner of evil against them, etc., what then? Then they are false brethren. They they are the peril of the true brethren.

Oh, how much the true followers of Jesus need to impress upon themselves this great lesson—that love does no ill to his neighbor, that love is sympathetic, suffereth long and is kind, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, seeketh not merely its own interest and welfare, but the interest and welfare of others!

The supreme test of our loyalty to God is our love for him; and this love is manifested by our desire to do those things acceptable to him. There is little that we really can do for the Almighty. He is so great and we are so small! But if we have his spirit of love, then we shall love all those who love him. And our conduct toward them will demonstrate the real sentiment of our hearts. Thus seen, we are daily making our record in the Lord's sight, daily showing him to what degree we are worthy or unworthy of his great reward.

"HE THAT RECEIVETH YOU RECEIVETH ME"

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."—John 13:20.

The strong emphasis which our Lord used in stating this vital principle, taken in connection with the time and the conditions, indicates its importance and the necessity of its full comprehension by those who would complete their course with joy. He had finished his public ministry, had foretold his passion and death, had celebrated the last feast of the Passover, had inaugurated the Memorial Supper, had washed the feet of the apostles, had proclaimed his true office as Master and Lord, had explained the symbolism of his having washed their feet, had informed them that the servant is not greater than his Lord and had announced that those who knew and did these things would have happiness as a reward. Then he added enigmatically, "I speak not of you all. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." Then immediately follows the statement of our text; and "when Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you that one of you shall betray me." Only one who had companied with the Lord and had been under the power of his spirit could become a "son of perdition."—John 17:6-8, 12.

Later in this same discourse our Lord told his followers that he was about to leave them; that though gone from them he would remain the Way, the Truth and the Life; that no man could come to the Father but by him; and that the holy Spirit would come in his name—his power, authority—and bring all his teachings to their remembrance.

FALSE TEACHERS AND TRUE PROPHETS

Thus the things of the "so great salvation which first began to be spoken by the Lord" were confirmed to his later followers by those who heard him, God also bearing witness with signs, miracles and gifts of the holy Spirit, according to his will. (Hebrews 2:3, 4) After our Lord has ascended far above all things, having led captivity—death—captive, he gave gifts to men. "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry [service], for the edifying [building up] of the body of Christ: till [until] we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Ephesians 4:11-14) Hence we know that under our Lord, first in the body are the apostles, foundation stones in the New Jerusalem; then second, prophets, the angels to the seven churches, whom he who walked in the midst of the seven candlesticks held in his own right hand (Revelation 1:13, 20; 2:1), sending each one in his due time with his appropriate message to the church which he especially serves.

Each one of the seven periods of the church had its special messenger and its special message, which it could get only through its messenger. (Revelation 2:1, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, 29; 3:1, 6, 7, 13, 14, 22) Following these angels, seven prophets, came numerous evangelists, pastors, teachers; but each church had only the light of its own angel, or prophet, and that of his predecessors, while the succeeding period of the church had to wait the installation of its angel by the Lord for its particular message. And as there were false teachers in fleshly Israel, making void the message of its prophets, so the Master warned of false teachers to follow him and his apostles and his prophets. The Apostle Paul, too, said that from among the disciples themselves, and chiefly from among the elders, would arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after themselves.—Acts 20:30; Jude 12, 13, 16-20.

Note how the Lord in our text coupled the acceptance of those whom he sent with the acceptance of himself and the Father. The converse must be equally true. The rejection of any whom he sent would be the rejection of him and the Father. In connection with their acceptance he says: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all. I know whom I have chosen [that will remain faithful, not loving their life to death]; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." And the one to whom he gave the "sop," and who accepted it, went out after Satan had entered into him and, as foreknown by our Lord, betrayed him. Nor did our Lord under the circumstances seek to hinder him.—John 13:27.

Consisting of bread and wine, the memorial pictures the life of our Lord given for the life of the world. In this sacrifice the consecrated ones have communion, common union, in presenting their bodies living sacrifices and thus becoming sharers in the Sin-offering. (Romans 12:1; 2 Corinthians 4:1-18, especially verse 11) From those who draw back come the Judases, the sons of perdition.

THE ANTITYPICAL "SON OF PERDITION"

To whom much is given, of him much is required. (Luke 12:47, 48; John 15:22) The early church had much given them, and much was required. (Revelations 2:5, 9) Yet from among them arose "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves" as ministers (servants of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:13, 14); those who turned aside from the end of the commandment, love, to "vain jangling," desiring to be teachers but failing to understand the things they affirmed. (1 Timothy 1:5-7, 19, 20) A careful noting of the constant and varied "strange doctrines" which the Apostle refuted shows how the adversary through his willing and duped agents strove to put out the light which our Lord had brought into the world.—John 3:19-21.

Thus in apostolic days "the mystery of iniquity" was working, whose coming was in all the deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who received not the truth in the love of it. Many who followed their vicious ways caused the way of truth to be evil spoken of. History has proven how Satan succeeded in bringing in the dark ages, foretold in the Word of God to come after men—the apostles—slept, resulting in the full development of the antitypical Son of Perdition.

After opening the eyes of the man born blind, our Lord said: "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:5, Diaglott) The Greek word here translated "while" has the significance of "whensoever." "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Yet it shone "in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." To those who would hear, our Lord said: "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light." (John 12:36) And some believed. Thus all down the age there have been children of the light.

JOY SINCE OUR LORD'S RETURN

During this last talk with his disciples our Lord also told them that he was going away to prepare a place for them, but that he would come again to receive them to himself. To and through the angel to the church of Laodicea he said: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me." To the faithful, watching servants who open the door at his knock when the Master returns, a blessing is promised in a full repast as he girds himself and causes them to sit down to meat while he serves them. —Luke 12:37.

Thus it has been since 1874. And with the return of "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," how light on every subject that affects man has come in and continues to come, and no power of malevolence can stop it! Oh, the blessedness of those who have sat at the Master's table, as he served through his wise and faithful steward, who was made ruler over the household to give them meat in due season! Volume after volume with abundant side dishes, has he given us. Of a truth he was made ruler over "all the goods," all the "meat in due season." (Luke 12:43, 44; Matthew 24:45-47) And why was this angel given rule over "all the goods," while the other angels had a more limited stewardship? No doubt it was because the time was near when the Mystery of God would be finished (Revelation 10:7), and the faithful living in this period would need all the meat to build them up and to sustain them.

THE TABLE OF THE LORD'S PROVIDING

Then, too, it was the divine purpose that there need be and would be but seven angels to the church. Moreover, there would be a table where our Lord would sup with his espoused, and she with him—a channel of service. And where has this been found? The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society is this channel, founded for the promotion of Christian knowledge, teaching how to walk in our Lord's footsteps, as he left us an example.—1 Peter 2:21.

How bountifully this table, this channel, has provided the "meat in due season," bringing forth things old and new! Clearly setting forth line upon line and precept upon precept from the Word, it has not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27) Man's perfection from the hands of the Creator; his fall through disobedience; the enforcement of the death penalty on all in Adam, making clear that "man became a living soul" and that "the soul that sinneth it shall die"—these fundamental truths are constantly reiterated. The doctrine of the Ransom is set forth with equal clearness—that through transference by divine power of the life principle from the Word in his prehuman existence (John 1:14), the holy Child was born in Bethlehem of Judea, becoming in due time the anointed Jesus who died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, thus providing the ransom sacrifice through which God could be just and yet the Justifier of him that believeth; and that on this foundation of satisfied justice Jesus became the spiritual seed of Abraham, through whom all the families of the earth shall be blest.

Furthermore, the work of the Gospel age has been fully explained. Those now joined to our Lord through consecration and spirit-begetting become living branches in him as the true Vine of the heavenly Father's right hand planting, and members of this spiritual seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:8, 16, 29) All thus favored of God obtain a clear vision of "the mystery hidden from ages and generations," but now made known through the holy apostles—"Christ in you, the hope of glory." As "this same Jesus" was highly exalted after his suffering, "being made so much better than angels as he had obtained a more excellent name than they," becoming "the express image of the Father's person," so those who have obtained the precious faith in the Lord's finished work will be made like him. Through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ they are given exceeding great and precious promises, that through these they too might become partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4) While in the flesh this class will diligently flee away from the corruption which is in the world through natural desires.

CURRENT EVENTS EXPLAINED

The second coming of our Lord and the consequent overthrow of Satan's empire have been clearly set forth. In our Father's house there are many mansions, distinctions of natures—human, angelic, cherubic, seraphic, etc. Our Lord went, as he said, to prepare a different and higher one for his faithful followers, even the divine. He promised that he would come again to receive them to himself. Furthermore, he would so come as he had gone. As then the watching faithful ones saw him go in the clouds, so the same class would see him return in like manner, to displace the angry nations, first executing wrath upon them in retributive justice for their iniquities, causing the very agencies they depended upon for peace to be their destruction.—Jeremiah 25:15-38; Ezekiel 28:18.

The long-promised time of trouble has been emphasized through this channel which the Lord has used throughout the harvest period. After having assembled the nations and pouring upon them his indignation, even his fierce anger, because of their iniquities, destroying the present order with the fire of his jealousy, God will then turn to the people a pure language, that they may call on him with one consent. Then he will set forth a feast of fat things and wines on the lees, well refined, for all people. In this new order, the mountain of the Lord's house, the Messianic Kingdom, God will destroy "the face of the covering [death] cast over all people, and the vail [ignorance] that is spread over all nations," leading them to say: "That is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." In this "restitution of all things," the bride class will be associated with our Lord as kings and priests to their God, and will reign with Christ a thousand years, until the last enemy—death, is destroyed and earth's sovereignty turned over to the Father that he may be all in all.

Again, at the second presence of the Lord, the light has been shining forth in a fulness unexcelled even in apostolic days. Again the wily and powerful adversary, through various and strange doctrines, putting light for darkness and darkness for light, is using every means to create strife and animosities among the consecrated, causing divisions contrary to the Word, putting non-essentials for fundamentals, raising false, unscriptural standards and using these as criterions for fellowship. Again sects are forming; but those approved will recognize the Lord and his arrangements and will not join in those movements which will cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of, and which lead off into "blackness of darkness."—Matthew 6:23; Jude 13.

EVIL INFLUENCES NOW AT WORK

Since the Laodicean "angel," as a part of his stewardship, and as the final arrangement thereof, prepared for a continuance of the table, the channel, on the foundation of the Ransom and its corollaries—the seed to bless and the resurrected to receive the blessing—shall we turn away from the feast of "meat in due season" to feed on various and strange doctrines and to "be tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive?" Shall we become puffed up in our fleshly minds, not purely "holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God," building itself up in love? "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me, and he who receiveth me receiveth him who sent me." "If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen!"

Ah, Beloved! It behooves us in this "end of the age," when the Lord is sending "forth his messengers, who will gather out of his kingdom all seducers [from the faith] and iniquitous persons" (Matthew 13:41, Diaglott), that we reject not his table (channel) lest we be led to the cup and the table of devils. (I Corinthians 10:21) Let us keep our hearts with all diligence, remembering that out of the heart are the issues of life, and that out of its abundance the mouth speaketh. And while our God tries us whether we love him with all our heart, we can take to ourselves the Master's injunction, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," remembering also his assurance, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you . . .

In the world ye shall have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." Thus we can be tranquil, brave and strong, very courageous, even though a thousand fall at our side and ten thousand at our right hand; for only with our eyes shall we behold the reward of the wicked, who say and do not.

THE BASIS OF EVERY SIFTING

We might have personal preferences here and there in the selection of elders among our little ecclesia or among officers and directors in the Society. But recognizing that the will of the Lord as expressed in the voice of the majority decides these matters, we can cast all our care in these, as in all things, on him who careth for us, knowing that all things are open and plain unto him with whom we have to do. He is working all things through Christ according to the counsel of his own will; and as he causes the deeds of evil men to praise him, restraining what would not, so even more assuredly he will overrule for his glory and our good if any error should come in through the earthen vessel of those who serve in his order and arrangement. (Galatians 2:11, 12) Let us take heed that there never be in any one of us an evil unbelieving heart in departing from the living God, through which we become hardened by a delusion of sin.

Every sifting has rested on attacks upon the agency through which the Lord has sent his message. Not receiving it, but rejecting it and claiming to point to a definite time when the Lord cast it off, these while teaching error themselves are condemning "another man's servant," whom he, the Lord, is able to sustain (Romans 14:4) and to whom he gives evidence of his approval in supplying the proper meat at the proper time.

"For ye have need of patience [patient endurance] that after having done the will of God, ye might receive the promise [to rule with Christ]. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just [my just One] shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition [See John 17:13], but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—Hebrews 10:37-39.

TWO CAUSES OF DISSENSION IN THE CHURCH

A man is merely what his will is and what that will can make out of the body and its circumstances. And so at the very beginning of our discipleship, the first thing is to see that we are dead as respects our will, and alive toward the Lord Jesus Christ. All who do this God calls new creatures. He grants them the Holy Spirit, that the new mind, the new will, may be theirs. In proportion as they obtain the new mind, the new will, in that same proportion will the oneness with one another exist.

That which causes dissension amongst the Lord's people is either a lack of loyalty or a lack of knowledge. If it is a lack of loyalty, the disloyal will gradually drift away. The Lord does not choose to force any of his family. He is choosing such as worship him in spirit and in truth, such as are in every respect loyal. He has set aside for the purpose of selecting this class the entire Gospel age. This great work has been in progress for more than nineteen centuries; and this company will be a little flock. They will, evidently, be a very select class. They are required to walk by faith, not by sight.

Not many have the loyalty to God and to righteousness to walk that way and to count the world as loss and dross—as nothing, with all its projects. As the disloyal ones leave the ranks, more and more the loyal ones will find themselves drawn together, and more and more of oneness will be found among those who are faithful. This would necessarily be true in every time and in every country. All who are thoroughly loyal would desire to do the Father's will, desire to lay down their lives in the Father's service. And this desire would make them one.

The Lord speaks of his disciples being perfected in one. As each individual member of the church makes progress, he becomes more worthy to fill the place or use the opportunity provided for him. And thus the body of Christ becomes more efficacious.

THE TABLE OF THE GREAT KING

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." —Psalm 23:5.

To serve in the courts of an earthly monarch has ever been considered a great privilege, and to sit at the royal table is an honor enjoyed by but a favored few. With this thought in mind we can especially appreciate the condescension of Jehovah as illustrated in the beautiful words of our text. Why should he come to this sinful, accursed realm and select even a handful of earth's inhabitants to be his sons and to serve them, as members of the divine family? If the Lord, the great King of the universe, has been pleased to prepare a table laden with "meat in due season" for his household and to invite us to partake thereof, it would be a most ungrateful, unworthy guest indeed who would spurn such a blessing and turn away from the food which God himself had set before him.

Our text indicates that to sit at the Lord's table would be to expose ourselves to the envious gaze of enemies, headed by Satan. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Those who have been enlightened by present truth, who have been privileged to feast on the good things which the Lord has spread before his children during the past forty years, can appreciate the significance of this statement. One by one the harvest saints have left the Babylonish "tables of vomit" (Isaiah 28:8) to partake of the meat of present truth. In each instance it has meant persecution, and oftimes vilification and ostracism which have been very hard to endure; yet in it all our cup of joy at the privilege of feasting upon the truth and of suffering for Christ's sake has literally overflowed.

"NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES"

With each publication of harvest truth, gladdening the hearts of the Lord's people, there has been manifested a corresponding hatred on the part of all the enemies of the truth; for indeed these "Helping Hands for Bible Students" have been plagues to ecclesiasticism.—Revelation 15:5-7.

Satan has been increasingly active in his endeavors to detract and to distract the minds of the Lord's people, and to draw them away from the table of truth which has been prepared for them. In some instances he has succeeded. It seems strange that any one who has once been privileged to enjoy the food of the Lord's providing would on any account leave the King's table and household, and return to the emptiness of the world. Nothing has incensed the adversary more than has the seventh course of "meat in due season," which the Lord in his providence has seen fit to spread before us. While it has strengthened and refreshed thousands of the Lord's faithful children, "the seed of promise," it has been as a grievous plague upon the ecclesiastical lords, "the seed of Satan." Numerous are the insidious arguments that have been propagated by our wily foe to draw away the Lord's people from the food—arguments designed either to nauseate or to frighten them. More than ever has it been true, as expressed by our text, that this last feature of present truth was spread before us "in the presence of our enemies."

To those who are familiar with Satan's tactics it should hardly be necessary to suggest an offset to his arguments. Yet in order to strengthen the faith of those whose hearts are right, but whose minds have become temporarily confused, we are pleased to set forth a few positive evidences that none other than our Lord himself has served us with the truth of Ezekiel and Revelation, which at the same time constitute the last plague upon Babylon. Let us not say: 'Why should we accept it as present truth?' Rather let us say: 'Why should I not accept it as meat in due season from the Lord?'

THE "HAIL" OF PRESENT TRUTH

Did not the Laodicean messenger, "that wise and faithful servant," promise us throughout his ministry and in the hour of his death, that the church should expect and would receive an exposition of these two prophetic books? Have they not now been explained thoroughly and clearly and in accordance with all other features of the divine plan? Did not the same channel or agency which the Lord has been pleased to use in publishing the preceding messages of the harvest period also publish these truths for the comfort and encouragement of the church in its hour of direst need? Is not the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society the one and only channel which the Lord has used in dispensing his truth continually since the beginning of the harvest period? Did not this last published message contain the "hail" of truth which the Scrip

tures indicated it would. (Revelation 16:19, 21; Job 38:22, 23) Furthermore, has it not brought to the Lord's consecrated people tremendously rich blessings as they have feasted upon the wonderful symbolisms so confirmatory of the plan of God as explained by the Laodicean servant?

The explained truths of Revelation and Ezekiel are such as to comport with the prophetic description of what the Lord said he would proclaim in the end of this age. He indicated that he would administer a stinging blow to Babylon, which would cause her to stumble and fall. He said that when the seventh vial was poured out "great Babylon came in remembrance before God . . . . and there fell upon the men [the clergy] a great hail." (Revelation 16:19-21) From this it is evident that the burden of the last message of the age would be upon the heads of ecclesiasticism.

"I WILL HAVE THEM IN DERISION"

Again, in Psalm 2:1-4 the Lord prophetically shows that in the end of the age the nations would rage, and that forthwith the great ones of ecclesiasticism would take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed; i. e., against the anointed body of Christ (the feet members), and thus against the Lord himself. Then the Lord said that he will "have them in derision . . . . and vex them in his sore displeasure." Is not the very keynote of the message of St. John and Ezekiel found in the Psalmist's statement that "the Lord shall have them in derision"? The burden of nearly every chapter in these prophetic books is that very message against nominal Christendom, because of their sins against the Lord and against his anointed body. Therefore since the Lord said that this is the message which he would pour out in the end of the age, does it not appear evident that those who find fault with the irony and derision of the explained messages of these prophets are really complaining against the doing of the Lord?

What could be clearer evidence that the Lord himself has served us with the true explanation of Revelation than the fact that the seven messengers have now been identified for the first time in the history of the church? Bible students of recent years have no difficulty in identifying Pastor Russell as the seventh messenger. But who were the six preceding messengers was a matter that could not be guessed at until recently. Now we know who they are, and we can see the reasonableness of the identification of each.

EPHESUS AND SMYRNA PERIODS

(1) St. Paul is now known to be the messenger to the Ephesus or first epoch of the church. The proof that this is correct lies in the fact that the message which the Revelator quotes as the words of that angel is indeed and in fact the very message found in the Pauline epistles. Compare Revelation 2:1-6 with Hebrews 10:32-38; 2 Corinthians 7:11, 13; Galatians 6:9; 1:6; and Acts 20:17-30. Thus if St. Paul in his writings has delivered the very message which the Revelator declared would be delivered by the angel of the first epoch of the church, then we have this proof that St. Paul was the messenger to the church of Ephesus.

(2) St. John is now identified as the messenger to the second or Smyrna epoch of the church. Some have asked: "Why should we call St. John the angel of the second epoch? Why should he not be called the angel of the first epoch? Was he not an apostle before St. Paul was appointed?" We answer: Yes; but Revelation 1:19 clearly shows that St. John's commission to write appertains to the second epoch of the church instead of the first. There we read: "Write therefore the things which thou hast seen [past], and the things which are [present tense], and the things which must shortly come to pass hereafter [future]." This passage indicates that at the time of St. John's appointment as a messenger one epoch was in the past, that he was living in the second epoch, and that there were other epochs to follow. "The things which are" were of course the things which were then occurring at the time when St. John was commissioned to write. What was then transpiring? Persecution of the Smyrna epoch of the church was then transpiring on a general scale; and at this very time St. John himself was an exile on the isle of Patmos because of his faithfulness in proclaiming the truths of our Lord.

PERSECUTIONS BY PAGAN ROME

The message to the Smyrna church, therefore, is one of comfort in their afflictions. "By the angel of the church of Smyrna write: I know thy works and tribulation and poverty, but thou art rich [blest, favored]; and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews [Israelites indeed], and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." (Revelation 2:8-10) The word Smyrna means "bitter"; and as Pastor Russell has well said in the last issue of THE WATCH TOWER which he published, just prior to his death: "Some of the most sublime pictures of Christian endurance that the world has ever seen were enacted during the Smyrna period of the church." In the same article Brother Russell explained that the "ten days" of special tribulation here mentioned were symbolic days (i. e., ten years) and referred to the persecution under the Roman Emperor Diocletian during the years 303-313 A. D.

(3) Arius is clearly identified as the messenger to the third or Pergamos epoch of the church. The word Pergamos means "earthly elevation," and manifestly refers to that epoch of the church which witnessed the rise of Papacy through the conversion of Constantine, the last pagan emperor of Rome. In 325 A. D. Constantine convened the Council of Nice; and there the first Babylonish creed was formed—the Nicene Creed. The identification of Arius as the third angel is found by a comparison of history concerning this council with the message which the Revelator says would be delivered by the angel of the church of Pergamos. We read: "By the angel of the church in Pergamos write. . . . I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is [the seat of Antichrist]; and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith in those days wherein Antipas [antipapists] was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols and to commit fornication."—Revelation 2:12-14.

CREED IDOLS REBUKED

It is clear that this message covers the period of Papacy's rise, beginning historically with the Nicene Council of 325 A. D. The mention of Balaam is significant. Balaam presumed to be God's prophet; yet he connived with an earthly king to injure God's chosen people for earthly reward. He advised the king that with the assistance of fair women of the land of Midian the Israelitish men of war could be enticed, and led away from God and into worship of idols.

How complete is the picture! The clergy of this period, claiming to be prophets of God, catered to the civil power of Rome; and through the women of the land (the churches which had descended to an earthly level) they put stumbling blocks before the true Israelites indeed, and made them worship the creed idols which began to be erected in 325 A. D. The message by the angel of the church of Pergamos is the first rebuke against creed idols to be found in the book of Revelation. If the angel of the church of Pergamos was thus to administer such a rebuke, undoubtedly history will explain who he was; and so it does. It was the faithful Arius who stood forth in the midst of the 384 bishops assembled at the Council of Nice, and in plain terms rebuked them for mutilating the teachings of the Scriptures and for sacrificing the truth for that false trinitarian creed! This rebuke cost him his bishopric; and he was banished to the Balkan mountains, one of the most inhospitable places in the world. But the influence of his teachings spread far and wide; and Arianism became the backbone of the Reformation movement which occurred twelve centuries later. Arius is the only person in history that fits the picture; hence he must have been the messenger to the church of Pergamos.

(4) The fourth messenger to the church was manifestly Peter Waldo. His identification is found in Revelation 2:21, in which this messenger of the Thyatira epoch was to announce to Papacy that God would give her a "space to repent." The word translated "space" is the Greek word chronos, which means a time—a symbolic year. Bible students know that a year in symbolic language means 360 years literally. The message to Papacy by this fourth angel therefore in substance was: "I will give you 360 years to reform; and if you do not reform within that time, a great reformation movement will be launched anyway." The Protestant Reformation began in full force with the excommunication of Martin Luther on the 15th of June, 1520; and 360 years prior thereto takes us back to the year 1160 A. D. It was in that very year 1160 that Peter Waldo began his great work of proclaiming the truths then due. This Scripture identifies him as the messenger to the fourth epoch.

(5) John Wycliffe was manifestly the angel of the church of Sardis. The word "Sardis" means "that which remains." In addition to signifying the remains of the true church, which had been driven into the wilderness, the word may also signify that which remains of the 360 years or "space" of repentance. At any rate it is evident that this fifth messenger was to make his appearance between Waldo's day and that of Martin Luther. Wycliffe is the only reformer of special promin-

ence during that period. To him belongs the honor of making the first translation of the Bible into English; and it is said that he wrote no less than two hundred tracts and pamphlets attacking transubstantiation and the mass, and more or less clearly treating the central doctrine of the ransom. Wycliffe was the father of the Lollard and the Hussite movements; and his influence was soon felt throughout all Christendom. In the year 1378 he stood forth as the great doctrinal reformer. At that time there were 142 years of the "space to repent" yet remaining to run. John Wycliffe was clearly the messenger of the epoch directly preceding Luther's time.

THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

(6) Martin Luther is identified as the messenger of the sixth or Philadelphia epoch of the church by the same text which identified Peter Waldo. (Revelation 2:21) Luther stood at the end of the "space to repent," even as Waldo stood at the beginning of that period. However, even if we had no text of Scripture by which to identify Luther, no one familiar with church history could well doubt that he was the messenger of the epoch of the church which preceded the harvest of the Gospel age; for he was the most prominent figure in the whole Reformation movement prior to the proclamation of present truth. On various occasions Brother Russell has so referred to him.

(7) Charles Taze Russell was the seventh messenger. No Bible student who has examined the evidence has any doubt that he was the angel to the church of Laodicea. Through him has come a clear unfolding of the Divine Plan of the Ages. He is the most prominent messenger mentioned both in the Revelation and in the prophecy of Ezekiel.

This identification of all seven messengers to the church should be clear evidence to all consecrated Bible students that the interpretation of the Revelation is from the Lord. A close study of the explained symbolisms of the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven plagues, etc., as well as the exposition of Ezekiel is equally convincing. We need merely to mention the remarkable explanation of Ezekiel's vision in the first chapter of that prophecy in order to convince sincere Bible students that only the Lord could have clarified this matter. It is of no private interpretation.

The four symbolic creatures with their four faces (lion, ox, man and eagle) are now seen to be in harmony with the symbols of Revelation 4:7; and a comparison of the two passages shows that God's four attributes of Justice, Power, Love and Wisdom are unquestionably referred to. This being true, the remainder of the vision of Ezekiel is apparent when once we see that the "wheels" or cycles allude to the ages of the divine plan. However, only wisdom from above could have clarified this hitherto dark chapter.

FOOD FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

Another choice portion of "meat in due season" which the Lord has been pleased to serve upon his table is the clarification of the Temple of Ezekiel. This feature alone should be sufficient to convince any spirit-begotten, truth-hungry saint that God has guided in the publishing of these truths, never before understood. Perhaps not one of us understood anything in connection with the last nine chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy, relating to this wonderful temple, prior to the outpouring of the seventh vial. And yet we should have noticed the emphasis laid upon it by the Lord when he said: "Behold with thine eyes and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall show thee; for to the intent that I might show them unto thee art thou brought hither; declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel." (Ezekiel 40:4) This passage plainly shows that all the features of this temple were to be understood and declared to the true Israel (the church) for their guidance, ere their sojourn is completed. The Lord has fulfilled the promise. Numerous important details of the great plan of God are now made as clear as the noonday sun through the typical features of the Ezekiel Temple—details which could not have been illustrated in the simplicity of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Yet they are in exact accord with the great fundamentals so clearly taught in "Tabernacle Shadows."

In view of these things which have been made plain to us through the only channel which the Lord has been pleased to use in the end of this age for serving truth to his household, who can doubt that it is indeed the Lord who has placed upon his table the exposition of these two prophetic books of the Bible, which have never been previously understood by his church? Seeing, then, that the Lord is serving us, even though it be "in the presence of our enemies," let us not be dismayed by the opposition of those enemies of truth and righteousness, but faithfully receive from the Lord's table this additional evidence of his love and favor, and grow strong by the assimilation of this "meat in due season." "Greater is he who is for us than all they that be against us."

Is not the way to heavenly gain
Through earthly grief and loss?
Rest must be won by toil and pain—
The crown repays the cross.
As woods when shaken by the breeze
Take deeper, firmer root,
As winter's frosts but make the trees
Abound in summer fruit,
So every heaven-sent pang and throe
That Christian firmness tries,
But nerves us for our work below,
And forms us for the skies.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

HAS THE HARVEST ENDED?

Question.—Did the harvest of the Gospel age end in the Spring of 1918, or it is still in progress?

Answer.—In THE WATCH TOWER of Sept. 1, 1916, Brother Russell treated this matter in considerable detail in an article entitled "The Harvest is not Ended." He there explained that the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry were not strictly occupied in harvest work, but rather he was then engaged in preparation for the harvest, which began at Pentecost. He then called attention to the fact that there was no "garner" into which to gather the wheat prior to Pentecost. The forty years' Jewish harvest was therefore explained to have begun in A. D. 33, and expired in A. D. 73; and by parallel the Gospel harvest was seen to have commenced just 1845 years later than the Jewish harvest, viz., in A. D. 1878, expiring chronologically in the Spring of A. D. 1918. This was the last statement on the subject of chronology uttered by the messenger to the church of Laodicea. We see no reason for doubting its correctness.

ALL CROWNS APPORTIONED

Question.—Some have made consecration of themselves since the Spring of 1918. Could such be begotten of the holy spirit and enter the race for the great prize as members of the "little flock"? If so, in what sense could we say that the harvest has ended?

Answer.—We think it quite probable that in the Spring of 1918 all crowns had been apportioned, and that no more crowns would be available except as some then standing may prove unfaithful. In that event the Lord would fill up the vacancies by begetting to the divine nature a number of consecrated ones equivalent to the number of unfaithful ones who have lost their crowns. You may then wonder if that has not indeed been true ever since 1881, in which year the general call ceased. In what sense therefore, would it be different since 1918 than before? We think the difference might be this: That in 1881 a sufficient number had been called and begotten of the spirit to complete the foreordained 144,000, but that forthwith there was a great falling away, to such extent that between the years 1881 and 1918 there never was a sufficient number in the race at any one time to take up all the vacant or available crowns, until about springtime of last year, when again, for the first time since 1881, all available crowns were apportioned and no vacancies existed. However, since that time there has probably been another falling away on the part of some, requiring others to be brought in to fill the vacancies. But the difference between the present situation and that which existed from 1881 to 1918 may be that since the Spring of 1918 there are more candidates than there are crowns, whereas prior to 1918 there were more crowns than candidates.

SHOULD WATER IMMERSION BE PERFORMED

Question.—Should we continue our efforts to spread the truth and to leave people to consecration, encouraging them with the promises of glory, honor, immortality, and joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer? Should the symbol of baptism still be performed?

Answer.—We should be "instant in season and out of season," preaching the truth, and endeavoring to lead people to consecration of their will to the will of God. All who gain life on whatever plane must come to a knowledge of the truth and must consecrate their lives unto the Heavenly Father. We see no reason why we should not also continue to declare the divine promises held out to the little flock, because it is not for us to know whether the one to whom we are speaking may or may not be accepted of the Lord to fill a vacancy caused by the unfaithfulness of another. If the person is not spirit-

ually minded he will not appreciate spiritual promises, and in any event he will not be harmed by having heard them proclaimed. We think it proper, however, to always explain to those now coming to a knowledge of the truth, that there is no guarantee in the Scriptures that an immortal crown surely awaits them. They should be encouraged to consecrate their life to God, and rest in the assurance that whatever they obtain in the way of future reward will be infinitely more than they deserve or could reasonably expect or comprehend. As for water immersion: we see no reason why such a beautiful and fitting symbol should cease to be performed, (1) because we know not but that the candidate may have been accepted to prospective membership in the little flock; (2) anyway, the burial in water would continue to picture the complete burial of the will of the candidate into the will of Christ, and that he is reckoning himself "dead indeed unto sin" so far as his new will is concerned. The candidate having consecrated himself, has done all that anybody could do; hence it is proper for him to symbolize that fact before others. Whether he is to be apportioned a crown is a matter for the Lord alone to determine. For aught we know the symbol of immersion may be perpetuated throughout the Millennial age in picturing individual consecrations.

IN RE THE SECOND DEATH

Question.—Is the world now subject to the second death?

Answer.—God's law, when broken, brings the sentence of death upon the sinner, as in the case of Adam. If broken by any one who has been delivered from that sentence pronounced upon Adam, God's law would bring condemnation afresh upon the guilty person. The Bible speaks of this second condemnation as the second death.

The first death sentence passed upon all mankind because of one man's sin. The second death sentence will pass upon none except for wilful, intelligent sin of the individual. Such a sin could not be committed, however, until after such a person had been delivered from the sentence previously upon him through father Adam—the first death sentence. The world, therefore, cannot now die the second death; for mankind are not yet released from the first death sentence. No man could be judicially tried and condemned to death while already under a death sentence. To have a second sentence he must have come, either actually or reckonedly, from under the first sentence. The world has been condemned once, in Adam. Not until they shall have been released from that condemnation can they come under another condemnation. Hence the Bible declares it to be God's purpose that there shall be a great day, a thousand-year day, in which Christ will give the world a judgment, or trial. The right to give them this trial our Lord Jesus has secured by his own death, having tasted death for Adam and all his posterity, condemned to death in him. (Hebrews 2:9) The death of our Lord, a perfect man, would be the full offset for the sentence upon the first man. Thus the way is opened for the great "times of restitution" mentioned by the Apostle Peter.

MAN MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of January 1, 1907, under the title, "Man Created in God's Image," which please see.]

LETTERS FROM AFIELD

PETITION WORK A BLESSING

DEAR BRETHREN:—

You will be glad to know we have been blessed in connection with the petition work. One firm of lawyers, after reading the petition, said they would rather it asked for an unqualified release than to have the bail feature attached. They gladly signed it, and requested three clients, who were in their office at the time, to sign also. Later in the day one member of this law firm saw me in front of his office and called me in, explaining that another client was there who would be glad to sign my petition. The client was an officer of the Life and Casualty Insurance Co. and readily added his name to my list.

Another lawyer told me that however expedient it might have been to lock up these sincere Bible students during the war, those reasons could not possibly exist in times of peace; that in his opinion a grave mistake was being made in keeping them in prison; and that "such a violation of the principles of free speech, free press and religious liberty, the fundamentals upon which this grand country was established and has prospered, is sure to bring trouble, especially if continued beyond the cessation of hostilities."

With continued Christian love, I am,

Your brother in the Lord. GROVER C. POWELL.—*Tenn.*

PEOPLE READILY SIGN PETITION

DEAR BRETHREN:—

You have already received some 2,000 signatures from this place; but we are glad to continue the good work. It is not much trouble to secure signatures to this petition. If other places keep up the same ratio you surely will have a great petition. We secured all the above mentioned signatures before the tracts arrived.

Please note the enclosed petition contains the very best people of our city and state, including the Governor, Ex-Governor, Mayor, Ex-Mayor, lawyers, bankers, physicians, dentists, druggists, County Judge and one minister.

With loving greetings to all we beg to remain,

Your brethren in the Lord. E. E. HODGES, M. D.—*Ark.*

MESSAGE OF LOYALTY FROM ABROAD

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Loving greetings in our dear Redeemer! It is my privilege to transmit to you the following resolution passed unanimously today by the London Tabernacle congregation:

"This congregation having heard with much pleasure that the annual meeting of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society recently held in Pittsburgh was a happy occasion of fellowship and communion in spirit, and that our dearly beloved Brother J. F. Rutherford, the chairman of this congregation, was re-elected President of the Society; Be it therefore

"Resolved: That the London Tabernacle congregation take this opportunity to express its loving union in spirit with our dear brethren in America, and its full agreement with the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in its service for the Lord. With one heart and mind we continue in the way which the Lord of the harvest has hitherto directed our steps, and intend so to continue, accepting the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society as the Lord's channel of service and blessing to his people."

Prior to our having received word of the result of the election, it had been unanimously agreed by us that the elected President of the Society be our choice for Chairman of this congregation; and that Brother Hemery, as the Society's representative in Great Britain, be our Chairman in his absence. We would be glad if you can convey to Brother Rutherford our warm love, with assurance of our prayers on behalf of himself and of his fellow-prisoners.

We are rejoiced by many evidences of the Lord's presence with us, and we are looking forward to continued opportunities of service in laying down our lives for the brethren, and in seeking to carry the message of comfort to the world in its darkening hours. We realize more fully than ever the Lord's gracious arrangements for us through our dear Brother Russell, whose memory is ever with us. With fervent love in the Lord.

Yours by grace. T. SEECK, *Secretary.*

REJOICING IN THE TRUTH

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—

I am thankful to be able to tell you I am now a sister in the Lord, and symbolized my consecration at the recent Toronto convention. I have gladly taken the Vow unto the Lord and am endeavoring to carry out my covenant with him faithfully. I am so grateful to my Heavenly Father that he has made the blessed provision by which I may bring my prayers to the throne of grace in behalf of all the saints; also that I, notwithstanding all my weaknesses, am counted in when the other dear ones offer their prayers for the Lord's people. I am privileged to enjoy the sweet fellowship of the dear little class at this place, for which I give thanks. Praise his holy name forever!

Please find enclosed Express Money Order for $..... which is for "Good hopes," to help a little in the blessed work. "If God be for us, who then can be against us?"

Your sister by his grace. LYDIA DABER.—*Ont.*

A VALIANT SOLDIER OF THE CROSS

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Loving greetings in his holy name by whose kind favor I address you as brethren! I am a soldier brother in khaki; yet withal I am rejoicing in the fact that I am also a soldier of our Lord Jesus Christ, wearing the armor which he provides for those who will ultimately be overcomers. (Ephesians 6:10-18) How I rejoice that I have heard God's Reveille Bugle Call, when he says: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ will give thee light." (Ephesians

5:14) From the evidences we see about us it is quite certain that our Captain has not called, "Halt!" nor that we should stand still; but that his providences rather speak loudly: "Forward! March!" I have realized his leading hand ever with me during my trying experiences of military life; and still I am trusting, though I cannot always trace.

For a time I was stationed at —— ——, and was much influenced by the thought which is persuasive in the Northwest, that THE WATCH TOWER is no longer the Lord's channel. I was much confused and bewildered; but these questions, with others, kept coming to my mind: If this be the case, why is it that some who accept the Seventh Volume and some who reject it can meet together, and apparently have harmony in a common cause against this channel? And if such a time has truly come to "stand fast" without having a message to deliver, then there is surely nothing left to do but to wait; but why then so much ado about proselyting?

After much prayer and thought I came to the conclusion that it was another sifting taking place and that as usual our adversary is directing every issue he can against this channel and those who accept its message as from the Lord. Let me assure you, dear Brethren, that the current TOWERS are as dear to me now as ever. How like a bell-buoy do they ring out, sounding the dangers that lurk in the way, still guiding us on to our haven of rest!

For a benediction I would say: "Mizpah!" (Genesis 31:49) with the thought as rendered in the margin—"To the Beacon Light or WATCH TOWER." With much Christian love to all the dear co-laborers at Pittsburgh and elsewhere.

Your brother by his grace. D. E. WELLINGTON.—*Cal.*

CONTRIBUTING HIS "MITE"

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Herewith lists of petitions which constitute my little "mite" in behalf of our dear brethren in Atlanta. You will see our Congressman from this district heads the list, also our Sheriff, Probate Judge, Assessor, Collector, Supt. of Schools, etc. I surely have been rejoicing in this grand privilege of having a share in this witness work.

Yours in the service of our king. W. J. GOODLET.—*Ala.*

BOOKLET TRACTS FOR MAILING

We are now printing a limited quantity of tracts in booklet form treating the subjects "Where are the Dead?" "What is the Soul?" "Calamities, Why Permitted?" "Is there a God?" "Is Christian Science Scriptural?" and "Spiritism is Demonism." Similar tracts on other subjects are also in preparation and will be announced later. Each tract covers 16 pages, size 3⅜ x 6¼ pages, small enough to enclose in an ordinary envelope without folding. Being in booklet form they are much more attractive, also far more expensive, than the former BSMS. For this reason they should be used for mailing only to persons who you have reason to expect would read them. They are not intended for house-to-house distribution. They will be supplied free in limited quantities.

BACK ISSUES REQUESTED

Friends who have issues of THE WATCH TOWER for the years 1879, 1880 and 1881 will confer a favor by lending us the following issues: November and December, 1879; January, April, September and November, 1880; January, February and March, 1881. With these exceptions our file is complete from 1879 to date. As announced in our last issue, if there is a sufficient demand for the reprinting of all the back issues in book form the Society will gladly undertake the proposition. Numerous orders have already been received; but it will require a large quantity additional in order to print them at the prices given in March 15th TOWER.

FRIENDS, PLEASE NOTE

The Society requests that all instances of opposition to the petition work emanating from the clergy be reported to this office at once, % Publicity Department. Give name, address and denomination of the clergyman, and specific facts as to what course he pursued to hinder the work. Be sure, also, to mail us all newspaper clippings bearing upon such opposition, giving name of paper and date of publication.

BRETHREN ADMITTED TO BAIL

Just as this issue goes to press we are in receipt of telegram advising that Brother Rutherford and associates have been admitted to bail pending the hearing of their appeal. It is exactly nine months since they were imprisoned. Sentence was pronounced on Friday, June 21, 1918—the first day of Summer; and they are now granted bail on Friday, March 21, 1919, which is the first day of Spring. This, however, means only temporary freedom until their case is finally passed upon. We suggest that the petition work be continued with increased vigor, merely drawing a pen through the third clause relating to bail. Please mail petitions to us as rapidly as possible.

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LIBERTY IN CHRIST

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—Jno. 8:36.

When one is released from bondage after having suffered restraint for many days, and is fully conscious of his freedom, he experiences a peculiar thankfulness and joy. All persons that have lived on the earth have been in some kind of bondage. When Adam was in Eden he enjoyed full liberty, full life and happiness. After a brief sojourn there he found himself deprived of liberty, in bondage to sin and death; and he is yet in the great prison house of death. All of his children were born under condemnation, and therefore in bondage. They found themselves in this condition, not willingly, but because of conditions coming to them over which they had no control. "As by the disobedience of one man sin entered the world and death by sin, so death has passed upon all men; for all are sinners." (Romans 5:12) Because of this bondage the whole creation from Adam until now has groaned in pain and yet groans, waiting for the day of deliverance. All of these are asking themselves, Is there anything better for us in the future?

MODERN BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

Christ Jesus through his apostles organized the church, the members of his body; and during the early part of its development its members enjoyed liberty. The time came when ambitious politicians entered the church, organized man-made systems in the name of Christ, and the members were subjected to the bondage of such organizations. The many systems that have been organized throughout the period of the Gospel age have each formed a prison house, figuratively speaking, depriving many of their true liberty in Christ. These systems the Lord designates in the Scriptures as "Babylon," meaning confusion, and he describes the consecrated ones in "Babylon" as those who are groaning because of their captivity, or incarceration. He foreshadows the joy of those released from this condition, putting these words in their mouths, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." (Psalm 126:1, 2) Thus he pictures in a small degree the joy coming to any one receiving liberty, especially those who receive liberty through a full knowledge and obedience unto Christ.

Another form of bondage which we find prevailing throughout the world is the bondage of fear. The ruling element of all nations is suffering from fear of their enemies. It is chiefly because of fear of future wars that statesmen of the world are now forming a league of nations with the avowed purpose of securing a greater measure of liberty and protection to the peoples of the nations. There are now, according to press reports, thirty-two nations interested in the formation of such league. That the league will be formed is clearly foreshadowed