

VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

There are two sides to every question, so also there are two views from the TOWER. The one is glorious, bright and encouraging, the other dark, and would be discouraging were it not that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His." (2 Tim. 2:19.)

The dark outlook is that we see from the TOWER that another testing is in progress, and the adversary – Satan – presents errors – Satan – presents errors under the guise of "light," and as his custom (Matt. 4:6) uses Scripture to accomplish his object – wresting it from its proper meaning. We are not surprised at this in one sense, because we have long seen that we are living in the "Evil Day" of which Jesus and apostles and prophets forewarn us, saying "that it will be difficult to stand – and not fall before the attacks of the enemy. (Luke 21:36; Mal. 3:2; Eph. 6:11,14,13.) Paul is very specific, and warns us that we will need the whole armor of God, because the conflict will not be with men (flesh and blood), but with the prince of darkness himself, whose "wiles" or deceptions he carefully mentions. (Eph. 6:11,12.) Thus divinely forewarned of what we might expect in this day, we have been calling attention to the coming storm and dangers for some time, and endeavoring to have all the saints armed with the panoply of God, in order that whatever the test might be, ye might be able to withstand all the wiles and fiery darts of the enemy, and having done all, to stand.

We have not the gift of prophecy, and could not tell you in what form, nor from what quarter the testing would come, for our adversary, the devil, is sure to bring the test from an unexpected quarter. This has ever been his policy.

Our surprise is that some whom we had supposed to be well grounded upon the Rock foundation – our ransom – should be at all assailable from the standpoint of our redemption, and the nature of our Redeemer. Paul expresses the same surprise concerning some in his day, saying: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel: which is not another, but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ." (Gal. 1:6-8; notice also vs. 11,12.)

As we had anticipated, our article, "An Unpleasant Duty," in last issue, was misjudged by some, as three letters received indicate. They hinted that our "DUTY" was too pointedly expressed, and that if we had said that we took a "different view" of matters, in a mild and very gentle way, it would have been more in the spirit of Christ. Our reply is, that our usual method is mild, especially when discussing differences of opinion relative to Christian faith, but when the foundations of all our faith are assailed by some among us attempting to teach, it is, in our judgment, the spirit of Christ to lay aside mildness and cry aloud so as at once to arouse all Israel to the danger of the hour. (Ezek. 33:6.)

Jesus did not hesitate to call doctrines and people by their true names. Please recollect that many of his utterances were far from "mild and gentle." While his utterances are devoid of all malice and hatred, they were often full of force and keenly to the point. Fear to speak the truth finds no place in the spirit of Christ. We feel sure that no candid reader can trace malice or hatred in our article referred to, and subsequent developments prove that we stated the matter none too strongly.

Others, we are glad to know, rightly judged both of our motives and the necessity of the article. We extract a sentence from a letter of the latter sort, of which we received several:

"Best thanks for the WATCH TOWER for December, in which you have performed 'An Unpleasant Duty,' as agreeably as possible, and respecting which it would have involved a serious sin not to have called attention to the present teaching of the 'Day Star' after having recommended it."

The importance of the subject is our excuse for devoting so much of the space of this number to its consideration. We trust that it will be helpful to you [R426 : page 1] to fully realize –

"How firm a foundation, ye saint of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word;
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

It may be that the subjects treated will be very valuable to new readers and help to establish them firmly on the Rock. A testing on first principles seems peculiar at this late hour, yet, from present appearance, it seems to us that this will be the general line of attack in which the entire nominal Church is to be overwhelmed – in which "a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee, because thou has made the Most High thy habitation." We hope that all will take their Bibles and refer to every text quoted in this issue and note the contexts.

But we have very much to encourage and refresh us. Thousands of hungry hearts are upturned to God in thanksgiving for the blessed light now shining on and revealing the precious plan and promises of God. Thousands of letters tell of renewed faith in God and quickened lives resulting from even a first glimpse of "the riches of His grace," and the grandeur of the great plan of God for the salvation of all who die in Adam, based on the grand old rock of truth that we were "redeemed" – that "Christ died for our sins." Yes, praise the Lord, the general prospect was never so encouraging as now. But these new readers will find their love of truth and their reliance on and

consecration to the Lord tested also. All must be tested; we are in the testing time; you should know to expect, that though these truths be in your mouths sweet as honey, yet after partaking of them you must expect to encounter bitter opposition from your old nature and your former friends. (Rev. 10:10.) Though you rejoice greatly in the strong meat of God's Word, yet you will find your after experiences with it to be bitter – friends and dear ones will oppose, and "ye shall be hated of all men for my sake and the Gospel's," yet rejoice and be exceeding glad, and

"Bear the cross, endure the shame,
Supported by God's Word."

"Let us, then, stand the storms,
It will not be very long,
We will anchor by and by."

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We present you herewith extracts from a few of the many similar letters received daily:

DEAR BRO.: – I have now mastered the "Food" after seven months' hard study, and believe it to be no more nor less than a revelation from our Heavenly Father. Next Sabbath I shall begin to preach for the first, on these blessed truths, regardless of friends or enemies.

Send me 400 TOWERS (Oct. No.) and as many "Food" as you can spare, and I assure you that they will do as much good as any you ever had distributed heretofore. I am satisfied that I can get 500 subscribers in Orange and 500 in Rockland Counties. You shall hear soon.

I shall use six months of my time now, just to distribute tracts and get subscribers for the TOWER. Help me by prayers and prompt

returns. The "Food" and TOWER I distribute only to those whom I believe to be zealous Christians.

Yours in the work,

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Dec. 25, 1882.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL: – The books ("Young's Concordance" and "Diaglott") came duly, and have proved a valuable help to me in studying the Bible. Heretofore I have been without a concordance, and have depended too much on the writings of others as a guide. Now I can judge for myself. I enjoy the study of the Bible more and more as the opportunities are increased for studying, and my love for my Saviour is increased by the knowledge that I may be permitted to prove my following and "help fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."

Yours in brotherly affection,

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AUGUSTA, ME.

DEAR BRO.: – I write this to thank you on behalf of both my wife and myself for the papers sent her, and also for the copies of "Why Evil was Permitted." That little book has done more than anything I ever read to resolve and remove my doubts about **page 2** the Old Testament Scriptures, and by its help and the help of the Holy Spirit I am indulging a hope that I may yet come into the kingdom. For thirty years I have been one of those who could see nothing in Christianity but a bone of contention between differing professors and churches, but now, thank God, I am able to look beyond professors and churches, and to believe that "Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost." Thank God for me and pray for us both.

Yours in faith and trust,

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