

VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

Many of the household of faith looking out can see the storm coming upon the world – the "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." (Dan. 12:1.) They can see the various brigades preparing for "the battle of the great day of God Almighty." There are the Socialistic "Regulars," and to their army is being added daily "Volunteers" from among the honest, well meaning mechanics, and laborers, of every kind, called together by various circumstances and with hopes of maintaining present advantages, or bettering their condition.

On the other hand as opposed to this organization, are the established governments, who seek to perpetuate their honors, titles, revenues, etc., by maintaining control over the people; and to these and their armies of paid soldiery dependent upon them, are being added volunteers also: The rich of this world see that their interests are closely linked with those of present governments to whom they must look for the protection of their interests.

The members of the true Church (whose names are written in heaven) imbued with the spirit of justice – the Spirit of Christ – can behold both of these gathering armies, see the wrongs of each, and the rights of each, and can pity and sympathize with both. They can sympathize with the poorer classes, those who have little, and have never had much, of this world's goods, and who under the clearer light of increasing knowledge on every subject, are beginning to believe that, all men were created free and equal, and to inquire why there is so unequal a division of the honors, power, and wealth, of the world as at present exists. They see that some men own tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of acres of land, which, (notably in Europe) under the Landlord system, is

rented out to the masses for as much as they are able to pay; and they inquire whether if the earth is a gift of the Creator to all men, some have a real right to so much more than they use, while others have none; and whether the land should not remain as free as God's other common gifts, air and water.

They see that something is wrong, and that the present arrangement is not entirely just and equitable. The study of their rights and the rights of others, lead them to the inquiry: How came our Landlord's right to ten thousand acres while we have none? The answer comes, it was handed down from father to son for several generations; and looking into the pages of history he finds that the present landlord's great-great-great-grand-father took it by force – or stole it – from his great-great-great-grand-father. Is it any wonder that he expects a restitution of some part of it? As surely as the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof – as surely as he gave it to the people in general, so surely when he whose right the dominion is, shall take his great power and reign, there shall be Times of RESTITUTION of all things, spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21.)

But they know not what steps to take to obtain rights, privileges, and comforts, which they believe are God-given. They see little hope of their condition bettering – rather, they fear that as mechanical inventions increase, the result will be merely to make the rich richer, which with the increased competition among skilled and common laborers, will result in bringing down wages and making the poor poorer – which means less honor, less power, less comfort.

In this condition men are easily led, by political demagogues and Socialistic enthusiasts, onward to the conflict of the "great day."

The true Church can sympathize also with the "kings, rich men, mighty men, and chief captains," in their view of the conflict. The kings and rulers of earth have so long felt themselves to be superior to their fellow men, that they find it difficult to believe that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men." (Acts 17:26.)

Did not "BABYLON THE GREAT" acknowledge their right to rule the people? Did not the Popes in crowning their ancestors, declare that they acted as God's representatives, and that really God had crowned them? Did they not declare that their reign was "by the grace of God" – a mark of God's favor to the people? Have not all the DAUGHTERS of "Babylon the Great" (all denominations of so-called Protestantism) endorsed this policy of the "Mother of Harlots and abominations"? Do not all religious people recognized as "Wise" according to the course of this world, endorse and support the same theory? Why then should these great ones give up the privileges which they esteem far more than life? Rather they will reassert and exert their power, and drive back the "common people"; if necessary, restraining them yet more, by restricting present liberties.

Surely in the conflict they will have the support of Babylon – mother and daughters, for not only are they committed to the support of the kings of the earth whom they have declared to be of God's appointment, but they are bound by closest ties of common interest to mutually support each other. Are not the nominal churches of Europe supported directly by the kingdoms of Europe?

The great and rich men of all countries are naturally led to join this same side in the battle. Their wealth, both in money and lands, has been accumulated by methods approved both by the governments and the nominal churches, whom they in turn support with it, and from whom they expect both moral and material

support and protection now. They have, perhaps, inherited their lands and the income from them for many generations, and while they have no ill-will to the tenants, they have come to consider them as semi-slaves who belong to the land. If they are manufacturers they can truthfully reason that they run risks in business and have the trouble and anxiety of its management, which should entitle them to a greater proportion of the profits than the laborer who uses his muscle only and is free from responsibility. For these reasons the rich will be on this side of the battle.

But the true Church stands separate from both these armies – sympathizes with the feelings of both, but joins neither. But she has an interest, nevertheless, in their conflict, and instructed out of the Word of the Heavenly King, she realizes what few others do, that this conflict is "The battle of the great day of God Almighty," and that "the mighty man shall weep there bitterly." (Zeph. 1:14.) It will be a day of wrath – "The great day of his wrath." He will overthrow the throne of kingdoms. (Hag. 2:22.) It is the day in which the delusions with which earth's rich men, and chief captains, or kings, and the mighty men of the nominal churches who have deceived themselves in their own favor, will all be swept away, and true rights, full liberty (to do right) and progress need no longer be fought for inch by inch, but will be firmly and forever established by earth's new King, who, at this time, takes possession of the dominion under the whole heavens. (Dan. 7:27.)

Unknown to men, he has for some time past been holding back the winds – preventing the conflict until the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads (Rev. 7:3) – given an intellectual knowledge of the things coming and their relation to the plan of God in the establishment of his kingdom. The Lord reserved until its due time that which he had previously declared through the

prophet, the means and agency in the overturning of the thrones of kingdoms – "knowledge shall be increased." [R684 : page 1]
When ready to have knowledge increased, and through knowledge liberty, the Lord brought to men the art of printing, to which, more than any other perhaps, the overturning of every form of evil and oppression among men is traceable.

We see the various battalions now making ready; the battle-line becomes more and more apparent, and the hosts are marching to their respective positions, and soon the engagement will be general.

But what about the true Church? Has she no share in this conflict? Will she have no part in this battle of the great day? Ah! here is a weak point with many: while interested in watching the world's preparations, they neglect proper attention to their own share in this battle.

– "Are there no foes for us to face?"

– "Sure we must fight if we would win."

Yes! yes!! Awake! the battle is already upon you. It begins with the house of God real, extends to the house of God nominal, and ends with the world. Be sober, be vigilant; for the fiery darts of the enemy are even now falling thick and fast about you. The battle of the great day has already commenced. The grand efforts of the adversary now, is to disarm us of our faith in the cross of Christ as the power of God unto salvation, and if possible to convert us into enemies of the cross. The alarming extent to which he has already succeeded should bid every saint that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. Never, by the grace of God, never let the banner of the cross be torn down. Evidently the "offense of the cross" (Gal. 5:11) has not yet ceased. Still, it is to the Jew [and the nominal Christian] a stumbling-block, and to the Greek [all the

worldly wise] foolishness, that the death of Christ bought for mankind life and liberty. Up, soldiers of the Cross –

"Lift high the royal banner,
It must not suffer loss."

The preaching of "Redemption through His blood – the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. 1:7) has always been opposed by the adversary, and he has ever found able assistance but never with such persistent and deceptive effort as now.

It is well that we all should clearly see the Enemy's plan of attack. His soldiers appear clad in garments of light; they even wear aloft the name of Christ, and are divided into various companies, prominent among these being "Spiritists" and "Progressive Christians" so called, but all and everywhere they may be discerned by their opposition to the Cross. Some are more open and some more wily and mild in their opposition, but all deny the ransom – deny the very foundation of real Christianity – that we "were bought with a price" even "the precious blood of Christ." (1 Cor. 7:23; 1 Pet. 1:19.)

Will the battle be hot – will many fall? Alas! yes, a thousand shall fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand. (Psa. 91:7.) A thousand to one is a very heavy slaughter, and marks the severity of the battle, but evidently pictures what we may expect before our share in the battle is complete. The thousand falling to one who will stand, is as real and truthful as the statements of the same prophet relative to the trouble coming upon the world.

Do you ask the cause of so many falling, and the means by which the few shall stand? We answer that they fall because the Apostles words have not been heeded – "Take unto you the whole armor of God that you may be ABLE to withstand in the evil day." (Eph. 6:13.) Alas! how many in the ranks have nothing but the shield of faith. The shield is very valuable, and if we could have

but one piece of armor it would doubtless be the most valuable, but unless we have more we must surely fall as this conflict progresses – we will not be "able to stand" without more armor. Ah! how much we need sandals, the preparation of the Gospel which leads us to **[R684 : page 2]** expect and enables us to endure the sharp difficulties of the narrow way unflinchingly, as good soldiers. How much we need to be girt about with truth, with the precious promises of God's word, lest we become weary and faint. How much we need to have well in hand the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, that we may be able to keep the adversary at a respectful distance. How much need there is also for the breastplate of Christ's righteousness – his merit recognized as covering our life, our vitals. How much need too, for the helmet, an intelligent hope of salvation – a head-cover.

Those who are negligent about putting on the armor, and are relying solely upon their shield of faith, to meet every attack of the enemy, are making a great mistake – As the enemy's arrows ["bitter words," sarcasm, sophistry, etc.,] are showered upon you and he presses you close, you may lower your shield for a moment to note his position, and then unless you have an intellectual apprehension of the truth – a helmet – the enemy will be sure to succeed in striking you with an arrow of sophistry. Or if very guarded about your head, and busy seeking to protect your intellect by your shield of faith, you lift high the shield your breast will be exposed, and there the arrow of no ransom will strike, unless you have on the breastplate of Christ's righteousness.

Even armed with the whole armor you will barely be able to stand – so fierce the assault. With all the armor on there are chinks and openings of various sizes in our helmets (intellectual apprehensions) which demand that we still be on our guard and cast not away our shield.

Let every soldier of the Cross put on the whole armor and see well to it that it is true steel and not mere polished tin. See that it all bears the imprint and marks of the Royal Armory – the Word of God.

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EXTRACTS FROM INTERESTING LETTERS.

Walton Co., Fla.

C. T. RUSSELL: – Dear Brother: – Please accept my thanks. I wish I could only tell you all I feel, but I cannot. The teaching of the TOWER seems to me to be the truth, and yet, so different from what I have been taught. I read, and am amazed and delighted, and frequently I am led to exclaim, Surely, surely, this must be the truth! My Father in heaven knows how I long to know the truth – I have prayed to be kept from error.

For some time I have not been satisfied with so-called orthodox teaching. It didn't seem to me to harmonize with God's Word, and although for a time I tried to keep "in the lines," I finally broke through and preached what I believed to be the truth. I have in consequence been persecuted and denounced as unsound in the faith. I became so disheartened that I meditated leaving the Baptist church. But where to go I knew not. When I came to examine, they all seemed to be afflicted with the same disease, and some worse off than my own denomination. Just then (it seemed an accident), a friend handed me, at meeting one day, a couple of Z.W.T., with the remark that as I was unsound, they would not hurt me to read them. Oh! how they stirred my very soul!

I am studying hard; if I become perfectly satisfied, I am done with sects and creeds. I have been lending the papers and circulating them about. Some of the strict ones are watching me. A

storm is brewing for me, and I am all alone; but blessed thought, God will help. Yours in Christ,

Brooklyn, N.Y.

VERY DEAR BROTHER: – I am going to write you a few lines. More and more I esteem your special work. I have been feasting on "Food," and it is rich, spiritually. When first I read of the doctrine of the presence of Christ, it was too much for me – so contrary to all I had learned in days past – but now, after months of study and meditation, I see the truth, and it is a power to the believer. Your letter of April 11th has been perused over and over, and has been of great help to me. I again thank you. The one serious and important question, if you remember, was as to how much time I should give to the Lord and how much to business. Since then, the subject has been constantly in my mind, having given it the cool and careful consideration you advised (also my method), desiring to do exactly right in the matter, desiring above all to please our Lord, and to so decide that I should gain spiritually and be enabled to do the best for others.

Well, business takes the second place, and I will give more time in studying the Word and gaining from the Lord spiritual light and direction. The Lord is revealing himself to me more and more. I pray that I may so understand him as to do the most I can to honor him in this life, to do good to all men, and "to live and move and have my being in him." I pray for wisdom, direction and blessing for you, often.

With sincere regard, your brother in Christ,

Clay Co., Dak., Oct. 14.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: – May the Lord bless you, in your work, spreading the joyful tidings of our dear Master's presence. "O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God." I have often thought of writing to you; but being a foreigner, the English language don't come as natural to me. Have had the TOWER in our house for two years, and it has been the means of opening my eyes. My heart is full of gratitude to my heavenly Father. How gloriously the dawn is breaking after such a long night of darkness! For the last five years I have been earnestly looking for the coming of Jesus my Bridegroom. My path has often been narrow and difficult. Thanks to God, I can see it clearly now. What a great privilege it is to suffer with him here and share his glory there. When your paper and Food first reached me, it seemed to me I was like Peter, who was out along with the other disciples, fishing the whole night and caught nothing. When morning came, Jesus stood on the shore and they knew not that it was Jesus, but John was the first to recognize him, and told Peter, and we know the result. So it was with me, when you told me, "It is the Lord." I believed the John class, and swam ashore. Will you please send me three copies of each number of the SWEDISH WATCH TOWER; I would like to send them to Sweden, to some persons whom I know for sure are thinking Christians and Bible students. The mite enclosed (\$5.00) will help pay some of the debt you are in for expense of the Swedish paper. I wish it could be more, but I am sure the Lord is able to provide in due time. "Be of good cheer," the help will come where we least expect it. I hope that some of my countrymen, or the Swedish saints, may be able to comprehend the glorious truth, and take an interest in the Swede TOWER. I know but two or three that really understand – they are old pilgrims. May God bless you abundantly, dear brother and sister Russell, is my daily prayer.

Your sister in Christ,

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Orangeburg, S.C.

MY DEAR BROTHER: – I am glad to tell you that I am cheerfully holding on to what I have learned of "the good (not spurious) Word of God," and am still anxiously reaching for more. I receive so much comfort from the teachings of the TOWER that I read the different issues over and over again. Indeed, so helpful is the paper to me, in the understanding of God's Word, that I look for it every time as I would for a dear friend. It is next to the Bible. I am alone as yet, but the light is certainly making some impression. Babylon is visibly unstable and corrupt; her corruption is becoming so enormous, that thinking men cannot much longer submit to it; she is actually closing her eyes and ears to known filth in her ministry, as well as laity, and her order is to "hold the fort" against the light now streaming from the Word.

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Delta Co., Tex.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER: – Some time ago, a copy of the WATCH TOWER accidentally (?) got into my house. I read it and became interested very much; have received several numbers since, and "Food for Thinking Christians." Well, what of it? I hardly know whether to accept it or reject it; in fact, I can't reject a part of it without rejecting the Word of God. I determined many years ago not to accept or reject any theory until satisfied that the Word of God sustained it. I need not tell you this motto has made me a little "weak-kneed" on some things in my church.

I have read all you sent and am thirsting for more. I handed some of the papers to friends, though that voice, "Let no man

deceive you," makes me tread cautiously; yet, "by their fruits ye shall know them" partly dispels the fear. I shall be glad if you will answer this by letter, and answer the following questions: First. Should I become convinced that yours is the true Church, and wish to join it, how should I proceed? Second. In other words, would I have to subscribe to a certain set of doctrines, the mode and design of baptism included? Third. If you have a set of doctrines your ministry are bound to subscribe to and teach, what are they? – especially with reference to baptism, its mode and design, and the conditions of pardon? I think, from what I can gather from your book and papers, that we are agreed on these things – I hope so. Can you arrange for us to have preaching on these subjects? This is, I should think, a good field of labor. Our people are ready to hear and test by the only infallible guide – the Bible. Will you please to send us, as per offer, more reading matter, especially, "The Tabernacle and Its Teachings," and whatever else you think would be good for me.

With respect, &c., I am yours in Christ,

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[Answers to the above questions will be found in the following articles of Z.W.T.: – "The Ecclesia," Sept., '84; "Our Sect," Oct., '83; "Justification Defined," Sept., '84; "The Two Baptisms," Oct., '84; "The Episcopal Church," this issue. When evidence is seen, "Be not faithless, but believing" – then courageous and faithful.]

Palmyra, Ill.

MRS. C. T. RUSSELL: – My Dear Sister in Christ: – I have longed so often to write to you, but have refrained from anything only short letters to the TOWER, on what seemed necessary. But it is almost a year since I left the M.E. Church, and myself and

husband were buried in baptism. It has been such a year of rest that I must write and tell you. Of course, we have had trials; those that once spoke well of us now say strange things, but you know all about that, for all are treated alike. We have stood on the "sea of glass" almost a year, and we are not tired yet! The Word tastes just as good – yea, it grows sweeter all the time. I do wish I knew some word to write that would express my intense love for the precious Word of God, precious because it is the revelation of himself. Several years ago I promised my Lord to do whatever I should see to be duty, regardless of others' opinions, and the Lord always gave me strength to do whatever he required. As to knowledge of Scripture, I had none only the most simple; I clung to what I had, but was afraid to try to learn more. I read my Bible just exactly as a Catholic counts his beads, in reverence and in ignorance. I was afraid to study it, because friends of mine commenced studying long ago, and, seeing the error in the church, left it, and left all. They saw the error in the church, but did not see the glory in true religion; they saw the failure of man, but did not see that God has a religion that is not, and cannot be defiled by man. I feared to study my Bible, lest I should deny the Lord that bought me, and then, of a sudden, I saw that I might study – yea, I could go down into the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and he would aid me, and there was no fear of infidelity! Could I be disobedient to the heavenly vision? nay, nay, but I could praise him continually for the great joy he has given me, the unspeakable joy of knowing him. I wish we could oftener find listening ears, for it seems so selfish to have all these precious truths and not feast our friends too; but they are suspicious of us, it is seldom they will listen, and I find it a severe trial to be quiet and learn so much and say so little. We esteem the WATCH TOWER most highly, but I cannot tell you that we swallow them all instantly; sometimes we get too large a dose, and have to wait a while and apply the test, but we search

the Scriptures daily, to see if these things are so, and it is wonderful what feasts we have, how could we have read the Bible so long and not know anything about it?

And now, dear sister, I have written this to you, because I love to commune with one of like precious faith, and hoping that it might prove a slight encouragement to you, if your arms are weary. I would help to hold them up, but the Lord will sustain you. We do not know each other, but we do know the same precious Saviour, and together we will praise him.

Your sister in the Lord,

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