

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL: – I have been led to come again to you for some advice, feeling that you will gladly spare me a few moments time from your many and arduous duties to help me in my perplexity.

In Matt. 18:7, Christ shows that snares must come and warns those through whom they come. In Matt. 13:41, the Lord again informs us that in the end of this age he will send his servants (messengers) to gather out of his Kingdom all "snares" and those who work lawlessness. The *Diaglott* shows that the "offenses" of Matt. 18:7 and the "things that offend" of Matt. 13:41 are the same words. I have been led to think that all organizations among men of these latter days having first, the hope of improvement of condition as a motive, and which second, owing to cupidity and sordidness of men, deteriorate rapidly into machines of self-aggrandizement of clique or class, belong to the "snares" of which the "overcomers" must beware and avoid. While their aims are generally honorable and satisfactory, especially at first, it seems that their methods, being largely founded on envy and strife, make them rapidly lawless institutions. The *Diaglott* shows that those who "do iniquity" in Matt. 13:41 are those who "do lawlessness." In James 3:14-16 we are admonished that the wisdom of envy and strife is "earthly, sensual, devilish," and abounds with "confusion and every [R1285 : page 14] evil work." In Eph. 5:11 we are admonished to have "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." The rapid movement now in all lines of business is to organize for protection from evils that must destroy the various lines of business unless arrested, and then to proclaim non-intercourse with those who do not come into the organization and fellowship with it in its methods. You may sympathize with the motive and aim that prompts the organization, and give them your

moral support by observing right practices, while deprecating the system inaugurated, but if you do not fall in line and aid the system, you will be persecuted. Query: Is it not the privilege and duty of those who are aiming to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," to remain outside of all these organizations, however harmless they may appear, and whatever necessity seems to demand their inauguration? It seems so to me, and yet I do not want to go to extremes, unless it is to an extreme the "Lamb" approves; and as you have unquestionably studied this feature, you can help me by your views, confirming mine, or leading me to search the Scripture again more profitably, if I am in error.

I must soon act on this question before 50 to 100 of my associates in the Insurance profession, and if I am confirmed in my present opinions, I shall decline to enter into affiliation with them, and state simply that fidelity to the teachings of God's Word prevents my doing so. This confession may open the way to some fruitful private testimony. Somehow, since I have been writing, the teachings of the Scripture quoted assure me that this is an instance where God's exhortation to "Come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6:16-18), applies. The flesh always shrinks from such ordeals, yet thanks be to God, he always strengthens us through Christ, if we but accept his outstretched arm.

The Lord is very exceedingly gracious to me, and is giving me daily "meat in due season," in things new and old, especially opening up details in many things old to us, but so new to Nominal Israel that they cannot brook them. Sr. Page shows increasing hunger for the knowledge of the truth. May the Lord grant equal zeal and earnestness to spread the "good tidings" as opportunity offers (either through favorable circumstances or watchfulness to use every means at hand).

Remember me in Christian love to all the household of faith, as well as to our dear Sister Russell.

In Christian love, your brother,

W. E. PAGE.

[We publish the above and subjoin its answer because the subject is daily becoming more important to all the saints.]

DEAR BRO. PAGE: – Yours of the 13th inst. came duly. It gives me great pleasure to note your conscientious desire to consider and to do the Master's will in all things. With the little time I have at my disposal just now, I can only answer your letter very briefly.

I think in the main you take a very proper view of the binding and fettering processes now going on. I would not be prepared to say, dogmatically, that a man could not be a member of the Knights of Labor or of some other Union, and yet be one of the "wheat" class in the barn-condition of safety; but I feel that the position of separateness from these human institutions and bondages is a safe position for the saints. This will probably be seen more in the future than at present. The present is merely an organizing time; it is in the future that the trials and testings will come. The present time is more like a period of enlistment preceding a war. While the recruiting elements are at work, with fife and drum, and with flags fluttering, many enlisting and wearing the uniform, there is little to arouse apprehension of wounds, pain and death. It is after the enlistment that the shock of battle comes. So with these societies. At present they are organizing, but by and by will begin the battle between them. I think with you that our safe position is to be as separate as possible from them all.

I am glad to hear of Sister Page's progress, as well as your own, in the way of truth and service. May the Lord continue to bless you both in wisdom, grace and love. Your brother and fellow-servant,

C. T. RUSSELL.

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MEETINGS IN TORONTO, CANADA.

At the urgent solicitation of friends in and near Toronto, the Editor of this journal has arranged to speak twice at Toronto on Sunday, Feb'y 22nd next. The hour and place will be duly announced in Toronto papers. TOWER subscribers present are urgently requested to make themselves known to the Editor.

THE ANNIVERSARY SUPPER.

The Anniversary of our Lord's "Last Supper," as reckoned by Jewish method of calculation, will this year fall on Tuesday evening, April 21st. It will be more fully announced later.
