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THE WORK IN ENGLAND.

AFTER an expenditure of considerable by the Tract Fund to get the Colporteur work started in Gt. Britain (books, etc., to the retail value of \$965.67), we have to announce that Brother Rogers, who went there for the purpose of starting it, has left the colporteur service. He assures us, however, that he has not left the Truth, and that he will still circulate MILLENNIAL DAWN, as he may have opportunity, in his new line of work.

His new plan of labor we cannot approve for several reasons. He describes it as a work of *faith*. Instead of accepting and using the sale of the DAWNS, as God's provided means for the support of the laborers in the present "harvest," he proposes to rely largely upon collections and donations from the friends. He explained to us that he proposes to work as follows: On going to a city, he will seek for any who are already interested, and expect them to hire a suitable place for preaching and to attend to his financial matters and "see that he lacks nothing," while he preaches orally. Between meetings he will call upon Christian people and talk with them privately about the Truth. If any of them inquire for reading matter on the subject, he proposes to take them the MILLENNIAL DAWN, the profit on the sale of which will go toward defraying his expenses.

Brother Rogers became so infatuated with his [R1637 : page 106] idea, that without even trying the method or writing one word about it he crossed the Atlantic to urge, nay almost to force upon us, the general adoption of this plan, instead of the present Colporteur method, which, together with the Tract work and WATCH TOWER, has been so greatly blessed of the Lord to so many of our readers. He expresses a dislike for the term Colporteur, preferring to be called a minister or preacher. We fear

that he is getting ashamed of the method which God seems specially to have used and blessed in the preaching (making known) of present "harvest" truth.

Our objections to the proposed method are as follows:

(1) We are opposed to all forms of begging – whether by word, by insinuation, by suggestive hint, by collections, or by going into a Brother's home and sitting down on him until he is forced to say, Move on.

(2) Experience, which is much better than theory, convinces us that the majority of Christian [R1638 : page 106] people are prejudiced against any religious meeting held in a hall, unless they have some knowledge of its character in advance. Consequently, a gathering of representative Christians can not be had in that way. Indeed, we find that Christians who seldom attend Church services of any kind, being prevented by family cares, and some by skepticism, are more often reached by the colporteurs and deeply interested.

(3) It is an expensive method, wasteful of time and money which could be much better spent for the service of the Truth and the praise of the Lord in the colporteur work and Tract circulation. The time spent in seeking a suitable hall and in preparing and delivering discourses, could all be used in colportering, and the expense of hall-rent, etc., be saved besides.

(4) The effects of public discourse, soon wear away, because the Scripture proofs are not so well appreciated as from reading, when the quotations, being marked and cited, can be referred to and re-read until fully understood.

(5) In a town with a population of ten thousand, properly colporteur'd, two or three weeks' effort should dispose of at least four or five hundred DAWNS, and bring it to the attention of all;

whereas the proposed plan would bring the Truth to the attention of only a few, probably circulate not above fifty DAWNS, and require much more time and expense. Experience shows that while some of the books sold may awaken no immediate interest, many of them bring forth good fruitage years after. Besides, as Brother Rogers himself has previously remarked, it seems as though the Lord is circulating the reading matter, to select and arm at once the overcoming class now, and the remainder of it to do a similar work for another class to be developed under, and out of, the great tribulation approaching. (Rev. 7:14.) See Brother Rogers' clear statement on this subject in our issue of July '93, page 194.

(6) The method proposed would debar from the privilege of the "harvest" work the majority of those now engaged in it as DAWN colporteurs; for about one-half of the number are sisters, and of the brethren very few have the gift of oratory or any of the qualifications for attracting, interesting and profiting the public by preaching-meetings.

Indeed, Brother Rogers agrees with us and many others of his best friends, that he lacks the talent of a public speaker; but he claims that the less ability he has, the more the Lord will use him in that way. He states that for this reason he never even attempts to prepare a discourse. And a similar course he urges upon others. We, on the contrary, hold that each of the Lord's servants should seek to use the talent which God *has given him*, as directed in Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-11; and that each should study how best to use his talents for the edification of his hearers. – 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Cor. 14:19.

Upon going to London, Brother Rogers started a three months' course of discourses, announcing subjects. Being from America and coming to them as a representative colporteur and instructor of colporteurs, of several years experience, commended to them by us, the WATCH TOWER readers there naturally

inferred that his oratorical preaching was part of our arranged program; and when they went to hear him some were greatly disappointed, [R1638 : page 107] and wrote us accordingly. One only recently interested TOWER reader, was quite provoked indeed, and wrote that we must have a very low estimate of the intelligence of our English readers when we sent Brother Rogers as a representative to instruct them; and intimated that not one of his audience could have made a poorer effort as a public speaker. Another wrote, Surely if our dear Brother Rogers has been used of the Lord for the blessing of others, it is not because of eloquence of speech, etc.

We replied privately to these brethren, telling them that they should not judge of Brother Rogers as a servant of the Lord by his ability as a speaker. We assured them that his *talent* consists in his ability as a colporteur and an instructor and starter of other colporteurs; and that thus his efforts had been greatly used of the Lord to the blessing of many. We assured them that we had not sent him to England as a representative orator of the truth, but as an efficient colporteur, and one, too, who we had every reason to believe held clear views of truth and who was firmly fixed upon the foundation-doctrine of the *ransom*. We asked that with this explanation they receive and honor Brother Rogers for his colporteur-work's sake (1 Thes. 5:13), and that they encourage his use of the talent he possesses while discouraging his attempt to use a talent which he does not possess so far as his best friends can discern.

Feeling it to be our duty to Brother Rogers, as well as toward the truth, we wrote to him as kind and brotherly a letter as possible, explaining the situation, urging him to specially use his great gift of *preaching by the circulation of the printed page*, and advising that he turn the remainder of the announced London meetings into Bible Study Meetings and lead them, instead of preaching; and we enclosed some of the correspondence received. We closed the

letter with an exhortation that he consider our love for him and our interest in and our appreciation of his service, and referred him to Psa. 141:5.

But the effect was the reverse of what we designed. Whether from a lack of humility or whatever the reason, Brother Rogers concluded that all who did not appreciate his preaching were devoid of spirituality. As he considered the question, he reached the conclusion that he had a mission from God to *change* the whole program of harvest work: that he should come to Allegheny, and if Brother Russell were not humble enough to accept *the Lord's message* from him, then he should do all that he could do to stop the other colporteurs from present successful methods and get them started in his untried, theoretical and mendicant method.

He came to Allegheny and stopped with us for ten days, during which time we gave him twenty-four full hours of valuable time, listening to his scheme, and endeavoring to point out its impracticability, telling him we had tried the plan in a general way before the publication of DAWN and TOWER – except that instead of depending upon others to pay the expenses, the Editor paid them himself.

Brother Rogers urged that the Lord had sent forth the early disciples without purse or scrip and had provided for their necessities, and that without books or tracts to sell, and that they lacked nothing. We answered, that God had sent out this "harvest" truth similarly from house to house, and had *none the less* PROVIDED for the necessities of all who went forth, – although in a different manner.

Brother Rogers urged that it did people good to give; that the WATCH TOWER had failed of its duty in not urging people to give; that the priests of the Jewish age lived upon the *charity* of

the people – their tithes – and referred us to the Apostle Paul's reference to the Law upon the subject in 1 Cor. 9:7-11.

We agreed that people who *give* most to the Lord's service are most blest, provided they give it of a grateful willing heart; but we pointed out the Apostle's words in the same connection – "Nevertheless, *we have not used* this power [to demand support]; but [on the contrary] suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ." "I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me." I "make the gospel without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:12,15,18.) We also showed that the priests were not permitted [**R1638 : page 108**] to squeeze the tithes from the people, that the people were free to do as they pleased, although the tenth of all increase was demanded by the Law. All of the consecrated are of the antitypical "royal priesthood" for whom God will provide, and who are to engage somehow in self-sacrifice in God's service. The saints are, therefore, typified by the tithe-takers and not by the tithe-payers; and besides, among them are *not many* great or rich – chiefly they are of the poor, rich in faith only. We assured him that we believed that we had done our full duty in placing before the consecrated *an opportunity* to share in the Lord's work through the general fund of the WATCH TOWER TRACT SOCIETY, used for publishing and circulating tracts by the million, to forward the translating of DAWN and Tracts in other languages, and to assist in colportearing the DAWNS and Tracts. Those who are of a willing mind need no prodding and, so far as we know, are doing all that they can do in this way. We have even returned money to some we had reason to believe from their own letters were giving beyond their ability. We assured him that our commission from the Lord was not to beg, or even to "make a poor mouth" to thus excite pity and draw money, but merely to preach the gospel and leave to the Lord to provide (in his own way) the things needful for ourselves and for his work.

But Brother Rogers was so infatuated with the delusion that God had given him the message for us that he declared that we were resisting God in the matter, and that he was not sure but that the Apostle Paul made a similar mistake in the method he used, as expressed in the verses to which we referred.

Finding argument of no avail, we proposed to set aside some city, large or small, in which he could make a trial of his method – provided he would make a complete demonstration and not leave the city until he had done all the work that he thought should be done there. We believed that the experiment would prove a refutation of his theory, and that thus he might be convinced that it was not of the Lord. But he would not agree to this and told us that we should live by *faith*. We replied that "our sufficiency is of God," that the Apostle also said, "Hast thou faith? *have it to thyself!*" – that we are not to have [R1639 : page 108] faith in other people's generosity and endeavor to squeeze money from them, but to have faith in God and to use the *means* which he puts into our hands, – as he (Brother Rogers) had been doing for six years in preaching the gospel by the sale of DAWN.

We bade Brother Rogers Good-bye, assuring him that so long as he continues in the Truth, trusting in the *ransom*, we will have a deep interest in his welfare, even though he take what seem to us less advantageous methods of work; that we would put not a straw in his way to hinder his service of the Lord in such a manner as his conscience would approve; and that if, when tried, his method shall seem in any degree to have divine approval we shall be glad to adopt any part that may seem to us compatible with the Lord's Word and spirit. But, meantime, we must demand the same liberty for our conscience that we accord to his. Brother Rogers assured us that he is still in perfect harmony respecting the Truth as presented in the volumes of DAWN, and that he will still be glad to use them in whatever way he may hereafter work. We assured him that we were glad to know this and that we would be

pleased to supply him what DAWNS he might desire, at the usual low rate at which we supply all TOWER readers.

We regret, however, that when he saw that his mission and theory did not move us from the method which God has so far blessed, he seemed somewhat bitter in spirit, and left us expressing his intention to see and influence as many as possible of the colporteurs. Hence the propriety of so full a resume of this matter for the benefit, not only of the colporteurs, but also of the English friends, to whom Brother Rogers hopes soon to return; – although no longer as a representative of the *Tract Society*, nor at its charges.

"As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.... But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." See 1 Cor. 12:12-18-25-29.
