

**WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.
REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DEC. 1, 1896.**

ALTHOUGH the above has been the recognized name of our Society for some four years, it was not until this year that the Board of Directors took the proper steps to have the name legally changed from ZION'S WATCH TOWER TRACT SOCIETY to that above. The new name seems to be in every way preferable.

Although disinclined to make frequent reference to the work centering in the TOWER office, lest it might be misunderstood to be boasting, we are nevertheless glad to avail ourselves of the opportunities offered us in connection with this our annual report, to lay before our interested and sympathizing Brethren and Sisters, for their encouragement, a brief summary of the work itself, as well as of the moneys expended in the propaganda. If the following statement even seem to a few to savor of boasting and show, nevertheless, it is our duty to those who have contributed the means which have permitted the work: and they represent in the aggregate a large proportion of our paying subscribers; – and the letters from those who receive the WATCH TOWER free as "the Lord's poor" indicate that many of them are equally deeply interested in the work, in its every feature. Many of these, although hindered by poverty from sharing in this work financially, have efficiently cooperated in the work as tract-distributers, etc.

The work divides itself into the following departments.

(1) The WATCH TOWER Editorial Department, to which three proof-readers lend efficient aid. Each reader must judge for himself respecting the Lord's blessing upon this department. We trust that the *study* of the TOWER by its readers gives them even half the blessing enjoyed in its preparation. The withdrawal of our "Associate

Editor" has been noted by some, so we explain now to all that this was granted at her own urgent request. She prefers to appear as a correspondent over her own signature, MRS. M. F. RUSSELL.

The growth of the TOWER list is one of the best evidences of the progress of Present Truth for which it stands as a defender and *servant*. Our friends will be glad to know that notwithstanding the money pressure of the past year the TOWER lists show an increase of the interest – although of course some "fall away" as we are forewarned to expect.

(2) The Correspondence Department, – with which is associated the keeping of accounts, attention to your orders for DAWNS, O.T. TRACTS, WATCH TOWERS, Bibles, etc. This department handled during the past year about twenty thousand of your letters and sent out thirteen thousand two hundred and ninety-one replies. This is a very important feature of the work, very helpful to many in perplexity, and, blessed by modern progress, enables us to be in touch with such as the Lord may please to direct to us from all parts of the world.

(3) The Publishing Department. – To this belongs the type setting of the TOWERS, DAWNS and OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS, contracting for paper, press-work, binding, etc. (for we save both time and money by hiring our printing and binding done). This department also includes packing and shipping of DAWNS, tracts and TOWERS by freight, express and mail. The writing of wrappers for the sending out of sample tracts and TOWERS belongs also to this department; but efficient aid in this matter has been rendered by friends at a distance, who have our hearty thanks.

(4) The Colporteur Department. – This is conducted by dear Brethren and Sisters who give, some a part, and some all, of their time in visiting house after house, and city after city, with a view to interesting fellow Christians in "present truth," respecting the Plan of the Ages, in which the divine wisdom, love, justice and power are made manifest; in showing, too, that we are now in the Millennial dawn onto

which laps the forty year "harvest" in which ends the Gospel age in a great time of trouble – social, financial and [R2077 : page 302] religious. The past year has been a very trying one upon these dear faithful "reapers," obliging several of them to temporarily seek other employment. And many who continued got so deeply into our debt that it was very trying to them as well as to us. Many of them will be made glad and encouraged to fresh energy by one item of this report yet to be mentioned. Already the prospect of "better times" is leading to new inquiries for fields of service, etc. This branch of the service continues to yield most favorable results which are, however, ably supplemented along the other lines.

Any who may have the idea that the colporteurs are in the service merely as a business, are greatly mistaken. We never knowingly encourage such, and if, by chance, they do slip into the harness, they soon become discouraged. As an illustration of the spirit which prompts the colporteurs, we will here give an extract from a letter written by one of them to a friend, with no expectation that it would ever reach your eyes or ours. The Brother is not yet nineteen years old, but since getting the Truth has caught its spirit, and with his sister is seeking to spread it. His letter says: –

"We had very poor success in selling DAWNS that day. Yet it was no more than I had expected (having been in the business before), but I think my sister was a little disappointed, as it was her first attempt, and she became pretty tired by evening. But I do not see that we should be discouraged, but rather encouraged, since we are following in the footsteps of our dear Master, and we remember how he also many times became weary, and how he sat down by the well to rest. We should be encouraged when we look at the course of Jesus and the apostles, how they went from door to door, sacrificing all earthly things, and when we remember the life of the great Apostle Paul and the sufferings he endured for Jesus' sake, working his own way as he preached.

"Now I know that the Lord is abundantly able to prosper us in this work and make it an honorable service before the world; but on the other hand I see also his plan in *not* permitting it thus. Our work of preaching is made to be dishonorable and a reproach before the world and the nominal church, that we may thus prove our love and loyalty to God and his truth, and show ourselves worthy to be of that "little flock" who, through much tribulation, shall enter the Kingdom of God. Unless we suffer with him, we cannot reign with him.

"All my brothers and sisters (ten children in our family) are studying the DAWNS and TOWERS with the Bible in hand and learning the truth as fast as they can. The death of our dear mother has also been a chastisement to father and is leading him closer to Jesus and farther from the world and its spirit."

(5) The Evangel Department. – This branch looks after the holding of meetings, to water the good seed sown by the colporteur brethren, and to refresh and assist little groups of the Lord's people, wherever accessible, and to assist them to the most profitable methods for private and social study of the Lord's Word. Of the good results of this service, as now carried on, we have constant evidence through your letters; and still we are endeavoring to make it more efficient. To the Lord of the "harvest" be all the glory, and to his people, the true "wheat," more and more blessing. The expenditure for this branch of the service is noted in the Financial Report in another column: it has been, we believe, wisely and economically used for legitimate expenses only; and, so far as we have been able to judge, has cooperated with such only as have considerable knowledge of present truth and some talent as speakers. It has been expended for meetings held in 224 places, from one day to a week at each place and from one to three meetings per day in the following States: – Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Kentucky.

(6) The Tract Distribution Department. – Every TOWER reader is desired to be an active participant in this branch of the service. Some

have more and others less opportunity for engaging in this service. The report given in another column shows that this department lagged a little this year as compared to last; probably because of the general distraction incident to the recent political campaign. However, many may now be all the better prepared to see that "*Neither* their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them" from the impending trouble, and to look for the only hope of the groaning creation.

(7) The Financial Department. – The work of course must have means or stop, as we have no power to work miracles. But it may surprise you all, as it does us at the Office, how, almost miraculously, the Lord keeps opening the way more and more from year to year. The report for this year will doubtless amaze you. It shows that notwithstanding the extreme financial depression, your increasing zeal has been blessed and used of the Lord to such an extent that we open the new year with a small balance on hand for the use of which contracts are already let. It will soon be out on its mission in the form of O.T. TRACTS and TOWERS, to be used of the Lord in reaching others of his children who are now more or less blinded by the falsities propagated by the god of this world, – to help them "out of darkness" into God's "marvelous light."

It is a rare matter for us to mention the names of the Tract Fund contributors – nor would we have space [R2078 : page 302] for them all, for our list of contributors is nearly or quite five thousand; and their donations range from half a cent per week upward. Neither do we intend now to change our rule, believing that it is best that the left hand know not what the right hand does for the Lord's cause, until the King shall make known his [R2078 : page 303] judgment, based upon the purposes and intents of our hearts. And indeed the Brother, whose name and very generous gift we will mention wrote – "I prefer you do not mention my name, unless you think that some special good would be secured. It is quite sufficient to credit it to 'A deeply interested Brother.'"

But we are not satisfied to do this for two reasons; (1) because many might say, That is Brother Russell's own gift to the work, and thus make a mistake; and (2) because we believe it does us all good to know something of the noble sacrifices of others. We therefore conclude that it will be to the Lord's glory and our readers' good for us to give you some particulars including the name, as follows.

Some time ago Brother W. Hope Hay fell heir to a fortune in Great Britain. On securing the money he invested most of it in mortgages; and being anxious to do something in the Lord's cause, he built and donated a neat little Episcopal church for the town in which he resided. About that time the Lord counted him worthy and sent him MILLENNIAL DAWN, which, as the Lord's messenger, guided our Brother to a better and more consistent understanding of the divine Word. With a heart full of thankfulness to God for "his marvelous light," Brother Hay visited us at Allegheny, looked into the work and said, Brother Russell I want to have a share in this work. By simple living I can spare \$10,000, and I want you to put it into active service in spreading the "harvest" message of divine love and wisdom to others who are yet in the darkness from which God has so graciously delivered me. Not only do I believe that this is Truth, but more, I believe it to be the very message ordained of God "to gather together his elect" unto himself preparatory to their glorification with him.

It required some time and sacrifice to get the money out of the mortgages, but it finally came. Brother Hay's idea and our own originally was to invest this money and use the interest to help defray the additional expense of making ZION'S WATCH TOWER a twelve page weekly, without increasing the subscription price. (In harmony with this thought we made quite a number of this year's issues sixteen pages instead of twelve.) But the pressure upon our time, the greater necessity for getting out additional volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN, and the growing burden of Colporteur debts has hindered. And now we have received from Brother Hay a letter directing the sale of the investments and the *direct* application of the money to the uses of

the Tract Society; part of the sum to be applied to the cancelling of portions of the accounts of burdened Colporteurs in arrears – for their reencouragement, and for the Tract Society's relief from the burden of debt, interest, etc. He remarked incidentally that he feared anyway that if the TOWER were made a weekly its important subjects would be merely *read* and not *studied*, Bible in hand, as they should be.

We in no wise wish to intimate that Bro. Hay's gift is greater in God's sight than the much smaller donations of many others less able; but we are sure that all who are in harmony with the work which God has been pleased to assign to the *Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society* will rejoice with us, and with the Colporteurs, and with Brother Hay, in view of the great blessing which, as a servant of divine providence, he has been permitted and enabled to render to the Lord's cause. And besides, while Brother Hay did not give out "of his penury" nor "all his living," like the poor widow (Mark 12:42-44), nevertheless, neither did he give this out of a vast superabundance; for in this gift he laid upon the Lord's altar (we believe) more than half of all his earthly possessions. And indeed he would have given more, had we not counseled otherwise; urging that he keep enough to maintain himself and family, so that he could give his *time* in the service of the truth. And now he is so engaged, – holding meetings on Sundays, and during the week engaged in DAWN and tract work, seeking and feeding the Lord's sheep.

DISTRIBUTING ACCOUNT.

During the year from December 1, 1895, to December 1, 1896, there have been circulated, at the expense of the Tract Fund.

Copies of the OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS.....1,134,952
 " " ZION'S WATCH TOWER..... 183,187

In view of the fact that tracts vary greatly as to the number of pages, it is customary to state their circulation by pages. The foregoing, so stated, represent a total of tract pages,.....23,978,780

The total number of copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN
 circulated by the cooperation of this Fund, but not at
 its expense, was..... 74,013

FINANCIAL ACCOUNT.

EXPENDITURES:

For Tracts and for TOWERS sent out free,.....\$8,213.48
 Labor, for mailing same,..... 485.00
 Postage, freight, wrappers, etc.,..... 747.78
 Interest paid on Colporteur accounts overdue, 555.23
 Cash paid out on account of foreign
 translations, etc.,..... 1,264.42
 Expenses of traveling Evangelists, etc.,..... 925.04
 Colporteurs' hopeless indebtedness paid off
 by W. Hope Hay's donation..... 8,847.66

 Total,.....\$21,038.61

Cash balance on hand, now being invested,
 1897 account,..... 104.49

 \$21,143.10
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RECEIPTS:

From "Good Hopes,"\$ 6,502.80
 " other sources,..... 4,850.20
 W. Hope Hay's contribution for the
 general uses of the Society, and specially
 to clear off part of the Tract
 Society's liabilities,..... 10,000.00

 Total,.....\$21,143.10
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Respecting the helpers connected with the above work we must say a word. Our office force consists of eight Brethren and Sisters and two lads, besides Sister Russell and the Editor. The amount of work turned out must be your guide as to the zeal and efficiency of these dear co-laborers. There are no "drones" among them: each labors "as unto the Lord," and seems to wish that there were more hours to each day that he might accomplish more. Indeed, strange as it may seem, we have been obliged to hinder some from overtaxing their strength in willing, joyful service to our King and to you our fellow-servants.

It will be noticed that no items of rent, fuel, gas, salaries, etc., appear in the above. This omission is not by oversight: we have no such expenses, but share the office comforts of the TOWER PUBLISHING CO., free of charge. Thus we are enabled to accomplish much more proportionately than other tract societies, much of whose receipts goes for rent and salaries.

Another matter. Not one cent of the above fund was begged or even asked for, – directly or indirectly. It was all voluntary. Those who have been truly blessed by present truth love to serve it out to others, and need no urging. They want to do what they can, and we merely show them what is being done, and consider that they and we are highly favored in being permitted to join in it. The rewards for present sacrifices and services cannot be expected now, but they will come later, – from the King of Glory himself!

The usual "Good Hope" blank goes with this issue; do not understand it as a *request*, but as a notice of *opportunity* to join in this service. Knowing in advance what the friends wish and hope to do enables us the better to regulate the work economically and efficiently.

We congratulate all of the friends of present truth upon the result of our united efforts for the year past; and trust that as our King shall pass judgment upon it he may be able to say to us each and all, – Well done, good, faithful servants, enter ye into the joys of your Lord.

Let us now unite our hearts in fervent prayer for divine wisdom and blessing for the new year, remembering each part of the work and all co-laborers in any manner associated with it.
