

JOSEPH L. RUSSELL, DECEASED.

THE EDITOR has lost his oldest, tried and true friend – his Father according to the flesh, his Brother according to the spirit; well known to quite a number of our readers. He was in his 84th year, and the burdens and disabilities of life under present conditions had gradually come to outweigh its pleasures, so that he was glad to enter into rest; – the rest that remains for the people of God.

The Editor's mother, a noble Christian woman, whose instructions and example are still fresh to his memory and will never be forgotten, died when he was but nine years old; and from that time his father filled nobly the office of both parents. His care, his admonitions, his help into paths of righteousness will never be forgotten.

But it was after we had come under the first rays of "present truth" that his fellowship became most precious. He was one of the first to accept the harvest message as set forth in ZION'S WATCH TOWER, MILLENNIAL DAWN, etc. Altho not gifted as a teacher of the good tidings, either by voice or pen, he manifested his zeal for the Lord and his cause in various ways – he loaned and gave away thousands of tracts and DAWNS, besides contributing financially for their publication. He was one of the founders of the Tract Society; voluntarily giving \$1,000 in the first subscription at its organization, – a large donation for his means. His greatest helpfulness however was in his personal encouragement of the Editor; in every visit and in every letter, he sought to "hold up our hands." This was specially noticeable at such times as the Lord permitted the great Adversary to assault the work, and the Editor as one of its representatives.

In his case we have been reminded of the Apostle's words in Hebrews 10:32-34. He had the spirit of martyrdom, and if he did not get into the thickest of the fight and did not bear the brunt of the

Enemy's attacks, he surely was a faithful encourager and "*companion of them that were so used*" and "had compassion on me in my bonds." And as the Apostle adds so add we for the encouragement of all such whom the Lord has not assigned to duty in the front of the battle: –

"Cast not away therefore your *confidence* which hath great recompense of reward." "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye ...have ministered to the saints, and do minister." – Heb. 10:35; 6:10.

Our last conversation before he became unconscious was respecting our blessed hope of eternal life through Christ, our dear Redeemer, and the promised future glory in which the Apostle intimates there will be different degrees of brilliancy, as "one star differeth from another star in glory." (1 Cor. 15:41.) Humble minded, unostentatious and neither vain nor boastful, he declared that he did not expect a great or prominent position in the Lord's Kingdom, but that he had full confidence nevertheless – not in his own perfection but in the Lord's perfection and sacrifice and love and grace, – and was confident therefore that *a place* was reserved for him, and he was satisfied to have the matter thus.

It is not for us to say what shall be his blessing and reward: the gracious Judge will esteem us none the less if our *confidence is in him*, rather than boastfully in ourselves; but we can say of father a few things without boasting of him or for him. He was a lover of [R2239 : page 5] righteousness. He walked not *after* the flesh but *after* the spirit. He was a true yoke fellow and helper in the Lord's cause. He fought a good fight – striving to conquer self-will and inherited sin and to resist the world and the devil. He kept the faith – did not deny it, – confessing it in word and deed to the very last, leaning on and trusting in the dear Redeemer. He has finished his course, and the righteous Judge, in whose grace he trusted, will grant him a goodly portion in the Father's house of many mansions.
