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WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.

– REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DEC. 1, 1898. –

WE ARE confident that many of our readers, deeply interested in the present "harvest" work are anxiously awaiting this annual report: for such reports show, as nothing else can so accurately show, the real status of the work in which you as well as we are absorbingly interested. There is a wide difference between interest and curiosity; and it is the former that we seek to serve. We seek no publicity for our affairs before the world; but feel it a privilege as well as a duty to report yearly for the satisfaction of our many colaborers, who otherwise might judge of the work merely from their own surroundings and experiences and be either unduly elated or depressed and discouraged.

It will be interesting for those of our readers who preserve and file their WATCH TOWERS to look back over these annual reports to their first appearance – for 1891. The progress for these eight years is encouraging to the friends of the truth and astounding to its enemies. The lesson is that the work of grace is progressing; for zeal must be either the result of superstition or of grace: and as it must be admitted that WATCH TOWER readers, translated out of darkness into the marvelous light of present truth, are freer from superstition and from bondage to human creeds than others, it is but reasonable to credit their zeal to growth in grace and knowledge and to increasing thankfulness for the liberty wherewith Christ makes free. [R2402 : page 369]

If each year has seemed to bring intenser trials, testings and siftings, and to inspire opponents to more bitter and yet more unscrupulous envy, hatred and slanderings, each year has also found those who are walking as "children of the light" stronger, more on the alert against "the wiles of the devil," and better prepared to resist him and his blinded servants: because better armed with the panoply of

divine truth and forewarned by the Captain of our salvation to expect such things. To such the divine promise is fulfilled so that they are enabled to realize that all things are working for good to those who love God, – the called ones according to his purpose.

For several years back we have felt (when making out these reports) that we had reached the highest limit, and that of necessity the showing of the following year would be smaller: but thus far we have been agreeably disappointed, and the year 1898 quite outranks its predecessors, as will be seen from a study of the following reports and a comparison with those of previous years.

By the Lord's favor the present year has brought to the Society the ownership of the entire plant at Allegheny: – the WATCH TOWER, the Bible House with its complete outfit of office fixtures, type, stock of Bibles, DAWNS, booklets, tracts, etc., together with tons of valuable electroplates of DAWNS, tracts, etc., in various languages. The Bible House is a four-story building, built for our use and intended from the first to be sooner or later presented to us. It is valued at \$34,000, and has against it a mortgage of \$15,000, which may remain indefinitely – the interest on it being more than provided for by extra rooms rented out. The net equity of this entire donation is appraised by the Society's Board of Directors at \$164,033.65. This much of an explanation is necessary, that you may understand the Treasurer's financial report which follows – which of necessity will assume a slightly different form from previous ones. Formerly the Tower Publishing Co. met all expenses and furnished the books, tracts, etc., to our Society at an agreed upon price: now the Society pays its own expenses, buys its own paper – in a word, does its own publishing. Formerly the Tower Publishing Co. furnished the capital, and all debts of colporteurs, etc., were owing to it: now this Society furnishes its own capital, and all such accounts are owing to it.

We have separated this special donation in the account, because it is out of the usual, and so that the records of future years may not be

overshadowed thereby. It will hereafter appear as "Plant, Real Estate, etc."

The items of borrowed money need explanation. Several friends of the cause who have already contributed liberally had money which they desired should go to this Society at their death; but they desired that it be actively in use in the service of the truth while they [R2403 : page 369] live, and presented it to us on these terms: if they should ever come to need a portion or all of it, they are to call for it – giving reasonable time. If they never need it and do not call for it, it shall at their death be credited in their names as donations. Some of these *need* interest on their deposits to live on, and get it: others do not need interest, having other income, and get none.

Envious enemies will as usual whisper that these reports and the "Good Hopes" blanks are *solicitations* for money. We deny this: we neither covet, nor ask for any man's silver or gold, and entreat that those who feel thus send us nothing. Our God is rich. He tells us that all the gold and silver are his, and we believe him. He is abundantly able to give us ten times as much annually, if he choose. What he supplies for the spread of the truth is but a drop in the bucket, as compared with the millions spent annually in the propagation of error. But we are *satisfied* and thankful, and appreciate his wisdom. We perceive that as the lack of "laborers" in the harvest-field is a call and an incentive to some to enter who would not enter if the supply were abundant, so with those who have the financial "talent" – the fact that the means for the propagation of the truth is so meager as compared with the plethora of error, furnishes opportunity and incentive to the consecrated to do with their might in this direction also. And our experience is that all who are *active* in the Lord's service, using in *love* whatever talents they possess, are the most blessed and stand the firmest. Is it then wrong for us to make known to such opportunities for service that will bring them spiritual returns and blessings? No! It is duty! It would be wrong to withhold the

knowledge and the opportunity. It would be withholding a means of grace.

Our report of the work we classify as follows: –

(1) ZION'S WATCH TOWER we esteem as a messenger used by our present King to stir the hearts and minds of his people whom he is feeding with the meat of present truth. As such it is your *servant*, and its editor rejoices greatly in this privilege. Respecting its service during the year, that is not for us to report – the Lord knoweth. We have merely done what we could, regretting that we could not serve the "brethren" more and better. We have, however, been encouraged by many letters telling us of help by the way rendered to pilgrims on the "narrow way" to the Celestial City. But we are waiting, hoping, praying and striving, trusting that the Master's decision may be, "Well done, good and faithful servant, – thou hast been faithful over a few things."

We hear almost daily of some who are deeply interested [R2403 : page 370] in these things and who long for the regular visits of the WATCH TOWER but find themselves financially unable to spare even one dollar a year. Every issue of the TOWER contains our offer to supply such, as "the Lord's poor," *free*, if they will write us to this effect, yearly. We know not what more to do for this class: those who think they can pay later may have credit indefinitely, while to the hopelessly poor it is sent as cheerfully as to those who do pay. Possibly the fact that the WATCH TOWER is no longer of individual ownership, but the property of the Tract Society may encourage more of these classes to ask that they may receive – freely.

(2) CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT. – During the year we received 29,523 letters and sent out 14,371, – our largest record thus far. We value very highly the privileges of the mail, which bring us into so close touch with so many of the Lord's people throughout the world: from your letters we are the better enabled to appreciate and sympathize with your varied experiences of joy and sorrow, your trials

and triumphs, and to reflect these in turn upon you all, through the WATCH TOWER, – blending these with the light of divine revelation through the lenses of the Scriptures, to our mutual benefit. As an evidence of the general character of much of this correspondence (that it is not merely "*business*") we note the fact that we received about twenty-five special requests for remembrance at the throne of grace each week, or thirteen hundred during the year. These are remembered regularly, specially, and are personally mentioned in prayers, in addition to our general requests for the welfare of all the Lord's flock, at our WATCH TOWER home which is on the fourth floor of the Bible House, and shared by the office assistants. Moreover, those who ask our prayers usually assure us that we are remembered in their petitions, morning and evening, daily. The very knowledge of this loving interest and sympathy is a blessing, a strength, an encouragement, and helps us to esteem our share of the trials of life as "light afflictions, which are but for a moment," designed of the Lord to "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Thus –

"We share our mutual joys, our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows the sympathizing tear."
"Blest be these ties which bind our hearts in mutual – LOVE!"

(3) THE COLPORTEUR WORK. This we sometimes describe as the Evangel branch of the work; for by it the good news is being borne everywhere, much after the manner of the work of the disciples at the first advent – when they went from house to house and from city to city to make known – the Kingdom of Heaven *at hand*. The dear brethren and sisters engaged in this service often endure hardness as good soldiers of the cross of Christ. And they need, and because of their self-sacrificing service deserve, the love and sympathy and prayers of all of the Lord's faithful people, – they have ours daily. Theirs is the pioneer work, so indispensable.

It is a mistake to suppose that this service is merely for those who are out of other employment: it is for those who seek first the King's business, preferring it to all other. These colporteurs forsake other vocations of greater ease and profit to use their talents in this fullest, best and truest sense, whether the world so recognizes them or not. Moreover, in going from house to house they get better opportunities for presenting the true gospel than can be had in any other method known to them or to us.

It will be noticed from the Secretary's report following that the number of DAWNS disposed of this year fell behind that of last year; but really the quantities were about the same – the difference being accounted for by the eight thousand copies of VOL. IV, sent to TOWER subscribers in 1897. Besides, the booklets have become quite a feature – very effective in the spread of the truth. Nor do the Colporteurs merely circulate the DAWNS: they leave tracts where DAWNS are refused, note the interested ones and call in the evenings and help them, and before leaving a city introduce them to the WATCH TOWER, or, if possible, start them as a little meeting of truth seekers and servers. God bless these noble servants! There are evidences that the improvement of times is encouraging others to enter this service with all their time.

Nor should we neglect to mention the many noble souls, whose family duties hinder continuous service for the truth, who are nevertheless doing with their might what their hands find to do, to find the "lost sheep" of Spiritual Israel and to bring them to the green pastures of present truth, and to point out to them the glories of our Heavenly King and the beauties of his Word and plan. These sent out thousands of DAWNS and booklets the past year – loaning, selling or giving them gratis, according to circumstances and judgment – together with millions of tracts. These also are faithful soldiers and overcoming, and being blessed accordingly.

(4) PILGRIM LABORS. – The "Pilgrims" are chosen from amongst those whose age, experience, knowledge of the truth, general "moderation" and ability for public speaking, and freedom from domestic cares and obligations fit them specially for their service. They visit the friends at different accessible points where there are as many as five WATCH TOWER readers and hold meetings with them – counseling them in the good way. Four brethren are continually engaged in this [R2403 : page 371] work at present, besides a number who give a portion of their time.

These take up no collections, either publicly, or privately. Their expenses are met out of the Tract Fund and are very moderate. Receive them joyfully as ministers (*servants*) of the Lord. And be prompt to avail yourselves of their ministries, for their stay will be short – from one to three days. They come prepared to speak at least twice a day, so drop other matters, so far as possible, and enjoy with them a feast at the Lord's table. Cards are sent out by the Society notifying you of the coming of these "Pilgrims." It is desirable that some, at least, of the meetings be for believers of "this way" – but you may rely upon it that any thus introduced to you by card, as "Pilgrims," are fully competent to hold public meetings that will be both creditable and profitable.

(5) TRACT DISTRIBUTION. – All WATCH TOWER readers are considered representatives of the tract work, and are supplied on application with all they can use judiciously as sample copies. Some who can and do supply the funds have fewer opportunities for tract distribution than others who are unable to contribute to the fund – and thus this service is blessedly divided. The report of our Secretary and Treasurer on quantities of tracts distributed and of the economy with which such large results were attained is surely good cause for rejoicing. No other Society in the world ever attained anything like such results at so proportionately low cost. The secret of this is, that the WATCH TOWER force labors for the love of the truth and for a

future reward – accepting merely their very moderate expenses, from the Society's funds.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified." – 2 Thes. 3:1. Very truly your brother and servant in Christ, C. T. RUSSELL, *President*.

TREASURER IN ACCOUNT DR.

To Cash on hand, Dec. 1, '97,..... \$ 191.80
 " " "Good Hopes,"..... 9,286.65
 " " Other Donations,..... 2,114.07

 Amount,.....\$11,592.52
 Special Donation: – ZION'S WATCH TOWER,
 office, plant, books, tracts, type, electroplates,
 etc., etc., including the Bible
 House building. Value, appraised by
 Board of Directors,.....\$186,000.00
 Less – Mortg. on Bible House, \$15,000.00
 Obligations to friends, 6,966.35

 \$21,966.35

Net Value of Special Donation,.....\$164,033.65

 Total Amount,.....\$175,626.17
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TREASURER IN ACCOUNT CR.

Net Appraisalment of plant, stock, cash,
 etc., approved by Audit Committee of
 Board of Directors,.....\$188,401.53
 Less – Mortgage on Bible House,.....\$15,000.00
 Obligations to friends,..... 6,453.32

 21,453.32

Working Capital, Dec. 1, 1898,.....\$166,948.21
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SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN, circulated
during the year 1898,..... 62,027
Copies of various "Booklets," circulated
during the year 1898,..... 20,658
(This department of the work is self-supporting.)
Copies of ZION'S WATCH TOWER supplied
gratis, to "*the Lord's poor*," and other
sample copies, sent out free,..... 228,313
Copies of Tracts sent out during the year,..... 2,091,875
This, represented as usual when referring
to tracts, represents tract pages,..... 40,778,102
E. C. HENNINGES, *Sec'y & Treas.*
