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INTERESTING LETTERS.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – At last I managed to get to London to see the brethren, being hindered from an earlier visit. Brother Guard very kindly provided for me whilst there. I found in London both that which cheered and that which made me sad. It may be said that there are three classes; (1) the scattered ones, whom I found generally lacking in interest; (2) a company who meet regularly in the north of London, and who reside chiefly in the West and North. Brother Sheward, as far as I could judge, is the main-stay of this meeting, which is now getting beyond things we understand; and (3) a meeting in Stratford, East London, which meets in Bro. Guard's home and is in full sympathy with the TOWERS and DAWNS. It was with these all my meetings were held. I went on the 8th of June and held meetings the same day, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, Sunday afternoon and evening, and again on Tuesday. [R2514 : page 207]

The day-time I spent looking up the odd ones, and hard work it was. London is such a big place, and some districts ten or more miles apart. I called upon our dear Brother Hart and spent some little time with him, besides seeing him three times at our meetings. Bro. Guard is another dear brother, to all appearances sincerely desirous of pleasing God. He is rather stern in countenance, but very kindly in disposition, and I believe he does his best for the brethren. We had a good time together. Our meetings were attended by forty or more people, all apparently deeply interested. I found their meetings had been, to my mind, rather too open, inasmuch as they allow interruption at any time; indeed, they had taken the form of conversation more than not. As brother Guard has some ability, I counseled him to develop the idea of worship more than they had, and let questions be asked and answered afterwards if need be. Or, in many cases it would be altogether preferable that a newly interested one should be allowed

private opportunity rather than a whole [R2514 : page 208] company should be kept waiting whilst every old question is again threshed out.

There is, as you have often said, a tendency, when one is freed from Babylon's bondage, to swing to the other extreme not only in doctrine but ceremonies, and some forget the prime object of meeting together, – worship. I am thankful to God for Bro. Guard and the dear brethren with him.

There was much to encourage one. One feels more than repaid by the hearty words "God bless you!" The brethren generally seemed helped and encouraged by my visit. Perhaps some of this was due to the form of worship we had. I judged the brethren were needing exhortation, and by the grace of God I was enabled to encourage them.

I was unable to get but a short time with Brother Sheward, but I was satisfied with even that. He was courteous, – one could expect that, – but he is developing a cynical trait of character, I am sorry to say. "I suppose you have some difference with Brother R., Brother Sheward?" "Well, yes! a little theoretically, but *practically nil.*" This I found to be quite in error, for the practical difference is as between light and darkness. He could not define his position. On my saying it was negative, he admitted that was so. He denies the "high calling;" does not know what to hope for; neither does he know his position as touching the world, thinking there is probably the same hope for it as for us now. I pointed out to him how that his philosophy left a vacuum; which he also admitted. His chief claim is that *none* have understood or been "begotten of the spirit" since the apostles' days, that Bro. R. has made a brave attempt at the elucidation of the mystery, but has failed. "Bro. R. has done a great work and is now exhausted, nothing more need be expected from him." Presumably we are to look to Bro. Sheward (seeing he is not exhausted) for any further developments of truth(?).

I should say that Bro. Sheward's theory of a spirit-begotten condition is "an ability to ring up Peter, for instance, and ask his

statement as to an interpretation, etc." So we are to come to Spiritism by a new route. What assured him chiefly was that all the company meeting with him were agreed. As I asked for some Scripture for this or that statement, he admitted he could not prove, but claimed that I must disprove. There was not much opportunity for that, he was so busy telling me of his beliefs. Well! I came away quite sad, but assured, nothing could be done while he was in the same mind. To me it is another [R2515 : page 208] case of "the wisdom of this age." What a need for those who have responsibilities to guard themselves well! I did not seek opportunities of interviewing the members of his flock. He invited me to stay over Sunday and *listen* to them when they had a better opportunity of telling me, but I declined.

It seems as if the truth received into any other than "good ground" (sincere hearts) creates an insatiable desire for new things; and if nothing *new* be forthcoming, something must be *invented*.

I will write again shortly after I have given the brethren in Liverpool a call. With kindest good wishes in the Lord, I am, dear brother,

Yours in the Lord,

JESSE HEMERY, – *England*.
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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – Your esteemed favor of the 28th was joyfully received, because you say in it you expect to be able to send to us again Brother Draper about Oct. 1st. I feel especially pleased over the prospect, and I have good reasons to believe others feel the same. He seems to possess the faculty of stirring up, and waking up, those who have the harness on, as well as comforting and strengthening those that are feeble and halting to press on and entirely forsake the old way which in almost every case is more or less the way of Babylon. I have great reasons to rejoice and be glad and thankful every day for God's loving kindness which, when seen in its purity and

grandeur, more than offsets the tribulations, trials and sorrows that surround us on all sides. But it makes me greatly ashamed of the complaining spirit that has heretofore often possessed me. I greatly desire to be separate from every defiling thing and to be clean in thought and desire as well as in person; and I freely acknowledge that your writings have opened to my view the precious, loving character of the Almighty, and of our dear Master, as no other light ever did, and have greatly encouraged me to accept the invitation to freely partake of the bountiful feast of fat things, so wonderfully brought to our view by your pen. Oh how gladly and thankfully I partake of them, and what a longing desire it has created in me to do something useful in return for these great benefits!

I will enclose a small remittance to you, not small when compared with my income, but small compared to what I would like to make it. Desiring for your complete success as heir with Christ to the Kingdom, and with Christian love to all the Church, I am,

Your brother in Him,

A. B. PERINE, – *Kansas*.

BELOVED BROTHER IN CHRIST: – It is after 11 P.M., but I must drop you a note before retiring, in reference to the meetings of Brother McPhail, the last one of which was held in Philadelphia this evening. To say we have been blessed is putting it too mildly. I believe we will all be better men and women in the Lord for what we have received of our heavenly Father through the instrumentality of this dear brother. He addressed one meeting Friday, two Saturday, and three to-day, and all the meetings were well attended, especially to-day's. Friends were here from Wilmington, West Chester, Chadd's Ford, Lansdale, Doylestown, Newport, Camden and Scranton.

During the entire series of meetings a beautiful spirit of love was in evidence. Everyone seemed to enter heartily into the spirit of the discourse, which can truly be said to have been in the demonstration

of the spirit and in power. I believe I can safely say that the past three days have been the most momentous in the experience of the brethren in this city. We feel very thankful, dear Brother, that when Bro. McPhail's route was laid out the brethren in Philadelphia were remembered.

The Lord has blest us greatly of late, and I think the Philadelphia Church is in an excellent condition spiritually – there is love, unity, and peace, as well as a deepening confidence in God's ability to make *all things* work together for our good. Excuse the haste in which this is written. With Christian love to you,

Yours,

BENJAMIN H. BARTON, – *Philadelphia.*
