

AN INTERESTING LETTER.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL: –

In the late fall of 1899 a young woman stopped in my house long enough to sell my wife a Volume I., M. DAWN, for which she was canvassing. My wife, being of the Roman Catholic faith, hesitated to read the book, and, knowing my irreligious disposition, feared to inform me of her purchase, thinking I might ridicule her action; so the book lay untouched for some months. After Christmas my wife, while engaged in making up a parcel for my relatives in a distant city, bethought herself of the book and an easy way to dispose of it, by sending to my grandmother, and thus also relieve herself one of the perplexities of Christmas giving, the religious nature of the book appealing to her idea of an aged person's disposition. I came into the room at this juncture, and, noticing the book, questioned her concerning it. On learning her intention, I explained to her the conception she had of my grandparent's disposition was erroneous, and that, instead of appreciating the gift, an opposite effect would be the case, as, to one of the old lady's temperament, it would imply that as she was now in the evening of life we felt it were best for her to prepare for the end by becoming religious. My wife saw the point, and the book was not sent, its pretty cover alone saving it from destruction as useless.

During the long winter evenings, being a voracious book-worm and tiring of the mechanical and scientific works which were my usual bent, I took up the volume of DAWN, more out of curiosity and want of something else, apparently. On reading the preface I was very favorably impressed by the utter absence of the ego most authors infuse into this portion of a book, and naturally desired to read further in the writings of so unusual a person. My mind must have been in relation to the volume in about the same condition that a soft veinless

piece of marble is to a sculptor, for each statement left an impression, each opposing thought being readily and reasonably answered and dispelled. I read on long past the usual hour for retiring, not heeding repeated admonitions from my wife that I would be late to work next morning. This continued each evening as opportunity offered, taking up each volume, (having meantime procured the same), to the entire neglect of my usual studies, and becoming more deeply impressed and enlightened as I progressed. It was truly a coming "out of darkness into his marvelous light," and the thoughts and feelings inspired in me by the reading of these volumes cannot be described; they are beyond words. It was all so grand, so reasonable, so completely filling my heart with love for the great One who alone could devise such a wonderful plan; it was so natural to believe these writings, and in all my studies from Vol. I. to V. not once did a serious doubt arise in my mind but that each statement was absolutely true, for the God of the writer was different from the horrid monster my childhood's teachers had told me of, who **[R3184 : page 127]** could torment eternally those he loved, and was otherwise so contrary and inconsistent.

Meanwhile Satan had endeavored to draw me aside, and, by the conciliatory efforts of a Roman Catholic clergyman to induce me to join myself to that faith, as well as the promise of family peace and worldly prosperity, lure me from the high calling toward which I was progressing. But I can with much fervor thank my heavenly Father that I had read enough from M. DAWN, as well as some timely advice from yourself, to be ably fortified against Satan's advances, and, with the "spirit of a sound mind," I could combat his sophistry. Now, since the light has become brighter to me, I can clearly see that God's overruling power was exerted in every instance just where I could not help myself further, and would have fallen but for his aid. Praises to his love!

Of course I could no more keep to myself these glorious tidings than a freshly opened bottle could retain the effervescent liquor that fills it. I must tell someone, and, as my dear wife not only refused to

listen but opposed me, I had to try elsewhere. In a fellow-employee, Sister Kestner, I found a ready listener, and the volumes sold to me were of double service, for her experience was but a repetition of my own. Each now was alert to spread to others the knowledge we enjoyed. Bro. Bird we found hungering and thirsting after righteousness and we proceeded to cooperate in filling him, while he, on imparting to his sister Mary what he had learned, was surprised to find that she had a set of the DAWNS, but being somewhat bound by sectarianism had not as yet mustered sufficient courage to make a bold stand for the truth and put into practice the suggestion of complete independence pointed out to present day footstep followers of Jesus as scriptural and necessary.

Sister Grebe became a fellow-employee, and it was but a short time till Sister Kestner had succeeded in bringing her into a study of God's Word as made clear by the DAWNS. We five, now all fully consecrated to God, and having publicly signified such fact by water baptism, acknowledging no Head but Jesus, are gladly working in his harvest field at whatsoever our hands find to do under his guidance; and we can with certainty attest that having tasted and seen that God is good, there is no peace or blessedness except in him; and within sound of our Shepherd's voice there is only gladness.

We have another young student with us now, and we six have been banded together in the Volunteer work this year. God's blessing has been with us and we have succeeded in reaching all the churches assigned to us, 62 in all, as well as giving our help in other parts of the city after our district was finished. We have received abundant evidence of our Master's kind approval of our feeble efforts to spread the glorious message of our Redeemer's second presence and to call his little ones out of Babylon, by the growth in Christian characteristics of love and forbearance, through the experiences while serving the brethren, also in the occasional permission to view some of the good results of our labors.

By the gracious permission of our heavenly Father we were last summer enabled to inaugurate mid-week meetings at my residence (we being so situated that it is not possible to attend the uptown meetings except on Sundays). Each one of our little class can testify to the wonderful help we receive in our daily walk up the narrow way, as a result of following the kindly suggestions which are given in the WATCH TOWER, and it is a sore trial if one of our number misses a meeting.

I close with a prayer for God's blessing on your every effort, through our blessed Redeemer's name.

Yours in Christ,

JAS. LOCKWOOD, – *Missouri*.

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