

## **WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY.**

*– DEC. 1, 1904, TO DEC. 1, 1905. –*

STRICTLY speaking, according to the terms of our Society's charter, its membership consists only of those who have subscribed ten dollars or more at one time to its funds, each ten-dollar subscription representing one voting share. Such voting shares are regularly credited in the names of the donors. And the arrangements of "Good Hopes" for a year are such that those donations during the year amounting to ten dollars or more, though paid at different times, would be credited as though paid at once. In fact, therefore, our annual reports are for these regular members of the Society. However, we recognize all WATCH TOWER subscribers as being members of the Society in a general sense – in the sense that they are interested in the work that is being carried on, and that they participate in it to the extent of the opportunities at their hand.

In the Lord's providences our talents vary, some having more, some less, of the money talent; others, who have comparatively little of this talent, possessing talents of time and opportunity for the circulation of the Truth. We are sure, therefore, that from the Lord's standpoint we may properly consider all who are truly his and walking in the light of Present Truth as being members of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY – associated and co-laboring financially and otherwise for the promulgation of the glorious message, with its light upon all the features of the divine plan – past, present and future. We are glad then to suppose that all of this class are deeply interested in every effort that is being put forth in the name of the Lord to serve his cause, and that all such at the closing of each year feel a deep interest in what our reports will show as respects the results of our cooperation.

These reports are not presented with a view to boast before the world or each other of what we are doing. The world really knows little about us and cares less, because, as the Master suggested, we are not of the world, even as he was not of the world. These annual reports are stimulating to ourselves, encouraging and helpful. Just so every business man likes to take an account of stock at the close of each year, and to ascertain just how much his business has increased or decreased, just what profits he has made or what losses he has sustained. He does not do this for the benefit of the public, but for his own satisfaction and for the guidance of his affairs during the new year.

### **YOUR INTEREST APPRECIATED**

We make up our accounts to December first instead of January first, because it makes no real difference where the year begins and ends, and because this will give you all the desired information at the time that it will be most interesting and acceptable to you – at the customary time for all to make their good resolutions for the new year. Amongst the good resolutions and plans for every year we want to put first those which affect our own spiritual interests, and, secondly, those which have an influence upon the spiritual interests of others. And indeed these interests unite, because whoever would grow spiritually must not only feed but also exercise the strength and grace already received in the interests of others.

As the years roll by, and we realize that those engaged in the service have done practically all that they have been able to do, we incline to wonder if the succeeding year would show as good results. Yet each year, all the way back, seems to have shown constant increase of work in every direction. And from one standpoint this is certainly what we ought to expect; for even though the interested ones in previous years may have done all in their **[R3680 : page 373]** power to forward the cause, to serve the Truth, to glorify our Father and Savior, yet each either finds others freshly interested or

becoming more deeply interested who should be and continually are seeking for opportunities whereby they also may serve the Truth. These rightly say to themselves, "It is the eleventh hour, and I must strive by all means to use my talents in whatever opportunities the Lord will permit me to find." These are coming nobly to the front in their departments of the service, and we frequently remark that some of the newly interested seem to grasp the Truth and to enter into its service with greater zeal than some who have possessed it for a longer time.

The explanation of this no doubt is in part that we are drawing nearer to the end of the harvest time, and that those whom the Lord is now admitting to a knowledge of Present Truth were already in training for it to some extent. Furthermore, they have a fresh blessing because of their recent reading of the DAWNS. In our experience some of the dear friends forget a great deal of what they have already read, and thus lose proportionately the zeal, the inspiration which they enjoyed at first, while the various features of Truth were more freshly in their memories. Our general advice to those who give evidence of becoming slack in their zeal, or weary in well doing, or faint by the way through manifold trials and discouragements, is that they read afresh the entire six volumes of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series.

### **ZION'S WATCH TOWER SUBSCRIPTIONS**

We estimate that the WATCH TOWER subscription list stands first as a barometer showing the general interests of the cause. Last year showed an increase of our list of about two thousand, our present list being about 22,000. We are glad that there is this increase, but it by no means satisfies us. We feel sure that if our list contained the names of all the interested ones the number would run up to 30,000 or more. We have done all we know how to do to secure the interest of the dear friends whom we have every reason to believe would be blessed by regular visits of the TOWER.

Seemingly we must leave the matter in your hands. If you receive a benefit from the reading of the TOWER, you surely will feel interested in helping others to a share in the same blessings and comforts and assistances.

Of the 22,000 subscribers \$12,128.00 were received last year. The other 10,000 represent some who advise us that they are of the Lord's poor, who cannot afford to pay for the paper; others who ask for it on credit, saying that they prefer to have it so rather than free, with the understanding that they will pay at some time in the future if ever their circumstances permit. Still others have said nothing about the matter, and as they are old-time subscribers we hold their names on our list for at least a year [R3681 : page 373] after the time paid for, fearing lest a discontinuance of the TOWER should result in an utter quenching of the evidently glimmering flame of their love and zeal for the cause. We could wish that they would at least write us yearly of their desire to have the paper continued.

The amount of money received on the WATCH TOWER account was sufficient to meet all of its expenses, and we are particularly satisfied with this, and reiterate here what we have previously said, namely, that we would like to have on our list the names of all interested in the harvest message, whether they are able to pay \$1.00 a year for it or not. It is sent with the best of good will, not only to those who request it on credit, but also to those who ask for it free without hope of ever paying. We wish that every TOWER reader would consider himself a special agent for the paper, and assure all the interested of the facts here set forth, and urge upon them that they make request for the paper, either for the money or on credit or as the Lord's poor, that our list may be as nearly representative as possible of all who are in the Truth. These *requests*, remember, should be made yearly, and are necessary as a compliance with the United States postal laws.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF TRACTS**

We place the tract distribution second amongst the evidences of the prosperity of the harvest work, not only because it represents a work that is being done amongst Christian people for the finding and garnering of the wheat of this Gospel age, but particularly because it represents the deep interest of those already enjoying the Truth, which leads to their activity in this branch of the service. We may be sure that those who contribute time and influence, as well as those who contribute money in the tract work, possess considerable of the evangel spirit – the missionary spirit – the spirit of love for God and for our fellows, who have not yet been blessed to the same degree as we in respect to the true light on the divine Word – the plan of the ages and the harvest work.

It means something that without fairs, suppers, or prizes, or the publication of names, money is sent us for this work. It means something, too, that voluntarily men and women, active in the affairs of life, set apart a portion of the week for tract distribution. That while endeavoring to be faithful in all the duties and obligations of the home and family, and while opposed by the spirit of the world in every sense of the word, these are willing to give up their time and influence to minister the Truth, in the hope of reaching the eyes and hearts of some who are the Lord's true followers – in the hope of communicating to them such a blessing as has already come to their own hearts by a clearer appreciation of the divine plan.

We are pleased that this year's reports show a marked increase in the number of tract pages circulated by you all. The figures are so large as to be beyond the comprehension of the majority of people – for this is so of all calculations running into millions. From the itemized statement you will see that the total distribution of tracts during the year amounted to 183,992,588 tract pages. Comparison shows that this is more than 56,000,000 in excess of last year's enormous output. It evidently means, either that a larger number of

the dear friends have participated in this work, in which the Lord has seemed so greatly to bless the laborers, or else it means that those who have [R3681 : page 374] been laboring have been doing accomplishing greater work than hitherto.

We advise the dear friends in every quarter to engage in this "volunteer work" of distributing tracts systematically from house to house in every city in which there are lovers of the Present Truth. And we advise the extending of your efforts to adjacent cities and towns where there are none in the Present Truth to serve them. Our experience is that those who sacrifice something in this way to raise up the standard for the people, and let the light of Truth shine out to the glory of the Father, receive a great blessing in their own hearts, a strengthening and deepening of their own faith and love. There is no compensation except that which the Lord has promised. The Society merely provides the sample tracts free to all who will promise to faithfully circulate them, the only stipulation being that the person be a subscriber to ZION'S WATCH TOWER either for pay or on the free list. All WATCH TOWER subscribers are also subscribers to the Old Theology Quarterly, for the two club together for the price of \$1.00 per year, and all subscribers are welcome to extra copies for use as samples in any quantity.

We are pleased to be able to inform you that for some reason we have had a much larger number of responses from the tract distribution than in any previous year. We are not certain how this should be accounted for. Possibly it is because the topics presented in the last distribution were more attractive, or possibly because the work of previous years has helped to awaken the minds of the people, and that now they are more ready to inquire for other reading matter. Or it may be the general trend of events in Christendom today – toward Higher Criticism, Infidelity, etc. – is awakening larger numbers of the Lord's people to think for themselves, and to be ready and hungry for the spiritual food which through these tracts we endeavor to supply to them to excite their appetites for more. In

any event you will rejoice with us that there have been much larger returns in inquiries for reading matter than have resulted from the tract distribution of any previous year.

## **THE VOLUMES OF DAWN CIRCULATED**

All cannot be colporteurs, but amongst those who are continually becoming newly interested in the Present Truth a certain proportion are able and glad to engage in the colporteur service – in the circulating of the MILLENNIAL DAWN BIBLE STUDY series. And the increasing numbers of the colporteurs means an increasing number of books circulated. We should expect that the sales of DAWNS would be larger year by year, and this expectation has been fully verified, this year being no exception to the rule. The output last year exceeded all previous records, being over 254,000; but from the figures shown in the summary of this report you will see that we have exceeded last year's numbers considerably. We find that there is practically no limit to the number of books which we can publish, nor apparently any limit to the number that can be sold when the books are properly introduced to the public.

The question before us respecting next year's output is therefore narrowed down to the number of colporteurs willing to engage in the work and their efficiency in it. We do not recommend any to engage in it who have family obligations and responsibilities, but all who are of reasonably good address and who have only themselves to care for may certainly succeed in this work, and co-labor with the Lord in the gathering of the wheat of the present harvest as well as in the development of their own hearts and characters along spiritual lines. More depends upon the *method* of approaching people and presenting the works than is generally supposed. We have gotten out some new suggestions for colporteurs which are proving very helpful, not only to new beginners but also to many who have been long in the work. This is in line with the Master's suggestion that we should be "as wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

## **THE CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT**

This department alone seems to show unfavorably as compared with last year. Notwithstanding the larger number of letters from the disinterested our total receipts of letters were fewer than in 1904. This means that our friends have written to us less frequently. We trust that it does not signify coldness or loss of interest in the Truth and in the work. Indeed the foregoing reports all indicate that your interest in the Truth was never greater than now. We must, assume, therefore, that the fewer letters received imply either that you are becoming more settled, more established in the Truth, and have therefore less occasion for making inquiries respecting it, or that, seeing the general pressure of the work, you fear to encroach upon our time, or that you are learning better each year how to answer your own questions through the use of the DAWNS, TOWER references in the Wide Margin Bibles, and through the index at its back and the index in the back of each volume of the DAWN series.

Whatever be the cause for the decline in the number of letters received from you we are glad to bear testimony to the fact that the general tenor of the thousands of letters received indicates clearly, unmistakably, that a good work of grace is going on amongst the TOWER readers. The letters we received are not merely those indicating that curiosity in the Truth has been aroused or is growing or is being satisfied by the reading matter, but they indicate that the fruits and graces of the Spirit are being developed in your hearts, and that efforts are daily being put forth to these ends. Along this line are the majority of the requests that we remember them in prayer – not so much for temporal interests as for spiritual welfare and all the experiences and testings and developments which the wisdom and love of God sees necessary. We rejoice that this is so.

We can account more easily for the decreased number of the letters sent out: First, we were for a part of the year short of help in that department, and, second, we discontinued the sending of



individual postal cards announcing the visits of the pilgrim brethren, and instead, [R3682 : page 375] during the past year and more, have been sending letters of advice to the elders of the churches or to those through whom the requests for pilgrim visits were made. Let us assure you afresh that we are always glad to have your letters, and glad to answer them as explicitly as possible. If sometimes the reply seems to be brief, merely references to DAWNS and TOWERS where you can find your questions answered at greater length, this is so not merely for the saving of time and our convenience but largely because it will be to your interest to find the full dissertations on the topic already in print, and also to your advantage to learn that nearly every question that may arise in your mind has an answer already provided, which may be found through the indexes in the back of the DAWN volumes and in the more general index in the back of the special Bibles published a few years ago.

In this connection we remark that we have abandoned the thought of getting out a new edition of the Wide Margin Bible with special references, and instead we hope to be able to announce sometime during the year a topical index with references to the Scriptures, DAWNS and TOWERS, and a Scriptural index showing where the various passages are treated or referred to in the DAWN volumes and in the WATCH TOWERS of the past ten years.

### **THE PILGRIM DEPARTMENT**

The evidences multiply which prove that the Lord's guidance was with us in the establishment of the pilgrim department of the harvest work. The dear brethren engaged in this branch of the service are such as we believe have special fitness and qualifications for the work. Their visits to the little gatherings of the Lord's people in various parts are not only interesting and refreshing to both, but we believe very profitable. The meetings held by these pilgrims in no sense of the word interfere with the Bible studies and other

meetings by which the little gatherings are locally progressing and developing, but coming not too frequently they are in the nature of special boons, special blessings, special refreshment and assistances to all. The dear friends often write us of how much they enjoy such visits, and of their desire that the stay of the pilgrim be increased, but as a rule we think it better that each little company of the Lord's people should learn how to help themselves, using the Bible studies, DAWN studies, etc., thus drawing out all the local talent possessed and using it generally.

They also tell us how much they appreciate the ministries of the pilgrims, and uniformly the testimony is that the last one is the best, the most helpful. The secret of the matter probably lies in the fact that month by month and year by year we are growing more and more in grace and knowledge of the Lord, and thus growing also in the ability to appreciate the Truth by whomsoever presented. It is the Truth that grows richer and better, and gradually we come to appreciate this fact, so that we can rejoice in and be refreshed by the water of life, whether it be sent to us by the Lord in a tin, earthen or silver vessel.

This pilgrim service is not in any sense of the word intended to be a bar or hindrance to individual efforts to serve the Truth on the part of any of the Lord's people anywhere who have a knowledge of the divine plan and are blessed with some talent in the clear presentation of it to others. We bid all such God speed, and wish them success in doing with their might what their hands find to do. We pray for them divine guidance. Since we cannot know particularly all of the dear friends in various quarters who are thus seeking to stir up their talents and to serve the Lord and his cause, it would not be appropriate for us to style them all pilgrims and to thus directly even give them the Society's endorsement. Whoever is announced as a preacher of the Truth by the Society must always be some one whose professions and character and doctrines are reasonably well known to us as thoroughly worthy of our

recommendation. This does not imply that none others would be worthy, but does mean that the dear friends in various places where they meet with such will need to exercise a still greater degree of discrimination as respects their presentation of the divine plan. Not infrequently it is today as it was in olden times, when Aquila and Priscilla were able to instruct a public preacher, Apollos more particularly, in the way of the Lord. – Acts 18:25,26.

For the foregoing reason, and because of the increasing numbers of the dear brethren in various parts who are seeking to use their talents and to serve the Lord in the giving of Chart lectures, etc., it is deemed best by the Society that henceforth none shall be announced as pilgrims under the Society's auspices except such as are giving their entire time to the pilgrim work, either as traveling pilgrims or in the office work at Allegheny, engaging in the pilgrim work on Sundays.

### **Pilgrim Work Summary**

Total number "Pilgrims".....	25
" visits made.....	1,639
" miles traveled in preaching tours.....	154,110
" public meetings held.....	1,580
" parlor meetings held with the interested....	3,159

### **NEWSPAPER HARVEST WORK**

Three newspapers of considerable circulation have been publishing "Brother Russell's" sermons weekly during the past year, besides which the friends in convention cities have secured special insertions in their local dailies. These combined represent over 3,000,000 sermons sent broadcast; and under divine Providence some results are apparent: more we shall hope to learn of on the other side the veil.

We purpose a continuance of this and all the other departments of service as the Lord of the harvest may indicate to be his will by

the opening or closing of the various doors of opportunity – financial and others. In our day the measure of opportunity for scattering the Truth is very nearly a question of the dollars at our disposal. We shall continue our course of making no appeals for money. The Lord can and will keep the throttle in his own hands and let on or diminish the financial steam as he wills, and as the interests of his "harvest work" demand. It is for him to stir the heart and loose purse strings and ours to [R3682 : page 376] serve faithfully as stewards in respect of whatever he entrusts to our care.

### **HARVESTING IN FOREIGN LANDS**

This report includes practically all of the colporteur work and tract work in Great Britain and Australia, but it does not include the circulation of free tract matter in Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, France, Italy. Some further statement of the work done in foreign countries may appear in a later issue.

While much encouraged with the work done on the continent of Europe, we are still inclined to believe that in the Lord's providence the vast majority of those who would be most susceptible to the influence of Present Truth have been gathered out of those parts to America, where they are receiving the message in many respects under more favorable conditions. Thus, for instance, although the work in Germany is comparatively slow and uphill, the numbers who are upon the WATCH TOWER list who are of German descent, as indicated by their names, would probably be one-third of the entire number. The same is apparently true of Ireland, where a comparatively small number are interested, while the representatives of this nationality on the TOWER list is very considerable.

### **SUMMARY OF THE YEAR'S OUTPUT**

Total number of DAWNS sold at or below cost..... 254,083

(These were in various languages and all in cloth or leather bindings. DAWN I. in magazine form is included in the statement of TOWERS sent out.)

Booklets sold at cost..... 28,606  
Total number of tracts of various kinds sent out.. 5,324,000  
Copies of English TOWERS sent out free,..... 318,492  
These tracts and TOWERS represent (in the usual form of stating such matters) tract pages.....183,992,588

These figures are far beyond the comprehension of the masses, but they signify an immense quantity. Under the Lord's blessing we trust seed has been planted which will bear much fruit to our Master's praise and to the profit of his true people.

The "Volunteer" work has been carefully done over a wide territory, and we are receiving more responses by mail than from any previous effort.

### **FINANCIAL SHOWING FOR 1905**

The financial showing seems small when compared with the work accomplished. That the work we are doing is very economically managed even our bitterest enemies will admit. They are continually wondering "where all the money comes from." They know something about the large sums donated and legacies left to other tract societies, supported by Christendom's millions, yet know also that our tracts and publications are seen everywhere, while those of other societies are rarely met with. The Lord's blessing and guidance and your faithful cooperation are all we boast.

We are glad to be able to report that while the work as a whole has progressed, we have been enabled to reduce the deficit of last year by nearly one-half. We endeavored to cut the expenses more closely and to have a balance to the credit of the Fund, but always



in the results of our united labors as reapers under the guidance of the great Chief Reaper. Ere long he will say, we trust to many of us, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joys of your Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

Let patient endurance work faithfully in us. A few more days or weeks or years and our trials and testings will be over and we shall see his face. Be sober, be vigilant, be zealous. The Lord and his mighty angels look on to see us finish our race with joy and to encourage and assist us, and to cause that all things shall work out for our preparation for the Kingdom.

"How light our trials then will seem,  
How short our pilgrim way,  
The life of earth a fitful dream,  
Dispelled by dawning day."

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