

## SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

There are three churches quite close to us, Free Methodists, United Brethren, and Methodist Episcopal. We were not here very long before they found out that Bro. Wagner knew something about the Bible, and the Free Methodists came and asked him to come to Sunday School and teach their Bible class. He told them if they would let him teach the way he understood the Bible he would teach, and that he would not teach anything or accept anything without a direct proof from the Bible. "Yes," they said, "he could teach that way," and he has taught it that way ever since. While some did not altogether agree with what he taught they could not find anything to disprove it and had to let it go. [R3930 : page 30] A short time after he started teaching there the United Brethren asked him to take their Bible Class also, because they heard he was so "wonderful" on the Bible, and as their school was in the afternoon and the other in the morning he could do it. He accepted on the same terms as with the Free Methodists. One of the class leaders of the M.E. Church heard so much that he came to our house to investigate, and Brother Wagner gave him a brief outline of God's plan. We gave him some tracts and he soon came back to hear more and get more to read. We gave him Vol. I. in "Scripture Studies," and he told us on Sunday night he wanted us to send for the TOWER, Diaglott and a set of the "Studies." Last Sunday, when he got his quarterly to look at the lesson he said the explanation was too "rank," and he would not go to Sunday School at all, as he said he did not have enough of the Truth to teach yet and would not teach error.

The Free Methodist minister said Sunday before last that he thought this was not suitable doctrine to teach in the Sunday School, which this M.E. class leader found out, and immediately came to ask Bro. Wagner if he would take charge of a Bible class if he started one, and teach the Truth. Bro. Wagner consented and he arranged one for last Sunday night. His brother class leader became alarmed and decided to come also and show his brother his foolishness, but after the meeting he came humbly forward and shook hands with Brother Wagner and said he had never heard anything like it and begged for permission to come again. There were fourteen at the meeting with their Bibles and all thoroughly interested. The interested had not all been notified, as the time was too short, and we expect many more next Saturday night at our house. The membership of either of these churches does not exceed twenty, so you see there is a good percentage interested in the Truth.

Your sister in his name,

S. M. W., – *Pa.*

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MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

As such I am indeed glad to address you. I am a stranger to you in the flesh, but am of "the household of faith." You have not the time to listen to my experience, for it is but one of many that you have heard and of which I trust there shall be many others. Yet it differs in many particulars. For perhaps nine years I had been seeking the truth; had seen it as a land afar off. I came up closer to it, however, after coming to this place in May, 1905, where I have been as pastor of a Baptist Church. Before coming here for a number of years I had been a student of the subject of the Lord's return, and before coming here I had come upon the

first volume of MILLENNIAL DAWN. I did not get interested in it until some time about September or October of last year, when a Pilgrim brother came and I happened in, as it seemed, being attracted by the advertisement of the meeting. There the seed was sown. I had come so far that I have concluded to resign my pastorate here. I have done it really, though unknown to all the Church, and have been for nearly two months working at my old trade, carpentering, and on the Lord's day ministering in the Truth to the people here. Circumstances are such that I cannot locate elsewhere until about the middle of November, so I shall resign here to take effect then. I am really out of Babylon, and the satisfaction is simply indescribable. I am glad to have obeyed the Master's voice.

Yours in the common faith,

\_\_\_\_\_, *Pa.*

**[R3930 : page 30]**

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

The Pilgrim service continues a source of great blessing to me, and where a request for Pilgrim visits was sent to the TOWER office I believe the visits are especially refreshing to the friends of the Truth in that locality. There, too, the spirit of love and good fellowship is more pronounced, and generally there is manifest a greater degree of zeal for the service of the Truth. Indeed, how could we expect it to be otherwise? And where Pilgrim visits are requested I find more hungering for truth, and of these it is written, "They shall be filled." They seem to show more the disposition of self-sacrifice and less inclination to criticize each other. The characteristic of contentment dominates more largely, while at the same time

they deplore their inability to do a great deal more for the Master.

Some are disposed to think their accommodations for entertaining a Pilgrim are not good enough. But I assure them to the contrary, for so often they are much better than we deserve. Our service is so easy, so devoid of weariness of mind and body, and withal so blessed and spiritually uplifting that anything the dear friends have to offer is good enough for us, and "our cup runneth over" with joy continually.

There seems one thing, however, that needs to be corrected, so far as my observation goes, and that is the bringing to the meetings of small children, who cry and fret and talk aloud and thus disturb others who are present, as well as distract the attention of the speaker, so that he cannot do justice to the occasion. Many of the friends tell me they cannot get from the service the good they would like to have gotten, because some infant or small child present drew their attention despite their effort to keep the mind on what the Pilgrim was saying. And I find, too, that the fretful child impairs the service in that the speaker's attention is drawn from his subject, and causes more or less of rambling talk and disconnected sentences, and an extra effort and weariness. **[R3931 : page 30]**

While personally I have not been troubled much in this respect, the friends tell me of many instances where the service of other Pilgrims (and in one instance your own talk) was spoiled by a fretful child.

Wherever I go, dear Brother, I hear expressions of sympathy for yourself and deep appreciation of your work and the Truth in general. I think the Church is drawing together more and more closely in bonds of love and Christian unity.

Faithfully in Christ, your brother,

J. A. BOHNET, – *Pilgrim*.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Knowing that you would be specially interested in having a more particular account of the condition of the harvest work in the Maritime Provinces than could be possible in our reports, I have thought that a letter to this end would be acceptable.

One of the most significant things noted, as contrasted with last visit, was that there seemed to be a [R3931 : page 31] greater desire to look into what, to many there, seems to be a "new doctrine." This was manifested in an increased attendance of Church members at the different meetings, who had been reading to some extent the harvest literature. The meetings were held in Presbyterian, Baptist, Unitarian, Disciple, and MacDonalite churches; also, in two instances, in Y.M.C.A. halls.

In H\_\_\_\_\_ we had quite an interesting time. The friends secured a Disciple Church for the meetings. The minister and some of the members of the committee having in charge the leasing of the Church were out of town when the permission was granted, but on the evening of the first meeting all the members of the committee were present.

I spoke on God's Plan of Salvation and was listened to very attentively, and before the close of the meeting announced another meeting for the next evening. After the close of the meeting I noticed several of the audience, who I afterwards learned comprised the committee, gathered together and conversing very earnestly. Then I saw them call the brother who had secured the hall, and begin conversation with him in a very animated manner. I scented trouble of some kind, and when it seemed opportune approached them and enquired what was the matter. One of the committee replied that in the absence of their

minister they did not care to assume the responsibility of allowing us to hold another meeting, and also said that if all the members of the committee had been at home when the application was made we would not have been permitted to have the use of the Church at all. I told them that the meeting had been announced for the next night, and that I did not see who could assume the responsibility if they did not. Then one of the committee asked why we had come to them to secure their Church – why we had not secured one of the several halls in the city. I answered that I had nothing to do with that matter, but that the reason doubtless was because our brethren were aware of the fact that the Disciple Church professed to be an unsectarian Church, having no creed, and held that all who believed in Christ as Savior and Lord were their brethren in Christ; and as their Church was the only Church of this character in the city, it was quite natural for them to ask this favor of their brethren in the cause of Christ. This had the effect of silencing the brother, and appealed to the "Disciple pride" of the others.

I then said that we recognized the peculiar circumstances under which they were placed and that possibly under similar circumstances we might act as they were doing, and on this account, to avoid getting them into difficulty, we would relieve them of any responsibility by giving up the use of the Church and would try to secure another place.

Just at this point in the conversation a man who had been listening very attentively stepped up and said, "I think you are all wasting time. The meeting has been given out for tomorrow night, and there were quite a number of strangers here who will come tomorrow expecting to hear this man, and I can't see any reason why this committee can't let the meeting be held as announced. I am not a member of the committee, but I am of the Church, and have a voice in the matter. I myself was interested in the discourse, and I want to hear the brother to a finish." This

had an instantaneous effect upon the committee, who then, after a few moments consultation, decided to let us have the Church for the next evening.

On leaving the building, a sister, who was a member of the Disciple congregation, approached me and said, "The committee did not tell you what their chief objection was to your having the use of the Church. The fact is that you are under the bann. It is reported that some time ago you spoke at a Disciple Church at P\_\_\_\_\_, and were instrumental in splitting the Church there." I told her I did speak in P\_\_\_\_\_ two years ago, but that it was in a private house, and that it was at the invitation of the President of the Women's Foreign Mission Society who had previously been reading the literature of the W.T.B. Society and had, three months before the time of my visit, withdrawn from the Disciple Church. Further, that the minister of the Disciple Church was present with several of his congregation, but that they came of their own free will. I told her further that our work, which had been going on for years, did not have the object of establishing a new sect, but simply to bring the truth within the reach of all lovers of Christ and his Word.

The next evening quite a number of the Disciple Church were present at the meeting, including all the committee. We spoke on "How to Study the Bible Intelligently," giving an outline of the ages, dispensations, etc. The interest was much deeper than on the previous evening, and I have learned since that it had the effect of awakening an inquiry concerning what was to become of those who have never had a full opportunity to be saved in the present life. The literature was taken quite freely and is being read.

At our visit to P\_\_\_\_\_ after this we found a Methodist minister who had been obliged to give up his labors

in his Church on account of physical weakness, and had on this account found time to read the DAWN series and had come into the Truth. He attended all the meetings, and expressed a desire, if his health was restored to him, to engage in some active part of the harvest work – the colporteur work preferably.

In S\_\_\_\_\_ we found a Presbyterian minister who had read all the DAWNS, and was so favorable to the teaching that he allowed us to have the use of his chapel for a public meeting. We had a very good hearing, and trust the results to the Lord's keeping.

At S\_\_\_\_\_ J\_\_\_\_\_ at one of the meetings six ministers were present. They doubtless were stirred to look after their flocks.

We found the friends in all the places were more zealous in their efforts to bring the Truth within the reach of the people, and had advertised the public meetings quite extensively. They were all very demonstrative in expressing their appreciation of the efforts of yourself in ministering to their spiritual needs; they also expressed their deep sympathy for you in your trials, and desired that we convey to you an expression of their complete confidence and full sympathy for you in all your work and labor of love. There is a great desire in all the different places to see and hear you. It would be of great help to the furtherance of the harvest message.

With Christian love to you and all the dear friends, I am, as ever, yours in Christ,

R. E. STREETER, – *Pilgrim*.

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