

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

It is with joy and thanksgiving that we report the first public meeting at this place.

There were forty-one present. Brother Sturgeon's discourse on "Where Are the Dead?" was heard with excellent attention. One lady has since attended several meetings.

During the army maneuvers last week the leader of our class gave shelter to many of the soldiers who were drenched with rain, and almost exhausted from a forced march. The family remained up all night, serving hot coffee and a lunch, the soldiers having been without food about twenty hours. The men slept on the floors while their clothing was dried by the fire. Their offer to pay was declined, as the family considered it a privilege as Christians to do these things.

When they marched away to the town the brother went with them. The sight of a church drew forth from an officer a slighting remark. The brother said he was an ambassador for Christ and could also serve them in that way. The officer called the men to "attention," and on the street the brother gave them a talk on "Restitution," which was very well received by the men.

AMY M. CLOTTREY. – Mass.

TESTIMONY MEETINGS – VOLUNTEER WORK

DEAREST BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Inclosed find report for the first half of June. Praise the Lord! The work goes forward with great force. To say marvelous results are being

accomplished now would be to put it mildly. Oh, how thankful we are and should be, and how diligent we all should be during these closing moments that no stone be left unturned by us to forward our *own part* of this glorious work! Surely everyone of the Lord's dear ones has a part, if it is only to *patiently endure* the *weakness* [R4886 : page 366] of their bodies, and comfort and pray for those a little more able in body, but no more so in spirit. *God bless* these *exhausted ones*. It is good to have them, and to see how they can be truly happy, though unable to work as formerly.

Your suggestion re "Manna Texts" being used as subjects for prayer, praise and testimony meetings is a *timely one* and a *good one*. It appears to me it will meet a favorable reception everywhere. My hope is it may become universal.

Another important matter which appears to deserve notice is that in some places the brethren appear not to appreciate the privilege of service – in "*volunteering*" in the distribution of the papers – not half as they should. *Sometimes they hire boys to do it for them*. The thought is that it would never do for them to risk their respectability by appearing on the street thus. It would endanger their popularity and thus injure their practise or trade, etc. It is, of course, all right to hand out medicine or goods to the public, "but not the *Truth*," for the world approves the one and frowns upon the other. *The boy may burn up the papers, and no one attend the meeting, and the Lord's cause languish and die, but what matters that so long as they retain their popularity and practise!*

Their sluggish consciences are in this way given another opiate and put to sleep. Evidently the thought is that the Lord is very thankful to have them on account of their attractiveness and agility in dodging the issue. Besides, in some places the papers sent on request and at considerable cost are not distributed at all. Oh, that we might see what a privilege it is to *do the work*, to "suffer with Him!" "Be not ashamed

of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be a partaker of the affliction of the Gospel." – 2 Tim. 1:8.

Thank God much is being done, but the work is not yet *at its best*. Let *everyone* put his *shoulder to the wheel, throw his popularity and pleasing personality into the wagon and, with a mighty shout*, the work will go right on to completion and to Glory.

Much love to yourself and to all the dear ones at Bethel and everywhere.

I am faithfully your servant in the Master's service,

O. L. SULLIVAN.

RE MANNA TEXTS FOR TOPICS

We learn that our suggestion has been quite misunderstood. It was that the *Thursday* MANNA texts be used as the *topic* for the Wednesday night Testimony Meetings in all the Classes.

It appears that some of the dear brethren do not grasp the meaning of the word *testimony*. Some get the thought that a little *talk* or *sermon* on the suggested text is a testimony. Not at all, dear friends. Our thought re a Testimony Meeting is that during the week *personal experiences*, associated with the text of the week, be *watched* for, and the next Wednesday be told to the Class. Perhaps our thought would be better grasped if these were called "Experience Meetings."

Such experiences are fresh and interesting – they seem never to grow stale. Besides, they are educational. We get more and better experiences out of life when we learn how to look for and note them. Try this plan!

BROTHER RUSSELL.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

May I take a few moments of your valuable time to tell you how gracious our dear Lord has been to me, and how I thank him for the work you are doing?

Last October one of your *sermons*, printed in the *Southbridge Herald* and entitled, "Where Are the Dead?" caught my eye. I read it with amazement. Never had I supposed the dead were asleep. I took my Bible concordance and looked up every reference under the word "dead." I found you were right.

I took my Bible and your published sermon over to a friend, and asked her if she had ever thought of the subject. She said she had always believed the dead were asleep, and so did her mother. Her mother was a Seventh Day Adventist. She asked me if I would not like to read some books her mother had. I said, "Yes, I am interested in religious reading."

Among the books was the second volume of the STUDIES in the SCRIPTURES. The title attracted my attention, as I had always been much interested in the time prophecies and wished I might understand them. Well, that book was a feast to me and made me long for the first volume. I determined to write the Society and see if the book was still published. The book I had was an old edition printed in Allegheny.

Just then one of the dear Colporteurs canvassed our little town and found me. Was I not answered before I had asked? I learned then for the first time that you were the author of the books as well as of the sermons. I had until then thought the book an Adventist one, and that it was only a coincident that the sermons seemed to be along the same line of thought. I purchased the first three volumes and enjoyed a great spiritual feast. I saw and understood the truth clearly, but thought myself too unworthy to enter the race.

In response to my request, my husband gave me the last three volumes as a Christmas present. I also have now THE TOWER, Diaglott and Bible Helps.

I consecrated last February and symbolized it in April. I cannot tell you the joy I have had since I found "Him whom my soul loveth." I had always been a staunch church member, but felt I was not living up to my profession. Through a deep humiliation, I was constrained to a greater hunger and thirst for righteousness. Oh, how I have been filled!

I withdrew from the church here and united with the Worcester class. The step cost me all but two of my friends here, but for everyone I lost I have gained a hundred in the Truth. Take the world, but give me Jesus. I know I am growing in the knowledge of the blessed Truth and trust, through the grace and merit of our dear Lord, to render an acceptable sacrifice.

Now, dear Brother, I wish you to take my name as one who has taken and loves the Vow. It has been such a help to me in every way, especially in governing my thoughts and words and actions.

God bless you richly for the work you are doing and grant the sermons may reach other hungry souls.

Your sister by His grace,

MRS. MABEL F. BROWN.

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AN APPROVED METHOD FOR BEREAN STUDIES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

I feel constrained to write you a few words in respect to the Berean Studies. The classes in some places are reluctant to yield even one Pilgrim address for Berean Study, saying, We have the Studies all the time, but the Pilgrim seldom.

I know just how they feel and yet those Studies are the best lessons the Church has ever had. Since they are so generally used the friends specially need the sample illustration of how they can be made both interesting and profitable. A word from you in THE WATCH TOWER, I am sure, will be appreciated and would be a great assistance to many.

When the Berean questions first appeared in THE WATCH [R4886 : page 367] TOWER they were different from what we had been forming, because I had always formed my own questions. Several times I was tempted to ignore the printed questions; yet I did not wish to do so, because, coming from you, I felt these to be additional "steps of the righteous ordered of the Lord." Now, however, having become accustomed to the Berean questions, I find them of great value and appreciate them highly. I will outline the rules I follow in Berean Studies. I will be pleased to have your criticism of them.

I do not ask the class to formulate the questions, but read the questions from THE WATCH TOWER or pamphlet. I do not address the questions to one or two of the leading ones of the class, but give them, sometimes to one and sometimes to another, reaching as nearly as possible all of the class. If someone attempts to read the answer from a book I object, reminding the one that in school as children we were not allowed to look on the book, but were supposed to have learned the lesson and to know the answer before coming to the class. The reading of the answer from the book I may call for last; or, perhaps, I read it myself, but that is after the discussion and is generally understood to be the conclusion of the lesson.

While I generally address the printed questions to individuals, sometimes I make it general and invite voluntary replies and encourage them. In some instances I have thought it advisable, for the sake of

some beginner, to formulate questions additional to those printed in order to assist in bringing out some other good points. My effort continually is to draw the answers from the class and to say as little as possible myself, except by way of recapitulation.

I believe it a mistake for the leader of Berean Study to do more talking than others in the class. If in leading I have been obliged to do most of the talking throughout I consider that lesson a failure so far as my leadership is concerned, for, if it had been profitable, the class would have been anxious to speak.

Of course, I give the class opportunity for asking additional questions in line with the printed questions of the lesson; but I do not consider these questions as addressed to me personally, desiring a personal answer, so I turn the questions, the same as the others, to the class, and seek to draw out the proper answer and to supplement the answers by some words of my own, helping to make the matter still more clear if possible.

After questions have been fully answered by the class, the leader also having given his thought, then I suggest that we call on Brother Russell to give his answer. (Then all may look in the book to note the answer given and not before.) I find it well to restate the question just before giving your answer so that the matter may be as clear as possible before the minds of all.

After hearing Brother Russell's answer I, as the leader, ask the class if there are any further remarks. Some may have occasional questions.

So far as I am able to judge, the class of International Bible Students giving most attention to the Berean Studies are spiritually and intellectually better nourished than some that are depending upon preaching. Preaching, of course, has its place; but it could not be expected that many of the dear friends have special talent along this

line – nor would many of them have much time for preparation if they had the talent.

Anyway, classes that have learned to appreciate the Berean Studies and to use them, generally give these the preference as being most helpful to growth in knowledge and in grace.

Yours in His fellowship,

JAMES H. COLE.

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