

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

MY DEAR PASTOR: –

I have just returned home, enjoying eight days at the convention. This convention was to me a great spiritual uplift, and I write to say that while I have never been in opposition to the Vow, yet had never seen the necessity of making it my own until September 4, when present at the morning prayer, praise and testimony meeting. I ask your prayers that I may be able by God's grace to keep it until I stand complete in Him.

Yours in Christ,

THEODORE ANDERSON.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Inclosed you will find something I have copied from Oliver Spencer Halstead's book. Thought you might like it for THE TOWER. F. BENNER.

"The Rev. Dr. Theodore Clapp, in his autobiography, says he had preached, at New Orleans, a zealous sermon for endless punishment; that after the sermon Judge W., who, says he, was an eminent scholar and had studied for the ministry but relinquished his purpose because he could not find the doctrine of endless punishment and kindred dogmas, asked him to make out a list of texts in the Hebrew and Greek on which he relied for the doctrine. The Doctor then gives a detailed account of his studies in search of texts to give to the Judge.

"He began his study with the Old Testament in the Hebrew, and prosecuted it during that and the succeeding year, and yet was unable to find therein so much as an allusion to any suffering after death; that in the dictionary of the Hebrew language he could not discern a word

signifying a place of punishment in a future state; that he could not find a single text in any form of phraseology which holds out threats of retribution beyond the grave; that to his utter astonishment it turned out that Orthodox critics of the greatest celebrity were perfectly familiar with these facts. [R4924 : page 430]

"He was compelled to confess to the Judge that he could not produce any Hebrew text. But still he was sanguine that the New Testament would furnish what he had sought for without success in Moses and the Prophets. He prosecuted his study of the Greek of the New Testament eight years. The result was that he could not name a portion of it, from the first verse in Matthew, to the last of Revelation, which, fairly interpreted, affirms that a part of mankind will be eternally miserable.

"The Doctor concludes by saying: 'It is an important and most instructive fact that I was brought into my present state of mind (the repudiation of the dogma of eternal torment) by the Bible only – a state of mind running counter to all the prejudices of my early life, of parental precept, of school, college, theological seminary, and professional caste.'

"How could the Doctor expect to find any such teaching in the New Testament, after he discovered that it was not found either in Moses or in any other of the Prophets? And if he could have found any passage in his Greek of the New Testament which might seem to teach what he could not find on so fundamental a matter in Moses and the Prophets, would he have accepted it as genuine?

"OLIVER SPENCER HALSTED,
"Ex-Chancellor State of New Jersey."

MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Yours dated August 9 reached me today, and I praise the Lord for all His goodness. It seems that the Lord is answering the prayers of thousands here in India. May the Father bring you speedily so that you may proclaim the glad tidings here also. It would be a great disappointment to the friends here if you should omit them. You can hold meetings in three places in Travancore. There is a little improvement in the traveling, as a motor service was recently started between three important places.

If I could know definitely about your coming here I could make arrangements for some meetings in English and also one or two meetings for the brethren in these parts.

May the Lord bless you and bring you in His own time in our midst. With love and prayers from us all,

Your brother and servant in the harvest field,

S. P. DEVASAHAYAM.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

I should like to tell you that I have made the Vow my own. I have already told you orally, but know you like to have it in writing. I have been rejoicing in the knowledge of the Truth for three years.

I took the Vow shortly after consecrating, but it is especially of help just of late. The part I find so helpful is this – "All my thoughts." I find that as surely as we think a thing, so surely, in some unguarded moment, does it come out. So with the dear Lord's help I am striving daily to cleanse my thoughts.

I would like to tell you that although I am having, and have had, repeated trials – in fact, my life from a temporal standpoint is all worry and trial – yet I would go through it all again rather than lose the

corresponding blessing. The Lord has indeed given me good measure, pressed down and running over. I do wish to be faithful unto death.

I am sure the Lord is providing good, wholesome food. I want to keep to the table He has spread, and to keep my heart in the right condition. I pray the Heavenly Father daily for yourself and all the dear Harvest workers. Rejoicing in the Lord for His goodness and mercy, believe me,

Yours in the dear Lord,

MRS. IVY FROST. – England.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Being somewhat familiar with the subject of incubation, I submit the following as illustrative of the development of the New Creature: We are not able to determine at the time of filling the incubator whether the eggs are fertile or sterile. At the first testing the sterile eggs are sorted out and removed, as they would lower the temperature of the egg chamber, not developing the degree of heat perceptible in the fertile egg.

At the next testing there are found to be eggs that were fertile and in which the development had progressed to a certain degree. Under inspection these are proved to be lifeless, the germ of the new being having died, and, further progress toward development being impossible, these are removed from the incubator, as they would not only lower the temperature of the egg chamber, but they would befoul the atmosphere. The effect of these "bad eggs" is to weaken the vitality of the live embryos.

Just before hatching time we usually again make sure that there are no "bad eggs" in the incubator, as these become offensive in proportion to their stage of development.

Does not the Lord accept to the knowledge of the Truth both naturally-minded and spiritually-minded persons? Only those actually begotten of the spirit are represented in the "fertile" eggs. But are there not many who come under the influence of the Truth who, after testing, fail to reveal the warmth and life – the zeal represented in the heat of the "fertile" egg?

When a Spirit-begotten New Creature, after having received the germ of the new being, the new mind, the mind of Christ, and after having progressed to some extent in the new life, discloses the fact that the new life has died, does he not give evidence of this fact by a course somewhat similar to the egg in the incubator? Does not the Lord find it necessary to remove such from the fellowship of those who still have the life and the vitality of the Spirit lest their coldness and general offensiveness jeopardize the interests of the other live embryos of spiritual being?

Is it not also true that the dead embryos reveal offensiveness in proportion to the advance in their stage of development? Is it not observable that the persons who were never begotten of the Spirit, even if they have been defiled by sin, never seem to reach the depths of heart-defilement revealed in those who once "tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made [R4924 : page 431] partakers of the Holy Spirit and have tasted the powers of the world to come?" This would seem to be illustrated in the difference in the measure of corruption of the fertile and the sterile egg.

Praying the Master's rich blessing upon your service and labor of love, I remain your brother in the fellowship of Christ,

W. A. WHEELER. – N.Y.

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