

1912 - VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER - 1912

WHO CAN TELL what experiences lie just before us within the portals of the New Year! Ah! 'tis better so; 'tis better that the future is open to our Lord alone, and that we by faith should trust Him for life's blessings and for a measure of the peace which passeth all understanding and which the world can neither give nor take away. It is better, too, that the trials, the difficulties, the sharp stones and thorns of the narrow way we tread are seen alone by our gracious Care-taker who has promised His faithful that all things shall be so overruled as to outwork for their highest welfare.

"My times are in Thy hand; my God, I wish them there."

But while rejoicing that God knows, not we, what lies before us of joy or pain, we may profitably retrospect the past year and begin the new one with good resolutions. Indeed, the custom of merchants to take an account of stock and to map out their business energies at the beginning of each new year is evidently a wise one which may be adapted to our still more important spiritual interests and activities.

Looking back upon the activities of 1911, we are surprised at their magnitude, and amazed that the apparently wise expenditure of so much money has not produced greater results as respects the number of those who have publicly acknowledged the opening of the eyes of their understanding. One would think that our wonderful message of the grace of God shining out as an electric searchlight would have aroused much more interest than we see manifested. One would suppose that so reasonable and gracious and Bible-harmonious a message, so widely delivered in this our wonderful day of intelligence and increasing liberty from superstition, would have aroused the world to a far greater degree than is manifest.

One lesson taught us by this retrospect is a fresh reminder that only he that hath an ear to hear can hear; and that the number with hearing ears at the present time must be comparatively small. Another lesson is that our work must be more particularly in the interest of those who believe – the workers. The wonderful opportunities presented to these for serving the Truth at the cost of self-sacrifice serves to prove their zeal, their loyalty and love for God, the brethren and the Truth. A third lesson is that the present very widespread circulation of the Truth into every nook and corner of civilization implies a general "rounding up," to the intent that not one saint in all the world shall fail to come into contact with "present truth," which, if he be an Israelite indeed, without guile, must surely prove attractive to him and thus draw him to the feast of fat things which some of us have been enjoying for years. Remember the words of the Master, "Wheresoever the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together." – Matt. 24:28.

Year after year the swing and impetus of the work has [R4937 : page 455] increased until, as the report for 1911 shows, our Society is spending nearly \$500 per day for the heralding of the Good Tidings of Great Joy. True, that sum is little compared with the estimation of the value of the Truth to our own hearts, and therefore its value to others with whom we would desire to share our great blessings of the knowledge of Divine Grace. True, our shortage of a year ago, as we predicted, was made up by the third of January; but, as the report shows, since then our expenditures have exceeded the income, leaving a much heavier deficit than ever before. We have no doubt whatever that the deficit will be wiped out; but the increase in the amount warns us that we must curtail expenses – that we are moving too rapidly. This was our Society's decision long ago: that it would work on a cash basis and avoid any danger of insolvency.

Some months ago we realized that we were going behind, and we began to put on the brakes. But the momentum was so great and the opportunities for the service of the Truth so many, that it has been difficult to know just when, where and how much to curtail most wisely

in the interest of the cause we serve. The Colporteur work is self-sustaining, except for foreign editions and "bad debts," when some of the dear Colporteurs, through no fault of their own, fail to make ends meet. Neither can we think of curtailing the Pilgrim service – so valuable has it appeared to be. Our curtailment evidently must be along the lines of the supply of free literature, and we must withdraw our offer to assist in "Class Extension," except in the providing of free literature – until we get evened up and see that the expenditures do not exceed the income. Meantime let our watchword be "faithfulness," not only in energy but in frugality. If any have literature laid by, unused, let it be brought forward; and let all orders for free literature be for no more than can and will be used faithfully and judiciously. Perhaps this is a lesson which the Lord would have us learn.

THE OUTLOOK IS PROMISING

Never has the outlook been more promising than at the opening of 1912 A.D. More than twelve hundred newspapers, whose combined circulation is probably twelve million copies, are carrying the Truth to reading, thinking people, especially in country districts. City papers are too crowded for sermons; and if they were published, the readers would not appreciate them. But the Colporteurs are reaching the people in the cities. The increased attractiveness of the books, the increased wisdom of the Colporteurs in presenting them, the increased intelligence of the people and the growing evidence that we are in the midst of a change of Dispensation – these are all very favorable to the Colporteur work; and some of the dear brethren and sisters engaged in this work are not only greatly blessed themselves, but are making their work more efficient by calling back on the interested and watering the seed sown, and starting classes of Berean students. Many are having excellent success in selling the entire six volumes with one year's subscription to THE WATCH TOWER, all for \$2.65, the ordinary price for one volume on theology.

There are good evidences both in Great Britain and America that 1912 may be our very best year yet, so far as the Colporteur work is

concerned; and for the volunteering, order all the free literature you can wisely use. If we find it necessary we will cut down the quantity sent you, but not otherwise! Let us hope that 1912 will not fall short of 1911 in the circulation of free literature.

WHAT RECENT EVENTS FORESHADOW

The confession of the McNamara brothers has made a profound impression on the social world. For several years they have been under the pay of \$1,000 per month to dynamite bridges and buildings with a view to the intimidation of capitalists and the assistance of trades-unionism. It is claimed that no less than twenty serious dynamite explosions have been accomplished through them – some say sixty. The most serious of the lot was the damage done to the *Los Angeles Times* building, in connection with which twenty-one persons lost their lives. It was hard to believe that members of our race could be so depraved and still harder to believe what trades-unionists claimed, namely, that the explosions have been caused by capitalists in order to incite the public mind against trades-unionism. Now we have the truth in the confession of the McNamaras and the implication of various prominent labor leaders.

The shock to moral sense is tremendous and is sure to cause a reactionary sentiment against all trades-unionism and socialism.

The results we anticipate are the drawing closer together than ever of capitalism and of all law-and-order people. This will mean a practical union of Church and State. Everybody not in sympathy with lawlessness will **[R4938 : page 455]** be expected and ultimately required to identify himself with the politico-religious arrangement thus inaugurated. Those who for any reason attempt to stand free and to oppose Churchianity will doubtless be seriously misunderstood and make themselves liable to hatred and persecution. Thus the readers of this publication, although the most staunch defenders of Law and Order and the most pronounced opposers of everything like anarchy, may yet find themselves branded

as opponents to law and order – just as Jesus was crucified between two thieves.

WHAT OUR POSITION SHOULD BE

The exhortation of the moment is loyalty to God and to the Truth, but great moderation and love and wisdom in every expression respecting the same. Nevertheless, even at the risk of being misunderstood, the true message of the Kingdom must be proclaimed by those who would be esteemed of the Lord good soldiers of the Cross and Ambassadors for God. But let us not forget the Master's words, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

The results of the combination will be powerful restraints upon everything supposed to effect the present social order and the ultimate results will be that this weighting down of the safety-valve will bring the great explosion of anarchy a little later on, very much as described in the volumes of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, explanatory of the Divine prophecies that our Age will end with "a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation," and that this will usher in the glorious Kingdom of Messiah.

The experience of our British friends in connection with the dock-workers' strike and the railway men's strike of last September was good. They had read of strikes elsewhere, but seemed not to dream of their possibility in Britain. The general stagnation of business for a few days opened their eyes to the fact that, prolonged a little while, it would mean starvation to thousands – so dependent are we today upon modern methods of food and fuel distribution. The British people seem to realize that a mighty struggle between capital and labor is not far distant. The working people are boasting that they realize their strength as never before, and that the next strike will be much more severe than was this one. Capitalists are saying, "It must be settled once and for all *who is master*; and next time we will resort to severer measures." This determination on both sides is what will make the crisis the more severe when it comes. Both sides will be shouting, **[R4938 : page 456]** No

quarter! No surrender! The next demonstration may be in Germany or in America.

The proper course for us is to keep close to the Lord, maintaining an attitude of humility and justice toward all – always counseling peace, never strife. Half a loaf is better than no bread. The worst government is better than anarchy. To those who expect strikes, etc., we suggest the advisability, where financially practical, of keeping a full supply of coal and of such staples as oatmeal, dried beans, etc.

However, our special concern should be to abide under the shadow of the Almighty, by abiding in His love and hence under the assurance that all shall work for our good. Then with hearts full of faith and rejoicing that the day of redemption draweth nigh, let us use our every opportunity for promoting peace and consolation amongst those of the world with whom we are in contact. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." As the time of trouble closes in, the "foolish virgin" class are to get the oil, the light; and we should be on the alert to assist them. Many of the worldly also will then be amenable to the Truth who are now deaf to it. Perhaps 1912 A.D. may be one of our most successful years for witnessing. In the meantime let us never forget that our main responsibility is in connection with our own covenant with the Lord – a covenant of sacrifice – whereby we are to make our calling and election sure. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." – Malachi 3:17.

