

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

SISTER SEIBERT TO HER FRIENDS

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:

Your recent letter of loving sympathy is received and *deeply* appreciated at this time. I want to assure you that your prayers on my behalf have been most wonderfully answered, and I am enjoying a peace of mind and heart which almost *frightens* me. I say to myself, "I did not know the Father *loved* me so!" His grace has been *more* than "sufficient," so that I have been enabled to comfort other bereaved ones in this sad experience.

I am counting my *blessings* every hour. I am so thankful my dear one was *not* taken ill three or four years ago, when I was so weak myself. Again I am so glad that he did not suffer any *pain*, which was very remarkable when we consider the nature of the disease, cancer. But this was my constant prayer, that, since he could not recover, the dear Lord would not permit him to suffer any more pain than was best for him and for me. I was more grateful than words can express because of the fact that we had the means to give my dear husband every comfort. I spared neither money nor skill nor science in order to do everything that could be done to cure him, as he was so anxious to get well. And lastly, but chiefly, I am so thankful that the dear Lord has seen fit to *hide* my dear one in the grave until "the time of His wrath be overpast," and that he has spared him the agony of witnessing my painful and probably *ignominious* death, if I prove faithful to Present Truth.

And thus, while I count my blessings, I do not sorrow as do others, but throughout these after-days I seem to hear a chime of silver bells every moment sweetly ringing the refrain, "*All that Thou sendest me, In mercy given!*"

The physicians would not tell my husband his real condition and it fell to my painful lot to refer to the matter on two occasions. I felt it was terrible to allow him to go down into death unconscious of his true condition. Yet, on the other hand, I realized I had witnessed to him daily, hourly almost, for nearly twenty years, without apparent effect. Nevertheless I determined to do what I could to help him. And therefore, about two hours before he died, when I knew he was failing rapidly, I said to him, "You are *so tired*, dear, wouldn't you like to sleep for a whole week? And how would you like to go to sleep and not waken until after the time of trouble is over?" He replied, "Oh, don't talk to me about *death*, I'm going to get well, I'm going to get well, I'm going to get well!" Then I said gently, "No dearheart, you are not going to get well; the doctors knew it from the beginning but would not tell you, and now I must tell you. Can't you thank the Lord for his goodness in saving you from pain and letting you just go to sleep? Can't you say a little prayer? Say, Lord Jesus, into Thy hand I commend my spirit?" No reply. "You are not afraid, are you, dear? Death is only a sleep. The Lord is going to let you sleep a little while and then in His due time He will call you to awake out of sleep, and the whole earth will be as the Garden of Eden, no more pain, no more tears, no more death." Still no reply. (Poor dear, perhaps he was too far gone, yet when I asked him if he knew me, he replied, "Of course, I know you, dear.")

I held both his dear hands while the cold death-stream crept higher and higher, and his breathing grew softer and softer until with a sigh he just fell asleep like a weary child upon its mother's breast. I caressed the beloved form and turning away, said, "Sleep well, dearheart, sleep well, no *dreams* disturb *this* sleep!"

He fell asleep on May 23, and on the 29th I laid him away amid the love and admiration and sorrow of the whole community, without a stain upon his reputation. I was *alone*, and had everything to arrange with respect to the undertaker and the services, but I tried to do everything as I believe he would have wished it done, without

ostentation or extravagance, yet withal in good taste and of the best and most enduring quality. I have nothing to regret, I believe I have faithfully discharged every earthly mortgage, and I trust the dear Lord will see fit to give me some further service for Him and His during the "little while" that remains for the feet members of His body!

I wished to make the funeral services my *final* witness for the Truth in this community, and requested that the Society send me our dear Bro. Woodworth to officiate. Services were held in the Presbyterian Church at Mount Union, Pa., where Mr. Seibert's family had lived. The Presbyterian minister read Scriptures selected by Bro. Woodworth. Prayer was offered by the Methodist minister, to whose church my husband's family had belonged, and to which he left a bequest of \$500. Our dear Sisters Detwiler and Virginia Noble from "Bethel" then sang "Nearer my God to Thee," my dear one's favorite hymn, and as I listened I could not help saying to myself, "Oh, that he might hear them, for he *never* heard that beautiful hymn so touchingly sung by human voice before!" (*I* used to sing it for him, but I am not a gifted singer.) Then our dear Bro. Woodworth followed with his discourse on two texts, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away," and "The ransomed of the Lord shall return," suggested by me. It was very impressive, and the audience of more than a thousand listened most attentively. I had arranged for a stenographer to take down as much as possible of what he said, and we have had it printed in the "Mount Union Times"; some of you have copies.

While the friends and audience were viewing the body, I had arranged for the two sisters to sing some sweet hymns very softly, so as to break that awful silence, that saddest moment of the whole service. They sang without the organ, "There is rest for the weary," and afterward they requested the organist to play softly our beautiful hymn, "Many sleep, but not forever." My dear one was a lover of peace, and "*a peacemaker.*" To me one of the most touching

incidents of the funeral was the presence of two editors, who had been *sworn enemies* when Mr. Seibert came to Orbisonia several years ago, walking side by side among the honorary pallbearers. He had brought them together in the bonds of peace and good-fellowship. Surely he will have little difficulty in walking up the grand "Highway of Holiness," especially with the assistance of so many dear Truth friends who appreciated his nobility of heart!

I used to tell my husband that it was pride which kept him out of the Truth, and his invariable reply was, "Why, what have I to be proud of but you!"

The floral offerings were the most lavish and beautiful ever seen in the town. At the cemetery dear Bro. Woodworth offered the most exquisite prayer I ever heard on such an occasion. Many persons referred to it afterwards, and also spoke favorably of the discourse. I trust that some good may have been done, some blind eyes opened, some weary hearts comforted that day. Both ministers asked Bro. Woodworth for some printed matter dealing with his subject. And a letter from the Methodist minister to me declared that my "manifest faith and trust had been a help to everybody." This greatly encouraged me. And further, I learned that all my acquaintances in the community *expected* that I would bear up differently from others, "*because of my faith and my religion!*" So I thanked the Heavenly Father for His marvelous fulfilment of His promises, "As thy days thy strength shall be," and "My grace is sufficient for thee," and for this opportunity to show forth the *power* of the TRUTH!

I cannot refrain from quoting here our dear Pastor's words to me. He writes, "You have my sincere sympathy. I know that you appreciated your husband very highly, as evidenced by your patient and continued devotion, not only in his illness, but at all times. I am glad that you have had the privilege of being with him to the last. I am confident that you can look forward to the future with good

assurance that he was a noble man, and that God loves such characters, even as Jesus declared of the young Hebrew who said that he had kept the Law to the best of his ability from his youth up. Of him we read, 'Jesus, beholding him, *loved* him.' We may [R5282 : page 221] be sure that the Lord has a sympathetic love for all the members of the race who have a desire for righteousness. We are so glad that the time is hastening when all such will be brought to fullest opportunity for knowing the great Redeemer and experiencing the fulness of His restitution power."

Please continue to pray for me that I may be faithful in doing His will even until He shall say, "It is enough, come up higher."

With fervent Christian love, yours in our Redeemer and King,

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT. – *Orbisonia, Pa.*

June 7, 1913.

HIDDEN PEARLS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you. My heart daily overflows with joy and gratitude when I consider our Father's abundant blessings to us. Help is provided, through the appointed channel, for every step of the way.

How eagerly we welcomed the Resolve, as just the assistance we need! I have it written on a post card – the vow on the other side – and keep it under my pillow, where I can read it as soon as I awaken. How it fortifies and helps one to be ready for every emergency! And what a grand beginning it makes to each momentous day – the wonderful, amazing days in which we live!

But I desire to tell you of the great help the little Question-books [R5282 : page 222] have been. I used them in study with another sister – all the class we have in our isolation. Some way I had looked upon them as for class study, and not for use in my private reading of ten pages a day in the STUDIES. But the Father opened my eyes to their full use.

I was unable to keep my mind fixed upon my reading as I desired; it seemed to me I was losing so much. A dear sister suggested to me, when I was out at a local convention, at Easter, to use the Questions. She was doing so with great profit. That was the key to the whole situation. There was the proper help provided, and I was not using it; hence not receiving the *full* blessing.

After that my thoughts were completely on my study, and I was not missing the point of each paragraph. I have been astonished to find what beauties of Truth – pearls of great price – were hidden in the paragraphs, that refreshed, and strengthened and cleansed me daily. So now I am eager for other dear ones to share the blessings, and whenever our Father gives me the privilege (and of late He is graciously giving me many such privileges) of meeting with His dear people, I desire to testify as to the blessing that lies in those little books.

Words fail to express the joy of fellowship we experience through the columns of THE WATCH TOWER. God bless you!

With Christian love and greetings,

HOPE TATE. – *Ont.*

SEEKING TO SERVE

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.
GENTLEMEN:

The writer had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Rutherford deliver a lecture in our city, Atlanta. Since then, I have bought of one of your agents a set of **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**. I am very much interested in them, as well as your work before the public, and will say, if you will furnish me with free Literature of any kind on this great work, it will be a pleasure for me to place it in the homes as I visit the sick each day. I feel that you are doing a great work, and one that is much needed in every home. If I can help you in any way I am at your service. I am delighted with the lectures and will appreciate any literature you may care to send.

Very truly,
L. W. WIGGINS, M.D. – *Ga.*

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THE RESULTS OF ZEAL

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY. DEAR BRETHREN:

We are very glad to know that you can serve us with more public meetings. We would be sorry to have them stop, as they are becoming interesting for the public. The audience is increasing at every meeting and more names are being handed in each time, and besides that, we are enjoying the work; so it is real harvesting and we are rejoicing in it.

In regard to the financial part, we feel that we are going to be able to meet it. It is wonderful how much we can do when the Lord is with us, and our hearts are filled with His Spirit. So, send us the brethren and the advertising matter, and we will try to do the rest.

Much love and best wishes to you all. We pray for you all, as we are sure you do for us.

Your brother in Christ,
J. L. MILLER.

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FINDS HELP IN VOW

PASTOR C. T. RUSSELL, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.
DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

I have often thought of writing you of my experience in connection with the special Vow unto the Lord, but have refrained, because I knew that your time was so fully taken up. My first thought was, It is a needless addition for the consecrated, but there can be no harm in it. How surprised I was to find what a real help it proved to be! I recommend it to all.

While our opportunities for service in this Present Truth have been limited, we have had the pleasure of seeing some brought to rejoice in the Truth, and to a full consecration in the Truth.

I append a brief history of my search for Truth:

Nineteen years ago, while associated with the Free Will Baptist people, through a study of the Scriptures, I was led to a complete consecration to the Lord, and while I kept my membership with them, there was such evident lack of consecration and the knowledge of God, that I refused to accept a pastoral work among them, working with them in evangelistic work, also with the Methodists, United Brethren, Presbyterians, and visiting among the Holiness people and the Christian Alliance people, being urged by each denomination to accept work, but not being able to do so.

I met one brother who had read the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and believed them, but he had such a wrong conception of their real teaching, that I thought they did not contain what I was looking for. Then I met the Adventist people, and as they discredited the Hell Fire teaching, and taught the truth about the nature of man and the state of the dead, I associated myself with them, and accepted a work with them, feeling that there was no need to look further; that I should have to go through alone if I did. Here I first saw that God was doing His work on time; and the thought became fixed in my mind that every true doctrine must magnify the name of God, and reveal the beauties of His character. With this thought I soon found it impossible to give myself wholly to their teachings, and as the Truth dawned on my mind and became clear to me that the Church is the Temple of God, I was convinced that the Adventist institution, with all other man-made ones, was Babylonish, and I sent my man-given credentials as a minister to those who had granted them.

This brought me to a very real sense of dependence on the Lord. I felt very much alone, but for Him. But providentially, a few days before this, a magazine copy of the DIVINE PLAN (WATCH TOWER form) was handed to me by a faithful colporteur sister. Because of the mental struggle I was undergoing in breaking previous ties, I paid no attention to it, but went and put it into the stove. Fortunately there was no fire in the stove, and after the step was taken that set me free. I went to the stove, pulled out the WATCH TOWER, and found that it was sent of God for just such a time.

I shall never be able to express my gratitude for the help the Lord has given me through the SCRIPTURE STUDIES, to you His servant; but the Lord will reward.

With much Christian love, your brother in Christ,

WM. H. BATTERSON. – *Neb.*

LUXURIOUS TRAVEL AND SACRIFICE

MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:

Before anything else let me thank you humbly and gratefully for your clear teaching on the Scriptures, and for giving it out to the world, at prices that almost any one can afford to pay.

I had practically left the English Church, and had almost given up everything, when in 1908, some copies of PEOPLES PULPIT were put into my reluctant hand. Since then, through the six volumes of STUDIES, a little more light has been coming to me all the time; and I have been trying to lead a life more acceptable to our Lord. I have been almost alone in this neighborhood, as regards believers in Present Truth, but the members of the Victoria class have held out helping hands to me. Your teaching was so new to me, that for some time I was almost afraid to accept it, as we are warned about false teachers in the latter days. But all your teaching is based on the Bible and far from smoothing or widening the narrow way, it shows us we can expect nothing else on this side of the Veil; far from teaching we can be Christians in name only, it points out that we must be Christlike in deed and thought; far from expecting popularity, we must recognize that we are a peculiar people, to be despised like our Master, and that our own individual responsibility increases, as He gives us light, and that we cannot attempt to go hand-in-hand with the world; therefore I now endeavor to lead others to read the STUDIES.

I want in all humility to ask you, How can we reconcile the description of the luxurious train, the hotel on wheels, and its places to lounge, its *chef de cuisine*, its corps of waiters, etc., with the example given us by Jesus of Nazareth? Is it not, dear brother, a pandering to the worldly spirit? It seems to me, that if Jesus had

conducted such a tour, He would have chosen a clean emigrant car, containing necessaries but not luxuries. How, too, can we reconcile the fact that when on earth He had no place to lay His head, with the fact that His chief earthly shepherd (whom He has honored as He has you, on account of your faithfulness and humility) should stay at the best hotels instead of with His humble followers? On page 31, Vol. IV, you point out that some of the reformed churches did not succeed because they "have made many compromising overtures to the world for smaller favors." Is not this a repetition of the same kind of thing? I am told that [R5283 : page 223] the newspaper men arrange these things for you, but you remind us that responsibility rests on each individual. God can take care of His work in the future, as in the past, without depending on newspaper men. I cannot understand it all, brother, and I long for a few lines from you, who have helped me so much hitherto. Vol. I, p. 199, "the consecrated, the transformed, in addition to the effort to subdue sin, must sacrifice the present good things." Vol. I, p. 203, "The transforming influences lead to present sacrifice and suffering."

Yours very gratefully,

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THE EDITOR'S REPLY

DEAR SISTER:

Yours dated June 15, I am reading on the train. I thank you for its frank statements and queries.

It is true that there were no fine hotels in our Lord's day, true that there were no railroads, and that His locomotion was accomplished partly by little ships, partly on foot and partly on an ass. Were we to follow the Master's footsteps literally, the possibilities of the present Harvest work would be much decreased. It is our thought that the Harvest of the Jewish Age was merely

confined to the little country of Palestine; whereas the Harvest of this Age, world-wide, is to be accomplished in a similar length of time – forty years.

We believe that the wonderful conveniences of our day are preparations for the Millennium, and that the Lord is not displeased with us for using these in connection with His service. Quite to the contrary, it is rather our thought that God is providing these wonderful conveniences for the very purpose of facilitating the Harvest work.

In this connection, we remember the Apostle's words which assure us that all things were given unto us richly to enjoy – to use, but not to abuse. We have an illustration of this in conjunction with our visit to India. The chief interest there appears to be in the western part, which has almost no railroad facilities. We were debating how we could procure some kind of conveyance to permit such a visit as we thought would be in the interests of the Lord's cause and not require too much time. Our queries were answered when we learned that just about ten days before our arrival, an automobile omnibus line had been established instead of a railroad.

As respects hotels: In the present instance I had no real need for a hotel because I could have stopped quite comfortably on the train. But the newspaper people handling my sermons are interested in making these somewhat of a spectacle, so that they can draw that much more attention to the sermons which they publish. In the world's estimation, a public man who is great or well thought of would be treated to the best that his friends possessed. From their standpoint, a very humble entertainment would be a low appreciation; and if his friends have a low estimation of him, the newspapers, representing the public, would size him up proportionately small, and his sermons would not be published.

The newspaper people surely deserve some consideration from me. It is estimated that my sermons weekly, through 2,000 papers,

reach 15,000,000 readers. To accomplish these results by advertising would cost millions of dollars yearly. For the privilege of preaching the glorious Gospel of the Love of God in Christ, I am not only willing to please the newspapers by going to good hotels and by long journeys to Panama, around the world, etc., but I am willing, also, to endure slanders and misrepresentations of jealous ministers who seek to prevent the publication of my sermons and the gathering of large audiences by slanderous misrepresentations of my character. Looking beyond the present, I am hoping and I am waiting for the Master's approval – "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord; thou hast been faithful over a few things."

We see no wrong in thus allowing the newspaper interest to have a say in respect to our earthly conditions when principle is not compromised. If they demanded that we should violate our conscience in respect to the publishing of the sermons, the case would be different. Conscience is not to be sold at any price. But when they arrange to give us additional comforts, we see no sin connected therewith. Rather, we remember that our Lord did not hesitate to wear a "seamless robe" in a time in which such a garment was considered extravagant, far beyond the means of the common people with whom He usually companied.

We remember, also, that while Jesus had no definite home of His own, one of His disciples, St. John, did have a home. So did St. Peter. We remember, also, that our Lord had a home whenever convenient at Bethany with Lazarus, Martha and Mary. We remember that they honored Him with a sumptuous feast and with an alabaster box of ointment, very costly. We remember that when Judas found fault with the extravagance, our Lord rebuked him and justified Mary. We remember that our Lord, on one occasion, at least, attended a wedding, and on another occasion was the guest of a rich Pharisee in one of the best homes of that time.

Respecting the luxurious train, with cooks, or chefs, attending to the food supplies: It is customary for newspaper people to use considerable latitude of language in their descriptions. It is not wrong that they call the cooks by the French name "chef"; and if anybody gets the thought that these cooks got fabulous sums for their services, as we hear that the chefs of the Vanderbilts, Goulds, etc., receive, he would be mistaken. The chefs, or cooks, on this train were brethren who availed themselves of the opportunity of a month's vacation, a convention tour, and meanwhile of the opportunity of serving the brethren on the train.

The train was described by the newspaper artist as "*De luxe*," and yet it was just such a train as everybody uses when travelling. Some of the cars were of the ordinary standard Pullman, and some of them Tourist, or cheaper sleeping cars. Of course, as your letter suggests, these friends might have gotten the use of a common box car cheaper, or they could have travelled afoot still cheaper. If they had gotten box cars and fitted them up for their use ever so crudely, with plain, wooden bunks and straw, the expense would have been nearly as great, if not quite as great, and the inconvenience much greater.

However, dear sister, I had nothing whatever to do with the making up of the train. I arranged for visits to the Bible Students of the Far West, whom I rarely have opportunity to see. My visit was in response to requests that I would come and hold public meetings. It was my intention to take the usual train service; but Brother Dr. Jones, learning of the tour, asked whether I would like to have company. I assured him that I would be glad of this.

Brother Dr. Jones then got into communication with the brethren, with the result that a train-load of friends journeyed with me. Some of them took the opportunity of meeting friends on the Western coast. All had the opportunity of fellowship with each other on the train, and at the various meetings served. They participated

in the work, too. Two of them served as stenographers; Prof. Read freely gave of his professional ability in connection with the singing; and others served as ushers; while all did their best to cheer and encourage the local Bible Students in the various cities visited. Additionally, considerable volunteering with free literature was done.

We are in danger, dear sister, of getting a wrong view of what is meant by suffering with Christ. If we merely think of the Master's sufferings as those of weariness of the flesh, wearing sandals instead of shoes, and walking instead of riding, we shall be gradually led up to the same extremes of error which prevailed during the Dark Ages, and which to some extent still prevail amongst our Catholic brethren. Some of these attempt to have greater sufferings than Jesus had by going barefooted, or by whipping themselves torturously and then wearing hair-cloth jackets to increase the pain, as the hair jags the sore flesh, causing it to fester. These, they think, are sufferings of Christ.

Gradually both Catholics and Protestants are seeing to the contrary. Jesus used the best roads and best means of His time. His sufferings were especially through the opposition of His foes in that He was despised and rejected of men. He was slandered, and "when He was reviled, reviled not again." He endured these things patiently for the Truth's sake, and thus set us an example to walk in His steps, similarly enduring worldly contradictions, oppositions, slanders, for the sake of the brethren.

I trust, dear sister, that you will not stumble over the means which the Lord is using in this Harvest time to promulgate the Message of the hour, one to awaken His people and to guide them to better methods of Bible study. But even if you cannot see eye to eye with us, do not stumble yourself, but remember that to his own Master each servant stands or falls. Take all the blessings from our ministry that you can get, and leave the remainder of the matters

which you cannot understand to God. In other words, let us more and more realize that God Himself is guiding His own work; and that whatever blessing we may obtain we should be thankful to Him for the same.

With much Christian love,

Your brother and servant in the Lord,

C. T. RUSSELL.

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