

INTERESTING LETTERS

NEWS FROM FRENCH BIBLE STUDENTS

I would be very grateful if you would kindly send me some tracts for distribution among sorrowing hearts, as the poor world is getting disheartened, and this is the right time for presenting to them the Gospel Message. I have already made several such distributions, for which the people were very glad, several of them saying they wished they were already living in that glorious Day. God's Word alone can bring them comfort. – JULES ROY.

Soon an era of righteousness shall be established by Christ and His Bride, of whom we are invited to become a part. What a comfort this thought is to me through all the dangers of this hour! Here new opportunities are afforded me to bring this precious message to the friends – soldiers of my regiment. Now, as soon as I receive the TOWER, some of them want to read it ahead of me. They read also Vol. 1 of the STUDIES from time to time. – ELIE MALINGRAT.

I wish to inform you of the departure of Brother Louis Durieu for the Orient (Dardanelles). Being told to start without delay for Marseilles (where he probably still is), he was unable to write to you himself of his going, and thus to present you his brotherly regards. I was much delighted at the real comfort I derived from reading in the last TOWER that marvelous page about Love. May the Lord bless it for all the Divine Israel! – ELISEE TRULEUX

I am glad to be able to write to you these lines to express my great joy at receiving THE WATCH TOWER (French), which is so interesting and comforting in the troublous times now upon us! What a peace fills our hearts when everything is crashing about us! By the grace of God strengthening us, we are enabled to endure

with patience and perseverance the greatest trials permitted of Him for our spiritual welfare. Yes, we can love and praise our good Heavenly Father for His many blessings. – M. NONGAILLARD.

We are very happy here at C_____ (near Dunkirk), being able to devote ourselves freely to holy study during the short time permitted us here below, and we pray the Lord to strengthen our faith upon the solid foundation of Present Truth, so as to better resist the tumultuous current beating about. – H. ROUSSEL.

Here in Liege (Belgium) everything is well in a temporal way, but God has blessed us still more spiritually. As you know, our meetings have never been interrupted. They still take place every Sunday in our hall at the Hawirs, and every Thursday at home. During the first three months of the war we had four meetings a week. Now, work is going on again in all the coal mines and we have been abundantly blessed. – F. PETRIE.

We thank the Lord more and more for having raised Pastor Russell and his valiant fellow-servants, through whom He has so generously and mercifully blessed us. We remember daily before the Throne of Heavenly Grace the great help you lend to the good "grain" already garnered, as well as pray God to strengthen and sustain you by His all-powerful arm in the good fight you have undertaken; also for the cause of Truth for which you have vowed to be faithful unto death, on behalf of all the brethren and sisters. – VICTOR RANDOUR. *The following letters from brethren who are prisoners in Germany:*

I have had the opportunity to preside at a meeting participated in by more than one hundred people. Helping me were some friends who had also studied the first and second volumes of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, as well as some tracts. With God's assistance, I have been enabled to give my experience before all the Protestants in the camp. The aforesaid friends left in March, I being sick at the time. Since then I have worked to spread the

good tidings of the Kingdom. "Do as occasion serve thee, for God is with thee." (1 Samuel 10:7.) I want to work for the Lord, and may His grace be with me! – FREDERIC POLLARD.

With much joy I have received the books you forwarded me. I have read and studied them without ceasing, having asked of our brother J. H. his help to that extent. I have understood and I am following. What is necessary is to win the final victory. The contents of the books, where followed, cause a lasting effect. It is a meat that does not decay. – L. FLAMME (newly interested).

I have received news of my wife and relatives in Rouboix (invaded territory); they are in good health, and so are the dear brethren and sisters there. I see that the Lord knows how to keep His own through all their difficulties, and I pray Him to give each of His beloved children the needed strength to bear every other trial that may still be in store in this evil day. Kindly send me some tracts and booklets, and also, if possible, some English and German tracts for distribution. I thank you for the tracts received and the card, "My Morning Resolve." – JEAN HER.

SCRIPTURE PRECEDENTS FOLLOWED

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Some time ago I read in THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY of a suit you had entered against Rev. J. J. Ross in Canada.

Now, I am only a humble seeker after truth, and I cannot criticize you, because I have not sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures to do so. There is, however, one point I would like to have cleared up; and if you would be so good as to take up a few lines in THE WATCH TOWER to answer me, I am sure it would

do not only me a lot of good, but others also who may have given the matter serious thought.

The question is, dear Pastor, how could you as a follower of Jesus bring suit against a fellow creature, no matter how vilely he talked about you or your work?

You know how our Savior was talked about, and aside from a rebuke He did nothing. At least, He never sought redress through any legal agency. **[R5782 : page 303]**

I despise the clerical profession, because I know them to be liars and parasites, who suck a fat living from the parish; that is, a good part of them. Of course, there are many noble, misled men amongst them; and I am sure they will be rewarded for whatever good they may have done.

Please, dear Pastor, will you not answer one who is sorely troubled – one who believes your work the grandest ever undertaken, and who loves God and His people, although he feels himself an unworthy sinner – one who hates to think of one who is doing so grand and noble a work for Jesus, as not walking in His footsteps in every respect?

Yours sincerely.

A. WOODS. – *New York.*

REPLY BY EDITOR

We are not certain that we did the wisest and best thing – the thing most pleasing to the Lord in the matter mentioned. However, the suit against Rev. Ross was not undertaken without consideration of the Lord's will and of the precedents of the Bible.

Amongst Bible students, informed respecting the Divine Word and its requirements, Matthew 18:15-17 is the accepted standard of action: –

(1) Private conference;

(2) If necessary, taking a couple of brethren in a further endeavor to get at the right and to stop what is believed to be the wrong;

(3) In the event of the concurrence of the brethren that the wrong is being done, and of the refusal on the part of the wrong-doer to desist, the third step is to bring the matter before the Church. If the Church agrees, then the wrong-doer, if he still refuses to desist from the wrong course, is to be disfellowshipped – to be barred from any office or service of the Church – treated as an outsider – "like a publican."

We could not see how this rule could be applied to Rev. Ross; for so far as we have knowledge he would have no regard whatever for such proceedings and could not be debarred finally from fellowship, because he recognizes no such fellowship. We felt, therefore, that any proceedings against Rev. Ross must be along the lines which he himself would recognize. He, like other ministers, recognizes the governments of this world as being parts of Christ's Kingdom; and their courts, therefore, as being parts of the Divine Institution. For this reason we felt that we were approaching the subject from a just and Golden Rule standpoint in appealing to the courts of justice, which Rev. Ross recognizes as being The Divine Institution. In other words, we attempted to meet him on his own grounds.

As for Scriptural precedents: Jesus did not need to take His case before the courts, because His enemies did that – taking Him before the chief priests and the Sanhedrin. They condemned Him in the Jewish courts. When before His judges, Jesus offered no

resistance, in the sense of using His power, either of eloquence or of Divine energy, to resist their unjust decisions. He merely submitted Himself with the complaint, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?" – John 18:23.

The Apostles, Peter and John, brought before the Sanhedrin court, made their defense. So also did St. Paul. On one occasion, because he thought he was not getting justice, he appealed to Caesar's court for whatever the Roman law might provide. Similarly I appealed to the court having jurisdiction of Rev. Ross, having in mind to stop him from doing evil and from opposing the Message of the Lord, which I am seeking to bear to all people. My attorneys, of course, were obliged to bring their action in harmony with the laws of the land. While the case was still pending, I wrote Rev. Ross, assuring him that I had no unkind intention, and proposing that I would discontinue the suit if he would promise to discontinue his injurious, slanderous course.

[R5783 : page 303]

ENJOYING THE SPIRITUAL FOOD

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

I am reading about ten pages in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES daily. Several times I have tried this plan, but did not continue. This time I am keeping to my lesson as outlined in the Berean Questions.

I have read the volumes several times, but by this method I am surprised at the results. Every day I have a definite study before me, and have more desire for the spiritual food than for the natural. I find it the best way to cultivate love in thought, word and deed.

Daily I ask the Father to help me, and daily I render my account. I come far short, but can see progress. Praise His name!

I am speeding along in the race, trusting in every promise and "looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." I am content, and am watching THE WATCH TOWER for the "light that shineth more and more unto the perfect Day." How it rejoices my heart to know that the time is near when the faithful will partake of the best wine and earth's festivities begin! Much Christian love to yourself and all the family, in which my husband joins.

Your sister in Christ,

MRS. W. W. GOODWIN. – *Rhode Island.*

EDITOR'S REPLY TO ABOVE

I rejoice with you, dear Sister, in the blessing you are now having from systematic study of the Bible through the daily reading of the volumes, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and the Scripture references which they bring to your attention. With the multitudinous affairs of life pressing us, we need to order our lives intelligently in the interest of our new natures. Otherwise, the cares of this life and the deceitful lure of earthly riches would hinder us from obtaining our spiritual food, rest, refreshment and strength – thus incapacitating us for our spiritual blessings and development, and leaving us unfit for a share in the Kingdom.

I think the plan you have adopted of taking the Berean Questions and the portion which they represent as your daily lesson is a good one. As you know, some five years ago many of THE WATCH TOWER readers began systematically to read twelve pages or more every day. Such as have been following this course report splendid success, and show it in their spiritual development. However, I think that your plan of using the Question Books and taking a special lesson for each day is still better. Often the lesson,

however, would run over only one page or two; and in such event you, of course, can readily take in several lessons for one day.

The advantage of the Question Books is that they promote study. One of the most important things for people in every walk of life is to learn to think. We have all done very little of this in respect to religion in the past. One of the mistakes which some of the Brethren make in leading Berean Study classes is that they talk too much. The successful Bible Class leader is the one who does comparatively little talking, except in an emergency, but who stimulates thought in the Class through the Questions and through the interrogative form of suggesting answers when necessary rather than giving the answers directly. Bible classes are specially profitable because of the thinking on Bible topics which they arouse.

You do not mention it, dear Sister, but doubtless yourself and husband are getting great blessings from the use of the MANNA Book every morning. It surely has brought a great deal of blessing to many. The text and the comment are quite brief, requiring only a few minutes; then, where there is a considerable number at the table, a further discussion of the text is often very illuminating. Thus the day is well started with helpful thoughts.

I am glad to know that the Morning Resolve and the evening self-examination at the Throne of Grace are also comforting, strengthening to you. You do not mention the Vow. I remember that you and your husband informed me long ago that you had taken it. Nothing that we ever had, I think, has accomplished more of blessing for the readers of THE WATCH TOWER. We have heard from about fifteen thousand that they have taken the Vow, but we doubt not that the number is much larger than this, as continually the dear friends remark to us that they took the Vow years ago, but did not think to mention the fact in writing to us. We are always glad to know of your welfare, and believe the Vow is a

special feature of blessing the Lord has ordained for our day. Besides this, it constitutes the *most wonderful prayer-circle that was ever known in the world* – fifteen thousand or more pledged to each other and to the Lord that they will remember each other and the Harvest work every day in prayer.

FROM BATTLE-TORN RUSSIA

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: –

This is to inform you that I fell into Russian captivity, and after a long journey was brought here to Jelabuga, Russia. I could not bring any religious tracts with me, and now I feel their lack very much. Therefore I earnestly request you to send me your complete works in the German language free of charge. Of course, I will thankfully reimburse you for their expense when we, with God's help, return. At the same time I would request you to send me some Hungarian literature and include with the others.

Please write me a few lines of comfort, and also something regarding conditions existing in the United States. With loving greetings,

Your brother in the Lord,

FALUVEGI DEUES.

=====