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WATCH TOWER, BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR – 1915

ALTHOUGH the year 1915 falls considerably short of previous years in respect to the Society's activities in the promulgation of Truth; nevertheless, this is one of the best reports the Society has ever been privileged to render. It so impresses us because many of the dear friends who have been active supporters of the work in the past have been so generous, so fervent, so zealous, that they left themselves with merely enough of this world's goods to properly maintain themselves and those for whom they had responsibility. Our expectations that the Lord's consecrated people might be taken beyond the veil by October, 1914, had much to do with these previous activities; leading the friends to spend and be spent in the most marvelous way in the interest of the King and the brethren, heirs of the Kingdom.

True, for two years preceding the date mentioned, THE WATCH TOWER pointed out that the grand climax of our hopes seemed not likely to be fulfilled at that time. Nevertheless, the fervent zeal of the brethren led many of them to serve to their limit. And during the year preceding, the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION so greatly appealed to the brethren as a providential arrangement of the Lord for the scattering of the Truth that it quite made up for any loss of expectancy in regard to the time. We therefore consider it very remarkable that in the face of these circumstances the work has gone on, practically uninterrupted – some features of it even increasing, notwithstanding the financial depression of the earlier half of the fiscal year.

First of all, we note the beautiful spirit manifested by the Lord's people in every part of the Harvest field. A deep work of grace in the hearts and minds of the brethren is everywhere

manifest. Their possession of the Holy Spirit in increasing measure is manifested, as the Apostle declared it should be, in the fruits of the Spirit; i.e., meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. We know of these prevailing conditions, not merely through the dear brethren who represent the Pilgrim work and by whom reports are continually sent in in respect to every Class visited; but we have information of the same thing from every part of the world, through the Correspondence Department.

As an illustration of how the work goes grandly on, we note the fact that in the New York City Congregation the number immersed during the year – 208 – exceeded those of the preceding years. We have similar reports from all over the world, witnessing to an increasing number, coming under the influence of the Truth, and "presenting their bodies, living sacrifices," in consecration to the Lord and His service.

THE COLPORTEUR WORK

The financial strain of the early part of the year discouraged many of the Colporteurs, and led them to leave the Harvest work temporarily and enter business pursuits – it being impossible for them, for a time, to meet their expenses. Now, however, the great improvement in business everywhere, resulting from the manufacture of munitions of war for Europe, is encouraging many of these brethren to return to the Harvest work. There surely never was a more encouraging time for engaging in this blessed service.

Not only are the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES supplemented by the CREATION SCENARIO; but additionally and especially, the minds of the people are open as never before, to know something about the meaning of the war, and to consider the relationship of God and the Divine Plan to the terrible war now in progress. We have the thing they need, the thing they crave; and no one else has it. We are hoping that many of the dear friends who became temporarily discouraged will perceive the hand of the Lord

beckoning forward for a further gleanings in the Harvest field before "the night cometh when no man can work." The circumstances mentioned will account for the decrease in the output of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, as shown in this report.

THE PILGRIM WORK

While various circumstances and conditions have seemed to make it advisable that some of the Pilgrim brethren be dropped from the active service, others have been brought into the work, and still others are expected to enter it in the near future. The results of the year, as shown in the tabulation, certainly compare very favorably with the year 1914. We consider this one of the most important branches of the service, and continue to commend to the love and special consideration of all the Lord's people the Pilgrims whom the Society sends forth. A special blessing seems to be going with this feature of the work at the present time. The public have an ear to hear, and the Lord seems to be giving His faithful ones more and more of wisdom and grace in the presentation of the Message. The results are gratifying.

CREATION PHOTO-DRAMA

This branch of the work, having been pushed for a year most persistently at great expense, yielded such **[R5813 : page 372]** bountiful results that we were loth to see the great activity in this direction curtailed. Nevertheless, it was the only wise and possible thing under the circumstances – the financial stringency. For a time, all but three of the DRAMAS in the United States were discontinued; and these were not run as continuously as before. Various endeavors were made to put the DRAMA on a financial footing to yield its own expenses. It was found, however, that in order to make it attractive to the Theater people, the DRAMA was so shortened that the main object was largely frustrated. The Society, on the contrary, had the special interest in the slides and records, because by these the great Gospel Message was delivered

– the moving pictures merely being introduced to draw the audience and to hold their attention. All such exhibitions of the DRAMA have been discontinued. Hereafter it is to be shown only in its full four parts, without any curtailment. And the Lord's blessing seems to be returning to the DRAMA on the free basis.

We have now, practically, all of our DRAMA sets in operation, though not showing usually, except Sundays, in the Theaters. And the friends can usually obtain the Theaters at a very low price. In cities where ordinary Photo-Drama entertainments are not permitted by law, [R5814 : page 372] CREATION is welcomed by the Theater managers at about the cost of janitor service and lights; and we are finding that in cities where moving pictures are permitted, the Theater people are willing to give Sunday forenoon, 10:30 to 12:30, to the DRAMA, at practically no cost, except that of janitor service and light. This does not indicate the interest of the managers in the DRAMA, but merely their desire to have something which will help to give moral tone to the Theaters.

THE EUREKA DRAMA SUCCESSFUL

We have been very pleasantly surprised to note the splendid results secured by the EUREKA DRAMA outfit – tinted slides, phonograph, records, scenarios, etc. These of course meet with their greatest success in suburban places, where the people are not so satiated with moving picture exhibits. Although the pictures are not so fine as in the PHOTO-DRAMA, they are nevertheless good, and highly appreciated. It is freely recognized that we have the largest variety of religious pictures ever exhibited; and these are introduced in a chronological and historical arrangement, which adds to their value.

To our surprise, it is found that the people really seem to give closer attention to the EUREKA DRAMA than to the PHOTO-DRAMA. Our wonderful records, so clear, so distinct, are a special attraction. Never before, we believe, have such records been put

forth, giving the human voice in its full power, and so distinctly that many people have inquired why the speaker did not come forward on the platform to be seen and receive applause, some even refusing to believe that the records were those of the phonograph, insisting that no phonograph ever produced such a result.

There are 86 of these EUREKA DRAMA outfits in the hands of the Brethren in various parts, and we trust that they are all being used at least every Sunday. Many of them, we note, are used almost constantly, every night in the week. We regret that we do not have an accurate report on these. We are deeply interested in knowing that they are all actively engaged and noting the results. Only fourteen Classes are giving regular reports; seventy-two we know nothing about. And yet we do know, that thus far we have had 5,560 exhibitions reported, with a total of 1,012,268 in attendance. The interest aroused by these may be indicated to some extent by requests for literature other than that which was freely distributed – the number of card requests for literature being 30,645.

Surely with such amount of interest manifested, with the people sitting listening to every word of the Message, while viewing the pictures illustrating the same, we would hardly ask for better opportunities for presenting the Truth – the Gospel Message. We trust that each of the DRAMAS is being kept busy; and we again express the hope that we may be informed of the activities and results.

THE WATCH TOWER

We continue to consider THE WATCH TOWER lists our best criterion in respect to the general progress of the Harvest work. The brethren will all be gratified to know that we are now printing an average of 55,000 copies of each issue. This indicates a deeper and larger interest in the Truth than ever before. Besides this, there are issues of the journal in the German, Swedish, Dano-Norwegian and Polish languages.

While we have reached and passed the mark that we some time ago set for the list – fifty thousand – we are not yet content. We have every reason to believe that our list should be double what it now is, if all the interested knew fully about THE WATCH TOWER and realized their need of its regular visits. We are dependent upon the zeal and loyalty of the brethren everywhere to make known to the interested ones, just what THE WATCH TOWER is, and to recommend to them that they send in their subscription. We believe that many are missing the blessing, and would therefore stir up into active cooperation the pure minds of all the dear brethren to this Department of activity in the Master's Cause – to the intent that the brethren may be "built up in the most Holy Faith" – into Christ, their living Head.

THE NEWSPAPER WORK

The financial stringency has interfered more with the newspaper work than with any other branch of the service. Had we the money, we would have representatives traveling continuously, visiting the newspapers, showing the publishers the difference between the Sermon reports furnished by the Pastor Russell Lecture Bureau and all other Sermon reports. Editors and publishers believe that very little interest is taken in the Sermons by the majority of their readers. They need to be made aware of the fact that these Sermons are different, and that they appeal to the public where others do not. But financial conditions have not permitted activities along this line. Hence, there has been quite a falling off in the list of papers publishing the Sermons regularly. Nevertheless, there is still a goodly number of these.

Anybody desiring to obtain the Sermons weekly can be accommodated by addressing the Society's Office. Not many now are publishing the three-column service. Nevertheless, we can supply these to those who desire them at any price they may choose to pay. Some publishers give to the Society as low a rate as 15c per

year; others 25c; others 50c; others \$1. Such subscriptions sent in to us are distributed between the different papers, according to your desires, and according to the reasonable proportions that would go to each paper.

VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES INCREASED

The term Volunteering we apply to the voluntary distribution, by the friends, of special issues of THE BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY – systematically distributed by Classes cooperating or sometimes by individuals. Where there is a Class, a Volunteer Captain is chosen, by whom the home town is districted, a portion of service being given to each one of the Class able, and desirous of participating, the shipments being made to said Captains. These activities are usually extended gradually to the suburbs of the town or city, and in some instances to **[R5814 : page 373]** neighboring towns or cities where there may be no Classes. The Society provides this volunteer literature without charge, and with the promise of repayment of the freight charges.

In the past, the charges were sometimes prepaid and afterwards demanded upon delivery. Now, all are to be paid on delivery and the receipt to be sent to THE WATCH TOWER Office, that the amount of the freight charges may be reimbursed to the Captain of the volunteers. In addition to this regular volunteering, we supply in limited quantities, any number of the "B.S.M." – not for promiscuous circulation, but rather that the Class may have these on hand to be given to visitors, or to those who make inquiry for answers to certain questions. We do not keep these in very large quantities. While we desire to supply them freely, we do not consider them the volunteer matter for general distribution. They are sent free, but with charges collect.

We are sure that it will surprise many of you, as it did us, to find that the zeal of the dear brethren was unabated; that the demand for this free literature for 1915 exceeded that of any previous year.

In the report, this might not seem to be true, because the figures are less than those of last year. We call attention, however, to the fact that the figures include the free SCENARIOS of the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION and that this free literature practically stopped with the stopping of the DRAMA. So far as the BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY is concerned, the year 1915 stands at the very top of the list. The total amount, including distributions in Great Britain and in foreign lands, reaches to about 50,000,000 copies.

FREE LITERATURE IN MANY LANGUAGES

Have in mind, dear friends, that the Society is publishing free literature in nearly every language, and that the SCRIPTURE STUDIES are now to be had in twenty different languages. We cannot undertake to enumerate all of these, nor is it necessary. Whatever you have use for, write to us, explaining your needs.

Under this heading we mention the work for the blind. We have the first Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and many Sermons and WATCH TOWER articles prepared for the blind in raised characters – the American Braille – the English Braille – the New York Point. If you know of any blind people who desire to read, they can be supplied without charge – books being loaned, subject to return, postage free. Such orders may be sent direct to this Office, or addressed to "Gould Free Library," South Boston, Mass.

FINANCIAL SINEWS OF WAR

To a certain extent, the Christian soldiers are engaged in a great warfare against sin, against error, against superstition – against the Adversary of men who is specially the Adversary of the light and of the Lord and the faithful followers of Jesus. All of the Society's activities are opposed by the Adversary, and are necessarily in

opposition to him and his course, and in favor of the Lord and His Message.

The Lord has very wonderfully, through His people, supplied the sinews of war – money – and that without solicitation on our part. Those who receive the Truth into good and honest hearts seem to be so impressed by it that many of them are in danger of giving more than they might reasonably afford to give, to send the Good Tidings to others. We believe that the Lord is very appreciative of such loving zeal; and that in due time those who are supporting the work financially, as well as those who are supporting the cause with their other talents, will all meet with a share in the great reward: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of your Lord." **[R5815 : page 373]**

We are sure the financial conditions, all being taken into consideration, our readers will agree that the report shown in this issue is an excellent one – even though being far short of last year's. A summary of the work follows:

SUMMARY OF SOCIETY'S ACTIVITIES IN UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Letters received.....	181,834
Letters sent out.....	332,773

LITERATURE SUPPLIED AT COST

Output of SCRIPTURE STUDIES – Vols.....	362,344
" " Bibles and other books.....	53,355
" " Booklets.....	88,447
" " DRAMA SCENARIOS (bound).....	55,630
" " WATCH TOWERS.....	1,406,000

LITERATURE SUPPLIED FREE

Free SCENARIOS – output..... 1,528,000
 Free BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY.....39,289,000
 Sermons in newspapers.....214,777,060

PILGRIM SERVICE FREE

Number of Pilgrims..... 65
 Miles traveled..... 505,957
 Towns visited..... 6,233
 Public meetings held..... 1,843
 Semi-public meetings held..... 2,735
 Parlor meetings held..... 8,971
 Total attendance..... 833,522

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR

Pilgrims' Expenses.....\$22,675.58
 Free Literature, Sermons, etc.....180,823.69
 Assistance to Foreign Branches and helpers..... 30,841.85
 DRAMA Expense in forepart of year..... 53,788.65

 Total Expenditure.....\$288,129.77
 Cash balance from 1914..... \$1,677.12
 Good Hopes, Tract Fund, etc.....185,739.56
 Special donation to balance.....100,713.09
 ----- \$288,129.77

THE CAROL OF THE "BRIDE"

Cant. 4:12-16.

The North Wind blows cold o'er my Garden today –
 Its fierce blasts rush mad on their pitiless path;
 The trees bend and sway in their giant grasp,
 And cower and shrink from their furious wrath.

They plant their roots deep, and still deeper; their arms
Take on sinews of strength as they writhe in the blast.
O bitter North Wind, thy fury is vain!
For strength born of need brings the victory at last!

* * *

Today o'er my Garden the South Wind plays,
And gently it kisses the blossoms fair;
Their soft petals tremble in glad response,
And their perfume flows out on the quivering air.

The soft breeze caresses each glistening leaf,
It whispers a message to each blushing rose;
And sweet, timid violets look up at its touch –
The touch that only the South Wind knows.

It sings to the trees a low, murm'ring refrain,
And steals thro' the branches with tremulous sigh;
They clap their soft hands as they dance in their glee,
For old Winter has fled and the Summer is nigh.

* * *

O South Wind, O North Wind, ye both brought rich gifts!
My fair flowers are sheltered, my trees great and strong!
And sweeter my blossoms, and richer my fruits;
To North Wind and South Wind I carol my song!

My Beloved has come to His Garden – and lo,
Sweet spices and perfumes and blossoms most fair,
And ripe, golden fruitage I lay at His feet!
What joy could be greater! What priv'lege so rare!

October 21, 1915.

ALICE G. JAMES.

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