

INTERESTING LETTERS

NO PEACE TILL GOD SPEAKS IT

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL: –

It is only because I know your time is precious that I refrain from time to time to write you telling of our appreciation of your faithful and untiring service. We wonder more and more, dear Brother, as we note the broadening avenues of service into which our Heavenly Father privileges you to enter while the enemies of the Truth are being hampered on every side – the waters of trouble rising higher and higher about them. We rejoice for you, and for the privileges which are ours through your faithful ministry.

We note your confession of some trepidation with regard to what you find it your duty to say through THE WATCH TOWER from time to time relative to the conduct of the war. We feel assured that those who have grasped clearly the Harvest Truth, and who still love it, will generally agree that you are fair and impartial. They will realize that your grasp of the history the nations have written, and of the principles supposed to underlie the conduct of international affairs, together with the course the different belligerents are all taking, require that you, as a faithful steward, speak as you believe the Lord regards the course of the nations. We feel that your utterances are Heaven-directed in order that those who know the Truth, and all Truth-seekers may see the more clearly why the nations are at war, the necessity that all who are heart-proud, in their own interest as well as that of others, be humbled; and the absolute impossibility of peace until God speaks with authority.

Gratitude fills our hearts more and more for the privilege of knowing something of the Lord's plans, as a safeguard against

pessimism, bitterness or discouragement, as we see these sentiments fastening themselves upon so many of those who do not know.

The war comes pretty close to us in Canada. The methods being employed in the recruiting campaign, every possible lever being pulled without regard to individual conviction as to what is right – in a fight which is claimed to be against Militarism, and in a land where every citizen is supposed to be free – is an interesting study. We can, especially of late, hear a rising murmur of dissatisfaction – a revulsion of public sentiment – which in the light of the Scriptures we see to be the sure harbinger of coming trouble along other lines. The "little finger" of clerical power is rapidly marshalling secular pressure to its support, and correspondingly becoming the "heavy hand" of oppression.

Canada, as a whole, you already know is not lagging behind the United Kingdom. St. John is keeping well to the front, with a continual change of tactics. A strong coercive method at first was employed through recruiting meetings in auditoriums and in the open, at which dire threats were handed out to the people. Because of public resentment this gave place to something more like inciting the scorn of the gentler sex for what they termed "slackers." Then came criticism of the gentler sex because they did not get into line as fully as was desired; also criticism of their position as lacking the spirit of patriotism and of self-sacrifice. Then came "bill-posting" on telegraph poles and everywhere, and a freezing-out of men eligible for service from the various industries. Now we have a body of French-Canadian soldiers billeted here who are commissioned, individually, to button-hole young men everywhere, using whatever methods may be considered effective; those methods include the use of intoxicants. (I am not in position to say the use of intoxicants is authorized – but it is practised.)

I have just mailed to the office (File H) newspaper report of recent Charge of Bishop Richardson (Episcopal), representing him

as following the lead of the Bishops of London in debarring the clergy (so far as expression of sentiment goes) from the privilege of becoming actual combatants, but stating that it is their duty to "heap scorn upon any suggestion of selfishness or slacking" on the part of others. I do not know how long the temper of Canadians will stand this. I thank God for the power of the Truth in my own case. I have felt that I could bear injustice toward myself with considerable grace, but the wholesale measuring out of injustice to others has always brought to my notice an element in my make-up the effect of which would give me serious concern, in this day of aggravated injustice, were it not for the power and spirit of the Truth. Even while thus fortified and guarded I feel that probably my strongest test will come right along this very line.

How secure we are in our "Strong City"! How safe from any threatening storm! The friends in the Provinces are of a good courage. The participation in DRAMA and Convention privileges of the past two seasons, especially, has been rich in blessing to us all.

Sister Black joins me in expression of increasing love for you, dear Brother, remembering you ever in our prayers, and asking a continued interest in your prayers that we may be faithful unto death.

"We will rejoice in Thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners."

Your brother by Divine favor,

W. W. BLACK.

STRANGE STATEMENTS OF PREACHERS

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL: –

It has fallen to my lot to have had not a few clergymen in audiences that I have been privileged to address, but to have had presiding elders and bishops among them has been rare; yet in at least three cases this has occurred. In each instance a special experience marked the occasion. It has occurred to **[R5904 : page 159]** me that it may be of interest to you to hear a report of the experiences; therefore, I will write you a short account.

The first experience was with an U.B. bishop. The discourse was on The Resurrection. He took elaborate notes. At the end of the service one of the brethren, recognizing the bishop, asked him how he liked the lecture. He replied: "I liked it first rate, but do not agree with the speaker. I would like to divide time with him before an audience. I can quote ten verses to his one on the subject." (I had cited by book, chapter and verse over a hundred verses to prove our position as Scriptural)

At this remark the brother told him that the speaker would, if the bishop desired it, enter a debate with him. Leaving the bishop the brother came to me, telling me of the bishop's remark. Thinking that it would give the Truth a wide hearing, I said I would be pleased to debate with him. The brother then returned to the bishop and asked to introduce him to me. After the introduction the bishop, assuring me that he had taught Greek thirty years, said that he wanted to correct an ungrammatical remark that I had made on the Greek text. It turned out that the bishop was mistaken, and admitted that the mistake was his. After several criticisms of the thoughts of the lecture, and his manifest inability to meet my replies, in response to my query as to time, place, etc., of the debate, he said that he thought no good would come from a public debate, but a private talk over the matter might yield good! With this he left. His attempt to undermine the influence of the address miscarried.

The second case was that of a presiding elder, who attended a lecture on The Two Salvations. Introducing himself at the conclusion

of the lecture he invited me to call on him. During the call he assured me that he did not believe in eternal torment, though he preached it. Asked why he so preached, he answered that the people were not yet enough enlightened to be given the Truth on the subject without injury [R5905 : page 159] to themselves, the church, the clergy and society. Asked why this was, he answered, "They would forsake the churches, leave the ministry unsupported, and commit all sorts of excesses, unrestrained by fear of torture." What a commentary on the moral effects of the ministry's work! He confided in me the statement that he was a Universalist as well as an Evolutionist and Higher Critic; yet he rebuked me for preaching against eternal torment!

The third case was that of an Episcopal bishop, who attended a semi-public meeting that I addressed this week on The Overthrow of Satan's Empire. Before the service, in a conversation that he held with the elder of the class that gave the meeting, he very strongly defended the doctrine of Apostolic Succession and the Divine Right of the clergy. In this particular lecture the latter doctrine is attacked from many points of view. During the course of the lecture I did not deviate from my usual way of presenting the doctrine of the Divine Right of the clergy. My remarks on the subject, though delivered very kindly, seemed deeply to cut the bishop. His face became redder than the red in the Stars and Stripes that decorated the stage from which I spoke. The way he squirmed in his chair one would have thought that he was seated on pins. He remained throughout the entire lecture, but did not wait to meet me. I could not but think that we are now judging the kings and princes!

By the way, there is another matter that I think might be well to bring to your attention, i.e., the friends by letter asking the Pilgrims to answer questions. You will recall that some time ago, in view of the fact that they travel on one-day appointments, which scarcely leaves them time properly to do the work at the places they visit, as well as in view of the fact that the dear Lord, mindful of the needs of His dear flock, has through the Correspondence Department at the

Tabernacle arranged for the answer of just such questions, you wrote the Pilgrims a letter, which you afterwards published in the TOWER, asking them to refer the brethren who asked them questions by mail to the page in the STUDIES where the subject is treated, or better still, to write their questions to the Correspondence Department at the Tabernacle. Judging from the number of letters that I receive asking questions, I have concluded that a large number of the friends have either overlooked or forgotten your letter on the subject.

Feeling that it is for me to abide by your suggestion contained in the above-mentioned letter, I do not answer these questions, but write to them telling them the condition. This, of course, consumes time for them and me, and is doubtless disappointing to them. Is there not some way in which this matter can be brought to their attention, whereby they can be spared disappointment, as well as save the Pilgrims' time, and receive their answers all the sooner? I am glad to note their zeal to learn the good Word of God, and would gladly answer their questions if this were in harmony with the Lord's will; but under the circumstances it is of profit to nobody for them to write to the Pilgrims for their information. For this reason I thought it might be well to bring it to your attention, trusting that it may result in larger blessing to all concerned in the matter.

The dear Lord has been blessing me richly in many ways both by toward and untoward circumstances. Was very much pleased by the reports of the year's work of the Society. My prayer to the Lord is that He continue to bless His cause, people and servants, especially yourself among them. Rejoicing that I am privileged to be associated in this the best of fellowship and service with you, and sending you much Christian love, with the assurance of my continued prayers for, and cooperation with you, I remain

Your brother and fellow servant,

PAUL S.L. JOHNSON.

"ABRAHAM SAW MY DAY AND WAS GLAD"

MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Greetings and love in the dear Lord! I take this opportunity of expressing my love for you, and for the service in which you are engaged so faithfully.

It was in the year 1908 that I began to read the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. From that time on I have not failed to find something to encourage, strengthen and uplift even though I have gone through many trials that have appeared more than I could bear, from outward observation.

I am continually reading the STUDIES, and the "Old, Old Story," which their pages foretell with no uncertain sound, always appears new. I find each time I go through them something I never saw before. Recently I have been going through TABERNACLE SHADOWS again, and have been particularly struck with the thought that Abraham was Justified by Faith in Christ.

I should be glad, dear brother, if you will explain just how it was possible for this to be. The question has been raised several times here and I have not been satisfied with the answers given at any time.

Some have suggested that "If Brother Russell were writing TABERNACLE SHADOWS now he would not put those words in..." Is this correct?

I have also heard on various occasions, when studying the Volumes, that Brother Russell has left various points without a full explanation in order that we might study for ourselves. I am, dear brother,

Yours in the Anointed,

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EDITOR'S REPLY

Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see My Day; he saw it and was glad." – John 8:56.

Abraham knew that God's promise to bless all the families of the earth was sure to be fulfilled. He saw the Day of Christ – the Millennium – and its glorious work by the eye of faith. Similarly he saw the great Messiah the King by the eye of faith; yea, more, by the same eye Abraham saw the millions of Adam's race blessed of God by the Messiah, His Seed, during the Millennium.

THINKS IT UNEQUALED

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS: –

With the enclosed renewal of my subscription to THE WATCH TOWER I cannot refrain from an expression of *appreciation*. For clearness of thought, cohesion of ideas and strength in "The Word," it is surely not equaled in any present-day religious publication. I look forward to each issue and read it with avidity, and am deeply grateful to each of the dear brothers and sisters who are assisting in its publication. With sincere thanks to all who have assisted in opening to my view a horizon of promise more glorious than the splendor of the setting sun. I remain,

Your brother in hope,

J. H. BENNETT.

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