

INTERESTING LETTERS

A VOICE FROM LONDON OFFICE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

My love towards the Father, Our Lord, His blessed Truth and you His servant increases as time advances. (Philippians 1:3,4.) I am indeed grateful for the Truth, and do not know just how to express my thankfulness. It is the one thing worth living for.

Speaking particularly of the share in the great Harvest work on this side of the Atlantic, which it has been my joy to participate in, let me remind you that when the **DRAMA** work in London closed down, it was arranged that half my time would be spent on Pilgrim work; this continued for just a year, when the preparation of the Debenture Bonds on the one hand and the opening up of the conscription question on the other, so encroached upon my time that I have made no journeys since the middle of April. The Military Service Act, and its application, has proved to be so complex and difficult of comprehension that the office here has perforce become quite an inquiry bureau, and the work is in my hands, although I consult freely with my colleagues over matters of importance, and all correspondence is open for their inspection. You will find enclosed a copy of a petition which has just been sent to Premier Asquith with 5,500 signatures. This was arranged for to meet an evident call on the part of the brethren generally. There are probably 50 brethren in detention at the present time; with this you will find a list of those known to us who are consistently refusing to obey Military commands and are suffering more or less severely in consequence. As the Act has now been extended to include married men of military age (18 to 40), it will affect many more of our brethren in the immediate future.

As we have no Pilgrim Brother now, this department is very quiet; it would be nice to know what you think about this, in view of the peculiar times we live in. Brother Smedley [R5945 : page 254] does a journey now and again as he can afford it, and Brother Hemery has just completed a trip in Scotland; this is the only trip he has taken for some months. Brother Crawford cannot spare the time from the Office, as he has many details to look after, and is short of help at times.

The Newspaper Department is reduced to one Brother now – Brother Cormack; there are just over 30 papers publishing the Sermons at the present time. It is quite likely that this number will be greatly reduced shortly owing to the increasingly high price of paper.

The foregoing are the Departments under my special care at present. Seeing, however, that Brother Hart is leaving us for India, the DRAMA work will be added, I presume, although this is only a small matter just now, only one exhibition, apart from Scotland, being in hand.

The easing off of the DRAMA, and the losing of our Brothers on account of the Military Act, has affected the output of Volumes seriously. The Volunteer work progresses satisfactorily on the whole, but the question of paper is a serious difficulty. The Class Extension work is proving satisfactory in London, but little is moving elsewhere. We are by no means busy in the office apart from the Military question.

The Tabernacle congregation continues satisfactory – I would think possibly 250 to 300 mornings and 450 to 550 at night. Many of the brethren would enjoy a wider range of speakers. There seems rather a tendency to form Sunday meetings within the area formerly reserved to the Tabernacle; not within one hour's journey, however. This movement probably arises partly on account of traveling expenses and partly to the dark streets at night, for no lights are

allowed on our streets now and every window must be screened. The question naturally arises whether these gatherings would not better be separate Ecclesias, for the members thus in attendance range from 50 to 150. I do not know whether this question has been brought before you or not. There are 19 Elders at the Tabernacle now and nearly 60 Deacons.

The working staff consists of six Brothers and daughter Bertha, who does my stenographic work again. The housekeeping department consists of five Sisters, including Brother Hemery's mother. At the present time there are 12 of us sleeping in the house, which includes my eldest son, who will be going abroad as a Cable telegraphist shortly. Sister Shearn with Daisy and Joe are down at Ealing, an hour's run, where I have taken a furnished cottage for six months.

Am glad to hear that the work continues to progress satisfactorily in America. The conditions amongst the people here show signs of a change – not particularly by way of opposition of the Truth, but of affairs altogether different to the immediate past, which all thinking people can see.

Bertha joins me in fond love to you and to all the beloved brethren with you. We pray always for you all that the peace of God continue to guard your hearts until we see His face!

Your brother in His service,

H.J. SHEARN.

FROM A FORMER MINISTER TO A FRIEND

DEAR BROTHER _____: –

Your encouraging and much appreciated letter of 20th inst. was received today. It is gratifying to know that there are some scattered over the country everywhere who are witnesses to the TRUTH, and of course, I suppose it is natural to appreciate a word of sympathy and encouragement.

In common with yourself I certainly feel that I am to be congratulated upon the gracious fact that God, in the abundance of His mercy and goodness, has permitted the light of TRUTH to shine in and dispel what I now clearly perceive to have been the grossest of ignorance on my part. The thing that puzzles me is the fact that I have been a fairly close Bible student for the past fifteen years, and have always tried to maintain an open attitude of mind to the Truth at all times, and yet failed to grasp the CENTRAL and FUNDAMENTAL truths of God's great Plan for blessing all the families of the earth, for surely this is in full accord with what we might most reasonably expect from "the God of all grace"! There are only two possible solutions to the problem so far as I can see, and it may be that they are not *two*, but *one*; viz.: That I have always read the Bible with a preconceived idea of what the Bible taught, and thus *read a meaning into the Bible* that was really *not there*; or that the time had not till recently come when God intended me to get the whole Truth; and as I have intimated, I built up the wall against a right understanding of the Scriptures, and God had His own time for removing it.

With reference to your other congratulation upon the stand I have taken, I fear that I must disagree with you so far as to say that I do not think I could possibly claim any credit for taking a stand for the Truth when I have, in the ultimate sense, EVERYTHING to gain by so doing, and NOTHING of importance to lose thereby. It is true that I have lost the esteem and support of many whom I had considered Christian people, and also my position in the Baptist Church. But like St. Paul I consider all things well lost for Christ's sake.

I had hoped that the reputation I have enjoyed for ordinary intelligence, firmness and freedom from fanaticism, together with the influence I have gained in _____, and especially in my own congregation after three years of association with them, [R5945 : page 255] would have gained me a *hearing* and have given me the opportunity of placing not only the Truth, but the Bible evidence of that Truth before my people and led them to investigate for themselves, and that I should have the privilege of leading my whole congregation into the glorious light of God's ONE PLAN, but it seems that it is not to be so, as my resignation has already been requested, and I shall tender the same on next Monday evening to take effect at any time that the church may choose. But I thank the Lord that in the three weeks that I have been permitted to present these things, I can even now see some of the seed germinating and rapidly taking root that shall in the near future produce a *goodly* "mustard stalk" in whose branches the dove of peace may find lodging.

I find that so long as I was a "sound Baptist" I was quite an authority among them, but now I am just a common "Russellite" in their estimation, and not worthy of a hearing, so I am requested to resign and get out. I fully realize that when I am put out of this church for "heresy" the doors of every church in this denomination – as well as those of all of the others – are firmly closed against me. Well, so be it! I remember that Christ and His Apostles were thrust out of the synagogues for preaching the Truth, so I will be in good company, even though I shall probably, like St. Paul, be obliged to "make tents" for a living, and preach the GOOD NEWS from "Mars Hill."

One thing I will do before I go, not through spite or ill feeling – for the Lord knows I pity rather than scourge – but rather in vindication of the Truth, I will force this congregation to either excommunicate me from their fellowship or to acknowledge that I am right in the things I have proclaimed. Like St. Paul, if I am

beaten *publicly* and thrust into prison, I will not be taken out *privately*, but let them "come and fetch me out." I will do this, NOT for any personal reason, but PURELY upon the ground that I believe the time is ripe to take every opportunity that is legitimately offered for calling attention to Bible Truth so long left covered by the dust of Romish error and traditions.

One thing I am determined upon, I WILL NOT preach again the vile slander against my Lord that the doctrine of eternal torture heaps upon His HOLY NAME; no, not for \$600.00 a month, much less for the paltry \$60.00 I have been getting. And no more will I hold my peace on the GOOD NEWS of God's Plan of Ransom and Restitution, though I have to preach it on the street corners and from public halls. This is my determination. May the Heavenly Father grant me the grace and strength to execute it. Pray for me to that end, and "that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel; for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

I cannot properly express my gratitude to good Bro. _____ for his interest on my behalf in presenting me with a set of the STUDIES.

Again thanking you for your hearty words of encouragement and fellowship in the Truth, I trust always to remain

Your brother in Christ,

_____.

OBJECTORS SING, "STAND UP, STAND UP FOR JESUS!"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

We read with special delight this morning in June 1 WATCH TOWER your recapitulation of those wonderful events in the years when the Lord graciously provided "line upon line" of the basis of what we now know as the *Truth*. It does our hearts good to ponder over these things and examine our foundations again and find they are rock-bed ones and immovable. As we read the details we take fresh encouragement in the hope that the Lord is yet going to show further developments through the same channel. We trust so.

A new phase of experience has been entered into in this country – an experience specially trying to the younger members of the "Body," many of whom are undergoing terms of imprisonment with more or less of hard labor. Many a mother's heart is wrung with the severity with which her loved lads are treated; yet we hear from these same lads glowing accounts of the goodness and faithfulness of our Father and barely a hint of complaint, although we *know* they are sorely tried. One contingent (a day or two since, [R5946 : page 255] numbering about forty) were marched away from the camp where they had been detained pending court-martial, to prison. There were only four or five of our brethren among these, the remainder being *moral* objectors, and our brethren describe them as a splendid lot of fellows. Educated and professional men along with honest, hard toilers were thus thrown together, and on one point wholly sympathetic and determined. As they passed through the Camp they unitedly sang, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus!" It was almost dramatic,

"And e'en the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer."

In fact, some of the regular soldiers did cheer them and numbers, we are told, confessed admiration. Many STUDIES have been gotten out, too, among warders, jailers, constables, officers and men, as a result of contact with these few "voices in the wilderness." To see the courage and fealty exhibited by these young brethren

causes us a deal of heart-searching and magnifies intensely our own failures and constant slips. While they have opportunities for service thrust on them, we seem to have a barren existence and a diminished activity. We are praying that the Lord may show His hand and thus lead us more fully than ever into the light. We are ever with you in Spirit.

Yours in the dear Lord,

F. GUARD, SR. – *London.*

"V.D.M." QUESTIONS FOUND PROFITABLE

MY DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR: –

Please find enclosed the "V.D.M." Questions and my answers to the same. This is the most searching test that I have ever undergone; and I am truly thankful to you and our Heavenly Father for the "Refiner's Fire and the Fuller's Soap." (Malachi 3:2.) I doubt not that the Heavenly Father directed your mind in the compilation of these questions; and the great desire of my heart is, that I have been able to interpret correctly the thought of the questions.

These questions, dear Brother, have surely come at an opportune time; for many of the friends and even some of the Pilgrims are becoming greatly confused upon some of the points. Notwithstanding all that you have written elucidating these subjects, many are unable to properly divide and express your teaching on justification and its two features – consecration, sanctification (our part and God's part). Also many are becoming confused upon the subject of the Mediator of the New Covenant, teaching that the Church will not share this office with her Lord.

The little "truth" newspapers, booklets, periodicals, etc., are in great measure responsible for the confusion now in the minds of the

friends. The matters and things therein set forth are uncensored, and unhappily contain many errors.

I pray daily that I may never come under this influence, but that I may remain true to my "first Love," from the light of whose pages alone I am refined, and purified, and made white. My practise is to prove all your statements by the "Word," as far as I am able to reason; and all the rest I trust to your better judgment, confident that it is wiser to rely upon that wisdom than my own or that of any other.

We are glad to acknowledge you (Luke 12:42), to honor you as our Pastor, and to follow you in your exposition of the Truth, believing that He who appointed you makes no mistakes. In grateful Christian love,

Your Brother in the Truth,

FOOD SUPPLY CUT SHORT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Since calling your attention to crop conditions in this country, there has been a further shrinkage due to rust in the Northwest – and it is now estimated that we will harvest but wheat enough for home needs – no exportable surplus.

Present estimate of wheat, Winter and Spring combined, is 725 million bushels, against 1,011 million bushels harvested last year; corn outlook, 2,700 million, as against 3,050 million last year; oats outlook, 1,200 million, as against 1,500 million last year. Rye and Barley shortage, brings grand total shortage of over a billion bushels.

Yours in Christ,

E.W.V.K.

INFANTILE PARALYSIS REMEDY

Mix Peruvian Bark (pulverized) with lard so as to make a stiff paste. Use this whilst massaging spinal column thoroughly. It is useful also for Asthma and for Spinal Meningitis.

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