

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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Annual Report of the Institute

THE PASSING of another year is an occasion for rejoicing, not only in the realization that we are that much nearer Home, but also in the multiplied evidences of the Lord's love and the assurance this gives that He who has been with us thus far for our guidance and blessing will be with us as we journey on into the unknown. There is nothing to incorporate in this report that will inspire satisfaction in our attainments. We do, however, rejoice exceedingly that there are evidences in every quarter, that in the Lord's providence there is continued growth along many lines, but particularly in the appreciation which the brethren show of the truth as a sanctifying power. This however does not lessen, but rather increases, their joy in it as a witnessing medium. In the witnessing, too, there is a gratifying evidence of growth in that there seems less of self and more of Christ manifested, speaking the truth in love for the one to whom, and the One for whom, the witnessing is being done.

By the Lord's wise arrangement, the thing on which we would most like to report is one of which we can know the least—the condition of the "inner man." We find great occasion for rejoicing in that the indications all are that the past year has been our best. The broadening of fellowships, undiminished zeal in services that show little material evidence of spectacular results, unabated eagerness to speak the truth though hearing ears are becoming more difficult to find, and particularly the increased faith that trusts, in the little and in the big things of life, especially evidenced in the peace that has guarded the hearts of those whose loved ones have been taken by the war beyond their personal watch care—these and many more are the things that we speak of as indications of growth during the past year. These are not all new experiences, and for that also we are thankful. Until the end of the narrow way is reached, Christians must be content to walk as those before them walked, painstakingly striving for the "mark," and appreciating it even beyond the "prize" His loving hand will one day bestow. Then He will render the Report -- not of our "great and mighty works," but that we are at last *"prepared unto every good work."*

Through the years the aim of the brethren who have served as directors, as editors, and as pilgrims with the Pastoral Bible Institute, has been to assist the brethren in general to put first things first. While rejoicing in this year's showing, we are not forgetful that we were building on

the foundation of other years-not unmindful of those who in the earliest days of the Church "endured such a fight of afflictions" in their opposition to the same enemies that assail us today within and without.

This opportunity is taken of expressing for the directors and editors and office workers, their appreciation of the encouraging messages received from the brethren scattered over the world. Time and press of duties have made it impossible to acknowledge or adequately answer many of these. The generosity of the brethren in overlooking these failures and the imperfections of their servants, while gratefully appropriating the benefits of their ministry, is noteworthy as an indication of their spiritual health.

This year has seen our third edition of the "Divine Plan of the Ages," and a reprinting, this time in booklet form, of the two subjects covered in the special "Herald," "Food for Thinking Christians," "Our Lord's Return," and "What Say the Scriptures About Hell" -- material from Brother Russell's pen. The same zeal that exhausted three previous editions of the special "Herald" is making good use of the two new booklets. As these booklets deal, not only with the special subjects their titles bear, but are in effect an epitome of the Plan of God for the restoration of humanity, we recommend them as being timely as a message of comfort for a sorrowing world.

In the reprinting of our tracts a booklet form has been used, and we trust the additional cost is being compensated for by a better reception from the general public. Many of these are being used in connection with the work of comforting the relatives of deceased soldiers -- a work which was started early in our present year, and which we trust has brought comfort to many hearts. In this connection we are pleased to quote from a report just received from the Committee:

To the Directors of The Pastoral Bible Institute Dear Friends:

The Service Committee was appointed in August, 1944, to encourage the Truth friends to send letters and tracts to nearest of kin of those lost in the war.

We started by asking selected persons in each State to act as captains and have secured fourteen such State representatives.

Letters were then mailed to subscribers of the "Herald," one to each post-office, asking that person to write to each such name that appeared in the local paper. We suggested that if others would assist in the work, one might be appointed to clip all the names and distribute them among the workers.

The friends in about one hundred and fifty localities are engaged in the work, and aside from some of the larger Classes such as Minneapolis, Detroit, Oakland, etc., who have sent direct to Brooklyn for their tracts, there have been around thirty-three thousand tracts ordered and sent to the various Classes through the Committee. We have had several replies stating they would engage in the work, but wanted to mail literature other than that put out by the Institute, Others said they had tracts that had been in the house for years and wanted to use those up before ordering more, so we are not in a position to know just how many have been sent out.

We have avoided asking the friends for reports of letters and tracts mailed. Christians have been and are so thoroughly and repeatedly "organized" that we felt our refraining from "numbering the tribes" (2 Sam. 24) would be refreshing.

Many letters have come me from the friends, some of them having been in the Way for thirty-five or forty years, expressing their joy and real appreciation for this privilege of service.

Although we are continually hearing good reports from the nearby Classes, we have no way of checking up the number of responses that have been received. However, judging from our own Classes, who are now mailing out about one hundred per week, the responses have not been as plentiful as we might wish, but we are happy to do the work and leave the results in the Lord's hands, letting Him bring the increase.

We realize fully that the chief work at the present time is the building up of one another and ourselves in the Most Holy Faith, but we have noted in the Classes that those who have a little time to devote to telling the good tidings to others, are the ones usually found at the study and testimony meetings, and who seem to be progressing in the spirit of the Lord.

This privilege which has been afforded us by the Institute has been appreciated, and we are thankful for such helpful tracts with which they have so generously supplied us. We also appreciate their encouraging the friends to take part in this work.

Envelopes and postage have been furnished to those who desired to engage in the work but were not financially able to do so.

There have been five paid "Herald" subscriptions sent in.

Yours in His Service,
SERVICE COMMITTEE,
By B. F. Hollister.

The friends will be interested to know that during recent months Brother Dr. Jones of the Chicago district has been experimenting successfully with the advertising of the "Plan of the Ages" in magazines and newspapers. This effort has been placing the Volumes more economically than any previously tried, the colporteur work alone excepted.

During the past year a number of sets of "Studies in the Scriptures," as also a number of "Daniel the Beloved of Jehovah," "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," and our new pocket edition of "The Divine Plan of the Ages," have been distributed. There have also been located and placed in eager hands some of the out-of-print publications of Brother Russell. We wish that more of these, especially the Reprints, might have been located so as to supply all who have requested them. As these publications are secured almost entirely through the brethren at large, we remind you at this time of this privilege of service. Those of you who know of individuals possessing sets of Reprints and other such items which are no longer being used, will be rendering a very important service if you will inform us as to the condition of the books, where they may be secured, and the price.

While seeking in every way to assist the brethren to an increase of knowledge, those working with us as editors and pilgrims have been mindful of the fact that the end to be attained is "love from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith." In whatever form of service we may have the privilege of engaging we should realize that our service is pleasing to our Master only as an adjunct to the more effective testimonial of a life conformed to His.

It has never been the intention that the Pilgrim service shall supplant the activities of the local Classes, but merely that it shall augment their ministry. Our effort along that line in the territory

about Chicago has been particularly effective, and the cooperation of the friends, generous and efficient. The total number of brethren serving in the local and general Pilgrim service this past year has been eighteen.

Miles traveled	79,536
Meetings held	981
Total attendance	14,332

It is a matter of regret that some still fail to take advantage of the spiritual benefits of the "Herald" and the Pilgrim service simply because they are not able to pay their share in the maintaining of these. Appreciating the desire on the part of the brethren to cooperate, we would, however, urge them to realize that anything which they recognize to be of the Father's provision could not well be dispensed with. Our indebtedness to our Heavenly Father would not be appreciably reduced by paying the subscription price of one dollar a year, or our proportionate share of the expense of a Pilgrim visit.

While our limitations have made impossible the, writing of many letters and required the shortening of many others, not -the least of our privileges has been counted that of having contact with the dear brethren in various parts of the world by means of the postal service. Our records for this year show:

Number of letters received	4,119
Number of letters sent out	5,820

These are but visible records-"outward appearance." We hope for much better things from the record our Father has kept. This year's activities are closed with a prayer that they may be found to have been merely preparatory to a more effective effort along all lines during the months that lie just ahead.

From the commencement of the Institute's work the earnest desire of those associated in it has been to avoid anything of a sectarian character. In closing we would urge the careful guarding of this ideal and the recognizing as brethren of all who are building upon the, one Foundation, regardless of whether or not they shall see fit to cooperate in our activities. Let us manifest at all times the spirit of tolerance, the spirit of liberty, the spirit of love: As another has said: .

"Love the truth, maintain the truth, propogate it, *but not at the expense of the truth itself*, not at the expense of the best and truest elements of man's nature, not at the expense of honor, of christianity, and of everlasting life. The truth has power; but it is the truth, when sustained and announced by a *true spirit*, which has the *highest* power, the power to overcome all its enemies. It is the truth thus announced and thus supported, which shall harmonize every discordant interest, which shall bring to the true standard every erring intellect, which shall demolish every idol temple and make every hill and valley vocal with the Savior's name."

Report of Annual Meeting

In harmony with the provision of the charter of the Pastoral Bible Institute those of its members who found it practical to do so assembled in the afternoon of June 2, for the election of directors and the transaction of such other business as might properly come before the members. Following a season of devotion a chairman and secretary were elected.

The minutes of the last annual meeting, the annual report of the directors, and the report of the auditors were read, and the reports of the chairman and the treasurer given orally, the last two stressing the favor of the Lord with us during the year's activities and their gratitude for this and the good will of the friends at large. Elsewhere in this issue the reports of the Board, the Treasurer, and the Auditing Committee will be found. The lists of new members added during the past year and those who have finished their course in the same period, were read..

The business next in order. was the election of directors for the year. Tellers were appointed, and while the ballots were being counted, a praise and testimony meeting was held. Later it was announced that Brothers J. J. Blackburn, J. E. Dawson, J. C. Jordan, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, and P. E. Thomson had been elected to serve for the coming year. Provision was made for the disposition of the ballots.

The meeting was concluded with another season of praise and testimony in the same spirit of devotion to the Lord and appreciation of His providences that had characterized the entire session.

Gathering shortly thereafter, the Board of Directors elected the following officers: Brothers J. C. Jordan, Chairman; J. J. Blackburn, Vice-chairman; P. L. Read, Treasurer; and P. E. Thomson, Secretary.

The Editorial Committee of last year was reappointed, namely, Brothers H. E. Hollister, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, and P. E. Thomson. Those who have been giving full-time pilgrim service, Brothers Blackburn, J. T. Read, and Thomson, and those serving as part-time pilgrims, L. L. Benedict, B. B. Boulter, J. E. Dawson, F. A. Essler, H. H. Fink, B. F. Hollister, J. C. Jordan, J. C. Laid, O. R. Moyle, F. W. Petran, P. L. Read, W. C. Roberts, T. G. Smith, W. J. Siekman, and J. Wyndelts were appointed to continue this service.

Not Your Work, But You

"It is not so much your work as you that God wants; at least He wants you first, and then your work. Service from hearts that are not really consecrated to God is not pleasing to Him. We are in danger of forgetting this in our busy, bustling days. It is easier to offer God a few activities than to give Him a heart. The tendency of the religious life at present is to work, to service, rather than to loving God.. So we need to remind ourselves continually that loving must come before doing and serving. The largest and most conspicuous work will find no acceptance with God if our hearts are not His."

"Tis not thy work the Master needs, but thee
The obedient spirit, the believing heart,
The child obedient, trustful, glad to be
Where'er He will, to stay or to depart."

Treasurer's Report

To the Members of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc.

Dear Brethren:

Below is submitted a Balance Sheet of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., as at the close of business April 30, 1945, together with a related Statement of Income and Expense and Analysis of Net Worth for the fiscal year ended on that date, to which the Auditing Committee appointed by your Board of Directors have appended their statement.

It will be noted that the Net Worth of the Institute increased from \$31,918.91 at May 1, 1944 to \$34,205.87 at April 30, 1945; or a total of \$2,286.96 for the year.

There were no contributions for special purposes this year, and income from legacies declined. On the other hand, contributions for general purposes increased from \$5,195.48 for the previous year to \$7,337.87 for the year under review, an increase of \$2142.39. Subscriptions to the "Herald" also increased over the prior year, notwithstanding the fact that a number of our subscribers "ceased from their labors" in the twelve months just now ended.

Pilgrim Expense and Free Literature each increased approximately \$1,300.00; other items of income and expense remained about the same as for the previous year. It is the thought of the Directors to continue these two branches of the Ministry at this higher level of activity for the coming year. An interesting report of the Free Literature distribution by the Chicago Service Committee appears on page 100 of this issue.

Last year we advised that the Directors had under consideration another printing of Volume II of the Revelation Exposition. Price and delivery quotations thus far secured have been unsatisfactory, owing to the war conditions. Perhaps more favorable circumstances may develop in the ensuing year. The recent printings in pamphlet form of the subjects of "Hell" and "Our Lord's Return" have been favorably received. Of these we still have nearly 2000 each on hand. Inventory of Volume I of the Revelation Exposition, at April 30, 1945, was 942. At that date we had on hand also 1048 copies of the Daniel Exposition and 1500 copies of our New Pocket Edition of the Divine Plan. Sales of these books last year were 48 Revelation Exposition, 45 Daniel Exposition and 172 Divine Plan.

With prayerful good wishes,
Your brother and servant in the Lord,
P. L. READ,
Treasurer

Brooklyn, N. Y.
June 2, 1945

Statement of Auditors

The undersigned auditors have examined the books of account of the Pastoral Bible Institute for the year ending April 30, 1945, and have found them correct and in good order.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN C. LAIRD
N. F. NICHOLSON
L. NEWMAN

Brooklyn, N. Y.
June 2, 1945

BALANCE SHEET

April 30, 1945

Assets:

Cash -- On hand and in Bank	\$13,733.00
Accounts Receivable	554.82
Inventory of Books, etc.	
New Edition-Divine Plan	555.00
Revelation Exposition-Vol. I	471.00
Daniel Exposition	524.00
Hell Booklet, Our Lord's Return Booklet, Tabernacle Shadows, etc.	349.43
Miscellaneous- Securities (Net)	1.00
Annuities Receivable	11,392.62
Property at 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn	12,000.00
Total Assets	<u>\$39,580.87</u>
Less: Mortgage Payable	<u>5,375.00</u>
Net Worth (As per statement below)	<u>\$34,205.87</u>

**Statement of Income and Expense
and Analysis of Net Worth
May 1, 1944 to April 30, 1945**

Income:

Contributions-General Purposes	\$ 7,337.87
Legacies-Sister Laura J. Klein (Alabama)	2,191.97
"Herald" Subscriptions	1,249.11
Gain on Sale of Books, etc	136.30
Rental Income	580.00
Miscellaneous Revenue:	174.00
Total Income	<u>\$11,669.25</u>

Expenses:

Printing and mailing "Herald"	\$ 1,353.75
Free Literature, including	
Expense of Chicago Committee	1,299.38
Pilgrim Expense and Allowances	4,116.74
Allowances to Office Staff	1,345.00
Office Expense	335.34
Interest on Mortgage	222.50
Maintenance of Property, including taxes, coal, gas, electricity, insurance and minor repairs	673.33
Comfort Committee Expense	36.25
Total Expenses	<u>9,382.29</u>
Net Income for Year	<u>\$ 2,286.96</u>
Net Worth May 1, 1944	31,918.91
Net Worth April 30, 1945	<u> </u>
(as per Balance Sheet)	\$34,205.87

Has the Day of the Lord Come and is the World on Fire

THE APOSTLE Peter in his second Epistle (2 Peter 3:10, 12) declares that the heavens and the earth are to be destroyed by fire, and both Peter and Zephaniah tell us that this great fire, which is to burn the heavens and, the earth, will be burning in or during a period of time called "the day of the Lord." Many of the Prophets have told of things and conditions that will be in the 'world during this period of time. Zephaniah says, it is "a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm." - Zeph. 1:15, 16.

Joel says: "Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for it is "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness." (Joel 2:1, 2.) Generally speaking, Scripture should be given a literal interpretation when it will bear it. Keeping this in mind as we note what we read in the papers and hear over the radio, let us consider what the Prophets have said would be due to take place in the day of the Lord; let us try to determine if we are now in that great day.

Zephaniah said it would be a day of wrath. Is the world mad, and do we see wrath upon the nations? He said it would be a day of trouble and distress. Is there a place in the world that is free from trouble and distress? He says it is a day of wasteness and desolation. Can the human mind conceive of the waste and destruction of lives and property in the world since this great day of waste and destruction began in 1914? He said it would be a day of darkness and of gloominess. Is this a dark and gloomy day? And it is to be a day of clouds. How many times have we heard of war clouds in this day?

Joel further says, "Sound an alarm: and let all the inhabitants of the land tremble." Perhaps the many air raid alarms that have been sounded since the trouble began in 1914 are too literal a fulfilment, but there have been many thousands of alarms sounded. And do the inhabitants of the land tremble? Joel 2:1-11 seems to describe the conditions in the world today, and to indicate that the Lord will *in some* way be taking a hand in the affairs of men during this great day of the Lord. Verse 11 says He "shall utter His voice before His army; for His camp is very great." We call them camps, but the Lord just calls it one camp, and evidently the whole world is becoming one great military organization. In Zephaniah 1:17 we are told why the Lord takes a hand in this great time of trouble that marks the great day of the Lord. He says: "I will bring distress upon men that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung." And in verse 18, He says, "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath."

THE TROUBLE DESCRIBED BY PROPHETS

Isaiah 34:1-3 is another prophecy that seems to describe the great day of the Lord: "The indignation of the Lord is upon *all* nations, and His *fury* upon *all* their *armies*;" He hath utterly destroyed them, He hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood." The complete fulfilment is of course still future. Psalm 97:5 also describes this great day of the Lord: "The hills melted like *wax* at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth." If mountains represent kingdoms, then hills would represent the smaller kingdoms or governments of earth. And have we not seen Poland, Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Denmark, Yugoslavia, and many . others of the small governments melt since this great time of trouble came upon the

world? . Daniel 12:1, speaking of this same time, says: "It will be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation. And Jesus also says: "Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time," and He adds-"no, nor ever shall be." It seems that the world's condition is fast shaping up to fulfil all these prophecies.

Fire is sometimes used in a figurative sense in the Scriptures to represent trouble and destruction, and the Prophets describing the great trouble do unquestionably use the word fire figuratively, just as many of the leading men of the world are using it today when they describe the destruction of the present order of things as we have known it. Many of them tell us that we must build a new world and a better one on the ashes and ruins of the' old world.

In First Thessalonians 5:3 Paul tells us that this day of the Lord will come upon the world as a thief in the night. Now notice that it is the day of the Lord that is to come as a thief -- this period of time that the Prophets tell us about, the time when all the troubles they mention will be taking place in the world. Looking back to the beginning of this trouble in 1914, we see how truly this part of the prophecy was fulfilled. In the few years just preceding 1914, the world was running along very nicely and peaceably, and many of our great men were telling us that we had become so highly civilized, and that Christianity had advanced so far that we would not have any more war. One of the most prominent of these great peace proclaimers was Andrew Carnegie. He had just visited many of the leading countries of the world, and he saw no war clouds. So he and many others said, Peace and safety. But Paul said that when they say this, sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.

We see that this day of trouble and destruction has come in exactly this way: First there was a severe pain or spasm caused by the four years of the first World War. Then a short period of ease, followed by a world-wide epidemic of the flu. Then, another spell of ease and rest. Then came another hard pain, due to the depression which lasted a few years; but the pain was allayed and we were resting fairly well, when another pain struck us. This pain, due to a world-wide war, seems to be the most severe yet suffered. Many of our great men are telling us that the old order of things is passing away, and that we will have a new world after this trouble is over. But the strange thing about it is that none of them seem to recognize it as a fulfilment of the prophecies, although they are calling our attention to fulfilment of the prophecies every day. Paul continues his prophecy by saying: "But ye, brethren, are not *in* darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." Have we not seen this part of the prophecy fulfilled also? And then Paul says: "Let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." In fulfilment of this prophecy there were a few faithful Bible readers who were watching-watching the prophecies; and for forty years they had been telling the world that the great day of the Lord was due to begin in the year 1914. But the world slept on in darkness, and only a few gave heed to the warning. Now we, are in the great day. We see the very thing has happened that Zephaniah said would come. He said God would bring distress upon men, that they would walk like blind men, because they had sinned against the Lord; and their blood would be poured out like dust.

We started out to see if there was anything happening in the world today that would prove or indicate that we are now living in the period of time called in the prophecies, "*the great day of the Lord,*" and that the world is on fire. Most all agree, we believe, that the burning will take place in the great day, and the foregoing has given what seems to us good support to the belief that we are in that great day.

REASON FOR BELIEVING THE WORLD IS ON FIRE

When this great time of trouble began in 1914, many of the world's leading men called it a great fire that was devouring the whole earth. Some called it a great *flame* that was spreading over the earth. At that time Woodrow Wilson said that the world was on fire and that we would be fortunate if it did not reach our shore. But it happened that we were unfortunate, and that it did reach our shore. After four long years of fighting, many thought the *fire* was extinguished; but now we see that it was only smothered for a while, for there were coals left smoldering in the ashes to be fanned into *a flame* later by the winds of trouble and discontent that were sure to rise soon. A few years later it broke out again, and has now spread over the earth once more.

LEADING MEN CORROBORATE THE BIBLE

Note what a few of the world's leading men say about it: One radio announcer, speaking of the surrender of the Republican armies in Spain: "*A fire* has been quenched which threatened to ignite all Europe." I. B. Alford, in the June 16, 1938 issue of the *Ferguson Forum*: "Every nation on earth today asserts itself as being an avowed friend of peace, but there is no peace." And then he goes on to say: "Not a nation on earth that does not view with alarm the outstanding disrupting elements both within and without their own borders, chiseling the very foundation of their national and community life. Why are the nations angry? Why are the people's hearts failing them for fear? What means this bitter strife? This demoralizing confusion in every land under the sun? Are we on the threshold of an earth crisis? If so, what does it mean? The disturbances now rampant bear every earmark of being more than of national or even of international import. The very elements of earthly organizations of every nature are melting with fervent *heat*. *The world is on fire*. Not an ancient landmark remains today to perpetuate the time-honored glories of the past. Not an institution on earth but is struggling for existence. Not a government but has slipped from its constitutional moorings, and cracked from pinnacle to base. And that is the world condition as Mr. Alford sees it. Mr. Obryan in 1940 said. "Our country is in *flames*"; and Mr. W. L. Clayton: "The world itself has exploded and is on fire." Joseph E. Davies, Ambassador to Belgium: "A third term for Roosevelt is necessary because *the world is on fire*."

Theodore Granik, director of the American Forum, said: "With Europe *ablaze* with war, the Lee Bill is commanding attention in Washington. And in January 1940, President Roosevelt is reported as saying: "A war which threatened to envelop the world in *flames* has been averted. But peace is not yet assured." And in one of Hal Coffman's cartoons, he pictured Europe *burning*, while the United States Congressman sat unconcerned playing the fiddle. Early in 1940, George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, said: "If Europe *blazes*: in the late spring or summer, we must put our house in order before the sparks reach the Western Hemisphere." Then on September 15, 1940, one speaker over the radio declared: "There is *a flame of fire* sweeping over the earth." On October 8, 1940, in the *Star-Telegram*, Jesse Jones is reported as saying: "The experience President Roosevelt has had in public affairs is an invaluable asset at this particular time, when the world is on *fire*." On October 8th a radio announcer said: "The Balkan States have burst into *flames*."

In one of Lyndon Johnson's speeches, when campaigning for the United States Senate, he said: "Wilkie, Hull, and others have lined up with the President since the world caught *fire*." Then in his last speech: "*The world is on fire*." In the October 1941 issue of the *Southern Agriculturist*, the Editor said: "With the *flames* of war raging in so many great areas of the world, it could be that American agriculture might be the eventual deciding factor." In the October 1st issue of the *Progressive Farmer*, Eugene Butler declared: "Even today, when the world is on *fire*, our primary

purpose is to put out the *fires* of war." Minister Jean Lageard, when speaking 'of world conditions, said that we are passing through a *fiery furnace*.

Then on July 24th, 1943, Dr. T. O. Walton, President of A. and M. College, told 3,500 attendants of the School's annual short course that they must be ready to rebuild the world on the *ashes* of a worldwide conflict. In the March issue of the *Farm and Ranch*, Claud R. Wickard, United States Secretary of Agriculture, stated: "We are going to fight through to a new world, and on the ashes of the old. We are going to build a better one." On February 3rd, 1942, Hal Coffman's cartoon in the *Star-Telegram* showed Hitler with a sword in one hand and a torch in the other, while the people of the world looked on in sorrow and sadness at the world in *flames*, saying: "There is something definitely wrong when one fanatic can, set it *afire*." One radio announcer said: "Mussolini lighted the *fires* of the world when he entered the war." On February 18th, 1942, the *Dallas News* printed a short article from Rev. G. W. Renfrow of Trenton, Texas, and with the article was a picture of the world in flames, and under the picture were the words: "*On fire*." Now we have given more than twenty of the leading men of our country who have testified that the world is on fire, and we doubt if there is one of them that had the faintest idea that they were calling the world's attention to the fulfilment of the prophecies.

There are two kinds of fire, or two ways in which it is used in the Bible: figurative and literal. When used in a figurative sense, it means sorrow, trouble, and destruction, because *fire is* the most destructive element known, and that seems to be the sense in which our great men are using it today. The Prophets may have been using it in that figurative sense, but they may also have meant literal fire-or possibly both. In studying the Bible, we find that there are three heavens, three earths, and three worlds mentioned by Christ and the Apostles. Peter, speaking of the heavens and the earth that were before the flood, calls them "the world that then was," and says that the world was destroyed, or perished, by being overflowed by water. Literal water was the agency or means used to bring about the destruction of the first heavens and the first earth which constituted or composed that first world. (2 Pet. 3:5, 6.) Then in the seventh verse he tells us of the heavens and the earth which are now, and he says that they are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment. They constitute or compose the world that now is, or the "present evil world" mentioned by Paul in Galatians 1:4 and Ephesians 6:12, and by Christ in John 16:11. Then Peter tells of a new heavens and a new earth that will constitute the third world, or "world to come," which is mentioned by Jesus in Luke 18:30, and by Paul in Hebrews 2:5 and 6:5. We have nothing to indicate that this third world or "world to come" will ever end. Heavens and earth are used in a figurative sense to represent the order of things as they exist in the world to which they belong. The heavens constitute the ruling powers, both spiritual and governmental; and earth, the social arrangements, and each world also represents an age or period of time.

Now we have seen that intelligent men are telling us that the very thing the Prophets and Apostles told us would come, has come, and are we going to believe it? Or are we going to be one of those who fulfil another part of Peter's prophecy, by saying, "Where is the promise of His presence, for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation"?

FIRE, LITERAL OR FIGURATIVE

Some think that the Prophets and Apostles meant literal fire would be used to bring about the destruction of the world that now is, because literal water was used to bring about the destruction of the old world. We reason that the literal heavens and the literal earth' will not be destroyed by literal fire, because the literal heavens and literal earth were not destroyed by literal water. By the same rule of reasoning: Since literal water was the agency used to destroy the figurative heavens and earth that then was, so, literal fire may be largely the agency used to destroy the figurative

heavens and earth that now is. Why would Peter use literal language to describe the agency used to destroy the world that was, and then use figurative language to describe the agency used to destroy the world that now is? Let us consider just what part literal *fire is* playing as a means or agency to bring about the destruction of the present order of things. Every thinking person knows that the present order of things is threatened with destruction due to the world-wide war. But have we realized that without literal fire we could not have this war! Literal fire is !the power or agency behind the manufacture of every battle-ship. Literal fire is the agency used to create the power to operate every factory in the production of weapons of war. Literal fire creates the power that moves every battleship and every other ship used in war, both on the water and under the water. Literal fire creates the power that moves every plane of every kind. Literal fire creates the power that moves every army tank, every truck, every car that His being used to carry on this war. Literal fire creates. the power that moves every railroad train, and every ship, and every boat now being used to transport men and supplies for the armies of every nation now involved in this warr of survival. Literal fire is behind every bullet and projectile. And there is literal fire in every bomb, whether it be incendiary or simply explosive. Now, these are the little fires that create the real fires that are really destroying the present world or order of things. To see the real fire we would have to be on the battle-fronts where we could see the bombers, the tanks, and the guns all in operation on both sides of the conflict. Both sides have only one purpose in view, and that purpose is destruction.

Then think of. the literal fires that these guns and bombs have caused, and the amount of property and the lives that have been destroyed by these fires. Think of the many ships of every kind -- warships, merchant-ships with their cargoes that have been destroyed since this trouble began in 1914. Literal fire was the agency that created the power that destroyed them all. If we should try to imagine the waste and destruction that has taken place in the world since this trouble began, it would be impossible for us to do so. The Prophets and Apostles said it would be a day of wasteness and destruction, and it seems that there has been enough already happen to fulfil the prophecies, but indications are that we have not yet come to the time for the end of waste and destruction.

Is it asked why we think it was not the literal earth that is to be destroyed by fire? One reason is that it was not the literal earth that was destroyed by water. Another reason is that Ecclesiastes 1:4 tells us that "the earth abideth forever." And Isaiah 45:18 says that God "created it not in vain, He formed *it* to be inhabited." Another reason is that those Scriptures which say that the earth is to be burned, tell us that the heavens are to be burned also, and the elements are to get so hot that they will melt.

Some might say God is able and has the power to burn the earth if He wants to, and we agree that that is true. But is it reasonable to think that He would want to burn up everything He had created just because one man (Adam) disobeyed His law? It would seem much more reasonable to think He would have destroyed man, the one who disobeyed, than to think He would become so angry that H would burn up the literal earth that He had created and formed to be inhabited. And that is not the worst thing about it, for if it means the literal earth, it would mean the literal heavens also. If that is true, it seems that the Devil foiled God's plans when he entered the Garden of Eden. It does not seem reasonable to think God would burn up His own. dwelling place just because man was disobedient. If we will interpret "heavens" and "earth" in these Scriptures to mean what they do in many other Scriptures, then everything will be in harmony, both with the Bible and with reason. Here are a few places where heavens and earth do not mean the literal heavens and earth: 1 Chron. 16:31: "Let the heavens be glad"Hosea 2:22: "I will hear the heavens." In Revelation 20:11, John says he saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it from whose face "the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them." Deuteronomy 32:1: "Hear, O

earth." Jeremiah 22:29: "O earth, hear the words of the Lord." Isaiah 51:6: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look upon the earth beneath, for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment." Then in the 24th chapter of Isaiah, the Prophet says that the Lord turneth the earth upside down, that the earth mourneth, and fadeth away, and that the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard. Now if the literal heavens and the literal earth or planet on which we live and the elements between heaven and earth are all to be literally burned -- melted and dissolved -- when Christ comes to judge the world, where will the people be while it is all taking place? These fires that our great and wise men have been telling us are burning the world, are bringing more trouble, more sorrow and more suffering than the world has ever known. Men are suffering enough for the many mistakes and wrongs they have done in the few short years they have been permitted to live in this world where sin and wickedness is on every side, and where Satan has blinded the minds of the people so that many are unable to understand.

- *J. A. Turnbow.*

Literal or Symbolic Fire

"But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men."-! Peter 3:7.

WE HAVE been asked whether this prophecy may be expected to be fulfilled in some way with more or less literalness as, for instance, by electrical displays of lightning, by storms, or in connection with the zone of electrical energy which some scientists believe is approaching the earth, etc., and whether this thought, if accepted as true, would be in line with Exodus 9:23: "And the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt."

We still think that the great fire that the Lord mentions through St. Peter, Zephaniah, the Prophet David and others is to be a symbolic fire. The Prophets declare that the fire of that great Day shall burn up the wicked-root and branch. And it would seem to signify that God's justice, indignation, will burn against every one who is wicked, and that this fire will go on all through the Millennial Age -- "that Day," the thousand-year Day. It will leave of the wicked neither root nor branch.

HUMAN MIND BROADENING TO RIGHTEOUS PRINCIPLES

The fire begins in the beginning of that Day, in the great time of trouble. The fire here would seem to be of this same kind. The judgments of the Lord will be abroad in the earth, and the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. The Lord spoke of a fire being already kindled in the Jewish nation. Trouble came upon them until their entire polity passed away in the year A. D. 70. And so we see now that more or less there are fires burning here and there, exposing, to some extent, the evil-doers. Isa. 26:9; Luke 12:49.

This has been going on for some time, and is to a certain extent broadening the human mind to the principles of justice and injustice. This is taking hold on business methods in a way that was never before known. We hear a great deal about the political chicanery of the present, but the world has never had so righteous, so just and equitable business arrangements as at the present time. And this is not because the people are more *righteous* than their forefathers, but because they are coming to see better methods of business. But present conditions will eventuate in a great time of trouble, in which the Capital element and the Labor element will each seek to burn the other up-and it will, no doubt, be a great conflagration. The whole structure will be involved in anarchy, which, however, will be only temporary, because of the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom.

WATCH, RATHER THAN SPECULATE

As the Apostle Peter seems to imply that the "heavens" will be on fire and the "earth" also, the conflagration might possibly have its beginning in the Church. We see more or less of an excitement now amongst theologians and all classes. We see that people are more or less losing confidence in their leaders of the past, and it looks as though the "heavens" will pass away with a great deal of struggle and great commotion. Just now they are having a little diversion with special attacks on *us*. They do, not yet have so much to do against each other, because they are all busily engaged in doing what they can against us.

All this will not interfere with the facts presented in *Studies in the Scriptures* -- *re* the change of dispensations. We have the assurance from the Scriptures that Messiah's Kingdom will bring the

world great blessings, and we wonder how these blessings will come. There will be a new arrangement of things in the affairs of the earth, but just what will be the nature of the physical changes, or how these will be brought about, we do not know. We are not to suppose that there will be another canopy of water to make another deluge, for the Lord had declared that there will never be another world-wide flood.

It would be very unwise for us to speculate on any thing not revealed in the Bible. We prefer to keep our eyes open and not allow our minds to specially dwell on any one theory. Our confidence is not in any one method, but in the ONE who has all power.

We feel sure that all He has promised will be fulfilled. It is not necessary to decide the point in our own mind even, let alone mentioning it to others.

SIGNS OF DISPENSATIONAL CHANGES

Then it is to be borne in mind that Joel's account of the Pentecostal blessing is divided into two parts the blessing upon the servants and handmaidens, and that upon all flesh. According to this, the servants and handmaidens of the Lord have special blessings at the present time. With the conclusion of the blessing of the servants and handmaidens comes the fulfilment of the other prophecy-the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh. This evidently refers to the blessing of the whole world by the Church during the thousand years. And in this connection we see that the Lord will show signs and wonders, clouds, "blood and fire and pillars of smoke." We have no positive knowledge that this language is symbolic. It may refer to social upheaval and combustion, political troubles, financial troubles, and also some great physical manifestations of Divine power in connection with the time of trouble.

But all this is only suppositionary. We are expecting a change; and if this change shall be accompanied by physical disturbances, *now is* the time for them to be coming. For the Lord says, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy Mountain" -- Kingdom. The supposition that there would be catastrophe *then* would be out of harmony with this prophecy. Rather, the appropriate time, if there are to be such calamities and changes, physical or electrical, would seem to be just now-just at the time when, as the Lord forewarned, there is to be "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" -- at the time, apparently, when the "four winds," the fallen angels, will become loose.

All of these things together will constitute the "time of trouble such as never was." And from this time of trouble, "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may' be accounted worthy to escape." Watch that ye may "escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Luke 21:36.

- R5317, *Sept.* 15, 1913.

Sheltered in the Love of Christ

"Ye shall abide in My love." - John 15:10.

AS WE review all of chapters 14 to 17 of the Gospel according to John, it becomes evident that in this comforting message Jesus was laying very special emphasis on our place of security in His love, and in the love of our heavenly Father. We are impressed also with how much He said about our dwelling in Him, abiding in His Word, and thereby having a full experience of His joy and peace. He began with words of comfort to hearts greatly perplexed by hints of impending trials, and so He continued this strain of encouragement throughout the entire discourse of these four chapters. His thought was to give confidence and good cheer to His immediate disciples, and the same words have brought similar blessings to all His sincere, true followers even to the present hour. It was a message intended to assure all such that they would be shadowed under the canopy of His own and the Father's unfailing love. He reiterates His own love, and leaves no doubt about the Father's love being perfectly revealed in His own. He wants it believed that from the security of that love no power can pluck those so greatly loved and protected. How cheering His words: -- "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." - John 15:9-11.

"As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you." Who can measure the significance of such words! None but His loved ones can approximate their meaning. They have a depth and a wealth of meaning well nigh incomprehensible. The analogy between the love existing in the relationship of the Father and Son, and the closeness of fellowship Jesus suggests we may have with them both, indicates an incomparable privilege. Yet it is to make this astounding fact clear to us that Jesus returns to it again and again in these chapters. He desires, therefore, to have us know that in this very close and tender affection we shall abide in His love.

We are to remember, of course, that in this particular matter, the emphasis is on our abiding in His love for us. It is obvious that what is meant is not primarily our loving Him, but rather our keeping His commandments and thereby abiding in the sweet sense of His love toward us. This is the Divine order always. "We love Him, because He first loved us." But certain it is that whoever thus abides in Christ's love, will echo it back in a continuous warmth of love for Him. So the two streams of love continue to flow deep and full—the love of Christ flowing to us in the volume of an all-excelling love Divine, and our love responding thereto in a devotion which counts every other gain as loss and dross because of love for One so altogether lovely.

To abide in this environment of love we must have the mind of Christ. Like Him we must have a perfect delight in all the will of God, and find ourselves wanting all that good and acceptable will wrought out in our experiences. If we are to be ready for Christ in His coming to be glorified in His saints, there are experiences for us in the will of God we cannot afford to miss. We are, therefore, to know how He loves us, knowing this not merely as a pleasing sentiment in the realm of meditation, but know it through the medium of experiences sufficient to give us the best and deepest sense of its reality and permanency. If ours is the obedience of faith toward the will of God in all things, such trusting and obeying will bring this unmistakable evidence that we are truly abiding in His will; therefore in a love that will not let us go. We usually hold, very limited conceptions of what the Lord's love yearns to do for us, as in many ways He seeks to work in us to will His good pleasure, and do it. Our slowness to believe and act in the fulness of true faith is always regrettable. We see only in part as yet, and how grateful we may well be that God

graciously understands our limitations and so continues His work in us and for us. He knows that when we have reached the end of the way, where faith will be lost in sight, and all life's windings and turnings, sorrows and joys are understood in the light of His great love for us, then we will be glad that He had His way with us.

WHOM HE LOVES HE CHASTENS

To abide in the love of Christ will mean that ere long it will be seen that He gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him. His love looks forward to great ends, even to an eternity of happiness and activity possible only to those who have passed through the needed discipline here below. This means a willingness to leave the complete choice of life's experiences wholly in His wise and loving supervision. As to what this will mean, Jesus uses the illustration of the vine and its branches to teach us, showing us what to expect in the way of love's operations. The pruning of the branches in this illustration is a picture of love seeking the greatest possible measure of fruitage. It is love that desires to see each branch in the true Vine bearing large clusters of ripened fruit. The branch responding to the pruning is shown as bearing more fruit, even much fruit. The branch failing to respond becomes a castaway. It was Jesus, the Vine, who said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer." He had overcome the same world experiences, learning obedience by the things He suffered. And how greatly the Husbandman was glorified by the abundance of fruitage gathered from the Vine!

If, then, we respond to the needed discipline as Jesus did, He will encourage us with His promise, "Ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." (John 15:10.) All things then work together for our good, as the called of God according to His will and purpose. Tribulations and tests of faith we must have, but it is needful to remember that the Lord can "steal the bitter from life's woes" only when we are rightly exercised by them. And if so exercised while the trials are doing their work on our characters, we shall yet see all these shine with a lustre of glory when all are understood. Was it not so with Joseph in God's marvelous overruling in his bitter trials? What privileges of service he would have missed otherwise. And what remarkable experiences of God's very personal care might never have been his if life's choice had been left in his own hands. Think of the outcome in Job's severe testing of his faith and patience. And think also of Elijah, utterly discouraged and pleading to be allowed to die, little knowing what he too would have missed if he had been permitted to lie down under his juniper tree and die. Had his prayer been granted, there would have been for him no vision of mighty wind, earthquake and fire, in which God pictured coming events of extraordinary significance to Elijah-and to us; he would have missed the lesson of the "still small voice" of God speaking to him for his encouragement. There would have been noseparation by fiery chariot and exit by whirlwind from his sphere of service; and in all probability no place for him in the tableau of splendor on the mount of transfiguration. Elijah's way out, if it had been granted when he was discouraged with his experiences, would have made but half a picture. God's way was a complete and wonderful picture, perfect in all its parts. It is even so with us in our appointed pathway when we continue in the love of Christ, and let Him choose in all things.

TRIALS REVEAL THE HEART OF CHRIST

Not only are we disciplined and perfected by our trials when these are accepted as from the hand of God, but out of these same experiences we are privileged to know how much it means to be in the love of Christ. So all trials are priceless, not only because they are a part of our being in the love of Christ through our readiness to let Him choose for us, but priceless also in that they bring us into a knowledge of His love for us by manifestations we should very much regret missing. If an illustration of this is needed, where can a better one be found than in the story in which we

have those two precious words, "Jesus wept." In that story the choice of a trial was made by Jesus, and what a wealth of blessing resulted from His choice. Lazarus had been permitted to die before He came to Martha and Mary in response to their message to Him. This unaccountable delay perplexed these dear sorrowing hearts who had thought it quite sufficient to send the word, "He whom Thou lovest is sick." At last He came, and Martha hastens to tell Him the results of His delay. "If Thou hadst been here, our brother had not died. Mary had remained within the house to weep on in her disappointment and perplexity. Jesus sends for her, and she comes weeping to His feet. Then, behold His loving sympathy! He appears to have shown no special emotional feelings while conversing with Martha, but how different when Mary weeps in His presence. It is then that the flood gates of His love and sympathy gave way, and mingling His tears with those of Mary, the Son of God wept with those who weep. What volumes of sympathy those tears unfolded to Martha and Mary, and to others who said, "Behold how He loved him." Such manifest sharing in the sisters' sorrow revealed that Jesus, whether present or absent, always knows, always loves and cares even when delaying His coming to our aid. Had Lazarus been raised from a sick bed, they had not seen those tears. Had Jesus not seen it best to choose a later arrival, they could never have known the depths of His affection. How fully they were held in His love, when it seemed to them a question if He really cared. O the depth of those words, "Ye *shall abide* in My love. Always abide within that sheltered refuge while trials refine the character He loves, and when He thereby reveals His love for His own. Surely we may abide there serene and calm while the pruning knife is used, and more of the desired fruitage is sought, which Christ's love sees can yet be produced.

Would we know that we are thus in the love of Jesus through the medium of the trials He chooses for us? Would we find Him increasingly precious to us as He continues His work of grace in us? If so, let us value all the permitted experiences by which these ends are made possible. Only then will we ever have any practical way of verifying the oft repeated words, "Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face." In believing that this is so we have learned that "It is under such discipline that the soul is mellowed to a loving submission that calmly says, I can do all things, bear all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. As gradually the dross of the old nature is consumed, and the gold becomes more and more manifest, these precious souls become ever dearer to their loving Lord. So dear are they to Him that in every affliction He is near with His grace to sustain and His presence to cheer; and the deepest shades of sorrow become memory's most hallowed resting places, where the Day Star shines the brightest." One who knew this truth has said, "Our tears are like telescopes to enable us to see further into heaven. God often washes our eyes with tears so that we may see realities of His love with clearer vision."

BY OUR SUFFERINGS WE BECOME BENEFACTORS OF OTHERS

To abide in the love of Christ, and thereby be developed in Christian character through trial, and additionally *to* see His love for us more clearly, are wonderful privileges -- sufficient reward surely for any "light afflictions" endured in submissive patience. But there is still another measure of compensation connected with these experiences. We hear Jesus say, "I have called you friends." This friendship means a very wonderful oneness embracing the Father, the Son, and ourselves. What a vista of possibilities this opens up before our eyes as we see how our trials affect not only ourselves, but are a part of God's purpose in His dealings with others. Beyond our own sphere of trials and their great meaning- to us, there is another realm where they play a real part in the larger plans of God and Christ. If we continue in the love of Christ by letting Him have His way with us, then in the wonderful economy of God's operations, it may be that we are serving those operations in ways *very* far beyond our greatest hope or expectation. Let the suffering of Martha and Mary illustrate this marvelous possibility.

The suffering and perplexity -over the delay of Jesus and the death of their brother which Martha and Mary experienced, was surely to the glory of God, as Jesus said. He .was glad for the sake of the disciples that He was not there before death had done its work. The sisters were surely as glad afterward when all was made plain to them. We too are glad of this delay, and for the story that has come down to us because Lazarus died. The raising of Lazarus from the sleep of death and all the circumstances connected with the story as it affected all inmates of the Bethany home, has been a cheering beacon light in myriad homes since that time. Weeping hearts have turned again and again to this Bethany home for comfort in an hour of bereavement, and found faith strengthened in a blessed resurrection hope. What a service Martha and Mary were privileged to perform for the thousands of mourners to follow them through the long years of waiting for Jesus to come and by His word of authority call the sleepers from the tomb. By this we see how possible it is for those who abide in the will of God to share in a ministry of far-reaching importance.

We think of Job and the anguish he experienced while the permitted afflictions made his life a burden. But he too can teach us that under God's hand and overruling none of *His* people can suffer with out in some manner benefiting others. Job suffered not for himself alone. Do we not read plainly that he was serving generations yet to come, even us in our day. "Ye have heard of the patience of job, and seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." O how little Job could know the endless benefits others would receive through God's dealings with him in those far-off days. As it was with him, and with Martha and Mary, so likewise with prophets, apostles, martyrs, and a host of humble unknown patient sufferers. Only eternity will reveal how far-reaching the sufferings of His children went in the working out of His purposes. Those, therefore, who spend their weary days on beds of sickness, or find themselves shut in by infirmities from which only death can bring deliverance, may take heart. Who knows but as Job's sufferings and the sufferings of Martha and Mary have meant so great a measure of blessing to others, so the sufferings of all who are in the hand of God are likewise used *of* Him in the interests of others whom He seeks to encourage and help.

These are the blessings that come to us *as* we remain in true relation to Christ. If we will remember that we live not for ourselves alone, nor die in a complete isolation from all others, we will surely find a larger meaning in the privilege ;of abiding in Christ. What a God is ours! Like the Psalmist, we find Him everywhere in His overruling power. And like Martha and Mary we too may often find Him at work for us in circumstances very different from our expectations.

So we are sheltered in the love of Christ. Within the circle of that love we live and move and have our golden opportunities. He has given us His commandments, the conditions of His will, and toward these we feel as did the Psalmist, and so pray with him, "Make me to go in the way of Thy commandments; for therein do I delight." (Psalm 119:35.) Obedience to these commands will mean receiving the treatment every fruitful branch in the true Vine must receive. The prunings are for more fruit, and we are one with the Husbandman in that desire. In all of these revelations of His will we hear Jesus saying to us, "I have told you these things just because I want to share My joy with you." In this union with Christ we find our present life truly linked with Him, and in Him we find our all in all. Happy are they who find that --

"In Christ all fulness dwells, from Him proceeds
All that fall'n man, poor, wretched, guilty, needs.
In Him the contrite, bruised in spirit find
Whate'er can heal the sorrows of the mind
Forgiving love; that saves from blank despair,
Rich grace, that banishes each anxious care,

Soft pity, that relieves the bursting sigh,
And truth, revealing joys that never die.
Thrice happy they, who to His word attend,
His favor seek, and on His strength depend.

"'Tis theirs to know His heart-consoling voice,
To share His smile, and in His name rejoice;
To them, reclaimed in mercy from the fall
And heavenward marching, Christ is all in all;
In want, their treasure -- in distress, their stay --
In gloom, their day-spring -- vigor, in decay --
'Mid foes, their guard -- in solitude, their guest --
In storms, their hiding place -- in toils, their rest, --
In bonds, their freedom -- their relief in pain --
In life, their glory, and in death, their gain."

- J. J. Blackburn.

What Say the Scriptures Concerning the Use of Wine

Question:

One of the brethren poses the question: "What position should a child of God take in regards to drinking wine or other strong drink? Of course we know we should use the spirit of a sound mind and not do anything to excess, but is it wrong to drink any such drink at all? The only reference I found was in regard to elders and deacons in 1 Tim. 3:3 and 3:8. Also why should elders be "not given to wine" and deacons be "not given to *much* wine"?

Answer:

None will deny that the excessive use of intoxicating liquor has been the cause of more human misery than perhaps any other one thing. Many a home has been ruined, many a life wrecked, through its baneful influence. Yet, aware as we are, of the evil effects which invariably follow its over-indulgence, we must nevertheless insist that neither in the Old Testament nor in the New is total abstinence from intoxicating liquor enjoined.

There is indeed, strong counsel against drinking to excess. Yet nowhere in the Scriptures is its use forbidden. On the contrary we find that, notwithstanding their clarion notes of warning against overindulgence, the Scriptures not only countenance its proper use but, on occasion, recommend it. Let us examine a few passages:

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." - Prov. 20:1.

"Be not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh. For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty;" and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." - Prov. 23:20-21.

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine. They that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." - Prov. 23:29-32.

The meaning of these citations cannot be mistaken. Taken alone they might well be considered as supporting the total abstinence position. Yet in - this same Book of Proverbs, (Prov 31:6, 7) there are other words which must evidently have, escaped the attention of over-zealous advocates of total abstinence, who claim that the Bible forbids the use of wine or other strong drink under any circumstances. Let us read those two verses:

"Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish. And wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his misery no more."

This passage agrees very well with the one in Psalm 104, where the Psalmist praises God for the manifold blessings which He has bestowed on man, amongst them specifically mentioning :the "wine that maketh glad the heart of man."-Verse 15.

From the records of the New Testament there is little room for doubt but that our Lord Himself used wine. It was said of Him, "Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber," not, we are certain, because He over-indulged in either eating or drinking, but because His general conduct in this respect was in such contrast to the abstemious course followed by John the Baptist, who, from his birth, was a total abstainer. - Luke 1:15; Matt. 11:18, 19.

The first miracle performed by our Lord was that at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee, where He turned water into wine. While we are aware that this miracle has deep significance, and that underlying it there is teaching of great spiritual import, we must not forget that it was real wine into which He turned the water, wine which the steward of the feast pronounced "good," which he preferred to any that had been served previously to the wedding guests.

In the question, reference is made to 1 Tim. 3:3 and 8. These verses do not forbid either elders or deacons to use wine. They are merely enjoined not to drink to excess. A little further along in the same Epistle, in chapter 5, verse 23, St. Paul tells Timothy, who was himself an elder, to "drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." Here, surely, is Scriptural warrant for the limited use of wine as a medicine.

In regard to the additional question, as to why St. Paul mentions only "wine" in the case of the elders, whereas in the case of the deacons, he speaks of "much wine," the explanation is that such distinction is the fault of our English translation. No such distinction is to be drawn from the Greek. The word in 1 Tim. 3:3, as applied to the elders, is "*paroinos*," the meaning of 'which . is defined by Prof. Strong as "staying near wine, i.e., tippling (a toper) ." In 1 Tim. 3:8, where St. Paul is referring to the deacons, the word is. simply "*oinos*," meaning "wine." The elders are not to be topers; the deacons are, not to be given to much wine. While the words employed by the Apostle are slightly different, the meaning in each case is the same.

What then, are we to conclude? We reply: We must conclude (1) that the Scriptures do not forbid the use of wine or other strong drink; (2) that its use by our Lord and those with whom He associated is evident; (3) that both Old and New Testament writers specifically recommended its use on occasion; (4) that whether or not any of us use it must be left to the individual's own conscience. It might be quite right for one, quite, wrong for another. We are not to judge another. Each must decide for himself. However, if we are truly consecrated to the Lord, we will, in deciding on a course of conduct for ourselves, seek not our own wills, but His. This will lead us to reflect, not only on the right or wrong of drink in itself, but on the possible effect our conduct may have on others. The general rule laid down by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 8:13, in reference to the eating of meat which had been offered to idols, will serve to guide us in reaching a proper decision on this as on all other matters pertaining to our Christian walk and conversation. There St. Paul wrote: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend,"

- P. L. Read

Report of Pilgrimage

Directors and Editors of the Pastoral Bible Institute.

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in our Master's name. I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to the Lord and to you for the opportunity of service which has been mine for more than a year now. Through the grace and strength supplied me by the Lord, I have just completed a trip that has embraced most of the United States and Canada. I personally received many blessings in meeting with the friends in the 114 places I had, been given appointments, and I trust was able to be of some help and encouragement to those with whom I had fellowship.

Under present conditions, there are of course times when travel must be difficult, when "standing room only" is available, and when one's destination cannot be reached at the time anticipated from the schedule given. Under the providence of the Lord, I had to spend one whole night in the bus station at El Paso, Texas, and so took that opportunity to engage in some editorial work I might otherwise have had to neglect. But on the whole, the trip was made in comfort and without many slip-ups.

It would be a considerable and perhaps unnecessary task to give you a detailed report of the conditions I found in all the cities and towns I visited. Generally speaking, the friends manifest much of the Spirit of the Lord, and a sincere desire to be loyal to the covenant they have made. Many are isolated and hungry for fellowship with those who are like-minded. The gas rationing, and working conditions have made it difficult for friends in many places to get together as they once did and in some instances, where they are widely separated, they have had to abandon all attempts at meetings for the present.

The testings that have come upon us since the Lord took Brother Russell from our midst, have from one viewpoint, caused havoc to the "Truth" movement. I came in contact with divisions that I did not know existed. Many of them, in my opinion, are wholly unnecessary, and have really been caused by the counsel of shepherds on whom they have relied for guidance. Some of the things that cause divisions, we will agree, are more or less vital; but many of the divisions are the result of differences about beliefs and class policies that are based largely upon our own reasonings, and so would come under the head of intolerance. I was happy to find in some Classes where there exists such differences, that they were still able to fellowship together in the Lord, and, recognizing Him as their head, were mutually willing to be tolerant in matters in which their human reason must play so great a part. Where only one side is willing, to be tolerant, it does not work out so well. A large proportion of those with whom we met have reached an age that does not give prospect of remaining long this side the veil. The ills of a dying race are causing many of them to suffer, and though they endure without complaining, it is quite evident that they will welcome the call that means their testing time has ended. Some I visited have since heard that call, and we rejoice to believe that their trust in the Lord will not go unrewarded.

I cannot bring this report to a close without expressing my appreciation for the hospitality, kindness, and aid that was accorded me by the brethren; sometimes at a decided inconvenience to themselves, I feel sure. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon all His people; and may His wisdom and Spirit direct the Institute in its endeavor to serve His people.

Your brother by His Grace,
- J. T. Read