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Think on These Things

Our Year Text for 1947

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things " - Phil 4:8.

PERHAPS THE best possible preparation of heart for the year which lies ahead is a thankful recollection of the Lord's grace through the years that are past. Meditating on Deuteronomy 8:2 an unknown poet has written:

THESE MANY YEARS

These many years! What lessons they unfold
Of grace and guidance through the wilderness,
From the same God that Israel of old
In the Shekinah glory did possess.
How faithful He, through all my griefs and fears
And constant murmurings, these many years!

God of the Covenant! From first to last,
From when I stood within that sprinkled door,
And o'er my guilt the avenging angel passed,
Thy better angel hath gone on before;
And naught but goodness all the way appears,
Unmerited and free, these many years!

Thy presence wrought a pathway through the sea;
Thy presence made the bitter waters sweet;
And daily have Thy hands prepared for me
Sweet, precious morsels -- lying at my feet.
'Twas but to stoop and taste the grace that cheers,

And start refreshed, through all these many years!
What time I thirsted and earth's streams were dry,
What time I wandered and my hope was gone,
Thy hand hath brought a pure and full supply,
And, by a loving pressure, lured me on.
How oft that hand hash wiped away my tears
And written "Pardoned!" all these many years!

And what of discipline Thy love ordained
Fell ever gently on this heart of mine;
Around its briars was my spirit trained
To bring forth fruits of righteousness Divine;
Wisdom in every check, and love appears
In every stroke, throughout these many years!

Lord, what I might have been, my spirit knows
Rebellious, petulant, and prone to stray;
Lord, what I am, in spite of flesh and foes,
I owe to grace that kept me in the way.
Thine be the glory! Merit disappears,
As back I look upon these many years.

Thine be the glory! Thou shalt have the praise
For all Thy dealings, to my latest breath;
A daily "Ebenezer" will I raise,
And sing "Salvation" through the vale of death
To where the crown, the golden harp appears,
There to rehearse Thy love through endless years!

Yes -- as we recall His mercies "through the years" our hearts are filled to overflowing. "Great, indeed," we feel, "has been His faithfulness," and we are constrained to exclaim: "Lord, if I may, I'll serve another day."

KEEP THY HEART WITH ALL DILIGENCE

In Proverbs 4:23 we are exhorted to "keep our heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life," and it was doubtless with much the same thought in mind that St. Paul addressed the Church at Phillipi in the words we have chosen for our year text. The heart represents the will, the intention or purpose. The will, being the power which governs the whole man, must be kept true and centred in God. "Blessed," said our Master, "are the pure in heart," that is, those whose purpose is fixed, uncompromisingly set, towards God and righteousness. Yet though the heart, or will, is the controlling power of a man, it is itself subject to influence. If the thoughts be impure, unjust, unholy, the power of the will becomes impaired. Obviously, therefore, in those who are striving to perfect holiness in the reverence of the Lord -- to adorn themselves with the beauty of holiness--the thoughts must not be neglected and permitted to browse in any pasture, but must be disciplined, trained in the direction suggested by the Apostle in our text. We must "think on these things."

THOUGHTS DETERMINE CHARACTER AND DESTINY

"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he," wrote Solomon long years ago (Prov. 23:7), a statement which no intelligent mind today would dispute. As the years pass, habits of thought impress themselves indelibly on the man, so that trained observers can usually tell a man's occupation; they can distinguish a school teacher, a doctor, a bookkeeper, a musician, a salesman, etc. There is an indescribable something about each which has resulted from continuous thinking in one general direction. Something in the manner, the bearing, the walk, proclaims the individual's occupation. *So, too, it is with one's character. If* one is largely occupied with good thoughts the tendency is to become good.

THOUGHTS CAN BE CONTROLLED

If thoughts could not be controlled, the fact that they determine our character and therefore our destiny would be appalling to us. But the inspiring and comforting thing is that we can control our thoughts. Not perfectly, of course; in this life we cannot reach that perfection of being we expect only in the next. Nevertheless we can, in considerable measure, decide what shall occupy our thoughts, and thus decide what our character and destiny shall be.

Let us make no mistake about this. We can, in the main, control our thoughts. If it has not been true of us in the past, it may be true of us in the year that lies ahead. Some one has said that "God's commands enable." Indeed that is axiomatic. He would never have commanded, "Keep thy heart with all diligence," if he did not intend to supply the power to enable us to obey. His chosen vessel, Paul, would not have been permitted to exhort the Church at Phillipi to "think an these things" if they were to be denied the necessary mental strength to do so.

THESE THINGS DO

Modern psychologists tell us that every thought tends to express itself -- either in word or deed. Some thoughts find expressions; others are suppressed. We would act upon each thought as it arises if it were not turned aside by another thought before it reaches the motor centres and starts them off. The thought that gets there first is the one that decides, at that moment, what we say or do. The word spoken or the deed performed always results from that particular thought which is uppermost at the time.

Viewed from this standpoint one's whole life may be seen to be a "fighting within," each thought seeking to get to the motor centres first so as to gain expression.

Obviously, then, if we would always speak and act aright, we must think aright. Our "habit of thought" (Manna February 9) must be developed -- carefully, painstakingly, cultivated. When we are confronted with a difficult decision, or a strong temptation, what is really taking place in our mind is a battle and the question in every case is: Which set of considerations -- which viewpoint, which conclusion is going to gain supremacy. If our minds have been properly trained, if we have the highest ideals "in the saddle," those thoughts will be the ones to win the race and be expressed.

In his "Farewell" Charles Kingsley gave good counsel when he wrote:

"Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever:
Do noble things, not dream them, all day long!"

A common mistake is to dream much and do little. Doubtless this human weakness is what produced the well known saying:

"The road to Hell is paved with good intentions."

Intentions, good in themselves, are of no value unless they find expression in word or deed. Every good intention, every generous impulse, every lofty emotion, should be permitted to find expression. Each time they are allowed to evaporate without expression in word or deed, another opportunity for strengthening the will and developing the character has been missed.

Some one has likened our mind in such circumstances to a great locomotive standing idle but under full steam. Actually trembling with pent up power, it nevertheless stands useless, merely blowing off steam, because the power is not connected with the wheels. Lives, too, may be wasted, no matter how noble the resolutions or fine the impulses developed, if these are not permitted expression. It is not sufficient to merely "*think* on these things" but, as the Apostle tells us in the very next verse: "Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you." - Phil. 4:9.

FINISHING TOUCHES OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

It would be a mistake to suppose that the words of our text are addressed to the worldly. The Epistle to the Philippians is addressed to Christians -- "to the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." (Phil. 1:1.) As Brother Russell has observed, the exhortation is not applicable "to others than saints-not to the worldly, not even to the household *of* faith, until they have made a full consecration of themselves to the Lord. It would be useless to address others along this line; the exhortation would be of no effect. Hence, the exhortation of this lesson is not specially applicable to any but the most advanced Christians -- not even to the 'babes in Christ,' but only to those who are somewhat matured in the new life. As for the babes who are not developed new creatures, they will have their attention very thoroughly occupied with the cruder elementary lessons, respecting the coarser sins which the new creature must abhor and battle against. This text addresses those who have made considerable progress along these lines of putting away 'the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit'-those who are seeking to *perfect holiness* in their hearts and so far as possible also in their earthly bodies. - 2 Cor. 7:1.

"The context proves our assertion, for after speaking of prayer and thanksgiving to God and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, keeping their hearts and minds, the Apostle sums up this advanced position of grace with the words of our text as the finality or finish of the argument, and of the process of character development: 'Finally, brethren.'" - R2891.

WISE COUNSEL FROM A FAITHFUL PASTOR

In another choice passage from our late beloved Pastor's pen we see how his trained mind profited from dwelling on "these things." We can think of no better way to end this article than reviewing once again his helpful presentation. We quote:

"Now we come to the Apostle's grand summing up of the way in which the Christian is to set his affections -- fix them, fasten them, hold them upon profitable things; that he may grow in grace as well as in knowledge and love of God. The Apostle points out that the will having been consecrated to the Lord, faith having been exercised in rejoicing and thanksgiving in all of the Lord's providences, the peace of trust having come in, the further steps in the development of character will be through *guarding our thoughts*: and this means also the guarding of our words and acts, because it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, and that the whole course of life is directed. What, then, should be the trend of the Christian's thoughts after

he has reached the grand development already outlined by the Apostle? It should be toward things that are true, having no sympathy with anything that is false or even exaggerated. Whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself. Whoever cleanses his thoughts, and avoids exaggeration, etc., is in that degree purifying his mind and his entire character, and coming the more into touch and sympathy with the Lord himself, who is 'the Truth.'

"Nor is it sufficient that we are sure of the truth of matters. We are to test them further, and discern to what extent they are honorable, noble; for although the Lord has accepted us, ignoble and imperfect, and has covered the ignoble features of our characters, and purposes to cover them to the end with his own merit, nevertheless, we cannot be in sympathy with the ignoble features of our fallen condition, but on the contrary must desire true nobility, and the highest standards of honor in our hearts, in our thoughts, in all of our dealings with our God and with our fellows. The test of honor is therefore to be applied after the test of the truth. The thing might be true, but is it honorable -to think about it or tell about it? This is another question.

"Another test we are to apply is, Are the things just? We are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust, and we are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours, while learning at the same time to, view the conduct of others from a different standpoint so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, forbearance, pity, helpfulness. But we cannot be too careful how we criticize every thought we entertain, every plan we mature, that the lines of justice shall in no sense of the word be infringed by us with our hearts' approval.

"Purity is. another quality to be esteemed by us. *We* are to love and cultivate that which is pure to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we will desire to drop it from memory, and this will only be accomplished by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, . and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to, recognize true. loveliness, and to esteem it. From our standpoint the impure, the unjust, the untrue, the dishonorable things, cannot appear lovely, desirable, worthy of emulation. When we would think on the purest of things we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible, and, as nearly as we may be, able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately the loveliness manifested in one or, another of the followers of Jesus, who walk closely in his footsteps. The mind that frequently calls up the lovely perfections of the Lord and the truth, and is well filled by these, is guarded greatly against intrusions of unlovely and unholy things, contrary to. the spirit of the Lord. The Apostle concludes the list, by referring to all things of good repute: things of any virtue or value, things in any degree praiseworthy -- the noble words or noble deeds or noble sentiments of anybody, we may safely meditate upon, and as a consequence find ourselves growing toward these ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed. We will become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Lord and Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the first resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness." - *Reprints*, page R3129.

- P. L. Read.

One Year Has Passed, Another, Comes

[The following poem was received from Brother J. J. Blackburn in January 1946, too late for publication in the "Herald" for that month. In view of the fact that he passed *on* a few months later, the fifth verse has special significance-Ed. Com.]

"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness." - Psalm 65:11.

A year just past in God's good grace,
And how we can His goodness trace,
Through *days* and months of peace and joy,
With hands and hearts in His employ.

By grace kept in the holy Mount,
And there what blessings we may count,
While all the year our feet have trod
This path of fellowship with God.

The love of God o'er all the way
Has given strength for every day.
If Time has brought some bitter-sweet
It left us nearer to His feet.

His peace has kept us free and strong,
And made His love our only song;
And thus apart from *ways* of strife,
We've lived in Him who is our Life.

We enter now another year,
While it is passing we may hear
Our Savior calling, "Welcome Home,"
And we shall rest no more to roam.

But if down all the year we're borne,
O may God's grace our lives adorn,
With more and more of sweet accord
In likeness to our loving Lord.

-J. J. Blackburn.

Walking in Newness of Life

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." - 2 Cor. 5:17.

THROUGHOUT THE inspired Word of God mankind as a race are represented as dead in trespasses and sins, dead in Adam, alienated from God through wicked works. Only those who have fled for refuge to the cross of Christ are ever spoken of as having life in God's Sight. These have passed from death unto life through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and consecration to him, and according to the above text and many others of a similar kind, those thus passed from death in Adam to life in Christ are now to be considered as living a new life. Of a life so altered in the matter of relationship to God as well as in all other aspects, it can be truly said "all things are become new." Thus in another text we have the same Apostle telling us "that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." - Rom. 6:4.

There is nothing ambiguous about such texts as the above. The natural man, living under the condemnation of death, and following the downward bent of the fallen fleshly mind is sensual, inherently sinful, dead. But the one who has turned from sin, and by faith in Christ found peace and forgiveness at the mercy-seat of God, has thereby experienced something so far-reaching in its possibilities of relationship to God, to eternal life, and to present resurrection influences, that the contrasts of life and death used by the Apostle in these Scriptures become clear and forceful illustrations of this most important teaching of the New Testament. In fact, this form of illustrating the state of those who are in harmony with God and those who are at enmity with him, is a prominent feature of our Lord Jesus' own teaching. "Let the dead bury their dead," is his clear conception of those out of relationship with God. Then in contrast, speaking of those who had entered the way of life, he said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." And to this might be added the testimony of the Apostle John, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." - Matt. 8:22; John 3:36; 1 John 5:12.

IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST

It is manifestly important then that we note very closely the language used in our text. We observe that Paul is careful to tell us that it is only to such as are "in Christ," that old things have passed away and to whom all things are become new. The words "in Christ" place a very particular emphasis on the fact that much more than a belief in Christ and his sacrifice is necessary to an enjoyment of these "new creature" privileges. It is not "If any man believe in Christ," but "If any man be *in* Christ." This distinction is ever a characteristic of the Word of God. To believe the word of Christ as true, and to have his word abiding in the heart, may be two vastly different reactions of the mind. One may hear his word and affirm faith in it and yet go on building on the shifting sand, being a hearer but not a doer of the word. The word of truth may indeed be received and believed by the simple processes of intellectual powers possessed, but the Scriptural emphasis is always placed on the deeper receptivity and response of the heart affections. "That on the good ground, Jesus said, "are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." - Luke 8:15.

We cannot be surprised, therefore, to find that throughout the entire Bible God puts so much emphasis on the depth of heart soil we display, and on the depth of heart devotion and receptivity we manifest. As he said to Israel of old, so he continues to say to all who profess faith in him, or

claim any special relationship to him, "The Lord your God proveth you to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deut. 12:3.) And this is the distinction intended in our text where being "in Christ" is the imperative requirement laid down by the Apostle.

And what does it mean to be "in Christ"? It means that we have found the "new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." (Heb. 10:20.) It means that by the exercise of faith in the atoning work of Christ we have now been "quickened together with him," and henceforth our "life is hid with Christ in God." This, then, is how believers are united to Christ and can know that they are "in Christ." The two important steps into this relationship are clearly stated by Paul: "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." (Rom. 6:8; Col. 3:1.) Thus it is through death that we enter the sphere of new creature life -- through faith in the atonement secured by the death of Jesus, and then by virtue of our baptism into death with him, we are raised to "walk in newness of life." As another has well expressed:

"It is in the power of a new life that believers are united to Christ. They were dead in sin, and he, in perfect grace, came down, and, though himself pure and sinless, was 'made sin' -- 'died unto sin' -- put it away -- rose triumphant over it, and all pertaining to it, and, in resurrection, became the head of a new race. Adam was the head of the old creation, which fell with him. Christ, by dying, put himself under the full weight of his people's condition, and, having perfectly met all that was against them, rose victorious over all, and carried them with him into the new creation, of which he is the glorious Head and Centre. Hence, we read, 'He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.' (1 Cor. 6:17.) 'But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved) , and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' (Eph. 2:4-6.) 'For we are members of his body.' (Eph. 5:30.) 'And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.' (Col. 2:13.) " Thus we are constituted alive "in Christ."

LIVING AS NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST

In the regeneration processes by which God's new creation class is developed, they are, by an act of pure grace planted in Christ, and thus like the branches in the vine, they are constantly partaking of the sap and strength of Christ the Vine; therefore the life of Christ becomes increasingly manifest in them. The evidences of spiritual life must become sufficiently marked in the daily conduct as to give a real corroboration to a profession of relationship to Christ. This is made clear by the statement of Scripture: "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the, Spirit. . Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8:5, 9.) These texts cover two important facts of Christian life. They very clearly point out our privileged and blessed standing in justification by faith, that is, our reckoned righteousness before God because we are now in "Christ Jesus, and they also show that because we are thus complete in him, and recipients of the holy spirit in its creative power, the mind and character of Christ should, yes, must characterize our daily life.

In this new life, according to yet another text, there is a renewing or transforming work at once begun, for so we read: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of *your* mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom. 12:2.) This requires, therefore, that in this new creature life, new hopes, new visions, new purposes, new habits of thought, and an entirely new point of concentration will now control such a consecrated individual. And what will that point of concentration be? Surely it will be in perfect

harmony with God's purpose for us, which is, that we should be conformed to the image of his beloved Son. Then it must follow 'that henceforth only that which definitely contributes to the development of Christ in the heart, and only that which is conducive to increasing spirituality, will interest and occupy the truly grateful believer. Under no other condition of mind and heart would it be true testimony to claim that old things had indeed passed out of the life. Then along with those new hopes, desires, etc., will come a greatly changed attitude of mind toward things in general, such as trials, environments, and our contacts with seemingly adverse circumstances. Of this condition the words of the hymn, may be taken as a true expression

"How happy and blessed the hours
Since Jesus I always can see!
Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers,
Have all gained new sweetness to me;
E'en when the great sun shines but dim,
And fields strive in vain to look gay,
While I am so happy in him,
December's as pleasant as May."

Among the many physical defects to which men and women are heir, there is what is known as color blindness. In the spiritual life there is an alarming possibility of a moral color blindness. Was it not some such moral color blindness against which Jesus uttered his words so full of deep significance "The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness." (Luke 11:34.) Certain it is, no one is living or can live the new life in Christ until the divine Oculist has trained the moral eyesight to see the fine distinctions by which God discovers the single eye. In the character of God there are righteous standards, firm and absolute, without shadow of turning; therefore the newness of life set before the follower of Christ, and the strong and admirable life, is the life that is keen to respond to this vision of God's character. In the life of Jesus on earth there were many admirable qualities of character displayed, but pre-eminent place is given to his hatred of sin and his love of righteousness. Thus it is written of Him: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. 1:8.) Living as new creatures in Christ requires this same uncompromising love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity.

BY THE SPIRIT LET US WALK

The reader of Paul's first letter to the Corinthian Church must be struck with the seeming contradictions in several of his statements., In 1 Cor. 1:4, 5, we read: "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ: that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge." Then while he is yet practically in the introduction of the letter, he is chiding them because of "contentions" among them, factional disputes, some saying "I am of Paul"; others, "I am of Apollos"; and others, "I am of Cephas." Then in chapter 3, verse 1, he writes, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." What a paradox these statements appear to be! But herein lies the lesson for us. Paul certainly recognizes these brethren as being new creatures in Christ, for he addresses them as saints. But while he gives them a standing as saints or new creatures in Christ, he very plainly tells them they are failing to live as becometh such. The Apostle can thank God that they are "enriched in all utterance, and in all knowledge," but he must, nevertheless, lament the inconsistency of their conduct. What pained the heart of Paul was that while they were enriched in knowledge, they had not entered into the truth in real spiritual power, in such a way as to really possess it and be possessed by it. He had wanted them to get

hold not only of the letter but also of the spirit of the knowledge by which they had been enriched.

He wanted them to understand that only the spiritually minded really possess the truth, and that if they would live as new creatures in Christ, the holy spirit must have free course in their lives in order to elevate them into the higher realms of maturity. He labored to show them that being conversant with the letter did not in itself indicate real spirituality.

Commenting on this very matter an able writer has well said: "Spiritual knowledge is not deep thought, but living contact, entering into and being united to the truth as it is in Jesus, a spiritual reality, a substantial existence. The spirit teacheth, combining spiritual things with spiritual; into a spiritual mind it works spiritual truth. It is not the power of intellect, it is not even the earnest desire to know the truth [though this must be present], that fits a man for the spirit's teaching; it is a life yielded to it in waiting dependence and full obedience to be made spiritual, that receives the spiritual wisdom and understanding. In the mind these two elements, the moral and the cognitive, are united; only as the former has precedence and sway, can the latter apprehend what God has spoken.

"It is easy to understand how a carnal or fleshly life with its walk, and the fleshly mind with its knowledge, act and react on each other. As far as we are giving way to the flesh, we are incapable of receiving spiritual insight into truth. We may 'know all mysteries, and have all knowledge,' without love, the love which the spirit works in the inner life; it is only a knowledge that puffeth up, it profiteth nothing. *The carnal life makes the knowledge, carnal.* And this knowledge again, being thus held in the fleshly mind, strengthens the religion of the flesh, of self-trust and self-effort; the truth so received has no power to renew and make free. No wonder that there is so much Bible teaching and Bible knowledge, with so little of real spiritual result in a life of holiness. Would God that his word might sound through his Church: 'Whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal?'. Unless we be living spiritual lives, full of humility, and love, and self sacrifice, spiritual truth, the truth of God, cannot profit us."

Surely if we thus "live by the Spirit" and "walk by the Spirit," in faith and obedience, we may rest assured that the holy spirit will do its complete transforming work in us. We can rest in the faith that the spirit will impart sufficient strength to live as becometh new creatures in Christ, working in us to will and to do all that is pleasing in the sight of God. It is the rich possession of the holy spirit that makes and marks the spiritual man.

OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY

In thinking of the "old things" which the Apostle tells us are to pass out of the new creature life, we realize there are many. We may think of the gross sins and weaknesses spoken of as "the works of the flesh and the devil," but for the present it will be helpful to examine another line of old things which must pass away through the operations of the Word and Spirit of God in our hearts now, or pass away in the fire which shall burn eventually, utterly consuming all that is "wood, hay, and stubble." The life of the Christian is represented in Scriptures under the metaphor of a building. This illustration suggests the idea of a slow, continuous process, a laying of stone on stone until the structure is complete. Into this structure we are told may be built "gold, silver, precious stones," or "wood, hay, stubble." Sooner or later the material with which we have built will be subjected to the test of fire, "the day shall declare it." This symbol of fire is but the Bible way of stating that a searching, revealing, testing, and destructive judgment will one day come upon all that is not of the gold, silver, and precious stones character. Whatever will abide in this test will be of permanent quality-it shall not pass away; but all that is not of this enduring

quality will be utterly destroyed in that day of the revealing fire. The Lord will judge his people. He is judging them now. Christ is now coming in to judge, and when he comes into a life to judge it, light comes in with, him, and that light is pouring in upon the actions and inner life of all who are before his judgment seat. This is the solemn word of Scripture: "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. . . . He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the Churches." - Rev. 2:23, 29.

What then are our works-how have we built? Have we been building on Christ, in him, and for him? Have we built for his searching eye so faithfully that we shall not be ashamed before him? Have the old things passed away under the power of the holy spirit's daily effective work in the heart through the passing years, or will they still remain to pass away in the fire which shall try every man's work of what sort it is?

How evident it is that in this revealing fire one class of service, of teaching, and one kind of life, will be brightened and beautified and glorified; and another class of such things will be destroyed and burned up. The gold and silver and costly stones will be glorified and heightened in beauty by being brought into this contact with the hand and heat of the Refiner and his furnace, while the other will be proved to be so mixed with the old things as to merit destruction. And what will the day declare for each of us? How many surprises will there be -both among the workers whose building will abide the fire, and also among those whose works must perish in the flame! Well may we each ask ourselves, how much of my life work will be wiped out of existence, crushed into nonentity, and made as if it had never been at all? Whatever in our conduct has been acceptable to God, we are assured will last. It will last in the mind of our heavenly Father, and it will last in glorious results to ourselves, because it will be in accord with the perfect will of God, which is the first great permanent reality in the universe. Because he abides for ever, so will that in us which has glorified him abide forever. May we then, be more and more able to affirm with the Apostle, "Old things *are* passed away."

BEHOLD ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW

Happy indeed are they who really know that they are "walking in newness of life." To know that there has been a complete separation from the pursuits and attractions of the flesh, and a new point of concentration permanently fixed in the life, the new creature life, is to know the blessed testimony of the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and heirs of eternal life with Christ our Lord. And so, possessed as we can be by new hopes, new visions, new aspirations, a new life in Christ, how comforting are the assurances of the Scriptures which teach us that God really gives us this high and perfect standing through faith in the sacrifice of Christ.

No doubt the poorest building on the foundation Rock, will have something in it that will remain after the fire of trial has done its work because it is on that Rock. But it is for us as true believers to cherish the noblest hopes and objectives. There is nothing new in seeking to be but "a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord." It is proper enough to say with David that I would "rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness," but it is much more proper for new creatures in Christ to conform their aspirations and expectations to the revealed will of God. And those who gain this true outlook will ever be seeking for higher and higher attainments in Christian character. Such will be heard always singing,

"I want to scale the utmost height,
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll pray till heaven I've found,
'Lord, lead me on to higher ground.'"

So let us build on the foundation other than which no man can lay. Build on it gold and silver and precious stones, the things which are eternally new -true thoughts and holy deeds, loving, pure, unselfish Christ-like and permanent materials. Let us give all diligence to add to our faith whatsoever things are lovely, ennobling, things which never grow old nor pass away, because they originate in God,, who is from everlasting to everlasting, ever new and unchanging. Then we shall not be "saved so as by fire," but by grace divine an entrance shall be ministered unto us "abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

- *J. J. Blackburn.*

Cooperation in the Ministry

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." - 1 Cor. 15:58.

FOR THE benefit of new readers we have been requested to present in these pages a brief statement of the circumstances which led to the formation of our Institute., the plan of its organization the purpose of its continued existence, and the provisions whereby all in harmony with the spirit of Christ may share in its ministry. This we are pleased to do in the following paragraphs.

It is doubtless unnecessary to relate that following the death of our late beloved Pastor C. T. Russell, conditions arose in all parts of the world which made it impossible for many of the brethren to continue any longer in the old association. After some preliminary meetings extending over several months, a convention was held in Providence, Rhode Island, in November, 1918. This convention was attended by some 200 to 300 brethren from various parts of the United States and Canada.

There being no movement at that time already bearing evidence of the Lord's approval and blessing, the friends gathered in Providence on that occasion took counsel together as to what might seem to be the Lord's indications for them. They were quite alert as to the importance of the occasion, the business meeting which they held being perhaps the best attended of any of the convention sessions, and the voting being participated in by practically all of the conventioners. We are glad also to be able to state that the voting was unanimous.

IMPORTANT SAFEGUARDS AND PRECAUTIONS

It is recognized that under present sin and death conditions no arrangement can be devised on earth which will contain in itself a guarantee of freedom from the evil machinations of ungodly men, yet there are some plans which obviously provide safeguards deplorably lacking in others. In what we trust is a proper spirit of humility, therefore, and in a spirit of loving consideration of the thoughts of others who may differ with us, we believe that the plan followed by the founders of our Institute contains most important safeguards. No thought was entertained by any one, and certainly no provision was made whereby power, or authority, or undue influence could be centralized in any one church, either by the limiting of voting rights to the members of such a church, or in any other manner. Indeed every precaution was taken to guard the Institute against contributing in any way to the gradual growth of any one church into a dominant position in the midst of the other churches. It is needless for us to enlarge here on the dangers to which such a course would have been liable. History has made them abundantly clear in the decisive example -- Rome.

A committee of seven were given very simple and explicit instructions. They were to "form a non profit organization as simple in form as would enable the Lord's work to proceed smoothly." They were to "speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." As a result of these instructions the Pastoral Bible Institute, came into existence.

FORM OF ORGANIZATION

In deciding the form our organization should take, the committee naturally sought the counsel as expressed in his writings, of the brother who had for so many years manifested such a large measure of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind. We refer, as of course all are aware, to the counsel of our dear Brother Russell. In arranging for the publication of a periodical, these brethren accordingly adopted a very similar arrangement to that expressed in

Brother Russell's will for the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Not that there was any legal or other obligation for them to do so, but because the principles there laid down seemed to them good to follow. However, whereas in the case of the trustees and editors of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, they were to hold office for life, and could only with great difficulty be impeached for moral or doctrinal laches, in the case of the Pastoral Bible Institute, the brethren charged with the responsibility of its organization preferred a more democratic plan. Accordingly the Institute's Charter was so written as to provide that the directors were not to hold office for life, but for one year only, and that each year opportunity was to be given for the members to elect whom they pleased to that service, each member being entitled to one vote. Moreover it was provided that no contribution, however large, would entitle the contributor to more than one vote.

BASIS OF MEMBERSHIP

It was the desire of the original incorporators to grant membership on the basis of a subscription to the "Herald," but upon the advice of the United States Corporation Agency, which conducted for them the necessary steps to obtain the Charter, this was found to be not wise or practical; because if for any reason the paper was not published, there would be no members; or certainly there might be difficulty about such an arrangement. It was therefore decided to fix the membership fee at \$5.00, just half the sum necessary in the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

As stated in its Charter, the purpose for which the Institute was formed is "the dissemination of Bible truths in various languages by means of the publication of tracts, pamphlets, papers, and other religious documents, and by the use of, all other lawful means which its Board of Directors, duly constituted, shall deem expedient for the furtherance of the purposes stated."

Thus with fear and trembling the little venture began, and the reader may well believe it when we say that from -consecrated hearts far and near fervent prayers were offered that the Lord's spirit should prevail, and that only his name should be glorified.

Today the Institute is no longer an experiment; it has been in operation for twenty-eight years. By the favor of our gracious God its ministry has been of much blessing to the Lord's people. Indeed many have expressed themselves that they would suffer a serious spiritual loss, if either of its two main ministries, namely the "Herald" and the Pilgrim visits, were discontinued.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COOPERATION

But while we rejoice that it has pleased our heavenly Father to bless this ministry thus far, we nevertheless recognize that it falls far short of perfection, and we are therefore continually on the alert for his leadings in the direction of improvement. Moreover we realize that others may see ways and means for increasing its usefulness that do not occur to those charged with the responsibility of its management. For this reason we again call the attention of our readers to a notice which, from time to time, appears on the second page of this journal, and which reads as follows: "The brethren having this ministry in charge desire it to be fully understood that the cooperation of their consecrated brethren everywhere is at all times most welcome. Suggestions designed for the promotion of Zion's welfare are not only cordially invited, but may be sent in, in the full assurance that they will receive very sympathetic consideration."

LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION PROVIDED

In connection with the above announcement, the question may arise, What opportunity has a brother to present his suggestion to all the friends, in the event that the directors fail to adopt it, and particularly if they oppose it? If he attends the Annual Meeting of the Institute, he is heard only by the few who are able to be personally present; how can he be heard by those who are scattered throughout the country, or the world? We are glad to call attention to the fact that what would appear as ample provision has been made for such a contingency. All that is necessary in such a case is for the brother to secure a certain number of brethren to sponsor his idea with him, and he is immediately afforded an opportunity of presenting it in the "Herald" for the consideration of all the brethren. In deciding upon the number of sponsors necessary to submit measures to the membership, the directors sought a number which would be sufficiently able to prevent unsound propositions being offered by irresponsible parties, and yet at the same time small enough to permit a godly minority with worth while ideas an opportunity of expression. Based on the number of "Herald" subscribers and Institute members, the conclusion was reached that forty would perhaps meet both of these requirements. However, since it is recognize that to secure even so small a number as forty might work a hardship in some cases, the decision was reached that twenty-five would be deemed sufficient to warrant the proposal being submitted in the pages of the "Herald."

FORMS OF MINISTRY FOLLOWED

As above mentioned, the "Herald" and the Pilgrim visits have constituted the two main ministries of our Institute. Additionally we have published and distributed several thousand copies of the Divine Plan of the Ages, many thousands of tracts, and large numbers of special issues of the "Herald," dealing with such subjects as "Hell" and "Our Lord's Return," besides supplying many Bibles and Bible helps, of which Brother Russell's publications form an important part. We have also published and distributed several thousand copies of Brother R. E. Streeter's expositions of Daniel and Revelation, both of which we believe have been instrumental, in the Lord's hands, of bringing blessings to their readers.

RADIO BROADCASTING CONSIDERED

In 1931 we were asked to consider the possibility of extending our witness to radio broadcasting. Prior to that time several of the members of our Board of Directors had, on various occasions, availed themselves of this opportunity of service, and, of course; were, and are, deeply sympathetic with this, as with every other method of spreading the knowledge of the Lord and his coming Kingdom. However at that time the Institute's directors were unanimous in their belief that it was not the Lord's leading for them to undertake a radio broadcasting ministry, except in the occasional way they had done in the past. Their reason for this belief was that insufficient funds were available for this purpose. In 1932, the brethren of the Brooklyn Ecclesia, with commendable zeal, attempted a radio ministry, but almost as soon as it began, this form of ministry had to be discontinued, the cost proving prohibitive. However a weekly pamphlet, the "Radio Echo," which according to its sponsors was designed to follow up the radio programs, was continued for a while, and subsequently was expanded into a monthly magazine, becoming the "Dawn," now published by the Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Today the radio ministry, while still quite costly, is no longer out of our reach, our finances not being restricted as they were in the early days of our history, and in recent years we have several times reconsidered the question of adopting that form of ministry. But the "Frank and Ernest"

programs Of the "Dawn" are performing a worth-while work in that direction and we would see no point in our attempting to duplicate it. Most, if not all, of our readers are informed of this radio ministry; some, including members of our Board of Directors, contributing to its cost.

CONSOLIDATION OF PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE WITH NEW YORK RADIO COMMITTEE CONSIDERED

Fourteen years ago, on the evening of November 25, 1932 to be exact, a conference was held *at* which representatives of the New York Radio Committee and the Pastoral Bible Institute were present. At this conference, which lasted perhaps four hours, during which the fullest opportunity for exchange of viewpoint was afforded each of the brethren present, the conclusion was unanimous that the consolidation of these two organizations (which had been recommended in a resolution submitted to a convention held a few weeks previously at Pittsburgh) would not be in the best interests of the friends at that time. *

* For a report of that conference the reader is referred to the "Herald" for January 1933, page 8.

COOPERATION - WITH DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION NOW BEING CONSIDERED

A few months ago we received a letter from the "Dawn" looking to a closer cooperation of their activities with those of our Institute. We had intended publishing that letter, with related correspondence, at the conclusion of our discussions, but the "Dawn" having found it convenient to include it in their booklet, "When Pastor Russell Died," pages 61-63, we submit it below without further delay. Our readers will doubtless be interested, also, in our reply, which is appended.

It is our thought to engage the "Dawn" brethren in further discussions along the line of the correspondence published below, and the prayers of all the brethren are solicited that we may be guided according to the Lord's will in this matter. Regardless of the outcome of these discussions, we trust that no one will misunderstand us *as* being in any way opposed to the spread of the Gospel by others, in whatever form their ministry takes. Rather it is ours to rejoice whenever "the everlasting Gospel" is preached in sincerity and in truth. Nor, because we do not find the Lord leading *us* in a particular direction of service, are we to conclude that he is therefore leading no one else in such direction, whether it be radio, pictures, or other methods. Furthermore, we not only are not opposed to such activities, but have cooperated, and intend to continue to do, with all who manifest the spirit of loving devotion to our Lord, and whose ministry we believe to be in harmony with the Lord's will, whether they are members of the Institute or subscribers to the "Herald" or not, and whether or not their judgment as to the Lord's leading coincides with ours. "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint 'not." Let us remember, too, that in whatever form of service our love for the Lord finds expression (and it would be strange indeed, if it found its expression in none) the same spirit will be found in all true co-laborers in the Master's Vineyard. As the Apostle declares: "Now in aim and purpose the planter and the waterer are one." - 1 Cor. 3:8, *Weymouth*.

Correspondence follows:

May 11, 1946

Pastoral Bible Institute Dear Brethren:

Christian love and greetings in our Redeemer's name!

As the consummation of our *hope* draws nearer, - and world conditions impress our minds and hearts more vividly than ever that "the time is short," it has -occurred to us that possibly after so many years of working independently it might now be to the mutual interests of our respective societies, a source of blessing to the brethren generally, and to the glory of God, if we could find a common basis upon which to work together in the Lord's vineyard. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Trustees of the Dawn Bible Students Association, held in East Rutherford, N. J., Saturday, May 4, 1946, it was voted to submit to you the following outline of what we would consider a scriptural basis upon which *we* could cooperate:

"The truth," as a basis of general fellowship, shall be considered as that statement published by Brother Russell under the caption, "To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach."

The doctrinal qualifications of those *we* sponsor as teachers shall be the enlarged and detailed treatment of this brief epitome, as set forth in "*Studies in the Scriptures*," and "*Tabernacle Shadows*," and also such so-called controversial subjects as the Lord's second , presence, the covenants, and the Church's share in the sin-offering, *as* taught in these volumes.

The *law* of the new creation as it affects church organization and as it is so clearly set forth in Volume VI of "*Studies in the Scriptures*," shall be considered of -vital importance to the spiritual welfare of ecclesias, and the brethren everywhere exhorted to heed same in their fellowship and service. This means that no attempt shall ever be made to dominate the affairs of any ecclesia, large *or* small; and that no encouragement shall be given to brethren who, because of doctrinal errors on their part, *or for* personal reasons, withdraw their fellowship from ecclesias and seek to work independently.

The paramount objective of all efforts shall be the building up of the Lord's people in our "most holy faith"; and the public ministry of the truth as well as the more direct service of the brethren shall be considered essential to the attaining of this objective.

Realizing how much we all need exhortation to faithfulness, it shall be considered a privilege and a duty, on all suitable occasions, and in every appropriate way, to exhort the brethren to faithfulness in cross-bearing, purity, fruit-bearing, and in publicly proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom by whatever means the Lord in his providence may provide.

If in your opinion the foregoing brief outline of faith sand practice is one upon which we can all agree, and in keeping with which we can labor together, we will be most happy to hear from you, and to engage in further discussion of the possibilities involved.

In the blessed hope,

Your brethren of the

DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION.

June 27, 1946.

DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION,

Dear Brethren:

Will you please refer to your letter of May 11, 1946, which we acknowledged under date of May 15, 1946.

Reactions have not yet been received from all our brethren-some of them are located at distant points, while others are engaged in duties which require them to travel almost continuously. Those who have replied, however, are hopeful that a mutually satisfactory arrangement can be reached, whereby the activities of our two organizations might be harmoniously blended and possibly some duplication of effort be avoided, to the advantage of all concerned.

Our brethren are unanimous in their approval of the objective stated in the fourth paragraph of your letter, namely, "the building up of the Lord's people in our 'most holy faith.' Indeed, it was with this objective that our Institute was organized, in 1918. Moreover, the two means you suggest as essential to the attainment of this objective, namely, the "public ministry" and the "more direct service of the brethren" have been continuously employed by us, up to the present time, to the best of our ability. With such unanimity of objective, and as to the means to be employed in its attainment, we ought not to experience much difficulty in resolving any differences which might at first appear in our preliminary correspondence and conferences; certainly none should prove insurmountable, if, as we believe, both you and we are animated by the spirit of the Master.

Coming now to the views expressed in your first three paragraphs, all of our membership would probably be found in very general agreement with the same. However, to adopt these as a confession of, faith, whether "as a basis of general fellowship" or as constituting "the doctrinal qualifications of those we sponsor as teachers" is another matter. It, would be a decided departure from their past practice, and, we think, in conflict with the Charter of our Institute, for our brethren to adopt any confession of faith (the one you now suggest, or any other) except the fundamentals of Christianity.

Briefly stated these fundamentals are: (a) Belief in the existence of the one true God, Jehovah; (b) A firm conviction that Christ Jesus is His Son, and that, after laying down His life as a ransom for us, He was raised from the dead by the Father's power; (c) A confession that this risen Jesus has become our Lord; that is to say, He has been entreated by us each, individually, and has graciously consented, to exercise lordship of our life, and (d) An outward manner of life which makes it plain that these beliefs and confessions are not false, but are the sincere sentiment of our hearts.

This "wide open" position, which we have consistently maintained since our organization, may seem too vulnerable to you, and we do not deny that it contains no guarantee that wolves in sheep's clothing may not enter in, not sparing the flock.. It is, however, no more vulnerable than are the ecclesias we serve, whose organization is patterned in accordance with the scriptural arrangement, unfolded in *Scripture Studies, Vol. VI*, which, we are pleased to note, you continue to highly regard and recommend. While, therefore, we stand ready to hear you further on this point, we feel that our experience of the past twenty-eight years confirms us in our present conviction that we should continue to stand free, not only from all parties, sects and creeds of

men, but from all "confessions of faith." Only thus, we think, will we be free "to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken according to the Divine wisdom granted unto us to understand."

It has been suggested that, in view of the shortness of the time, in view also of the fact that our Institute's., annual meeting is due to be held July 6th, and at that time a new Board of Directors will be elected, it would be better for us, and would doubtless suit you as well, if action were postponed until after the election of our new Board, who could then consider your proposition. This would take place immediately following the annual meeting, that is to say, in the evening of July 6th. . At that time they could appoint a committee of (say) three of their number to confer with a corresponding group from your Association. These two committees could report back to their respective societies the results of such conference, with recommendations as to lines along which the co-operation you desire (which strongly appeals to us also) could best be achieved.

Assuming the concurrence of your brethren with this. suggestion, the writer is taking the liberty of suggesting the date for the proposed conference, as July 8, 1946. The meeting could be held at any hour on that date, at Rutherford or Brooklyn, as, you might prefer. Will you please indicate your preference in your reply?

Sincerely in His fellowship,
PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE, INC.

Another Pilgrimage Ended

Dr. Leslie W. Jones Called Home

Dear Brethren:

Many of our readers, I feel sure, will be interested in knowing some of the details connected with the death and obsequies of our beloved brother and fellow-servant in the Lord, Dr. L. W. Jones.

On Tuesday, November 26th, shortly before six o'clock, he went to a neighborhood doctor's office to obtain a drug needed for the care of Sister Jones, who has been incapacitated for more than a year, and in returning home was struck by a suburban bus. The police took him to a nearby hospital and then phoned to his home; but before any of the family could reach him he became unconscious, and so remained until Thursday evening when he died. Needless to say this tragedy came as a great shock to his family and friends, who can scarcely yet realize the loss they have sustained.

My acquaintance with Brother Jones began back in 1904, when he first came to Chicago. He had been a successful practicing physician in Belvidere, Illinois, where he was reared and where he joined the Methodist Church; but after reading the Volumes, of *Scripture Studies*, he withdrew from his Methodist affiliation, and became energetic in promulgating the truth: so energetic, in fact, that he lost most of his medical practice. Because of this he decided to accept the offer of a position in Chicago, and thus the Lord led him into a larger field of service.

Brother Jones had the privilege of being one of the Committee chosen by Brother Russell to accompany him on his world tour visiting the Foreign Missions in 1912. There were not many friends back in the years 1906 to 1916 who did not know or had not heard of Brother Jones, and some, no doubt, still retain on their bookshelves the reports of conventions held in that period, which were compiled and published through his untiring effort and devotion to the service of the Lord and his children. He began the arranging of special train service for the convenience of the friends who were going to these conventions, as early as 1906-7; and in 1909, with the approval of Brother Russell, arranged the first Transcontinental Convention Tour, which enabled a large number of friends to live and travel together to conventions they would not otherwise have been able to attend. It was my privilege to be included on two of these trips, and to enjoy the fellowship of more than two hundred friends as we traveled together by special train for five and six weeks. We who knew them intimately, have not forgotten how the home of Brother and Sister Jones partook of the nature of a headquarters for the Chicago Class, and their hospitality was so well known that outof-town friends felt free to avail themselves of their kindly welcome.

For years meetings were held in the Jones' home every Saturday night; and the "bean suppers" that preceded them afforded a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and discussion of spiritual things. As many as eighty friends at a time would gather there for these Saturday-night feasts, and this association will linger long in our memory.

I was given the privilege, though to me a somewhat difficult task, of conducting the funeral service. The chapel, seating approximately two hundred, was filled to overflowing, and we were glad to see and to shake hands with some we had not seen for years. The opening hymn, "Gladness Will Come to Stay," was a favorite with Brother Jones, partly perhaps because it had been written by an old time brother and friend, M. L. McPhail, but primarily because it so well expressed his hope and joy in the prospect of "great joy" that will soon be "to all people. In his

prayer which followed, Brother Horace Hollister quoted the following appropriate lines from the pen of Bishop Wm. W. How:

For all the saints who from their labors rest,
Who thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blest! Alleluia!

Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might;
Thou wast their Captain in the well fought fight;
Thou in the darkness drear their one true light. Alleluia!

O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We toil on earth, while they' in glory shine:
Yet all are one, for all, dear Lord, are thine. Alleluia!

And when the strife is fierce, the conflict long,
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
And hearts are brave once more, and arms are strong.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Our Brother was a firm believer in the overruling providence of God, and so did not doubt the statement of Jesus in respect to the guardianship of angels, who do always have access to the Father's presence; therefore he would not have questioned the time and manner of his death. It is not always easy for us to see why the Lord permits some of our experiences. Human wisdom would say that it was essential that he be preserved to take care of his helpless wife, but the Lord saw fit to call him Home, and we know that divine love and wisdom do not err. Let us all remember Sister Jones in prayer.

Ever since becoming a Christian, his desires and anticipations had been centered upon the event of an "abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," and I feel sure that I express the sentiment of all who loved him when I say, we could not be so selfish as to wish to deprive him of one moment of that exceeding great joy. His all-absorbing interest in life was the laying up of treasures in heaven. Every effort was bent toward this end, and many are the times I have heard him quote the text he took for his rule of life: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these [temporal] things shall be added unto you." From the time he first became acquainted with the truth and the Plan of God as it is revealed in the Volumes of *Scripture Studies*, he made the truth and its promulgation his main interest in life; and even in this past year, when the care of an invalid wife made calls upon his time and effort night and day, he was able with the aid of the little Class in Wilmette, which he dearly loved, to place in interested hands over five hundred volumes of the *Divine Plan of the Ages*. There were times when this faithfulness cost him much; but although the larder may have run low, I feel sure that with David he could have said, "I have been, young; and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

The thoughts in the short discourse which followed were centered around the Twenty-third Psalm; but in thinking of the Brother himself and his walk in life, the words of the First Psalm came to my mind:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that

bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

'Still, still with Thee, when purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh, and the shadows flee;
Fairer than morning, lovelier than the daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with Thee.

When sinks the soul, subdued by toil, to slumber,
Its closing eyes look up to Thee in prayer;
Sweet the repose beneath Thy wings o'ershading,
But sweeter still, to wake and find Thee there.

So shall it be at last in that bright morning,
When the soul waketh, and life's shadows flee;
O in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning,
Shall rise the glorious thought -- I am with Thee.

Following the quotation of these lines from Harriet Beecher Stowe, a trio of old time friends sang, "They are gathering homeward from every land." Interment took place near Wilmette, Ill., and a beautiful evening sky in which hung a crescent moon, seemed to cast a benediction upon a life well spent.

- *John T. Read,*

God's Will Is Best

"God's will is best; faith's vision may be darkened,
And tangling influence our feet arrest;
Yet to our cry for guidance One has hearkened;
God's will is best.

"We raise our tear-dimmed eyes with eager longing,
To pierce the clouds that crown the mountain's crest
And watch the chill mists round the pathway thronging
With hearts distrest.

'God's will is best-oh! tired heart and weary;
Each footfall finds you nearer to your rest;
And God prints on your pathway, lone and dreary,
'God's will is best.'

"Why seek to know the secrets of the morrow;
Or what new dangers may your way infest?
'Tis Providence apportioned joy or sorrow
To be your guest.

"God's will is best-see not to do God's planning;
Nor of the future make untrusting quest;
He only of your whole life has the scanning;
God's will is best.

"Enough, for mortal feet, the step before them;
Enough, for mortal hands, life's next behest;
Enough to know Immortal Love is o'er them;
God's will is best.

"God's will is best-your first dawn may be over;
Life's noon be past, its sun low in the west,
And night full nigh; but Heaven's morn will discover,
God's will is best."

Recently Deceased

Mr. W. H. Gross, Elmer, N. J. - (July).

Mr. Axel T. Erickson, Wheatridge, Colo. - (November).

(Recently from Chicago, Ill.) Dr. L. W. Jones, Chicago, Ill. - (November).

Words Of Encouragement.

My dear Brethren:

Loving greetings in Christ. I have become a subscriber to the "Herald" recently. For over 46 years I have been connected with the Truth as presented in *Studies in the Scriptures*, having known and entertained our dear Brother Russell on several occasions and having worked with him in the Photo Drama of Creation and in other ways.

Trying to be loyal to the Lord I maintained association with the Society until 1935, though sadly troubled about many things. . . The position became intolerable and I had to withdraw. .

I am writing this because I feel constrained 'to tell you how much I have enjoyed the "Herald," since a copy was loaned to me by a brother a few weeks ago. Will you please send a copy of the June issue if available. In two or three articles since that month I have read your views on Christian liberty and wish to say that I agree fully with your attitude. It seems to me to be the only way of maintaining that freedom which characterized the teaching of our Master. Trying to restrain the Truth on any matter is dangerous. . . The efluxion of time proves whether we are justified in holding to a position taken up Years ago. . . I was chairman of the London Convention in 1914 when Brother Russell publicly stated that we must not expect our hopes of translation in the autumn of that year to be fulfilled, and he went on to say that our understanding of chronology, or matters relevant thereto, would have to be revised, though at that time he could not see to what future date the Lord was pointing. The position taken by, some of our brethren would seem to say to the Lord, "You mustn't show us anything unless it agrees with what we already believe," What presumption is this!! What loss is the inevitable result!!

May I say further that the article, "Near to the heart of God," in the September issue just received, has drawn, *my* heart nearer to him. I think it is very true, and near the ideal. Would that we all who believe in our High Calling to the Divine Family might so understand the matter. What a rich inheritance we should *now* enjoy! I thank the writer *of* the article, and you, the publishers of it, but still more do I thank our Father. for his Grace which enables me to rejoice in the intimate relationship which is the theme so ably portrayed.

I pray the Lord will continue to bless you, and the "Herald" journal. I am sure it will do a good work amongst those who hunger and thirst continually.

With Christian love,
Faithfully, Your Brother in Christ,
H. C. T. -- Eng.