

saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people: Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them; behold I will visit upon you the evil of your doing, saith the Lord. . . . Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the preachers: Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem [interchurchianity] is profaneness gone forth into all the land."—Jeremiah 23: 1, 2, 15.

Saith: In forsaking the Lord and following the evil tendencies of their own hearts the unfaithful clergy and assistants have committed the overt act of hating and wilfully spying out and persecuting the true and humble followers of Christ Jesus.

God foreshadowed and illustrated this in the life experiences of Esau and Jacob. Although heir to the Abrahamic promise—Esau, because of his love for fleshly gratification and earthly pleasure, sold his birthright for a mess of savory meat, and then persecuted Jacob because the latter made effort to avail himself of the prize he had justly bought. Esau pictured the class of Christian people—laymen and clergy—who have loved the pleasures of the world, honor and preferment of men, and despised the promises of God concerning his kingdom blessings. Jacob pictured the humble and faithful Christians who purchased the heavenly birthright by selling their all in full consecration to the Lord. The Esau class—faithless ones—have persecuted the Jacob class, faithful ones, who preferred to suffer persecution and death, remaining faithful to God rather than yield to the spirit of the world and lose the promised prize. The very faithfulness of the Jacob class has been a rebuke to that class who have desired to use the Christian religion as a camouflage to hide their evil and selfish course. Of the true Christians Jesus said: "Ye are the light of the world". The selfish, faithless clergy have hated this light. The true Christian progresses in the knowledge of God's plan. "The path of the just is as a shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day." Every progressive step of the true follower of Jesus has met with vigorous persecution at the hands of the clergy class.

CHURCH-STATE DESTROYS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The Lord divided the development of his church into seven epochs, progressive in their order. To each epochal stage he provided a human messenger. Each of these in turn was persecuted by the leaders or clergy class. The persecution of Arius, Wicliffe, and Luther was led by the Papacy. The messenger to the seventh epoch of the church was Pastor Russell. For forty years he held aloft the light of the gospel of Messiah's kingdom, which light exposed the deceitful and fraudulent claims, doctrines and practices of the clergy, and true to their instinct and past history the unfaithful, dishonest clergy—Catholic and Protestant—wickedly and relentlessly persecuted Pastor Russell and his asso-

ciates in service. In 1916 he finished his earthly course and others took up the burden where he laid it down and vigorously carried it forward, and like him they have been objects of persecution.

The Catholic hierarchy and the Protestant nominal church systems have created societies, such as the Knights of Columbus, Y. M. C. A., Interchurch World Movement, etc., to aid in their work, and these have rendered valuable aid to their parents. It has been another means to cement firmly the "unholy trinity". Their members are active in politics and fill important offices in every branch of the Government. They respond readily to the wishes of a parent clergy. These members of the antitypical Esau class have hated and maliciously slandered Pastor Russell, the friend of the people, and his zealous associates. The great war furnished the opportunity to make manifest that hatred. In 1886 Pastor Russell began the publication of a series of Bible comments—*STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*—in seven volumes, six of which he published in his lifetime, and the seventh, "The Finished Mystery," was published after his death. It is an interpretation of Ezekiel and Revelation. These prophetic books of the Bible contrast the course of the true with the nominal church. In prophetic phrase the Lord foretold the persecution of the true by the false, and the great hypocrisy of the clergy. Necessarily "The Finished Mystery" explained these Scriptures in the light of the historical facts—recording fulfilled prophecy. This greatly angered the clergy, because it interfered with their scheme to further defraud the people, and they sought an opportunity for vengeance.

The so-called "Espionage Law" furnished an effective weapon. It was to be expected that this law would search out spies. But what spy was prosecuted under the law? The chief selected for its enforcement was a well-known, ultra-nominal churchman, who is known as a heretic-hunter, having heretofore prosecuted Rev. Crapsey for heresy. He was aided in the collection of evidence by a "dyed-in-the-wool" Knight of Columbus, and both of these men have ready ears for the cry of the clergy. The penalty for violation of the Espionage Law did not seem sufficiently severe. Early in 1918 a convention of clergymen was held at Philadelphia, at which a resolution was adopted calling upon congress to provide that alleged violators of the Espionage Law should be tried by court-martial and death inflicted as a penalty. A general in the United States army was authority for the statement that the purpose and intention of this proposed law was to punish the officers of the International Bible Students Association and the publishers of "The Finished Mystery" by putting them to death.

A bill was pending before Congress to amend the Espionage Law so that one charged with its violation might have an opportunity to make further defense. The member of the Department of Justice having in charge the enforcement of this law, namely, JOHN LORD O'BRIAN, appeared before the Senate committee

having in charge the bill and argued that the amendment be defeated, assigning as his reasons therefor three classes that he could not prosecute successfully if the amendment carried, the three classes named being "The Finished Mystery," the "International Bible Students Association," and the "Kingdom News". Mr. O'Brien well knew at the time that the three represented but one class of Christians. No other conclusion can be reached than that he deliberately misled the United States Senate into defeating this amendment. His report appears in the Congressional Record of May 4th, 1918.

Public sentiment must be worked up against the "offensive Bible Students". The clergy started the ball. Another member of the unholy alliance, big business, dominates the public press. Unscrupulous politicians holding office are ready tools. First the books of account of the Bible Students were seized, on a pretext that money was being obtained from the enemy, Germany. For five weeks experts searched them and found not one penny coming from a questionable source. It was then discovered that before the war a little wireless receiving instrument had been presented to Pastor Russell and placed on the roof of the Bethel Home, and some of the boys had been attempting to learn the code. It never had a sending instrument. No messages ever were sent or could be sent from it. In November, 1917, this instrument was removed and stored in the basement. In the search by the secret service agents it was found packed away in the basement, hauled out and then a deliberate lie was sent by the Associated Press throughout the world, announcing that the Russellites were maintaining a powerful wireless on the roof by which they could send messages across the ocean to the Germans—all of which was necessary to work up public sentiment. Then followed the indictment of the officers of the Association and their trial amidst a great excitement of the war. Being thus staged, a verdict of guilty was easily obtained. Sentence followed, in which seven of these Bible Students were sentenced each for eighty years' imprisonment. Bail was denied and they were immediately incarcerated and remained in prison for nine months, without the privilege of bail, pending appeal. Later they were released and upon a hearing of the case in the Appellate Court that court reversed the judgment of the lower court, holding that the defendants had not been given a fair trial. On May 3, 1920, the indictments were dismissed by the Government and the defendants discharged. The defendants were thereby exonerated after suffering nine months illegal imprisonment; but the subsidized press industriously avoided publishing any facts about that part of it.

While these men were in jail their friends circulated a petition calling upon the authorities to grant them bail or a re-trial. Mr. John Lord O'Brien, contrary to all precedent known to American legal ethics, sent circular letters throughout the country defending his position in the prosecution of these men.

WIDESPREAD PERSECUTION

The spring and summer of 1918 witnessed a widespread persecution of Bible Students, both in America and in Europe, at the instigation of the clergy in every case. The homes of the Bible Students were searched without warrant, their hymn books, Bibles, "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES," and other Bible literature were seized, carried away and in many instances destroyed. In Los Angeles, California, every kind of Bible literature was seized by officers without a search warrant, and many of the Bible Students were arrested and thrown into jail. Others were beaten, their ribs broken, their heads cut and some permanently injured. Inoffensive men and women were mobbed and thrown into jail and held there without charge or without trial.

We give a brief statement of the facts in a few of the sample cases of persecutions, all of which occurred in a so-called Christian land.

WHEN AND WHERE MINISTERS WERE ANARCHISTS

Against the rights guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States, namely, the selling of Bible study textbooks not under ban of any kind:

Baptist ministers, taking advantage of war conditions, caused the following outrages:

March 1, 1918, at Salem, Virginia, C. W. Morris was arrested at the instance of Rev. R. C. Smith. March 23, 1918, at Checotah, Oklahoma, Charles J. Crews was jailed nine days at the instance of Rev. E. D. Cameron, his teacher's certificate was revoked and his home and furniture lost, all in accordance with the Reverend's threat that he must give up his belief or go to the penitentiary. No offense was ever charged and the case was never brought into court. April 23, 1918, at Miami, Texas, Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Bayless were jailed several days at the instance of Rev. J. C. Stalcup. May 30, 1918, at Post Oak, Missouri, W. L. Bowen's new automobile was disfigured and carried to Leeton, Missouri, by a mob associated with Rev. L. Newkirk, pastor of Providence Baptist Church, after threats by members and deacons of his church. Rev. Newkirk is now insane.

Methodist ministers caused the following outrages:

February 15, 1918, at Anadarko, Oklahoma, A. H. Sempley was threatened with imprisonment. April 19, 1918, at Winnsboro, Texas, G. W. Wilcox was jailed in a filthy privy over night. April 28, 1918, at Farmington, Washington, Mrs. C. A. Imhoff was threatened with imprisonment. At Tamaha, Oklahoma, Mr. and Mrs. B. Merriman and M. R. Charley were jailed six days at the instance of Reverend Phal. Mr. Charley, 65 years of age, died from the effects of his imprisonment. May 1, 1918, at Mesa, Arizona, an *Episcopalian* minister joined with a *Methodist* minister in causing the jailing for two days of P. R. Starks.

In March, 1918, at Enid, Oklahoma, L. F. Hall was jailed three times and bonded for \$12,000 on complaint of a *Lutheran* minister. On May 23, 1918, at Harrah,