

1914

Dail to Spicer and Knox

Nov. 6

The great point those who are opposed to taking up arms seek to make is; War is murder, and therefore the violation of the commandment, Thou shalt not kill. But this cannot hold, that war is murder, for it would then turn out that the Jews were the greatest murders of their day, possibly. I notice that even Brother Wilcox in his Question Corner of SIGNS OF THE TIMES for Oct. 20, p.651, has overlooked one very important statement of the narrative, in that he says: "All that God called upon His children to do in the taking of Jericho was to march around the city and blow trumpets, for the army of heaven threw down the walls, and conquered the people."

By reading the 20th and 21st verses, however, I see that the army on earth, which was undoubtedly composed of men whose citizenship was in heaven co-operated with their compatriots of the heavenly armies, and that "the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword."

It is certainly true that God, the Commander of the heavenly armies, never made any mistake, and when He commanded the total devastation of any land, it was high time that the inhabitants be rooted out. But it seems to me equally clear that, so long as the civil government confines itself to merely civil affairs, we are bound to be subject to civil government and render her all her dues. We pay taxes, and this is for the sake of the reciprocal protection we receive--we do not pay taxes that the government may render us no protection. But how does a government protect, but by bearing "Not the sword in vain"? "We as a people ought to be best citizens of any civil government, because of our citizenship in heaven leading us to obey the ~~gospel~~ commands of God and all the commands of our civil government so long as they are not of a nature to cause us to transgress the law of God.

There is another very hard point for some of our brethren here: The service in the army before the enemy on the Sabbath day. They would have us believe that such things as the children of Israel when they ere under arms the forty days that Goliath withstood them, and as recorded in 2 Kings 11, are not permissible to-day.

You may wonder, my brethren, why I take the pains to go into the details as I do-- it is merely that you may get a view of our situation, and if you have any suggestions to make, as to the strength of the statement that the European brethren are in opposition to the general body, let it be seen clearly that such is not the case--that we as a people have always been law-abiding citizens, and that there is no thought on the part of the American brethren to seek to support the false notion obtaining among some of our members that in obeying the law of conscription, our dear brethren, whose blood has already been shed upon the altar of their countries, have done anything wrong. Or if you do not want to state anything publicly, if you would make a statement to us in writing, that we over here could use, I think it would help many persons, who are now very strongly using that there is in our denominational attitude, a great break between us and the American brethren