



THE BIBLE AND

OUR TIMES



Papal Swiss Guards marching in the Vatican City, Rome.

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Rome and Salvation

By A. S. Maxwell

★ **THOUGHTFUL** Roman Catholics must be as puzzled as their Protestant friends over the seemingly conflicting policies emanating from one and the same supposedly infallible source.

They have heard—and believed—that Rome never changes. They have always been told—and believed—that there is no salvation outside the Roman church. Yet now they read in the newspapers that a certain priest has been excommunicated for publicly preaching this very doctrine.

How can this be? Has Rome changed? Has the Pope decided that, after all, the church may have been a bit too severe in years past regarding Lutherans, Baptists, Adventists, and other Protestants, and these dear people really have just as much hope of salvation as those who enter the

Roman fold? Has he decreed that this more generous attitude be proclaimed in Spain, Colombia, and other places where persecution of Protestants has been peculiarly bitter of late?

Not a bit of it. Let nobody be deceived by what happened to the Reverend Leonard J. Feeney of Boston, Massachusetts. This over-zealous priest was put out of the church for calling attention to a doctrine that the powers that be don't want mentioned in America just now. He didn't have sense enough to keep still when told to do so. His constant emphasis upon "Extra ecclesiam nulla salus" (no salvation outside the church) became just too embarrassing to the American hierarchy in the midst of its expensive advertising campaign, conducted under the name of the Knights of

Columbus, by which they are trying to sell Romanism to Protestants in that country as a native American product breathing good will, broad-mindedness, and individual freedom.

The fact is that the Reverend Feeney is a martyr to expediency, for he only preached what every informed Catholic knows to be absolutely orthodox.

An "Error" Condemned by the Popes

In 1864, Pius IX issued the famous *Syllabus of Errors*, in which the following propositions, among others, are solemnly condemned and anathematized:

"That every man is free to embrace and profess the religion he shall believe true, guided by the light of reason." (XV)

"That the eternal salvation may at least be hoped for, of all those who are not at all in the true Church of Christ." (XVII)

The last proposition of the *Syllabus of Errors* was quoted verbatim from an allocution delivered by the same pope, Pius IX, before a consistory in 1854, in which he recalled the well-known maxim "Outside the Church, there is no salvation." In that allocution the pope said:

"We have learned with sorrow that another error, not less fatal, has been spread abroad in some parts of the Catholic world, and that it has laid hold upon the minds of a great number of Catholics, who imagine that the eternal salvation of those who are not members of the true Church of Christ can be hoped for. . . . In accordance with our apostolic charge we wish to stir up your solicitude and your episcopal vigilance, in order that, to the full extent of your strength, you may banish from the minds of men this impious and fatal opinion that the way of eternal salvation can be found in all religions. Show . . . to the peoples who are confided to your care, that the dogmas of the Catholic faith are in no wise contrary to the mercy and the justice of God. We are required by the faith to admit that outside of the Roman, Apostolic Church, no-one can be saved, that it is the sole ark of salvation, that he who has not entered it will perish by the flood; however, it must also be recognized on the other hand with certainty that those who are in a state of invincible ignorance with respect to the true religion do not bear the fault in the eyes of the Lord. Now, in truth, who will go so far in his presumption as to mark the limits of this ignorance, according to the character and the diversity of nations, of lands and of minds and of so many other things? Doubtless when, freed from these corporal bonds, we see God as He is, we shall understand what a close and lovely bond unites the mercy and justice of God; but as long as we are in this earthly dwelling place, crushed under the mortal burden that weighs upon our souls, let us believe firmly, in accordance with Catholic doctrines, that there is one God, one faith, one baptism; to go farther in one's inquiries is no more permitted by

law."—*Pius IX in the allocution "Singulari quadum," 1854.*

Still Taught by Rome

Lest someone say, "That was a hundred years ago; the church doesn't believe the same now," we quote from the latest book written by that champion of Catholicism, Monsignor Ronald Knox:

"Have we [Catholics] thrown over the maxim, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—'No salvation outside the Church'? Not at all; only, to understand its meaning properly, it's perhaps best to translate, 'Outside the Church no means of salvation.' As long as you are not a Catholic, the religious body you belong to will not of itself help you to get to heaven. I say, 'of itself'; incidentally it may; you may be led to repent of your sins and start on a better life by attending a Buchmanite meeting, or by listening to a solo in Magdalen Chapel . . . but it won't do you any good to mention those institutions, with all respect to them, when you reach your judgment. All the identity discs in heaven are marked R.C."—*The Hidden Stream* (Sheed and Ward, 1953).

Another recent book, *Living Our Faith*, bearing the Imprimatur of Cardinal Spellman, and used extensively as a text in Roman Catholic high schools, contains the following very definite statements:

"*Catholic Worship*. . . . All other ways of worshipping God, found in the numberless non-Catholic societies, are false."

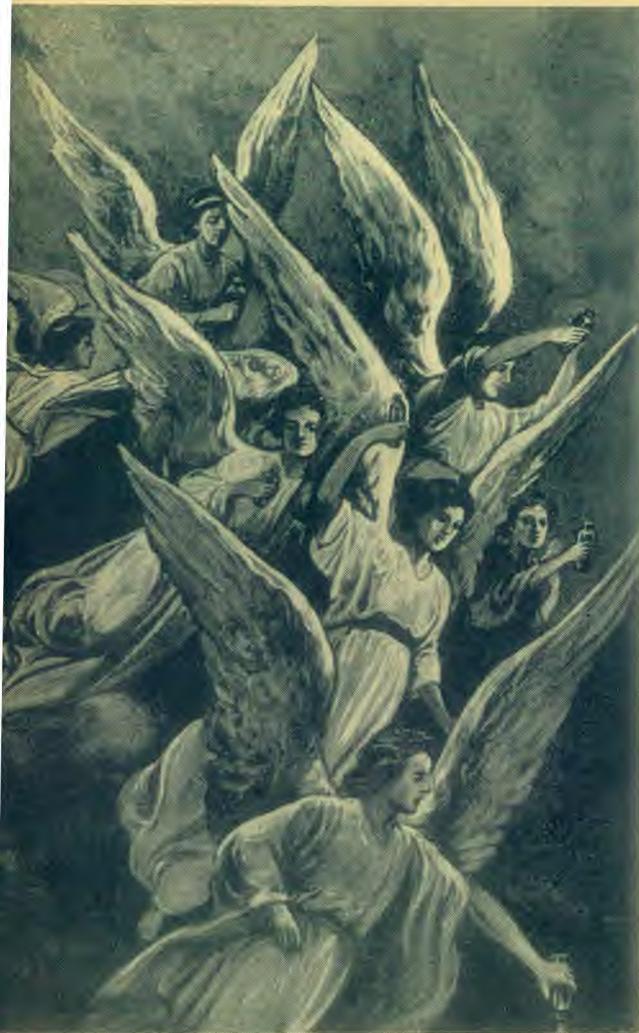
"*Counterfeit Religions*. The material, size, and shape of the paper and metal money is determined and authorized by the government. No other money is legal tender, and any other agency issuing such money is guilty of counterfeiting. In the same way, non-Catholic methods of worshipping God must be branded counterfeit. Each in its own way more or less imitates the true religion, yet lacks the true value of the genuine Faith of Christ. Therefore we cannot practise them without dire penalty."

"*A False Religion*. Like all partially Christian sects, such social agencies as the Salvation Army, the Friend's Committee, and the Y.M.C.A. are not a true religion, and acceptance of them as such is a form of false worship."

No, there has been no change. Rome still believes it has an exclusive option on the means of salvation. It still believes that "all the identity discs in heaven are marked R.C." Honest men will not be deceived by the duplicity of unscrupulous propagandists who assert the contrary.

God's Strange Act

By Daphne Cox



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The angels with the seven vials of the wrath of God.

★ THE question was thrown at me with disconcerting abruptness! "Why should God vent seven plagues upon people, and then destroy them?"

Momentarily I had no reply. I could only answer, "I don't know." Back home I went, with the question ringing in my mind, "Why?" To me, the only sensible plan was to study the Bible, and seek the answer there. And there I found it

In the fourteenth chapter of Revelation we read of three angel's messages that are to go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. The third angel's message, in verses nine and ten, is this: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the

wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation."

Everyone is to hear this warning, and it behoves us to study it well. The beast referred to here is mentioned in the preceding chapter, with some of his crimes listed therein: "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13:6-8.

Later an image to this beast is made. "And he had power to give life to the image to the beast, that the image to the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image to the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Rev. 13:15-17.

A Divine Warning

This power opposes the worship of the true God, and as the prophecy points out, proceeds to persecute those who are faithful in their witness to Christ and His teachings. So God sends out a warning to all mankind that should they join forces with this apostate power, they will find themselves overwhelmed by certain plagues of judgment.

The warning is there, and every second of every day the Holy Spirit is working with men's consciences—trying to make them understand the true value of salvation. Yet many ignore the pleadings of the Spirit, until they come to the

point where they are so conscience-hardened that they are immune to further suggestion. Peter calls them the "willingly ignorant."

And even when the plagues are upon them, they will still not see the error of their ways, for we are told in Revelation 16:11 that men blasphemed God, "and repented not of their deeds."

That these plagues are a just retribution, we read in Revelation 19:2: "For true and righteous are His judgments; for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand."

Even though they are meted out justly, however, we are not to imagine that God will enjoy the spectacle before His eyes. He tells us this very clearly in Ezekiel 18:23: "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways and live?"

God Compelled to Act

All through the ages there are records of God's warnings to disobedient men. Sometimes a nation has been warned, and sometimes a single individual has been given the opportunity to mend his ways. There is the story of Sodom and the story of the Flood. There men were told quite clearly what would happen if they carried on in their old ways. And when they refused to listen to advice, they were destroyed. The Israelites were shown these outstanding examples of what the fate of the disobedient would be when "the mouth of the Lord had spoken it." Yet despite all the solemn counsel from God they had constantly to be punished for their wrongdoing. And when they finally rejected His Son, they fell victim to the Roman hordes at the sack of Jerusalem, as had been prophesied, and were scattered among the nations. The famous temple was destroyed at this time, the temple which God had promised to preserve for all time if they remained loyal to Him.

Each time there was danger of judgment, a warning was given, "Repent and live." And each time the warning went unheeded, the guilty suffered for their sins.

So, someone will say, those plagues are coming and nothing can stop them. Not so, my friend. Remember what happened to Nineveh? That city was inhabited by exceedingly wicked men. God sent Jonah to tell them that in forty days Nineveh would be overthrown. And the record is: "So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed

a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even unto the least of them." And the king said, "But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God; yea let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?" Jonah 3:5, 8, 9.

"Come Out of Her"

Once they had known a change of heart, God did not destroy them as He had foretold. Instead, He "repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them; and did it not." Verse 10.

God Himself calls these plagues "His strange act," but stranger to me are those who cling to their old, sinful ways, when they could so easily accept Christ's invitation to "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and receive not of her plagues." Rev. 18:4.

Men to-day have the free will to accept or reject as they wish. It remains to be seen whether they will heed the example of Nineveh or not. Will they continue as described by Paul: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13), and in doing so almost commit suicide on a world-wide scale—or will they "cry mightily to God, and turn every one from his evil way"?

The choice is theirs. They don't *have* to die.



The Sunlit Way

Your Song

By Stanley Combridge

THE bird that sings its merry song when summer days are hot and bright, soon spreads its wings when storms blow strong, to warmer climes it takes its flight; although we sigh when it departs, it leaves a song deep in our hearts.

The voice that sang in bygone days and thrilled our hearts with great delight, is silent now, yet haunts our ways and brings to us joy in the night. Although the air's no longer heard, how sweet the thoughts by mem'ry stirred.

The song you sing to-day, my friend, may reach a soul far out of sight; its melody will quickly end, yet thoughts some day it may incite; perhaps upon a bed of pain its healing strains will come again.





By C. S. Dixon

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It was a transformed Peter who stood before the multitudes on the day of Pentecost.

“Be Ye Transformed!”

By A. B. Cheesbrough

★ UNDER the influence of the Holy Spirit, a man guilty of moral cowardice, may be transformed into one full of courage, and bold enough to declare his convictions no matter what cost such a course may entail.

Such a man was Peter. As the fatal hour of Christ's crucifixion drew near, Jesus told His followers that all of them would be offended because of Him that night.

Peter Boasts

“Although all shall be offended,” declared Peter, “yet will not I.” Mark 14:29. Impetuous and impulsive, Peter was also inclined to be boastful and self-assertive. Such self-sufficiency was no proof of stability. Jesus knew him better than he

knew himself and told him that before the cock should crow twice he would deny Him three times over. This brought from Peter such an expression of loyalty that the others joined in and asserted their allegiance also, to the extent of being willing to die with Him.

To profess to be a Christian is one thing, but to carry out the principles and teachings of the Master under all circumstances is quite another. In the failure of Peter to line up to his profession is a great lesson for us all. “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” In the warm atmosphere of Christian fellowship we feel safe and confident, but when we have to take our place alone in the world, it becomes fatal to rely upon our own strength. It is then that the oppor-

tunity arises to prove the promise made to Paul, "My strength is made perfect in weakness."

A few hours later, in the cold grey dawn, Peter's self-sufficiency was at a low ebb. Having followed "afar off," he mixed with the servants and sought the warmth of the fire. He who with the others had slept when specifically told to "watch and pray" was now in the hour of his Master's humiliation seeking to lose his identity with the Nazarene.

Challenged by a maid, he replied: "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about," and he left the room. In the stillness of the night a cock crowed, but as yet it rang no bell in Peter's memory.

Another maid recognized him and remarked to the others; "This is one of them," and he who had confessed that he believed Jesus to be the Son of God repeated his denial. "I know not the Man," he exclaimed. The Man, indeed! By this time the eyes of the company were curiously turned in his direction and very soon someone said: "Surely you belong to them. I can tell by your brogue; you're a Galilean!" This time there fell from the lips that had boasted a willingness to die with the Saviour, a torrent of oaths and curses—no doubt the language he had been accustomed to use before he companied with Jesus.

Peter Penitent

With the third denial the cock crowed a second time and memory awakened. The prophecy of Jesus was recalled. Shame and sorrow filled his soul. "And when he thought thereon, he wept." Ridicule is often harder to bear than direct opposition. Had Peter been called upon to bear arms on behalf of Christ, he would no doubt have proved himself a good soldier, but such is human nature. After earning the V.C. some have returned home only to disgrace themselves. In the final hour Jesus was left without a single faithful friend. He had to tread the winepress alone, "and of the people there was none" with Him.

But when human power is so patently helpless, God has a way of revealing His own purposes and baring His mighty arm. The cross was not the end. Suffering and death were not the finish. The resurrection so logically set forth by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians is the touchstone of Christianity. So the angel that spoke to the women as they entered into the sepulchre said: "Go your way, . . .

Tell Peter!

"Tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him."

Mark 16:7. Why "and Peter"? Was it because, as the Roman Catholics claim, Peter was to become the first Pope? Was it because Christ had said, "Upon this rock will I build My church"? Not at all. Was there anything rock-like about this three-fold failure? The rock was not Peter. It was the Rock of Ages, the Rock of Israel, the Rock that had followed them in the wilderness, "and that Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 10:4. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," was the confession of Peter, and it was upon that faith that Christ would build His church. It is quite evident that Paul did not think Peter was the rock when he says so distinctly, "That rock was Christ."

The church's one Foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord.

Tell it to Peter because of his failure and consequent despondency! Tell Peter the Lord is risen indeed, and cheer him up! Tell Peter his Master wants to see him again because He wants him to become a shepherd to the sheep. Tell Peter because the promise of the Father to send the Holy Spirit is about to be fulfilled.

When Jesus asked him three times "Lovest thou Me?" Peter was puzzled, but a threefold denial required a threefold testimony of love to confirm in Peter's heart the determination to go even to the cross with Christ. (John 21:19.)

Peter Preaching

On the day of Pentecost peoples of many countries heard the apostles addressing them in their own tongue. "What meaneth this?" they asked. "They must be drunk," some said. "No," declared Peter, not drunk, but filled with the Spirit of God. And then with a boldness which struck conviction to the crowd who had participated in the greatest crime of all history, the murder of the Son of God, Peter bore witness for his Master before the multitudes: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23.

Peter's preaching was pentecostal and prophetic. There was no compromising, no toning down to placate his hearers, but the plain unvarnished truth. "What shall we do?" they cried. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

What a transformation! What a witness Peter became! You can be transformed like that if you will let Christ work upon your life. "Follow Me," says Jesus, "and I will *make you*." Matt. 4:19.

THE SUN-CLO

By J. A



John the Revelator's vision of the woman and the great red dragon.

★ ONE of the most interesting lines of prophecy in the Bible is that contained in the book of Revelation from chapter twelve to chapter seventeen. Seven "wonders" or "signs" are presented to the beloved disciple John. He introduces this intriguing series of visions in these words: "And there appeared a great wonder [sign, margin] in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Rev. 12:1.

The Christian church was passing through a period of extreme persecution from the forces of

the Roman Empire. Christianity was a proscribed religion and John himself was banished to the isle of "Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 1:9. That which John had had revealed to him concerned the coming disruption of the Roman Empire, and the future of God's people, and therefore it had to be conveyed to the church in symbolic phraseology.

This is the first of a unique group of symbols or prophetic cartoons which include dragons, beasts, angels, and two women. Let us then begin the study of this line of prophecy by discovering what is meant by this symbol of a woman clothed with the sun. One key that will help us in deciphering the symbols of the Revelation is provided elsewhere in Scripture. In fact, when we appeal to the Scriptures to explain this present symbol, a flood of light is thrown upon an apparently enigmatical passage. What then does this woman actually represent and why did John clothe his thoughts in such obscure language?

The Woman Is the Church

The woman is a symbol of the church itself. This is made evident from the following texts. Paul speaks of the Christian church as a woman betrothed: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Cor. 11:2. In this he was following the figure of speech used by Ezekiel who wrote of God's ancient people: "The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother. . . . Thus were their names; Samaria [the Northern kingdom of Israel] is Aholah, and Jerusalem [the Southern kingdom of Judah] Aholibah." Ezek. 23:1-4. Jeremiah also uses this symbolism declaring: "I

THE WOMAN

McMillan

have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman." Jer. 6:2.

The woman then is the church of God through the ages and she is clothed with light. The sun is a figure of our Lord. "But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." Mal. 4:2. Surely, as the Psalmist describes Him: "The Lord God is a sun and shield." Psa. 84:11. Jesus claimed to be the light of the world. He also told His disciples that as and to the extent that they represented Him, they too would become the light of the world. (John 8:12; Matt. 5:14.) When the church is imbued with His righteousness then she is a pure woman, clothed with the sun, for in "Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, . . . righteousness." 1 Cor. 1:30.

The moon was seen under her feet. "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night." Gen. 1:16. Since the woman represents the church and the sun represents Jesus Christ, the moon could be a symbol either of the Old Testament types and sacrifices, or of the Holy Scriptures, both of which reflect the light of our absent Lord. The church has her feet on the Word which upholds her authority and gives the grounds for her mission and message to the world. The church has no inherent authority, but derives her authority from the divine commission and from the content of her message. The apostle Paul describes her as "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. 3:15. Her mission is to bear witness of the truth, which is the Word of God, written and incarnate. (John 17:17; 14:6.)

Another feature of the prophetic symbolism is the crown of twelve stars that adorned the woman's brow. The meaning of this is evident. When Jesus took the first step in organizing the Christian church, "He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He would: and they came unto Him. And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." Mark 3:13-15. Here were

the twelve stars that would adorn the head of the virgin spouse of Jesus Christ our Lord. Of them Jesus promised: "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration [in the new world, Syriac] when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matt. 19:28.

The Man Child Is Christ

The last feature of this apocalyptic sign is given in Revelation 12:2, 5: "And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." "And she brought forth a man Child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her Child was caught up unto God, and to His throne."

There can be no doubt about the interpretation of this symbol. The man Child is obviously the Lord Jesus. He is the Seed of the woman promised to redeem the human race. (Gen. 3:15.) He is the Seed of Abraham through whom the blessings of God are to be shared among the nations of the world. (Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:16.) Jesus is the man Child whose advent fulfilled all the prophecies contained in the Old Testament. Isaiah predicted: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man Child." Isa. 66:7.

The bringing forth of the man Child must not be confused with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. To do this is to depart from the symbolism of the prophecy and literally identify the woman of the Revelation with the virgin Mary and not the church. The man Child was brought forth by the church at Pentecost. Paul spoke of the resurrection of Jesus as the chief event in God's manifestation of His Son's unveiling. "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. And as concerning that He raised Him from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David." Acts 13:32-34.

Yes, the man Child was brought forth in resurrection power and He "was caught up unto God, and to His throne." The apostle Peter bore witness to this glorious ascension of our Lord,

Your
BIBLE QUESTIONS
Answered

declaring that our salvation is secured through the acceptance by faith of "the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him." 1 Peter 3:21, 22. Yes, Jesus is exalted "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body." Eph. 1:21-23. He it is who shall rule the "nations with a rod of iron." (See Psalm 2:8, 9 and Acts 2:22-24, 32, 33.)

The Church and Her Lord

Thus the close relationship that exists between Christ and His church is presented in this great vision given to John in Patmos. Jesus is her Lord and yet also the church is His mother. In that sense she is presented in the Scriptures as "the mother of us all." Gal. 4:26. Christ "loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word." Eph. 5:25, 26. The church also loves her absent Lord and labours to finish the work entrusted to her in order to hasten His return. (2 Peter 3:11, 12.)

Because of her devotion to her ascended Lord, the church becomes the object of satanic and worldly hatred. Jesus warned His disciples: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." John 15:19, 20. The prophecy therefore reveals three phases of this persecution. The details of this thrilling warfare are told in the unfolding of the remaining six signs or wonders. These we shall consider in succeeding articles.

There was first the persecution of the apostolic church. (Rev. 12:4.) This took place in various parts of the Roman empire, being instigated first by Jewish hostility, and later by Roman emperors, such as Nero, Diocletian, Domitian, and Julian. This was followed by the prolonged persecution during the "Dark Ages" when the church fled into the wilderness. (Rev. 12:6, 14.) The final phase takes place in the last days when the remnant church faces the fury of the dragon in the closing act of this drama of the ages.

Why are some Bible truths hard to understand?

THE teachings of the Bible are not so hard to understand as many think. They appear to be difficult because of there being so many contradictory man-made theories. The main essentials of salvation through Christ can be easily understood by all, but with these essentials there are certain other doctrines which are misunderstood because we do not allow the Bible to interpret itself. We prefer to put our own meaning upon them and thus find ourselves in difficulties.

There is no doubt, of course, that certain themes and prophecies of the Bible demand earnest study. Jesus told us to "search the Scriptures" and Paul commended the people of Berea "in that they . . . searched the Scriptures." In this searching or studying the Word of God we receive a great blessing as our minds are occupied with the things of God. And in this personal study we are not left alone, for the Holy Spirit will "guide us into all truth." We are not saved, however, by the profundity of our understanding of Scripture, but by living up to the light which God has revealed to us as individuals.

Can I be sure that God has forgiven my sins?

WHY surely you can! Let me read this statement in 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." This means that if we have done our part and confessed our sins to God then we simply rely upon His faithfulness to forgive. If we do the confessing, He does the forgiving. Do not let us rely so much on our feelings, but upon God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises.

Is the Sabbath a specific day or just any seventh part of the week?

WE read in the Ten Commandments, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." This is a definite day—the seventh day—which was made holy and blessed by God and honoured by Christ when here on earth.

FAITH and FEELING

By E. W. H. Vick

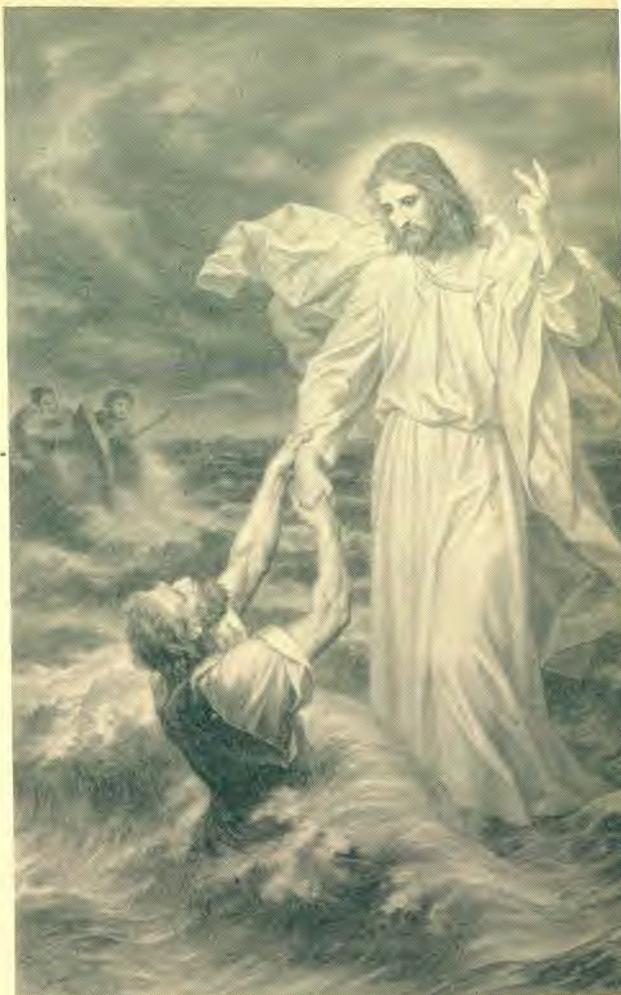
★ LIFE is light and shadow. There are different degrees of brightness. In the Christian's experience a variety of experiences come into his way—some that he would not choose, some that bring pain, others that bring joy. But the Christian's life and hope rest solidly on the promises of God. Those promises ensure his stability. He believed the promises when he was converted, when he began the journey of the new life, and it is by believing the promises that the Christian's journey is sure. Faith has to do with promises. We might call faith, trusting Jesus to fulfil His promises, because we know He is true.

Saved by Faith

It is the sinner's faith in God that saves and keeps him. Many texts tell us this: "The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:17. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." Heb. 11:6. "By grace are ye saved through faith." Eph. 2:8. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4. Faith sets heaven's machinery going and keeps it going. Faith is at the beginning and at every stage of Christian living. Faith grows as it is exercised. So the continued exercise of faith is the secret of the believer's power. Just as continued hard work develops muscle, so continued faith develops spiritual power. "The continuity of Christian influence is the secret of its power," or in the words of Hosea 6:3: "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord." So, faith produces as it is used; it brings forgiveness, activity, stability, satisfaction.

When Feelings Creep In

The Christian finds, however, that there are battles to fight, that life is not a playground, but a battle-ground. Life is work. "I slept and dreamt that life was beauty; I woke and found that life was duty." Every test that comes to us brings us



By H. Hofmann

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When Peter's faith failed, he began to sink.

an opportunity to develop our faith. But sometimes something else happens. We find that we do not always feel the same. We find that in all our striving against sin we sometimes, often, fail: and we are unhappy. Or sometimes we feel as if the burden of life is too much—those mornings when things seem to go all wrong. The fire won't light, the postman didn't call, we break our favourite jug. Sometimes it's just plain monotony; we are bored with life.

There is a disease that I expect we have all suffered from at some time or another. It causes depression and no medicine that the doctor can prescribe can cure it. It is called "the blues." Why do we get the blues? Where does our faith come into the picture? Sometimes it comes by too much sameness, loss of sleep, overwork. If we

can remove the causes, then we should. If we cannot, then what of our faith?

Did you ever think that the very experiences of life that are unwelcome are giving you an opportunity to get nearer to God? Have you ever prayed for hardships and difficulties? Perhaps you think you have enough anyway—and maybe you do! Enough, but not too much! Faith looks at them and says, "I'll turn them into assets." Feeling despairs with the wail, "I didn't want this: what am I to do now?" The exercise of the will determines our attitude to life. Everything depends on the way we use our wills.

Ecstasy Has its Dangers

But there is another side to this question. What about our feelings of happiness and ecstasy in the Lord? Are they good or not? Have you not found that when you have felt the best and most joyful you have been just as susceptible to sin as at any other time? Feeling can bring a false security and make it easier to fall under temptation. When the Christian relies on his feelings he will find that they present no barrier to sin. Have you ever had the experience of praying earnestly for power, for deliverance, for victory, and have experienced joy in prayer and then left it like that, thinking that the joy experienced in prayer was a sign of sure victory? But victory did not follow. Instead came disillusion, bewilderment, questioning.

Let us analyze the situation. Victory does not come through wishing for it. If it did we should never sin, because we all long for perfection. Victory comes as a result of personal effort coupled with God's power; it is the fruit of communion with God. While we must fight we must rely on God for victory. A steady faith in God's promises is the only remedy for our strugglings.

How many times we have been to an inspiring meeting and felt wonderfully lifted. Then came the journey home, the night's sleep, and the morning with its duties. What then? Feeling is no guide for my experience. Sometimes I feel good, sometimes not; that may depend on the weather or on my breakfast.

Walking by Faith

Feeling is not faith. How did you receive Christ? "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." John 1:12. How are we to keep up that first experience? "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,

so walk ye in Him." Col. 2:6. How did you receive Him? "Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:15. We received Him by faith? Then we walk by feeling? No, by faith! "For we walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Cor. 5:7. Then there is no fluctuation, but stability. "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord." Psa. 112:7.

"Satan leads people to think that because they have felt a rapture of feeling they are converted. But their experience does not change. Their actions are the same as before. Their lives show no good fruit. They pray often and long, and are constantly referring to the feelings they had at such and such a time. But they do not live the new life. They are deceived. Their experience goes no deeper than feeling. They build upon the sand, and when adverse winds come, their house is swept away.

"Many poor souls are groping in darkness, looking for the feelings which others say they have had in their experience. They overlook the fact that the believer in Christ must work out his own salvation with fear and trembling."—E. G. White in *Messages to Young People*, pages 71, 72.

Feeling is not an evidence of holiness. Tears are not necessarily evidence of spirituality. A sad story could have the same effect. The fruit proves. Faith leads to action. Feeling despairs when tested. The sign of a new heart is a changed life, a dying hourly to pride and self-will.

If a group of people get together who rely on feeling in their individual lives and a sensational preacher evokes emotionalism, how easy could this be confused with revival! Revival is based on faith, continued, growing faith!

Looking to Jesus

Perhaps in summing up, we could remember three F's: Faith—Fact—Feeling. By believing in Jesus, the fact of our acceptance is certain. Then we may feel as we wish. "I looked to Jesus and the dove of peace flew into my heart: I looked at the dove and it flew away." How many there are who expect to continue differently from the way they began. They came to Jesus in faith and were received by Him, then they looked inside, relying on feeling for Christian experience. True feeling is a fruit of conversion, not a guide. Feeling may or may not be grounded in faith. But our experience must be fixed to something solid, stable, unmovable. Then the fruits of genuine revival will be seen.

Once it was the blessing,
 Now it is the Lord;
 Once it was the feeling,
 Now it is His Word.
 Once His gifts I wanted,
 Now the Giver own.
 Once I prayed for healing,
 Now the healer own.

Safely to the Summit

By Victor Hall

AN English mountaineer and his Swiss guide faced the risk of falling stones when they crossed a gully which gashed the great wall of rock which they were climbing. The guide, moving quickly ahead, secured the rope for his companion following.

Suddenly from high above came the sharp crack of a falling stone . . . a mutter of moving stones . . . a roar of rushing stones. . . The Englishman, unable to move quickly enough, flattened out against the rock and waited for the worst. But before the first stones reached him, the guide

had leaped back into the gully, recrossed his flimsy footholds and bent over him, a human shield. The two men were fortunate. Most of the stone-fall missed them; and soon the guide, bruised on back and shoulders by rock fragments, led on to the summit.

So it is with our Guide up the steep and perilous path of life. He has gone before. He knows the way. The hardships are familiar to Him. He was "wounded" and "bruised" in protecting us. He is touched with the feelings of our infirmities. He has tied us to Himself with bonds of love and sympathy which will never fail. He shares the trials of our life by snow and ice, by storm and fatigue, that we might one day share His triumph at the summit.

Racial Issues

"In this, the second half of our century, the racial issue threatens to drown almost every other except that of Communism," asserted Mr. Kenneth G. Grubb in his presidential address to the Church Missionary Society.



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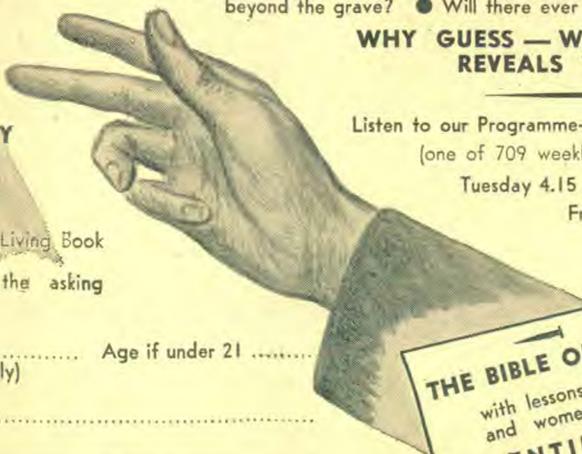
to questions vital to each one of us such as ● Why does God permit sin and suffering? ● Will Christ come in our day? ● Is there life beyond the grave? ● Will there ever be lasting peace? etc., etc.

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THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

Johnny and Old Grannie Brown

By Dorothy Toussiot

GRANNIE BROWN was a little old lady who lived about half an hour's walk away from the house where ten-year-old Johnny lived. Because she was old, she was not at all strong, so she could not go out very often, and she was lonely because she did not have many people to talk to. That was why she was so happy when Johnny went to see her sometimes.

He went on Sundays because on that day he was not at school, and he often took her flowers, or perhaps a nice egg custard, or maybe some warm mittens to keep her poor hands warm. It was always something nice which he took as a present from his mother.

Every time he went, Granny would say: "I wish you would come and see me more often, Johnny. It is so nice to have someone young to talk to."

She used to ask him about school, and about how his mummy and daddy were keeping, and about the games he liked to play, and lots of other things, too. And sometimes she would tell him about the things she used to do when she was a little girl, and he liked that very much.

Then one winter the weather was very bad, and Granny was less able to go out than ever. Her chilblains got very bad on

her poor old hands in spite of the nice warm mittens, and she became very lonely, with hardly anyone to talk to at all. So Johnny decided that he had better go and see her more often, and cheer her up a bit. He would sit and talk to her for a long time about all sorts of interesting things, until it was quite late,

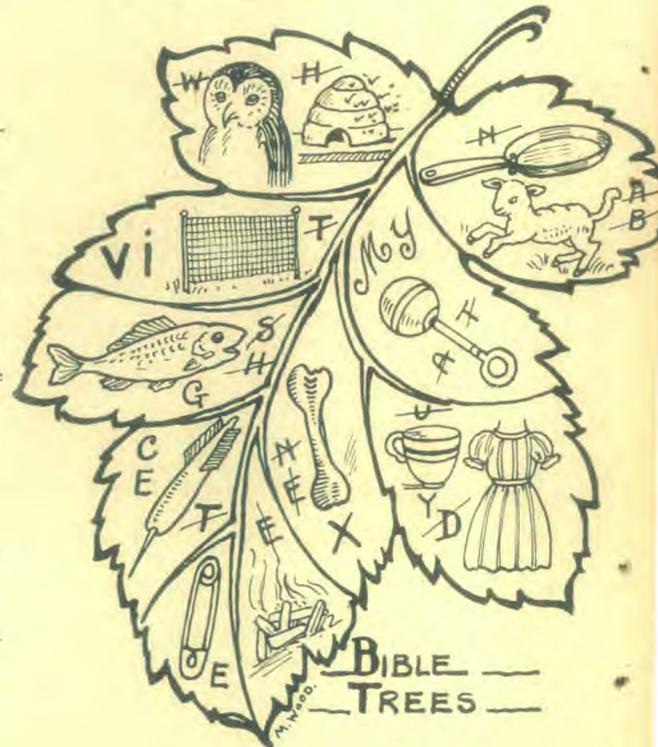
and he had to go home. But each time he would promise to be there again the following week so that Granny should not become too lonely. That made her happy, and she used to count the days during the week until Johnny should come back again.

Then one day, in the middle of winter, when the weather was very cold and frosty but dry all the same, Johnny thought that just for a change he would not go and see Granny. His friends were planning to go for a nice long walk, and had asked him to go with them; and, of course, it was only natural that he did not want to miss the fun.

So he asked his mother if it would really matter very much if he did not go and see Granny for once. It was true that he had told her the week before that he would come back again on that day, but to miss just once did not seem so important, and he *did* want to go with the boys.

Mother could only remind him

Here is a "tree" puzzle. See if you can solve the names of these Bible trees (for instance the top left is "olive"), then colour the picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Margaret, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than August 20th. (In case *Our Times* arrives late, still send your entry. All attempts will be considered.)



BIBLE TREES

that promises were made to be kept and that it would not be at all kind to disappoint Granny when she would be waiting to see him. Then Johnny realized that Mother was right; and tell-

What We Should Be

Be watchful, be prayerful from day unto day,
For Satan is seeking to lead you astray.

You need to be careful in all that you do,
For someone, most surely is following you.

Be wary when speaking, and do not offend,
A word fitly spoken oft comfort will lend,
Be careful when thinking, for thoughts become deeds,
And be like the Master, and sow goodly seeds.

Be earnest, be ready; soon Jesus will come
To take all His children to heaven, their home.
So let us be constant, and watch unto prayer,
And may we bring others to live with Him there.

Elsie Pratt.

her so often. After that Johnny went happily home.

He never saw Granny again. She died the next morning while he was in school, but she was so happy to have seen him for the last time. How happy Johnny was that he had gone to see her after all, and how proud he was—and still is—of the two lovely gifts which she gave him.

JEAN LEARNS THE HARD WAY

By Ellaruth Wren

"But, Mamma! I won't do it again. I promise."

"Now Jean, I have told you before that you must not climb around on that old fence. It may fall over some day with you on it. You had better go into the house now."

Jean thought Mother was old-fashioned in her idea that the fence would fall. Why! She wasn't heavy.

One day while Mother was away, Jean thought she would hurry with her work, then skip out and try walking on the fence. This she did. As she was nearing the end, she glanced up to see if Mother was coming down the road. She was! But at the same time the fence gave way, spilling Jean into a mass of brambles.

She didn't dare call for help, as Mother would hear her. She must work fast to get her clothes untangled before Mother saw her, but the faster she hurried, the more tears she got in her dress. Just as she freed herself, Mother came into the garden. Jean felt much ashamed of herself as they entered the house together. Mother didn't say a word. She merely looked at Jean, then began to wash her cuts.

Needless to say Jean learned her lesson the hard way.

— Your Letter —

My Dear Sunbeams,

We had the most wonderful lot of competition pictures sent in this time—pictures of that lovely bunch of summer flowers we asked you to colour some time ago. It was very hard to decide who should get the prizes, for many were really excellent. We have lots of "Honourable Mentions" this time.

It seems a pity that in competitions or races, only one or two get prizes, no matter how well the rest have done. I'm glad that Jesus will give prizes to *everyone* when He comes, if only they have been true to Him.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 11

Prize-winners.—Kathleen Weatherall, 97 Grangemouth Road, Radford, Coventry. Age 14; John Govier, Orchardleigh Cottage, East Compton, Shepton Mallet. Age 6.

Honourable Mention.—David Simpson (Coventry); Maureen Woodman (Southampton); Janet Hampshire (Leeds, 10); Phyllis Stevenson (Arnold); Paul Trenholm (Watford); Stuart Payne (Woodmancote); Cynthia Handysides (Reading); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Joseph Cartwright (Stoke-on-Trent); Anthony Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Dilys Waterhouse (Oldbury); Marion Archer (Parkstone); Greta Fellows (Watford); Valerie Banks (Bushey); Ruth Campion (Torquay); Lydia Harris (Cambridge); Valerie Westwood (Watford); Adrienne Edwards (Torquay); Lorna Coles (Torquay); Barbara Bonnett (London, N. 13); Jose Felixson (Nottingham); Jean Sparkes (London, S.W. 4).

Those who tried hard.—Edward Tricker (Lowestoft); Heather Betts (Norwich); Heather Payne (Woodmancote); Leon Maile (Huntingdon); Alan Bowns (Chalford); Margaret Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Richard Williamson (Worcester Park); David Davies (Llanerfyllid); Harold Walker (Manchester, 12); Nigel Payne (Woodmancote); K. Umpleby (Malton); Colin Doggett (Norwich); Christine Holland (Bishops Cleeve); Jean Myers (Newcastle-on-Tyne); Veronica Law (Greenock); Richard Payne (Woodmancote); Ralph English (Easington Colliery); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Sheila Myatt (Rickmansworth); Marion Eford (Hford); Siegfried Baron (Church); Joan Caldicott (Birmingham); S. M. Swift (Sutton-in-Ashfield); Ruth Price (Wokingham); Pamela Walker (Liverpool, 4); Eleonora Baron (Church); Gillian Dove (Edgware); Amy Randlesome (Stockton).

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ing the boys he could not come, he set out to see Granny after all.

When he got there he found Granny in bed. She did not seem at all well. How glad he was that he had come. They did not talk a great deal because Granny seemed too tired, but just before Johnny left her, she gave him a very lovely old Bible with gold edges and a nice thick brown leather cover. She also gave him a pretty little gold knife—which had a story all of its own which Johnny knew well. Maybe I will tell it to you another time.

When she gave these things to Johnny, she told him that she wanted him to keep them so that he would know how thankful she was to him for going to see

Straws in the Wind

Modern Air Defence

DISCUSSING the importance of co-ordination between the nations of Western Europe in defence, Charles Gardner, in a B.B.C. broadcast, explained: "To-day, a jet bomber flying from the east at 600 miles an hour at 40,000 feet might be first spotted by radar over Germany, tracked into France, engaged and pursued over Belgium or Holland, and finally dealt with off the coast of England, or over Denmark. And, in that, the whole business need not have lasted more than twenty minutes. Speed has shrunk the countries of Europe—compared even with the last war—to something about the relative size of an English county."

Pensioners Increasing

THE 1951 Census, points out Morag Allardice in the *British Weekly*, revealed that there were 6,627,900 old-age pensioners in Great Britain, or one in seven of the population. Within twenty years, it is estimated, there will be 2,000,000 more.

Soviet Strength

GENERAL ALFRED M. GRUENTHER, recently appointed supreme Allied Commander in Europe, has told the U.S. Senate

His Face

As long as time and life shall last,
And air and sky and sea,
None can portray our Saviour's face
As it should really be.

His face on earth did always bear
A tranquil, gentle look;
His eyes of love were piercing, too,
And read men like a book.

When He walked with sinful men,
And set the captives free;
His face was paled by inward pain,
His eyes showed agony.

When Calvary's cross at last had come,
A face unspeakable they see;
'Twas longing, yearning, suffering Love,
That died for you and me.

In heaven now He awaits to come,
His work is almost done;
His eyes seem flames of living fire,
His face shines as the sun.

No pen can e'er portray the face
That angel hosts adore;
Nor ever shall we even when
We see Him evermore,
Mrs. G. L. Brown.

Foreign Relations Committee that Russia has 4,000,000 men under arms, 20,000 operational aircraft, and 300 submarines. Thirty of the 175 Soviet divisions, he said, are stationed in Europe, apart from 65-70 satellite divisions, and they have 100 major and 200 minor airfields "in the perimeter nearest our forces."

World Radio

ACCORDING to a Unesco booklet, the United States has fifty-two per cent of the world's radio receivers, Europe has twenty-nine per cent, and Africa one per cent.

Cost of Military Preparedness

IN a recent speech President Eisenhower vividly pictured the fearful cost of military preparedness. "The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this," he said: "A modern brick school in more than thirty cities. It is: Two electric power plants each serving a town of 60,000 population. It is: Two fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is: Some fifty miles of concrete highway.

"We pay for a single fighter plane with half a million bushels of wheat.

"We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people."

