

The
Bible
and

OUR TIMES



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Ring In The New!

☩ ALL around the world the bells are ringing to mark the passing of another year. Everywhere they are proclaiming the joyous message:

*"Ring out the old,
Ring in the new."*

Somehow they seem to express man's dissatisfaction with the past—his failures, his tragedies, his sorrows, and his hopes for happier days ahead. They tell of his inward yearnings for that abiding peace and satisfaction that have eluded him in days gone by.

As they echo from city to city and from nation to nation, they seem to say, "Let's try again; let's make tomorrow better than yesterday."

Without a doubt this is the longing in every heart this New Year's Day. Whether or not one believes in making New Year resolutions, the ringing of the bells challenges us to forget the things which are behind—the mistakes and failures of the past—and to step forward with new faith and courage toward those high ideals and dazzling goals which still beckon us on.

Whatever our experience may have been in 1954, the new year can be better and happier in every way if we would have it so. All we have to do is to make this day one of dedication to God. Then 1955 will be a new year indeed; a year of walking with God, of thinking His thoughts, sharing His confidences, following His leadings, and witnessing for His name. It may not necessarily be a trouble-free year, but it will certainly be a happy year, full of true contentment and spiritual growth.

To one who makes such a dedication, all the treasures of heaven will be unlocked. No good thing will be withheld from him. The eternal Creator and Sustainer of the universe will draw near to bless him as a beloved child and friend. Angels will be sent from heaven to minister to him as another heir of salvation.

The pealing bells of New Year's Day may herald a glorious transformation for anyone who desires it. A willing mind, a whispered prayer, will bring the power of God flooding into the soul in such measure that a change will take place so complete that it will be as if one were born again an utterly different person. It will stop the old bad habits dead in their tracks. It will reverse the direction of old evil thoughts and turn them into

By A. S. Maxwell

worthy channels. It will end old entanglements with wrong-doing and bring freedom to do the things which are right and true.

This very day—if you so wish—the bells can "ring out the old" and "ring in the new" for you, heralding the dawn of a triumphant experience such as you have never known before. It can be like morning after night, joy after sorrow, liberty after bondage, riches after poverty, peace after strife.

And why delay? We may not see many more

such days. Time is running out. Ancient prophecies now fulfilling declare that history's years are numbered. Soon the bells of heaven will herald the glad tidings that on a global scale "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17); that for evermore there shall be "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,

neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4.

To share in that happy tomorrow—that "New Year's Day" of eternity—we must find God now. Today, while the bells are ringing and His voice is calling, let us make our dedication to Him for time and eternity.

A New Year

Message

From C. R. Bonney



Principal,

Voice of Prophecy

Bible School

☞ ON this first day of another year it is good for us to reflect on the past and make resolutions for the future. We have just passed another milestone on life's journey and a new, untried road lies before us. It seems that time goes much more quickly these days. Perhaps this is because we and our modern world are speeded up as never before. As the days, the weeks, the months and the years fly by in rapid succession we are left with many rich experiences which cause us to rejoice, while on the other hand time bequeaths to us much that is not so pleasant.

It is good for every one of us quietly to take a retrospective view of the past year. We have met disappointments and suffered pain. We have been surrounded by the darkening clouds of doubt. We have seen the futility of the honest strivings of men to settle the baffling problems of the nations. And so we could go on recounting many experiences that we would like to forget.

But on the other side we find that amid all the vicissitudes of life there is a God who is unchanging. James 1:17 tells us that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." New every morning we have evidence of the unfailing love of God. God is not even like the sun, which by its movement, causes shadows constantly to fall and change.

Whatever changes there may be in human affairs, whatever reverses we may undergo, whatever oceans we may cross, however we may change, God is the same.

If in our retrospective view of the past year, we were to try and count our blessings one by one we would surely be surprised by what God has done for each one of us. It has been reckoned that the year of an average man or woman is spent in the following way: 120 days in sleep, 98 in work, 46 in recreation, 32 in eating and drinking, 32 in travelling, 21 in illness, 11 in dressing and undressing, and 5 in religious devotions.

This is surely far from God's ideal for man. There is no doubt that far too much time is spent on the things of the world compared with the things of eternity. Perhaps this is the reason why we do not get all that we could out of each year.

"Forget" and "Reach Forth"

How then should we relate ourselves to this coming year? We know not what lies before us, but in the power and guidance of God we can be ready and equipped for any emergency. There is some very good advice given to us by Paul that will help us to face the year that lies before us, with renewed confidence and hope. It is in Philippians 3:13, 14. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

You will notice the two outstanding phrases, "forgetting and reaching forth." This is the only Scripture which definitely admonishes us to forget. As Paul thought of his past he found that it

(Continued on page 5.)



The famous statue of Christ in the high Andes of South America.

© Three Lions

ALPHA AND OMEGA

A New Year Meditation

☪ How the time flies! It seems but yesterday that we were changing from 1953 to 1954 and now we must get used to writing 1955. Yet every beginning has an end of one kind or another. In fact, the real goal of a beginning is the end. The seed is sown with a view to the harvest. Some begin well and finish badly, while others, making a poor start, finish first. We generally associate the beginning of a New Year with good resolutions, but a good resolution is worth making at any time of the year. If at any time it fails to materialize and progress is not as it should be, there is no need to give up; acknowledge failure and begin again. It's the finish that matters! "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Christ the "Alpha"

To John, as he languished in banishment on the Isle of Patmos, Jesus said: "I am Alpha [the

beginning]." Rev. 1:8. The child begins by learning the alphabet first. Learning to read follows, and that takes time. So with the making of disciples for Christ. Unless the beginning, the foundation, is sure, the building will not stand, for, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3:11.

It is the acceptance of Christ as a personal Saviour that begins the Christian's life, and what more appropriate time could there be for this than now, dear reader? You go to church, you say? Good! You read the Bible? Good! You try to do what you know to be right? Good! But do you know you are a forgiven sinner through faith in the atoning work of Christ upon the cross for you? Can you say with Philip Doddridge:

*'Tis done, the great transaction's done—
I am my Lord's, and He is mine:*

*He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to confess the Voice divine.*

Have you made that definite surrender to Christ which brings the assurance that you are His and He is yours? It's a glorious experience, for it brings newness of life.

"There is a new creation whenever a man comes to be in Christ. What is old is gone, the new has come." 2 Cor. 5:17 (Moffatt). The image in which Christ the Creator made man has been marred, but Christ the redeemer can restore it. Christ wants to make new men for a new earth. He wants to make men with new thoughts, new desires, and a new outlook which takes eternity into its reckoning, new creatures in Christ Jesus to become the inhabitants of a new world.

The acceptance of Jesus as a Saviour opens out a vista of new and glorious experiences. The Bible becomes a new book; our eyes are opened to its beauty and blessing. A real purpose in living becomes ours as we become identified with Christ, and we desire to share our faith with others. The promises of God take on a new meaning and prayer becomes the atmosphere we breathe. Our minds are broadened as we study the great themes which centre round Christ. New hopes spring up and life becomes full and satisfying. Self is lost in unselfish living as it becomes true in us that "he that loseth his life shall find it."

Christ the "Omega"

The great Alpha of salvation, having "begun the good work in you will go on completing it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6 (Moffatt). So Christ the Alpha, having been the first, and having continued with us, never leaving nor forsaking us, will also be the last—the Omega.

Says the Revelator: "And He said unto me, write: for these words are true and faithful. . . . I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Rev. 21:5, 6. New life here and now means participation in the new life to come.

Think of it. A new heaven and a new earth! No more wars, no more rationing, no housing

problems, no digging graves and funeral services, no more suffering and languishing upon beds of sickness, no more hospitals, no more persecution, crime, and hatred. The former things are passed away. Such is the moving picture which God caused John to take note of and write about. This is God's television preview. Do you not glimpse God's power and purpose? He who created a world from nought is going to recreate it and people it with redeemed and renewed men and women. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Verse 3.

Would you participate in this divine programme? Are you athirst for the water of life? A fountain has been opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness. You may drink and drink freely of the water of life. A new life opens out before you in this year of grace 1955, if you will accept Christ now.

What of 1955?

(Continued from page 3.)

was necessary to forget, as far as possible, many of his experiences which would tend to drag on him as he pressed forward to a higher Christian experience. He had made many mistakes, he was once a persecutor of the church, but those things he could forget as they were all forgiven in and through Christ. The devil often comes to us to tell us that we are unworthy to be saved, and that we have failed too many times. He is always holding up our past sins to discourage us. Let us confess them and find forgiveness in Christ; then, like Paul, we can forget them and reach forth unto those things which are before.

In Paul's statement there is the suggestion of an eager reaching forth. He is thinking of the runner with his eye on the goal. He will not be diverted by anything that is in the past. There was a prize to win and by God's grace he was going to obtain it. This same prize is offered to you and me. And what is it? The thrill and joy of living a Christ-like life here, and eternal life in the hereafter.

Friend, let us, at the beginning of this year, "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus." Let us make a resolution to study the Bible more, seek a better knowledge of the way of God for each one of us, and go forward with our hand in His.

By A. B. Chesbrough



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Representatives of fourteen nations signing the Paris Agreement at the Palais de Chaillot.

Is Peace Really at Hand?

☩ WHAT a world to be born into! What convulsions have disturbed the present generation; what devastation and needless waste has marred the works of man during the years of war-madness. What blinding hate has controlled the minds and acts of nations; what frightening experiences men and women have experienced. And what terrifying powers threaten us in the unknown future!

No wonder there is universal despair as mankind faces up to the future and its dread possibilities; no wonder so many have adopted a fatalistic attitude toward life!

Even the professed Christian has found his faith, his hopes, and his trust severely strained by the disturbing and sinister changes that have taken place in every sphere of life. Someone has said:

"Can the Christian who faces the withered hopes and mighty upheavals of the twentieth century still look above and say with assurance, 'God's in His heaven—all's right with the world'? Or, is the pessimist more correct who sees mankind 'here as on a darkling plain . . . where ignorant armies clash by night'?"

In a past age, when human relationships were equally disturbing, the divine prophet exclaimed:

"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?" Jer. 8:22.

And another prophet ventured to appeal to the "watchman" in the famous words: "Watchman, what of the night?" Isa. 21:11. Those words we repeat today; "What of the night?" For certainly it is true that for our world it is night-time. "Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people." The reply given by the prophet in that far-off day was: "The morning cometh!" And the answer today should be similar. Indeed, after the nightmare occasioned by two global wars and the continuing wars of the past decade, one detects now such a strange changing of attitude, such an obvious easing of the tension that one instinctively asks: Is the "morning" about to break? Is the darkness of the world's night about to pass?

Is it the Morning?

The Word of God contains a remarkable prediction that some time a cry—an insistent cry—

By S. G. Hyde

for peace will be heard among the nations. Here is the prophetic picture portrayed by Isaiah: "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord; . . . He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: . . . and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isa. 2:3, 4.

Is that peace-call heard today? Is the situation growing easier, and are the nations moving into the conditions as portrayed by the prophet? Undoubtedly there are signs and omens of a condition which looks very like that of the prophet's description. The international sphere presents today a new hope—"a little melting of the ice in international relationships," to quote Mr. Attlee.

Actually, at this moment, and for the first time in many years, no war is being fought anywhere in the world, a notable fact which would lend support to the idea that the great reign of peace and security is about to begin. Looking around the world one sees many signs—Russia, for example, the nation most feared by the world. A great change has come over this nation; she has become more conciliatory, less aggressive, and less arrogant; more ready to say "yes," than has been her wont hitherto.

China, too, has become more friendly and the "iron curtain" separating these two great nations from the West has less "iron" in it than ever before. France and Germany, too, have ended a "nightmare" of animosity and bad-neighbourliness and Europe is busily forging a union of her many peoples. Egypt and Persia are now friendly, while Italy and Jugoslavia have ended their age-long strife, Trieste is restored, and Tito is happy. And in addition, the United Nations Organisation is tackling strongly the problem of disarmament. The presence of atomic and nuclear weapons undoubtedly serves as a deterrent, and may be responsible for the changed diplomacy and the new approach in national relationships. Nevertheless the fact remains that no nation is anxious to precipitate a war which conceivably could bring the normal life of our world to an end.

Even in the religious sphere the same spirit is at work and the barriers of sectarianism are being removed. At Evanston, the process went on toward the unification of a divided Christendom and the religious world joined forces with the political world in seeking a new peace. A new hope has

arisen that the world is on the eve of a happier day.

A False Foundation

But—there is always a "but!"—and in this case it is a very big one—God has warned against human hopes which are based on false foundations. He has always declared, "There is no peace . . . to the wicked." And Jesus Himself, when offering peace to mankind, claimed that it would not be "as the world giveth." How obvious it ought to be that Utopia cannot come while the powers of darkness are still engaged in their nefarious activities! How easily man can be deceived by appearances.

Peace there will be, but not until the destroyers of peace—the powers of darkness—have themselves been destroyed.

Before the eternal peace is ushered in there will be a thousand years of peace on the earth, but not at all in the manner expected or under the conditions so often pictured when men talk about the "Millennium." Before this thousand years of peace begins Jesus must return. Indeed His advent is the signal which marks the beginning of the millennial age.

This is what the Bible provides as supporting evidence:

1. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God." 2 Thess. 1:7, 8.

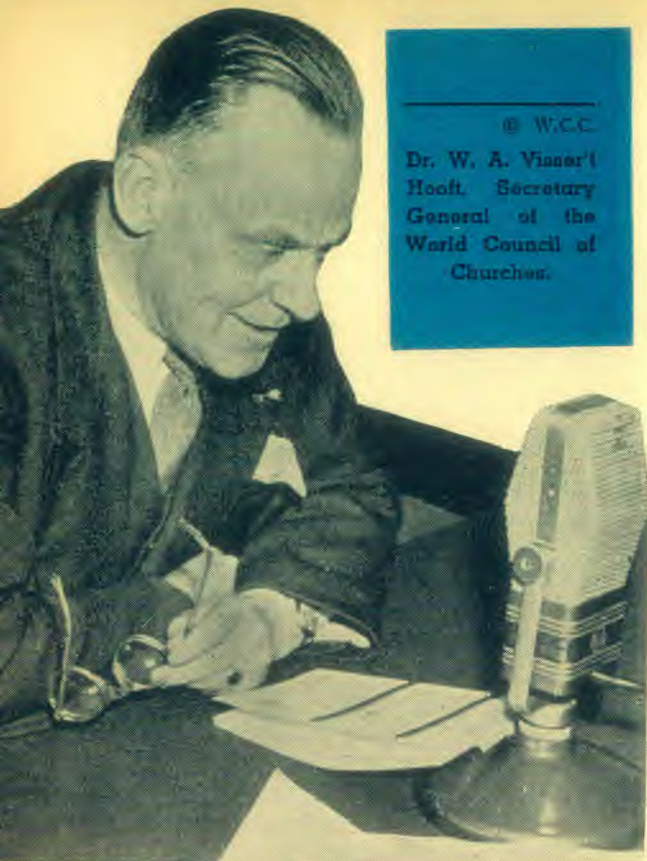
2. "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise." 1 Thess. 4:16.

3. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them [the resurrected saints] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:17.

You will see very clearly that these three events which take place at the second advent of Jesus, remove from the earth living humanity. The saints ascend to heaven where they "live and reign with Christ a thousand years," while the ungodly, being destroyed by the power of the Saviour they had rejected, are "gathered together . . . in the pit" of a world, the condition of which is graphically described by Isaiah the prophet:

"Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down and

(Continued on back page.)



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Dr. W. A. Visser't
Hooft, Secretary
General of the
World Council of
Churches.

✚ ON the face of it the question asked above could be answered by a simple "No" and there would be no purpose in writing this article at all!

But the issue is not quite so simple as that.

It is true that the Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the World Council of Churches and that the Vatican refused even to sanction the presence of unofficial observers at Evanston. The Archbishop of Chicago, Cardinal Stritch, in a seventeen-page pastoral letter just before the convening of the assembly, specifically forbade Roman Catholics, either priests or laity, to attend the meetings, stating:

"We wish it to be clearly understood that the faithful of the church are not permitted to attend the assemblies or conventions of non-Catholic organizations or councils."

But though Rome was ostensibly absent from the Evanston Assembly—except for a lone picket who stood outside the First Methodist Church at the opening meeting with a banner proclaiming, "All roads lead to Rome, come home brothers"—

some, at least, of those who were at Evanston could not but recognize the banners of Rome "inside" the assembly in much that was said and done there.

Origin of "Christian Activism"

Let us look first at the controversy which arose at the very outset of the assembly on the nature of the "Christian Hope." Set against Dr. Schlink's biblical presentation of the "blessed hope" of the return of Christ for the setting up of His universal and eternal kingdom, Dr. Calhoun expounded the doctrine of the transformation of the pattern of human society to conform to the

WAS ROME

Final article on the Second Assembly

By W.

divine intention by progressive Christian action.

Dr. Calhoun traced this so-called "activist" doctrine of the kingdom of God back to the "moral and social interpretation of the Gospel in Ritschlian thought," which, he said, "many of our biblical and theological teachers studied in Germany and adapted to the American situation."

This teaching, however, goes back much further than to Albrecht Ritschl. For, though a Lutheran theologian, Ritschl's most important work was a study of the old Catholic Church, through which his conceptions may be traced back to Augustine, whose famous work, *De Civitate Dei*, or "The City of God," marked the basic departure from biblical teaching upon which the Roman doctrine of the "kingdom" was built.

During the early centuries of the Christian church, Christ's promise to return to deliver His suffering church was fervently believed, and the time when the kingdoms of this world would be swept aside to make room for "the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ" was eagerly awaited.

But with the conversion of Constantine, and the adoption of Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire, the idea began to form in the minds of some of the leaders of the church that

here was the nucleus of the kingdom of God which ultimately would conquer the barbarian world and cover the earth.

This idea, mooted by Eusebius after the Council of Nicaea—before that he was a good Adventist!—and developed by the Donatist, Tichonius, matured in the mind of Augustine, bishop of Hippo, into a complete philosophy of history in which he contended that "the church even now is the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of heaven" (*De Civitate Dei*, chapter 9, page 430) by which "God was pleased to conquer the whole world, and subdue it far and wide by bringing it into one fellowship of government and laws."—*Ibid.*,

EVANSTON?

of the World Council of Churches

Framerson

chapter 22, page 372.

This conception of the "kingdom" already present in the earth and destined, in due time to fill it, completed the eclipse of the "blessed hope" of Christ's personal return for the establishment of His kingdom, and became the basis of the religio-political programme of the Roman Church.

Charlemagne's imagination was captured by Augustine's *City of God* and he set out to achieve a Christian theocracy with "one God, one emperor, one pope, one city of God." This was not, however, quite the papal programme, and from this day began the struggle for control which culminated in the papal domination of "Christendom" in the Middle Ages, when the visible church and the Holy Roman

The Hope of the World.—6

Empire were practically co-extensive and the Vicar of Christ was acknowledged as the supreme authority in both spiritual and temporal spheres.

The Reformation Revolt

This travesty of the "kingdom" which Rome came near to creating in the high noon of medieval times was shattered by the spiritual revolt of the Reformation, whose leaders recognized the supposed kingdom of God, superintended by Christ's "Vicar," as, in fact, the "kingdom of Antichrist," from which they called men to "come out" and "be separate." And thus, through the Protestant Reformation, Christians were led back on the one hand to the true basis of salvation by faith and on the other to the true biblical hope of the universal and eternal rule of Christ to be established by Him at His coming.

Unfortunately, some of the Reformation churches, especially theocratic Calvinism, were not completely purged of Augustine's doctrine of the "kingdom" already existent in the earth, and it soon began to reappear in various forms, helped by the acceptance of the reformed faith by the Protestant princes.

In the eighteenth century Daniel Whitby's (1638-1726) doctrine of the conversion of the world under the outpouring of the Holy Spirit became very popular, and particularly influenced the Calvinistic Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Hopkins in North America, who in turn placed a powerful impress upon American theology.

The evolutionary theory, popularized in the nineteenth century by Charles Darwin, was also

W.C.C.
The great audience at one
of the plenary sessions in the
McGraw Hall, Evanston.

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applied to history and eagerly adopted by the protagonists of the Augustinian "kingdom" theory, and the modern "social gospel" or "Christian activism" was the offspring.

It was the choice of "Christ the Hope of the world" as the "main theme" at Evanston which brought this conflict of the biblical and Augustinian doctrines of the kingdom to world notice as never before.

While therefore Rome was not personally represented at Evanston, it was the essentially Roman doctrine of the "kingdom" which was there opposed to the biblical teachings of "the blessed hope."

What Is the "Church"?

When next we turn to the discussions at Evanston on the nature of the church and the basis of unity, we see the shadow of Rome falling even more darkly across the assembly.

It was Augustine's conception of the *City of God* which crystallized the doctrine of the church as a visible and continuing community with its governing authority centred in Christ's "Vicar," and handed on by apostolic succession.

This "high" or "Catholic" doctrine of the church was inherited by the orthodox and other eastern churches which separated from Rome in the east-west schisms, and it has been retained by the Anglican and other Western episcopal churches which claim to be "Catholic" and reformed rather than "Protestant" and reformed.

Thus, among the non-Roman churches at Evanston, there were two distinct and incompatible doctrines of the church, the "high" or "Catholic" doctrine stemming from Rome, and the Protestant doctrine of the "gathered church," the basis of which is redemption by Christ through faith, and whose unity, while not as yet manifest in one visible community, will become visibly "one" when finally "gathered" by Christ at His coming. (Matt. 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:15-17.)

That the Catholic "wing" in the World Council of Churches is a factor seriously to be reckoned with is evidenced by a number of significant facts.

In the first place, on more than one occasion it has been emphasized that the World Council of Churches is *not* a pan-Protestant organization and that it is wrong to designate it as a World Council of Protestant churches.

This is indeed very heavily underlined when the list of the six new presidents who comprise the praesidium of the World Council for the next period of six years is pondered. For it comprises

Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill of the Episcopal (Anglican) church of the United States, Archbishop Michael of the Eastern Orthodox Catholic Church, Metropolitan Juhanon of the Catholic Mar Thoma Church of India. Besides these three confessedly "Catholic" presidents, Bishop O. Dibelius and Bishop S. U. Barbieri were elected from the Lutheran and the Methodist Episcopal churches respectively, leaving only one president, Principal John Baillie of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, who could not put the title "Bishop" before his name.

Are the Protestant Churches Slipping?

Again, it is significant that among the suggestions for study in the report of the section on "Faith and Order," it was urged that in addition to a new searching of the Bible teaching on the church, serious attention should be given also to Christian "Tradition," which, of course, is one of the pillars of the "Catholic" doctrine of the historic church.

"It is vital," said Professor Basil Ioannides, "for the Ecumenical movement and for the World Council of Churches to hold on to the Catholic as much as the Protestant element if they are to be true to their aim of creating among all Christians an Ecumenical mind and spirit and accomplishing the reunion of the church." And the Orthodox representatives made it clear on more than one occasion that if unity was to be achieved it would only be by the return and reintegration of the separated Protestant churches into the "one holy Catholic church."

So, while at the beginning of this article the reader might have dismissed the question, "Was Rome at Evanston?" with a summary "No," he must now recognize that in actual fact the age-old teachings of Rome on the church, its nature and its destiny, overshadowed the assembly and powerfully influenced its discussions and decisions.

"Image to the Beast" Emerging?

This leads us on to our final point. In the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation there is a remarkable prophecy which spans almost the entire Christian era and climaxes in a description of the final apostasy which is to be confounded by Christ at His coming.

In the first part of the chapter there is a description of a "beast" or Antichristian power, which from Reformation times has been recognized as a vivid portrayal of the Roman apostasy.

In the latter half of the chapter, which carries us down into the last days, we read of the development of an "image to the beast" which shares with the "beast" itself the worship of the world save for the true church of God, the remnant which refuses to worship "the beast" or "his image."

In the *Pulpit Commentary* there is a striking comment on this "image" to the beast, by the Rev. A. Plummer, M.A., D.D., past principal of the University of Durham. He says that the "image" would be set up "not in order to pay greater honour to the first beast, but that an apparent alternative might be offered to men, so that those who hesitated to pay direct allegiance to the first might overcome their scruples and worship something that resembled him, while allowing them to, as it were, cheat their own consciences by persuading themselves that they were not worshipping the beast himself."

Now if as we have seen, the "beast" is the apostate ecclesiastical system of Rome, an "image to the beast" would be some other ecclesiastical system, ostensibly independent of Rome, but in reality, a replica of that apostate church—in other words, a Protestantism which had abandoned its "protest," and become an echo of that church from which it separated in the great Reformation movement.

We know that we are living in the last days

when the "beast" and his "image" are to co-exist and we may well therefore ask if there are any evidences among the Reformation churches today of a desire to erect a world ecclesiastical system which, while not uniting with Rome, might run parallel with Rome and share the allegiance of the greater part of the Christian world.

The posing of this question cannot but turn the thoughts to the ecumenical movement which convened its Second Assembly in Evanston, Illinois.

Of course, the World Council of Churches is not and will never become a superchurch. By its constitution such a development is quite impossible. But as its avowed purpose is the bringing of the churches together for mutual discussion with a view to unity, there *could* emerge out of the World Council of Churches a world church which might quite easily become a replica of Rome, and which might readily co-operate with the papal apostasy in the achievement of its false ideal of "the kingdom of God," and climax the apostasy of the ages.

We are not "prophets," but we are to be "watchmen," and those who have studied the ecumenical movement through the years from Oxford and Edinburgh to Amsterdam and now to Evanston will certainly "watch" the direction in which the World Council of Churches moves in the coming years.

ARE YOU PERPLEXED

ABOUT WORLD EVENTS & THE FUTURE AS PLANNED BY GOD ?

THERE IS ONLY ONE ANSWER

TO QUESTIONS VITAL TO EACH ONE OF US SUCH AS—



- Is there life beyond the grave?
- WILL CHRIST COME IN OUR DAY?
- Why does God permit sin and suffering?
- WILL THERE EVER BE LASTING PEACE?

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Who is the author of prophecy?

"For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
2 Peter 1:21 (margin).

What are these "men of God" called in Scripture?

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." Heb. 1:1.

How did God speak through the prophets?

"And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle. . . . And He said, Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." Num. 12:5, 6.

Visions and dreams were often used by God to reveal His will and purposes to the prophets. (Dan. 7:1; 8:1; Gen. 37:5; Isa. 1:1.)

What phrase is commonly used to denote the Spirit of prophecy?

"And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord." 1 Sam. 3:20, 21.

Again and again, we find the expression "the Word of the Lord came" unto the prophet. (Jer. 1:2; 2:1; Ezek. 1:3, etc.) David testified that God spake to and through him. His "last words" were: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue." 2 Sam. 23:1, 2.

What then is the prophet's responsibility?

"And the Lord said unto Moses, see, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." "And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth." Exod. 7:1; 4:16.

From these texts we discover that a prophet is really a spokesman for God. He is not merely a foreteller but a for-teller and a forth-teller. The prophets enunciated the great moral and spiritual principles that govern the relations of God with mankind.

What purpose underlies the predictive element in prophecy?

"And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." John 14:29.

Is prophecy the prerogative of Deity?

"Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them bear, and say, It is truth." "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." Isa. 43:9; 46:9, 10.

The world's great books contain history, biography, poetry, eloquence, information, political and sociological principles, but only in the Bible

is found "the Spirit of prophecy." "The vindication of our faith rests upon an accumulated and concurrent evidence."—John Davison, B.D., in *Discourses on Prophecy*, page 17.

What challenge does God issue to all false gods?

"Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: Let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." Isa. 41:21-23.

Does God share His secrets with mankind?

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." Amos 3:7.

What supreme theme does prophecy present?

"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11.

By J. A. McMillan

What was Peter's comment on the transfiguration of Christ?

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount." 2 Peter 1:16-18.

The disciples heard the voice and they saw the

glory of the transformed Christ. But there was something of even more value than the evidence of sight and hearing.

How highly does Peter rate the prophetic Word?

"We have also a more sure Word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed." 2 Peter 1:19.

"The Christian religion challenges the severest test-fulfilled prediction. It is easier to counterfeit a miracle than a prophecy; and yet this method of confirmation, so certain to bring exposure to fraud, falsehood, or impudent presumption, is the standard by which the Bible stands or falls; on this golden strand of prophecy all these divine precepts and promises are strung. Marvellous is their variety, extent, and number, yet no prediction has ever failed; and if those whose set time has come have not failed, with what assurance may we look forward to the sure accomplishment of these prophetic words whose full time is not yet."—Dr. A. T. Pierson in *Many Infallible Proofs*, page 45.

How did our Lord endorse the prophetic Word?

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, . . . (whoso readeth, let him understand.)" Matt. 24:15.

Did the apostle Paul commend the prophecies?

"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5:20, 21.

How long will prophecy serve a useful purpose?

"We have also a more sure Word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:19.

"That sure Word of prophecy in clear terms foretells, beyond the certain day of death, a day when time shall be no longer; when earth shall be wrapped in a winding sheet of dissolving flames; when earth and sea shall give up their dead, and the great white throne shall flash upon the gaze of countless hosts of our humanity—when the books shall be opened, and the dead judged. Have you made ready for that day? In that storm whose thunders rend the earth and shake the sky—whose floods sweep away the last refuge of lies and sin—will your house stand, or fall for ever?"—*Ibid.*, page 47.

THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

Harry's Resolution

By Adna Bird

HARRY'S blue eyes wore a puzzled expression, while his chubby hand gripped the lead pencil tightly. It was New Year's Day, and he must think up a new-year resolution. There might be many new-year resolutions, but Harry wanted the best one a boy could think up. So he thought and thought. He was greatly puzzled.

Suddenly his face brightened, and he began to write. When he had finished writing the new-year resolution, he read it over. Why, he had the best resolution in the whole world, he did believe! He smiled, and his eyes sparkled as he tucked the slip of paper away, for his resolution was to be a deep secret. Then Harry went out to play.

Do you suppose he forgot all about his resolution?

Harry went out into the garden where his younger sister was playing with another girl. They were tugging with all their strength at a heavy board that they wanted moved, but they could not lift it. Then Harry's sister spied him coming out of the house. "O Harry," she called, "help us make a see-saw. Please do!"

"Ho!" answered Harry good-naturedly, and he heaved the big board on to the wooden horse.

So he helped his sister and her playmate make a see-saw. He stood in the middle, and a girl perched herself on each end of the plank. The children had great fun.

"Harry, oh Harry," called his mother in a cheerful voice, "please bring me some wood."

Harry leaped down promptly. He took in an armful of wood, and then he kept taking in wood until he had filled the box by the kitchen stove.

"Thanks, Son," said Mother. "That is a great help."

Harry felt a glow of happiness fill his heart; so he stayed and watched his mother do the baking. She let him help, too.

In the afternoon it snowed. The paths and porch were covered with snow. When Harry came home from his sleighing, he rushed for the broom and cleared the snow away. He was looking at his work when Daddy came home. "Beat me to it, didn't you, Son?" said Dad, grinning. "I couldn't have done better myself. Thank you for helping."

Harry's face glowed; his heart felt warm within him; he was a happy boy. That night did Harry need to read his resolution? No, he had remembered it all day: "Resolved, to be helpful."

A GAME IN THE SNOW

By Gwynn Goldie

"OH, how lovely the snow looks!" exclaimed Penny excitedly, as she pressed her nose to the window and watched the snowflakes falling. I wish you would take us out today, Mummy. It would be such fun."

Mrs. Goodwin was giving Baby Simon his dinner, but she looked up at Penny and Richard at the window and smiled at them.

"The snow does look lovely," she agreed. "I can remember how we used to go out in the snow when I was a little girl. It was great fun, and we all came back so hungry."

"Can we go, can we go?" asked Penny, jumping up and down.

"Yes, I suppose you and Richard could but I can't come with you. I've much too much to do. I've got all the ironing to do, and I must bake some cakes for tea. Then there are all the vegetables to do for supper tonight."

"Mummy, I wish you could come, too," said Richard. "You miss all the fun; you always have such a lot to do."

Penny looked very thoughtful, then she walked out into the hall and beckoned Richard to follow her.

"I've got an idea," she said. "If you do the vegetables and I do the ironing, Mummy can do the baking and then we can all go out together."

"It's a jolly good idea," agreed Richard.

So Penny got out the ironing board, and Richard put on one of Mrs. Goodwin's aprons. By the time the cakes were baked, Penny had finished the ironing (she had even managed to do one of Daddy's shirts which really were difficult things to

do), and Richard had finished the vegetables and had put them ready in a bowl of water.

Then while Mrs. Goodwin was putting on her hat and coat Penny dressed Baby Simon in his outdoor clothes and strapped him into his pram.

When they set off, the snow flakes had stopped falling and the sun was shining. It was a lovely afternoon and the trees and bushes looked beautiful, draped in thick white snow. During their walk they had a wonderful snow fight. How Baby Simon laughed and clapped his tiny hands as he saw the snowballs flying, and what a surprise he had when one of Mummy's balls landed with a plop right on the cover of his pram. They all laughed so much, and they were still enjoying themselves when they reached home. How hungry they all were! They put some logs on the fire and ate a huge tea.

When Mr. Goodwin came home, he was just in time to have some of the lovely freshly baked cakes that Mrs. Goodwin had made that afternoon.

"It's nice to see you not looking so tired," he said to Mummy. "You've got some lovely roses in your cheeks."

"We've had a wonderful afternoon," said Mrs. Goodwin.

"It was such a treat for me to get out," and she told Daddy that Penny had done the ironing and Richard had done the vegetables.

"And we're going to do everything we can all these holidays," said Penny.

"So that Mummy can have just as much fun as we do," added Richard.

Your Letter

My dear Sunbeams,

1955 is still quite new, so this seems a good time to review our Promises. Shall we begin with number one? "I will read a portion of the Bible every day." I do hope that you will always remember to do this, Sunbeams, as it is very important. Shall I tell you why?

Have you heard that the Bible has been likened to a compass? Now a compass is an instrument which consists of a magnetized needle which always points in

one direction—to the north, and this curious device is designed to help sailors to cross seas safely, and to aid travellers in their journeys across great deserts and other places where there are no roads.

Just so, each new day is unknown to us and full of many paths, some of which might lead in the wrong direction. However, we will not lose our way if we follow our compass which is the Bible, for we can be sure that it will always point us heavenward and to Jesus, which is surely the direction we all want to be facing, isn't it?

Good-bye, and God bless you all.
Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE PAM.

The Quest

Every girl has a quest to make,
For life is the King's highway,
And the joyous heart is the scrip
to take
On the road of every day.

Every girl has a loving Guide,
From the vale to the mountain
crest,
And the unseen Friend who walks
beside
Is the Way and the End of the
quest.

Mary Guest.

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STRAWS IN THE WIND

Shadows Across Globe

⊞ "Europe is no longer pre-eminent," said Sir Oliver Franks in his first B.B.C. Reith Lecture: "It is divided, impoverished, and weak. The balance of world power lies outside Europe. The poles of international tension are Washington and Moscow. The United States and the Soviet Union seem to dwarf all other nations: their shadows lie across the entire globe."

Most Volcanic Spot

⊞ "That whole area we label the Middle East, from Karachi to Cairo and beyond that even to Algeria," declared William Clark in a recent broadcast, "is politically one of the most volcanic spots on the earth's surface. And we cannot ignore those rumblings and eruptions."

Is Sermon Outdated?

⊞ It is reported that Dr. Green, Bishop of Manchester, has stated that "the days of the sermon as an instrument of evangelism are over." But Jesus, speaking of the very last days of earth's history, declared: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be *preached* in all the world for a witness, . . . and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14.

Roman Mariolatry

⊞ The present tendencies in the Roman Catholic Church to further exalt the Virgin Mary to a place almost on an equality with Jesus are criticized by the Bishop of Chichester in his latest diocesan leaflet, "The new feast of the *Queenship of Mary*," he says, "is deliberately set forth as a parallel to the feast of the *Kingship of Christ*."

"Blood on Our Hands"

⊞ The recently-published volume, *The Hydrogen Bomb*, by J. R. Shepley and Clay Blair, reveals how conscience-stricken many of the atom scientists felt as they developed more and more fearful atomic weapons. They quote a sentence of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer: "In some crude sense which no vulgarity, no humour, no over-statement can quite extinguish, the physicists have known sin, and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose." And they maintain that "on one occasion,

at the White House, he wept in the presence of President Harry Truman, because of the blood on our hands."

Alcoholism in France

⊞ Deaths from alcoholism in France in 1953 numbered 15,776, which was actually more than those resulting from tuberculosis. Since 1946 deaths from cirrhosis of the liver have risen from 4.2 to 20.7 per 100,000 and admissions of alcoholics to mental hospitals have gone up from 1.9 to 17.5 per 100,000 in the past three years.

Is Peace Really At Hand?

(Continued from page 7.)

scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." Isa. 24:1, 22.

And the prophet Jeremiah, viewing the scene, vividly portrayed the picture presented to him:

"I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form . . . I beheld, and, lo *there was no man*, and all the birds . . . were fled . . . all the cities . . . were broken down." Jer. 4:23-27.

So earth's reputed "millennium" will be very different from that hoped for. Instead of mankind glorying in an age of prosperity, peace, and plenty, silence and darkness will reign over all the earth. Only in heaven will there be life and peace, and a glorified reign.

If we are now entering upon a period of peace and prosperity, let us not misunderstand it, for it will be but the fulfilment of the Word, the dawning of the era acclaimed by man as "peace and safety," but concerning which God warns: "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh." 1 Thess. 5:3.

Only the Lord's return can bring peace. As "Prince of peace" He, by His loving sacrifice and glorious triumph over death and the devil, has provided a peaceful and eternal inheritance for all who wish to enjoy it.

