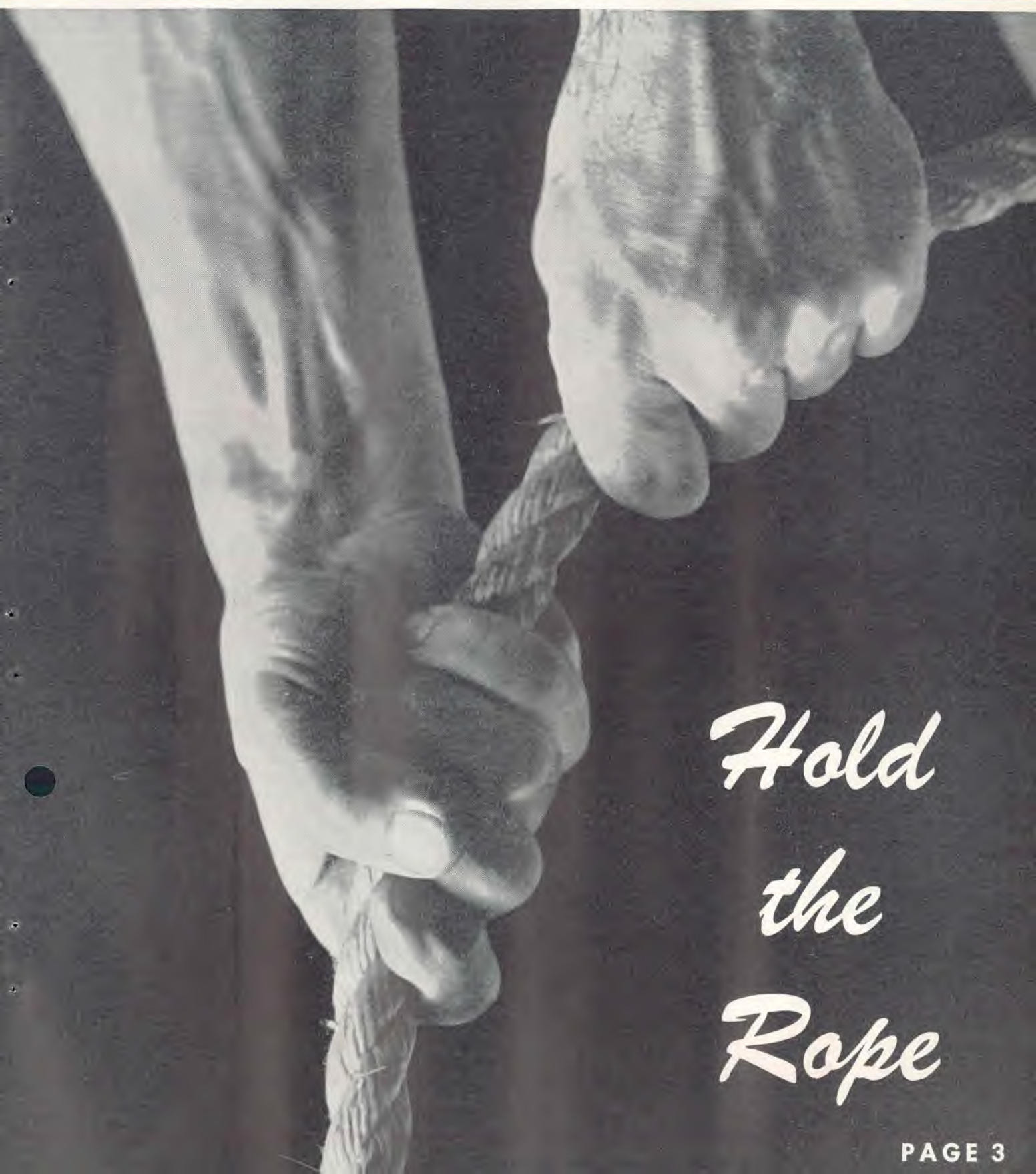


Canadian

OSHAWA, ONTARIO JULY, 1944

SIGNS OF THE TIMES



*Hold
the
Rope*

THE GOOD NEWS

Salt is now being produced in Canada in such large quantities that there is very little need for imports of this valuable commodity. Fifty per cent of it is used in the manufacture of chemicals. Some other uses, besides that of making food tasty, are: food preservation, stabilization for roads and runways, making sand flow easily. Christ's allusion to salt that has "lost its savour" being "trodden under foot of men" and so being "good for nothing else but road-building, shows that the pavement idea for salt is nothing new. The lesson taught by the Saviour should not be lost upon us, for He said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Matthew 5:13.

Boys know much more about the recent "song hits" than they know about the Bible, according to a report in *Time*. Some 250 teen-age boys of a Philadelphia suburb were asked to complete song-hit lines (such as, "She kicked out my windshield and she") and Bible verses (such as, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that"). Result: The average on the songs was 56 per cent, on the Bible 23 per cent. Forty-five of the boys didn't get a Bible verse, 157 got 20% or less. The only boy who got all the Bible verses right also got all the song hits right, and he is a Methodist minister's grandson who expects to enter the ministry. This editor found all the Bible verses easy, and all the songs entirely beyond his ken. The good news is that this report will wake up some parents to the fact that the simplest elements of Christianity are not being taught their children. Or will it? Some day there will be a futile yearning for Bible truth, and this is the reason:

"They shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it." Amos 8:12.

Bibles as never before are going out to those who need them and read them. The British and Foreign Bible Society in 1942 received one cent per person of the whole population of Great Britain for free Bible distribution. But in the same period the American Bible Society received only one-fourth of a cent per person from the United States. The sharp contrast is being urged on Americans as an incentive to give more this year. To show what can be done with even such

small gifts, the American Society reports for 1943 that it issued 12,277,387 volumes of Scripture, exceeding by 49 per cent that of any other year; distributed to the armed forces 48,193 Bibles, 1,820,733 Testaments, and 364,880 Gospel portions; furnished for life boats and life rafts 40,000 Testaments in waterproof containers; issued Scriptures for prisoners of war in



Chinese refugees returning to their wrecked houses after a bombing raid. But never before has the good heart of the world been more sympathetic.

Europe and America in thirty-eight languages; distributed 9,070 embossed volumes and talking-book records for the blind, surpassing that of any year in 109 years of service; received \$270,499 from individual donors and \$240,578 from churches for regular work, and \$298,962 for its War Emergency Fund, all these nearly fifty per cent increases over the best previous years. We rejoice—and then weep—at the thought that while thousands are spent on the Word of life, billions are spent on the battles of death.

"The Lord gave the Word: great was the company of those that published it." Psalm 68:11.

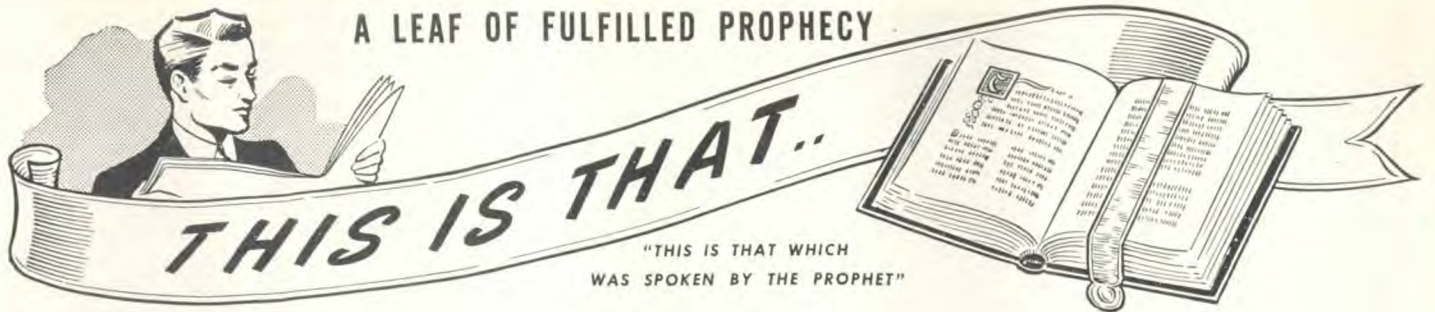
Religious liberty is clearly defined by the executive committee of the Federal Council of Churches of America. It indicates the provisions which governments must make to insure such liberty. "The right of individuals everywhere to religious liberty . . . shall be guaranteed against legal provisions and administrative acts which would impose political, economic or social disabilities on grounds of religion. Religious liberty shall be interpreted to include freedom to worship according to conscience and to bring up children in the faith of their parents; freedom for the individual to change his religion; freedom to preach, educate, publish, and carry on missionary activities; and freedom to organize with others, and to acquire and hold property, for these purposes."

"Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." Leviticus 25:10.

It makes a vast difference in your hope and courage as you face the future whether you expect men or God to make a better world. Men have a thousand schemes for it; God has one plan. "Behold, I create a new heavens and a new earth," He promises. And, after all, that is the only way out for us.

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord." Isaiah 55:8.

A LEAF OF FULFILLED PROPHECY



Hold the Rope

OUR CIVILIZATION is down there in the darkness on the edge of the abyss. All that makes life livable in this world—liberty, equality, fraternity, life itself—are tottering on the verge of annihilation. Not alone that an enemy seems to be snatching them from us, but in the very act of fighting for them we seem to be losing them. The world turns to savage warfare to save us from savagery.

Millions of our boys are down there, fighting to save what great and good men and women have been millenniums in building. This end of the rope that holds them is in our grip. It is terribly frayed and snarled at their end; for they do not have the time and the quiet to think clearly what it is all about; and many of them are not sure what they are fighting for; but they are fighting. Our admiration of their valour and our appreciation of their sacrifice work overtime.

Freedom may be an abstraction to the men at the front, but they spell it in words like home, mother, wife, a job, children, good food, and peace. The things that mean to them comfort, satisfaction, well-being, have become the obsession of their souls. Heart-sick of war, they want above all a warless world in which to live long and be happy because they are safe.

The fighters come home, honourably discharged or on furlough, and, after sizing up the attitudes and actions of those of us here, are disgusted if not embittered. Making allowances for the few who cannot be expected to care, they can't understand those of us who do care. Used to violent action in doing something to cure the world's ills, they cannot fathom the mentalities of those who appear to be doing little or nothing to the same end, and especially those who give every evidence of hilarious indifference.

There is some excuse for us. If they only knew it, no one escapes the supreme sacrifices of this war. There is nothing harder to do than to do nothing. When we have given all we can in work and loans and gifts and sympathy and prayer, we must sit tense and wait long, while they do their part. It is nerve shattering. We must release the strain—or break under it.

But we must not break—we hold the rope.

What can we do to grasp it firmer, tighter, even as we relax?

We can be sane in our thinking out the solution of the war problem. The ma-

majority will have to plan more constructively than they have yet, if it is solved at all. We will have to get down to the bed-rock of it, the human heart, and start to build there. We cannot solve it by policing, sanctions, blockades, disarmaments, domination, benevolent enslave-

peace advocates; but too many are in the grip of national, race, class, or religious bias, and find it well-nigh impossible to break loose.

Then what is the prospect for peace?—Because men will find it continually impossible to *make* it, the God of heaven



On the occasion of the celebration of the eighteenth birthday of Princess Elizabeth, as she appears with Their Majesties, the King and Queen.

ment applied to whole peoples—in short, force. For the human heart will not be happy under force, even with ultimate freedom as its object. Granted that crime must be suppressed; but there are no criminal nations, only criminal individuals.

We can resolve to banish all forms of vengeance from our hearts. For any degree of real or suspected revenge will only stir more hatred and more war. Firmness with forgiveness is God's way; and if we don't take God with us into planning world amity, we are beating the air. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

We can make up our minds that war never has been, is not, and never will be the successful way to pacify the world. The only way peace can come is by universal friendliness and love; and you can't win friends by triumphing over them. We believe this truth has settled in the minds of godly, thoughtful, observant

will have to come to this earth to *bring* it. And if we didn't believe He is coming soon to do just that, we would despair of it. But He promised that He would be here ere long to establish concord; and we believe His promise.

However, according to His own description and narration of His coming, He will not make peace by forcing all men to be peaceable. He will have to "destroy them which destroy the earth." You who call for justice to be meted out, never fear; vengeance will be taken, but God alone knows on whom it should fall. "You who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Thessalonians 1: 7,8.

We hold the rope steady when we find out how God is going to settle the final affairs of this world, and plan with Him.



The airfield "traffic policeman" who marshalls the aircraft to their dispersals, by signalling with two torches, on their return from a bombing expedition over Europe.

Watch the Trend

LIKE THE famous Roman senator who ended every speech he made with the words, "Carthage must be destroyed," we expect again and again to call the attention of our readers to the efforts being made by religious bodies to influence the civil government to make laws that curtail our religious freedom.

Adding to the laws that compel Sunday keeping, that force the teaching of religion in public schools, and that demand that no one be discriminated against because of his religion, a movement is now under way, by Protestants, Catholics, and Jews working together, to induce political parties to nail religious planks to their party platforms. We are certainly happy to see these historically opposed ecclesiastical bodies get together on anything, if it does not compromise truth and liberty. But to make the "recognition of the sovereignty of God and the authority of the moral law" a matter of politics is dragging religion down and not lifting politics up.

The danger of it is that these trends all look innocent enough, even praiseworthy, on the surface; and they can be argued for at great length as harbingers of peace, goodwill, and unity. Of course politics and government should follow good moral principles; and it is well for politicians and government officials to be religious; but forcing people to be religious by law is quite another thing. In spite of the

slur that "party platforms, like street-car platforms, are not to stand on but to get in on," party principles find their way to the statute books.

We repeat: Watch that religion which, having lost the power of God, turns to the power of the State. It looks as innocent as a lamb, but sooner or later it speaks as a dragon. (See Revelation 13:11.)

Too Many People

THE AUTHOR of a new book, "Plenty of People", concludes that modern medical science and other factors, are increasing births and decreasing deaths to such a degree that a dangerous situation for world happiness will soon be created. "We cannot long support the population arising from a high and uncontrolled birth rate and a low and controlled death rate." In other words, in the next few decades we will have more people than the earth can feed and clothe.

This is an indirect argument in favour of war, which is one way to kill off surplus population. But the author turns to the other end of the scale of living, and advocates birth-control instead. To look out over the world to-day, one would judge that, with millions of men being killed and incapacitated for normal living, and millions of women thereby being doomed to childlessness, human propensities are taking good care of the situation, and there is not much need to worry over surplus populations.

In the beginning, the race was commanded to "be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth;" and sin alone, the world's great malefactor, has modified that decree. "God Himself hath formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited." Isaiah 45:18.

Generations ago philosophers worried about over-population, but there are still millions of square miles of fertile land untilled because not needed. Even under present conditions and prospects, it is difficult to see how anyone need suffer for the necessities, if men with power were less selfish.

However, God's way is to make a "new earth," where there will be "no more sea" and the curse of sin will be no more. Then and there the righteous will see "plenty of people" and plenty of room for them. Read about it in Isaiah 35; 65:17-25; Revelation 21, 22.

Alcohol's Tide Flows

LAST YEAR there was an ebb in the tide of beverage alcohol because of war-time restrictions. But with the removal of the more effective of these restrictions this year, the tide flows again. And public sentiment favours its flow, according to a recent Gallup poll. The present degree of opposition to a national prohibition law has not been noted before. The poll shows Quebec and British Columbia strongest in favour of liquor, and Ontario and the Maritimes the weakest.

Fully half the population of Canada want no restriction whatever on the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages after the war. And this in spite of the abundance of medical and psychological testimony on the gross evils connected with alcoholism on both the individual and the community.

As an illustration of what drunkenness is doing to the country, read the following report made by Major John A. Laroux, R. C. A. M. C., newly appointed by the Ontario Department of Health to head the attack on venereal disease:

"There have been reported to the Department of Health since the outbreak of the war, more than 50,000 cases of venereal disease. [Note that this is for Ontario alone, and only the reported cases.] Over 1,000 more venereal infections were reported in 1943 than in 1942. The excessive amount of venereal disease in Ontario can perhaps be more clearly visualized when I tell you that in Sweden, in 1928, the percentage of syphilis was 14 persons to every 1,000 population. In Norway, between the years 1933 and 1939, there were 24 people afflicted out of every 100,000. In Ontario, in 1943, there was the staggering total of 175 persons with syphilis for every 100,000 population. *Liquor is recognized as the promoting agent in more than 50 per cent of the contacts. There is little doubt that our present condition is one result of our increased promiscuous drinking.*"

Our readers may draw their own conclusions in view of these appalling figures. But we wonder when Canada will learn that the demon drink is its deadly enemy.

WE MAY LIVE IN

TWO WORLDS

*The Other One Challenges
Our Attention*

By Eric A. Beavon

ONE of George MacDonald's allegorical stories for children tells of another world—co-existent with this—reached by the simple process of stepping over a picture frame into a picture. Once in that beautiful world, one could be standing beside familiar landmarks in this world and not be conscious of it. Similarly, in the most unexpected places, individuals rich in faith could find doorways into that other world, the existence of which was never suspected by materially-minded people.

There really *is* such another world all about us, infinitely more beautiful and satisfying than the majority of people have ever suspected. Even soldiers on the battlefields of Europe catch occasional glimpses of that fairer world, but to most of them it is only a picture—a mirage of something intangible and unreal, something they think they are fighting for but which recedes as they advance. Their hope seems to be that illusive kind described by Britain's poet laureate, John Masefield, in his poem, "The Seekers:"

"Not for us are content and quiet and
peace of mind,
For we go seeking a city that we shall
never find.
There is no solace on earth for us—
for such as we—
Who search for a hidden city that
we shall never see!

"We travel from dawn to dusk, till the
day is past and by,
Seeking a Holy City beyond the rim
of the sky,
Friends and loves we have none, nor
wealth, nor blessed abode,
But the hope of the City of God at
the other end of the road."

That which is only a mirage, or at best a hope for the far-distant future, for the majority of mortals, is an ever-present reality to the Christian. "Neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you!" Luke 17:21. Said Christ to His disciples: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs *is* [not *shall be*] the Kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 5:3. Some souls



One who lives in this world and knows or cares little about the other, is like a man expecting to arrive at a distant destination by riding a merry-go-round.

have a foretaste of heaven here upon earth. On the other hand, many who could quote the Ten Commandments by heart are not acquainted with the first Beatitude. They are Christians only in name. They know nothing of the Christian's world which is independent of, yet co-existent with, the dying world about us.

The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to the "poor in spirit." The spirited horse makes trouble for himself as well as for his rider. Saul, scourge of the early Christian Church, found it "hard to kick against the pricks." (Acts 9:5) Converted into a new man by the Spirit of Christ, he was able to assert joyfully, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18. It is the proud, selfish, carnal spirit of man, forever resenting injury and fighting evil with evil, which wrecks homes and forces nations into war.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," is a rule from which the

true Christian will not deviate. It is reported that three hundred and fifty Christians died of slow starvation in Nazi concentration camps rather than agree to give the Nazi salute, or kill their fellow men. Any day they could have signed a paper, recanting, and thereby have secured their freedom. Atheists in the same camps noticed that up to the time of their death they seemed full of joy. They had no worries, apparently, although most of them were married people with families at home. They were affectionate and friendly to their torturers to the very last. They lived, of course, in another world. There in the concentration camps, they had a foretaste of heaven. They learned that

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage!"

Was it the fact that Jesus Christ lived in a different world from the Jews that made Him unconquerable even in death! Facing the crown of thorns and the cross of shame, Jesus told Nicodemus and the

Jews: "We speak that We do know, and testify that We have seen. . . . No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man *which is in heaven.*" John 3:11,13. Referring to His disciples, He declared: "The world hath hated them, because they are *not of the world*, even as I am not of the world." John 17:14. Supplicating the Father in their behalf, Jesus said: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are *not of the world*, even as I am not of the world." John 17:15-16. To the disciples themselves, He said: "These things I have spoken unto you that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have *overcome the world.*" John 16:23. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4.

Nowhere is the distinction between Christ's church and the world more clearly in evidence than in James 4:4, where friendship of the Christian for the world is denounced as "adultery". "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? *Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*" "Pure religion and undefiled before God" is defined by James as a disposition to visit those in sorrow or distress, and to keep one's self "unspotted from the world." James 1:27.

Peter urges us: "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." 1 Peter 2:17,13. Yet it was this same Peter who, on one occasion, told officers of the government: "We ought to obey God rather than man!"

The Christian evidently owes a dual allegiance. He must obey the laws of the land, but he must also obey the Law of God. When human law conflicts with Divine law, God must come first. Jesus emphasized this dual allegiance when He said: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's." Luke 20:25.

There are two spiritual kingdoms in this world, so distinct from each other that they might well be described as different worlds. One is the kingdom of Light, and the other is the kingdom of darkness. "Love is the ruling principle of the kingdom of light. Savagery and brute force control the kingdom of darkness. Subjects of the Prince of Peace can be, and should be, loyal to their respective countries, but they cannot yield one inch of ground to the kingdom of darkness. They cannot, for instance, have one code of morals in peace-time, and another code of morals in war-time. Always their first allegiance must be to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. They will heed the admonition of the apostle Paul: "*Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*" Romans 12:2.

Christian morals are *not elastic*. The Christian will not dispute with governments the methods they use in waging war. He will go ahead, quietly doing his duty to his fellow men, finding inspiration in the stand of Christ before Pilate, when He said: "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36.

Let us frankly face the fact that there are representatives of Jesus Christ all over the world, in Berlin and Tokyo as well as in Great Britain. Let us also recognize that the kingdom of darkness has its subjects everywhere. There are individuals in Canada who indignantly repudiate the suggestion of sympathy with the Nazis, but who entertain the same materialistic conception of life. They are no less nationalistic, no less pagan at heart, no more pacific in their outlook, no more given to prayer and Christian service. Their word cannot be depended upon; laws and statutes, promises and undertakings, are mere "scraps of paper" as far as they are concerned. While endeavouring to ingratiate their superiors with "lip service," their attitude to all whom they regard as their inferiors is authoritative and dictatorial.

The Christian's responsibility to all such is to convert them, whoever and wherever they are, and whatever their profession. Had we all felt this responsibility a little more keenly in the years preceding the war, even the war itself, with all its terrors and waste, might have been averted; for says the apostle Paul, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty [nevertheless] to the pulling down of strongholds." II Corinthians 10:4. Were we living in a Christian world, Maginot Lines and battle-ships could easily be dispensed with. Christian people have shut themselves up to themselves, instead of looking out on the fields, "white unto harvest." How ineffective and futile are all those forms of nationalized ecclesiasticism with which we have grown familiar, as regards bridging even the narrowest gulf that separates man from his brother is concerned.

The lesson for you and me? Let us keep our connection with the unseen world of love, and peace, and beauty,—come what may. "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31-32. "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called 'benefactors.' But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." Luke 22:25-26. With the all-embracing love of Christ in our hearts, let us seek for channels of service to king and country, God and humanity. Instead of criticizing governments for settling controversies in the only way possible in a lawless world, let us, for our part, serve and sacrifice, do and dare, for the security and well-being of Canada and for the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will shortly return to earth as King of kings and Lord of lords.



How Many
Will Believe
The News
That

CHRIST HAS COME?

By Clifford A. Reeves

WE ARE living in the time of the end. Never before have events so great, with such momentous possibilities, been transpiring on the earth as in these present days. The terrific sweep of recent happenings has brought decisive changes everywhere. Panic and perplexity fill the hearts of men, and the hurricane of revolution threatens to sweep all before it.

Men tell us that no ordinary man is sufficient to control world affairs, and to guide us in our mass and tangle of gigantic problems. They say that present-day conditions demand a superman,—a man of the Napoleon type, a leader of superhuman grasp and force. As affairs become more complex, men talk openly about the need of some master mind to steer us from the brink of chaos.

The *London Times* asked the question some years ago, "What is all Europe looking for?" The answer was, "Europe is looking for another king of men. He must be a scholar, a statesman, a man of courage and irrepressible enterprise, full of resources, ready to look on the face of every foe."

The *New York Herald* says: "We look over the disturbed state of things, and recognize the need of a master hand."

The *London Morning Post* concluded

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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More brilliant and thunderous than the flash and roar of rocket guns will be the startling announcement that Christ has returned to this earth.



an article with these words: "The time seems ripe for a man of power; and such a man would transform the whole scene." And there are many other papers and leading writers expressing the sentiment of one who recently wrote: "I see no way out of the present situation save by some form of one-man power."

In the light of these facts, it is of the greatest interest to students of Scripture prophecy to note that the Bible foretells that just prior to the second advent of Jesus a false christ will appear. Our Lord Himself referred to this when He said, "If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:23-27.

Satan's business is to destroy human souls, and his most successful method has always been along the lines of counterfeit and substitution. Thus we find that almost every good thing in the world has a satanic imitation. Each divine truth has had its counterfeit.

Turning to the second epistle to the Thessalonians, we read in the second chapter of the last-day signs that tell us Christ's coming is near. In verse eight of this chapter the apostle Paul declares that the great rebellion of evil will culminate in an amazing demonstration of Satan's power just before the Lord's return. "Then will wickedness incarnate appear, but the Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of His lips and bring him to nothing by the splendour of His coming. For at the coming of the Lord there will be great activity on the part of Satan, in the shape of all kinds of deceptive miracles, signs, and marvels, as well as of wicked attempts to delude—to the ruin of those who are on the way to destruction." 11 Thessalonians 2:8-10, Twentieth Century Version.

Thus in these last days, according to

the Scriptures, we are to expect the occurrence of mighty miracles and "lying wonders." Surely we can see much of this in evidence to-day. The miraculous in Spiritism and other cults is causing men to accept mysteries and marvels as conclusive proof of the truth of these new teachings. Spiritism has taken firm hold of many, both high and low. Kings and statesmen, scientists and leading literary men, are numbered amongst the frequenters of the seance room, whilst millions of the lower classes have recourse to clairvoyants and mediums.

Not only will there be in the last days many signs and wonders to deceive, but Jesus stated that invitations would be offered for men to enter "the secret chambers" (Matthew 24:26), where, it will be claimed, Christ is giving special manifestations. It is startling to find that modern Spiritism is even now making such claims and solicitations. Frequently we read of instances where it is claimed that men have heard, seen, met, or talked with Christ.

Indeed, "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." 11 Corinthians 11:14. Through all the agencies at his disposal, he is busily preparing the world for the last great counterfeit. His ultimate purpose is the manifestation of himself as the coming Christ. And, because men have rejected the truth, God will allow them to be deceived by the strong delusion of "the lie" spoken of by Paul in 11 Thessalonians 2:11.

Speaking of this coming delusion, a leading Biblical commentator says: "As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. (See Revelation 1:13-15.) The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eye has yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, 'Christ has come! Christ has come!' The people prostrate themselves in adoration before Him while He lifts up His hands, and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion. But the people of God will not be misled."

Before the admiring and astonished gaze of earth's multitudes, Satan is yet to perform his most amazing miracle. But those who wait for their coming Lord and who know His word will not be deceived. They will remember that He is coming in the clouds of heaven in a personal, literal, and visible manner that cannot be imitated.

"Wicked spirits gather round thee,
Legions of those foes of God—
Principalities most mighty—
Walk unseen the earth abroad;
They are gathering to the battle,
Strengthened for the last deep strife;
Christian, arm! be watchful, ready,
Struggle manfully for life."

The WORLD'S HEART

THE great men of to-day are world-minded. Global war has necessitated global thinking and planning. But statesmen and leaders of thought and action are not only globe-visioned; they are also would-be seers. They forecast "post-war" events. Now that the end of the war appears to be in sight, peace is receiving more and more attention.

War-saddened men want the future within their grasp, and many of them believe they have it. They are sure of this because they are determined to make the world themselves, and not leave it to the enemy, chance, or even God.

First, it is going to be a warless world, they say, an ideal world, a happy world,—because it is going to be a self-made world, and peace and happiness are the sum of nearly everyone's desires and dreams. Their's is a lofty goal, and well worth all the terrible sacrifices that war has brought.

But the difficulty is that wise and good men differ like the ways of the winds as to what will constitute this ideal world, and as to the technique of making it. The press, the radio, and public forums are issuing panaceas by the hundred, and the product spells confusion. Much as we respect the opinions, as opinions, of all peace-lovers, we are not going to discuss them. The future of this world roots in God and stems in history. If we would go back and be straightened out on the divine philosophy of history, we would be much better interpreters of these and future times.

The minds of noted inventors and discoverers have been impressed that they were "thinking God's thoughts after Him." None of us are taking irreverent liberties when we attempt to do the same thing. Especially is this true when we follow closely the revelations of His book, the Bible, as to the trend of these thoughts. Speculation is futile, and wishful thinking is not for these tragic hours. But there is no guesswork on the broad outlines of the purpose of Him who rules in the realms of men. He has revealed much of the turn of events to come; and it is for us to open our eyes and see that revelation. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us." Deuteronomy 29:29.

The present sweep of globe-shaking events, and the stamp they will place on things to come, can be understood only as we get God's view. And to get that we must stand with God at His viewpoint. It may not be possible, nor is it necessary, for us to stand with God bodily at a certain spot on the earth or in the heavens, but we must do so in our thinking if we would understand the language of His revelations.

Let us begin with the directions, east, west, north, south. God, in His book, uses such expressions as, "the sides of the

north," "the king of the south," "the kings of the east," and "the four corners of the earth." Obviously, these directions do not apply to outer space. There is no east, west, north, or south in astronomical infinity. They pertain to the earth alone. East is around the earth one way, and west the opposite way. On a globe, directions are relative. You may go west to get to the East, and you may go east to reach the West. The Chinese list five directions,—our usual four, and the *middle*. We are here particularly concerned with that middle; for, in locating specific bodies, such as continents, it is necessary to designate one spot as the centre, and to speak of a place as being east, west, north, or south from that centre. All of this is axiomatic and primary, but is fundamental to our subject.

Now the question: Did God at any time in history select a spot on the earth from which He looks and speaks? The answer is found in the book of Nehemiah, the ninth verse of the first chapter, the last expression,—"the place that I have chosen to set My name there." The American Standard version puts it, "the place that I have chosen, to cause My name to dwell there." (Deut. 12:11; Ezra 6:12.) God is speaking, and the context plainly shows that this place where God has chosen to set His name is the ancient Canaan, the "Holy Land", the modern Palestine.

We shall not labour this point here. Every student of history, especially of Bible history, is well acquainted with the vital importance of that strip of land in the grand march of past and present events. To use a professional illustration, God established Himself, and hung out His sign, His name, in Palestine. This was to be His vantage point from which to direct the affairs of the world.

Again, the land of Israel, Palestine, is easily identified in the description given by the prophet Ezekiel (chapter 38:12), where it is said to be "in the midst of the land", translated by Moffatt, "in the *centre of the earth*." Palestine is in the surface centre of the earth, Godwise. God always has spoken from that spot; that is, with reference to that place as the most important place on earth. Not that it is more sacred, or more blessed, than any other spot on earth, though it once was; but it is the geographical eminence for prophetic utterance.

Many writers have recognized the stellar role of Palestine in history. To quote:

"We do not know in accordance with what law empires rise and fall, why one race is always predominant, why the history of the world revolves in eccentric circles round Jerusalem, its true centre, from Egypt to Assyria, Syria, and Palestine, passing then to Greece, Rome, and Carthage, at present taking in England, France, Germany, perhaps in turn, in the

Beginning a Series of Historical and Prophetic Editorials on

The Centre of the Earth

future, once more to the East."—*Science and Christianity*, by F. Bettex.

James C. Muir, archaeologist, calls Palestine "the land bridge between three continents." Writing of its ancient history, he says: "At that early date, the highways were the great means of communication, and in Palestine the great intercontinental highways running east and west were intersected by the commercial highways running north and south. Although it seems to us to-day an out-of-the-way country, Palestine was really almost in the commercial centre of the then-known world. Situated like a corridor opening on three continents, Palestine was the logical place to be the Promised Land."—*His Truth Endureth*, page 39.

Palestine is noted chiefly as the ancient homeland and modern rallying ground of the Jews. But its importance has less to do with the Jews as a people than is commonly supposed. Its vital significance lies in its relationship to universal affairs for all time. Neither is Palestine alone outstanding because it nurtured Christ and gave birth to Christianity. It was prominent as a centre chiliads before "historic Christianity" came into existence; and it will remain the centre of world interest when nominal Christianity is trampled under the feet of men. This will be more and more evident as we proceed.

The reasons for Palestinian greatness are to be traced to remote antiquity. And that antiquity should be to us a living past. "As it was" in the days that were before the Deluge, and in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, "so shall it be." Would we know the future? Look at the past. (See Luke 17:26-30.)

We shall herewith attempt to read the thoughts of God, which subsequent events have helped to make readable.

The one purpose of the Creator in bringing this world into existence was to people it with good and happy men, women, and children. "He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited." Isaiah 45:18. And when the first of the people whom He placed on the earth, Adam and Eve, broke His laws and thus brought the curse of sin and death to mankind, His further object was to save them from these consequences of their disobedience, and to bring them back

LAND



Imagine standing off in space, and with God viewing this world as a gigantic stage on which is being acted the drama of time and eternity.

to their original innocence. Everything He has done, and allowed to be done throughout the ages of time, has served this one end. His super-purpose is stated thus: "All nations He has created from a common origin, to dwell all over the earth, fixing their allotted periods and the boundaries of their abodes, meaning them to seek for God on the chance of finding Him in their groping for Him." Acts 17:26, 27, Moffatt.

With the saving of the human race in view, one of His early acts was the establishment of a geographical centre. After that awful baptism of death that was the Flood, He took the few who survived the watery grave, and made them fruitful and multiplied them. It was best for His purpose that they be scattered far and wide over the face of the earth. Concentrations of populations have ever aggravated evil, and have tended to degeneration.

By means of the upheaval at the time of the Flood, He made three-fourths of the earth's surface a waste of water, set the eight survivors on the land, and fixed the "boundaries of their abodes" by a wise distribution of the oceans, seas, deserts, mountains, and rivers. The present outline of the world's continents did not "just happen." They are there by Divine design. Men were effectively spread over the earth by confusion of languages, and were kept separated by the difficulties of passing natural boundaries, that they might not be influenced so much by "mass psychology" and the "mob mind"; that they might come into closer contact with the benevolent influences of mineral and plant and animal nature, and that they might have to labour harder in pioneering primeval

lands and so have less time to fall into evil ways.

For Him to whom the nations are as "a drop of a bucket", it was not difficult to place the earth's continents and oceans in such a way that one small country would be the strategic centre of the earth. From Palestine, Asia and Australia extend in one direction; Africa and South America in another direction; and Europe and North America in a third direction. Near to the Palestinian hub,—water-spokes of the wheel,—the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Aegean and Black Seas—extend in three directions to more or less separate the continental bodies of land.

It is of interest to note in this connection that the great arteries of travel and trade in history have stretched out along these great land areas, leaping huge bodies of water to do so. Thus, the "backbone of the British Empire," the world's greatest trading nation, lies along the Asia-Australian route; the most travelled ocean in the world is the North Atlantic between Europe and North America; and the short air hop between West Africa and South America has come to be a link that is growing with the modern development of those two continents.

It seems that no other spot on the globe except Palestine and its environs lends itself to centralization on the land surface of the earth. Move a few hundred miles in any direction from it, and you are "off centre." There are subcentres, such as the Suez Canal, the Bosphorus, and Gibraltar; but none of them could be made the centre without ignoring the importance of the other two, whereas, the acknowledged importance of all three only magnifies the

greater importance of Palestine. Note some of the factors of this superiority.

Politically, though insignificant in size, Canaan was ever a prize, a highway, and a battleground of the nations, as may be discovered from their annals. Many a decisive battle of antiquity was fought on its Plain of Megiddo. Egypt and Assyria surged back and forth across its terrain in gigantic struggles through the centuries. To possess it was to dominate or threaten either the Nile or the Euphrates countries. Hemmed in by the Great Sea on the west and the Arabian Desert on the east, it was the only feasible land route between the only two great centres of civilization of the ancient world,—Chaldea and Egypt. Its mountains, gorges, caves and cliffs made it a natural fortress which could be successfully defended by a weak nation against a strong attacker. This is one reason why the comparatively weak Hebrews could maintain their hold on it for so many centuries.

But for a large and virile nation to capture Palestine in the old days was to conquer the then-known world. It is significant that all four of the universal empires of antiquity occupied Palestine early in their march to world empire. It would seem that Assyria (Babylonia) Media and Persia, Greece, and Rome were able to rule the world by virtue of their occupation of that strategic centre.

Religiously, Palestine has stood out as the most noteworthy starting place and pivotal point of the worshipping world. The three most powerful, world-shaking religions of ecclesiastical history had their beginnings in this area, and have had much to do with it all down the stream of time.

First, Judaism: From that far day, twenty centuries before Christ, when Abraham the Hebrew migrated to Canaan, that country became the seed-bed of one of the most remarkable and influential religious growths known to man. With its devotees to-day scattered to the ends of the earth, everywhere persecuted beyond measure, slaughtered by the hundreds of thousands, maligned, ostracized, despised, it has survived for two thousand years as a virile, intelligent, prize-winning group; and not only survived, but it has increased in numbers, political acumen and financial wizardry. The later Judaism, which is the living remnant of the Hebrew people, has, through its sacred Scriptures—the Old Testament Bible—set standards of moral conduct, economic procedure, and cultural behaviour, which are followed by the most progressive among all peoples. Go where you will, Jews must be taken into account.

Second, Christianity: Palestine is best known as the birthplace of Christianity. All that is said in tribute to Judaism casts luster on Christianity. For Christianity is the flowering of the pre-Christian, Jewish religious system. The Jews bade fair to be the greatest people on earth; but they rejected Christ, and thereby lost their spiritual heritage. Christians came into this heritage by adoption, and profited by all that the Jews had built up. Christianity has be-

come the greatest religion of history, not only because it is based on a perfect code of morals, but because its God loves men with a love which only Divinity can know, and saves men with a sacrifice which only Divinity can make. Undoubtedly the Christian evangel has done more to make the world as safe and as free as it is to-day, than any other religious institution.

Third, Islam: The Moslem religion, with its two hundred and fifty million ad-

herents, chiefly in Asia and Africa, had its beginnings south of Palestine in the Arabian Desert, in an area once dominated by the kings of Israel. But some of its most famous shrines are in Palestine itself, even in Jerusalem, where the dome of its famous Mosque of Omar dominates the scene; and the Mohammedans claim Palestine as their own, religiously as well as politically. Theoretically, they have taken possession of all that Judaism and Christianity have offered to

the world, claiming to believe in Moses and the prophets, and Christ; and in addition have Mohammed, who, they believe, is the latest and greatest prophet. The Moslem peoples are the most difficult of all non-Christians to be converted to another belief; and they are by far the most aggressive and zealous of all religionists outside the Christian pale. Composing an eighth of the world's population, they exert an influence out of all proportion to their numbers.

Read, "GOD SPEAKS FROM THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH," in the August number.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS in WARRING LANDS

By Daniel H. Kress, M. D.

THE condition now prevailing in the war-stricken districts is anything but pleasing to contemplate. Of the young men who are called to go to battle, millions will be killed, and millions more will be maimed for life from wounds received. But the saddest thought of all is that the millions who escape may fall victims to a disease more to be dreaded than leprosy and worse than death,—a disease which will later be transmitted to innocent women, and will be engrafted on their offspring. Children born to syphilitic parents are either born dead or die soon after birth, or they may live to die before middle life.

Much better had it been for the human race and its future if these men could have been slain on the fields of battle. Yet they deserve pity. Under peculiar temptations, in the absence of customary wholesome restraint during times of peace, they have fallen victims to their own lusts. This is one of the saddest spectacles, and most to be deplored, that the present war presents.

Following the war of 1918 we were told that in London, "vice walks rampant in the streets," and that "legislators spend long hours debating a remedy for the hideous moral disease to be found everywhere." Father Bernard Vaughn said in a London newspaper:

"The worst sin crying to heaven for vengeance at present is the sin of trap-setting for the souls of men. Many officers, before returning to the front from leave, have furnished me with examples of what I now mean. 'We come home tired,' more than one has said to me, 'and we go back exhausted.' 'How is that?' I asked the first time. 'Well we are fed all day, and run off our feet all night. People are awfully kind. They want to give us a good time, but they give us hell. No human constitution yet built could stand the eating and drinking and dancing and theatregoing that fill up every hour of our time on leave. Why, it would tear a Samson to pieces.'"

Mr. Vaughn continued: "I have heard much the same sort of remark from many

types of men, though, of course, I do not mean to imply that these are the experiences of a large percentage of them. It is not merely the demimonde who take advantage of the khaki man come home; it seems to me that women of all sections of the community go khaki-mad. Any one who has studied human nature knows how extremely difficult it is, even under ordinary circumstances, to talk straight without bending to the right or left under the assault of temptation. Any fool can yield to these things; but it takes a hero to be dominated, in spite of them, by lofty and holy principles. If this is the case under normal circumstances, what is going to become of the average man in time of great excitement or deep depression? Why, it must take him all his time to keep on saying, 'No, I cannot and will not do it.' Many a fine fellow has gone under during these years of massacre—euphemistically called warfare."

Mr. Vaughn asked: "What ought our attitude be toward young men, and older ones too, coming home to our mammoth metropolis, half maddened by sights they have seen, nerve-wracked by work they have done, and perhaps maimed for life? They have been out to the front and laid their bodies down on the altar of duty. They have offered their lives in sacrifice for their country; and when they come home, the thanks they receive is practically a demand for their souls, too. Men of this sort contract, perhaps, a fellowship with some creature whom it is more difficult to throw off than the ravages of that fell malady. The clever, insinuating, and masterful sex realizes the truth of what I say—in order to draw a young man into their toils, women sometimes employ not merely the arts of their own fascination, but the tricks and devices of drugs and intoxicants, to capture him. And down he goes, unfitted merely to stand on his feet as a Christian man, but unable to stand up in the trenches and fight. I have come across many splendid fellows so vigorous and lovely to look

upon that one could hardly imagine that a shell would dare to wound or a woman to spoil them; yet they are down in hospitals, down in luck, down in spirits, down and out."

Womanly modesty affords the only protection from men who are in search of vice. Girls, "spend their evenings drinking with casual soldier acquaintances. They crave excitement and fall an easy prey to the allurements of the bar parlor and its ragtime piano".

Another writer said: "The upholders of social proprieties in England are becoming much exercised about the extraordinary speed that has attained in the ranks of society for hasty war weddings. Hundreds of these have taken place that never could have been consummated in any other circumstance. Young men and young women have married very much 'above' and 'below' their former station in life. A girl of notable family, being asked the other day who her fiance's people were, said, 'I haven't the slightest idea; but I am going there next week, and shall find out.' Another peculiarity about these marriages is that they are so sudden and unpremeditated that it is not expected that they can strike deep roots; and when one is ended—often by the death of the soldier—the lady not infrequently becomes engaged again within the year. Dukes' daughters are marrying social nobodies, and finding it a delightful innovation; and bewildered parents have given up attempts to control their children's matrimonial careers. 'What can you expect,' said a disheartened parent the other day, summing up a discussion on this point, 'when any morning a strange flying man may fall into your garden and expect to be engaged to your daughter by evening?'"

The prospect for the future of the race under such a social collapse does not look promising.

Before the present war began, there were in England many more women than men. The mortality among men has been considerably higher than among women for a number of years. Men were more

given to drinking and smoking and other excesses than were the women.

Fortunately for women, there has been, up to the present, a double standard of morality. Men could drink, smoke, and frequent dens of vice, without being ostracized from society. Women have had to maintain a certain dignity and reserve. This has placed upon woman a restraint which has tended to protect her from the excesses men are given to. Woman has been a conservator and protector of the purity and vitality of the race so far. When the bars are let down for women, and this wholesome restraint is removed, conditions will in a short time become indescribable and incurable. That is what is now taking place in war-stricken countries.

There are probably to-day, instead of three million, as was the case before the war, over eight million more women than men. There will be millions of men who will be mangled and almost totally disabled as a result of the war.

The question arises, With a condition like this, what does the future hold in store?

Dr. David Starr Jordan, referring to this unnatural condition in European countries, says, "In an emasculated society, some form of polygamy is the only resort against the barrenness of a generation." He adds: "After the passing of the armies, over the womanhood of Europe spreads the dark shadow of enforced celibacy. It is a most unnatural world in which women hopelessly outnumber the men. This condition does not mean the freedom of women or their release from any servitude men have thrust upon them. It involves loveless lonesomeness of great classes, with no wholesome means of escape. It means that millions of women created for love and motherhood are debarred from the richest joys of life because their natural mates no longer exist. For these forms of wastage there is no instant remedy. The dead cannot return; the living must fill the gaps as well as they can. In some form or another, glossed over by religion or patriotism, some form of conscription for women is sure to appear. It may be disguised by rendering 'legitimate' all children born out of wedlock, and their support through 'mothers' pensions.'

The prophet, in speaking of the days in which we live, said: "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go,—therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts."

This is a very vivid description of conditions which are developing. The results of this plague are clearly portrayed in the following words: "It shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. . . And in that day," we are told, "seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our

own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Isaiah 3:16, 17, 24, 25; 4:1. Such a condition as is here described makes impossible the perpetuation of a fit race. It means degeneracy and ultimately extermination.

A similar condition existed before the Flood. "The earth is filled with violence," and we are told that the thoughts of men were "only evil continually." "All flesh had corrupted his way," "and they took them wives of all which they chose." The condition had become hopeless and incurable. Restraint had been cast aside, the reins were thrown on the neck of lust, passion controlled men and women, and God said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." When the spirit of restraint was entirely withdrawn from man, in a short time, through its own iniquity,

the earth would have depopulated itself. To cut short the reign of sin, crime, violence, corruption, disease, and suffering, God in mercy washed the face of the polluted earth by a flood.

In referring to the condition then, Jesus said: "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the Flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:37-39.

The coming of Jesus in the clouds of heaven to cleanse the earth will be an act of mercy and a necessity in the near future, as the Flood was a necessity in Noah's day.



WHEN YOU ARE TO BLAME FOR ALL YOUR TROUBLE

It is like us to blame our troubles on circumstances, or on some person, or on God. But if we are observing and reasonable we sometimes see that we ourselves are at fault. Then we agree with the poet, Anne Reeve Aldrich, in her poem, "A Little Parable."

"I made the cross myself whose weight was later laid on me. This thought is torture as I toil up life's steep Calvary. To think mine own hands drove the nails! I sang a merry song, And chose the heaviest wood I had to build it firm and strong. If I had guessed—if I had dreamed—its weight was meant for me, I should have made a lighter cross to bear up Calvary."

But what about it? Is that the end? Is our next move to turn to resignation, remorse, or struggle? In contrasting the methods of Asiatic religions, this illustrative story is often told:

While prowling about in the darkness, a man fell into one of the comparatively shallow dry wells that are common in the East. Its walls were of smooth stones; and he exhausted himself trying to get out. The next day, in answer to his cries, the Buddha came by and considered his predicament. "If you had been watching where you were going, you would not have fallen in there," he observed, and went his way.

Mohammed came along and assured him, "It is the will of Allah; better be resigned and make the most of your situation." The Hindu, Krishna, looked down in pity on him, handed down a little food and water, and encouraged him by saying, "If you continue to try, I believe you can get out at last." Then Christ appeared; and with arm long

enough, and hand strong enough, He reached down, without asking any questions or saying a word, and helped him out of the well.

There is always a resort for those of us who will rely on it—and why make it the last resort?—no matter how far down we are, or how hopeless we are, or who's to blame. It is the uplift of the forgiveness of Jesus Christ. And that forgiveness so impresses us with its marvel and overwhelming liberality that we do not conclude that it is an easy way out, grow careless, and fall into the same pit again. Instead, it imparts an abhorrence of the cause of our fall and a determination never to repeat it wilfully.

Complete forgiveness is a fact, if by faith in it we make it a fact for ourselves personally. Otherwise it is a fiction, as far as we are concerned. If there is anything that is an insult to Christ, it is an effort to save ourselves from the punishment for some misdeed by performing an act of penance, as if we could wipe out bad by good. We are not to do good in order to escape the harvest of evil; but we do good because we are so thankful that we have already escaped it by forgiveness. Goodness is the fruit, not the root, of God's favour.

Let us not spend time blaming ourselves for our troubles. It is depressing, discouraging, deadening. Lay the blame on Jesus. It is no extra burden for Him. Long ago He made provision for that. It is for us only to accept what He holds out to us. It is all so incredibly easy that we who are used to belabouring ourselves find it hard to believe. Nevertheless, it is the most exquisite provision for happiness that man ever enjoyed.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And there may I tho' vile as he
Wash all my sins away."

The PENITENT THIEF

By J. A. Buckwalter



THOUSANDS have thrilled at the thought that a transgressing sinner could thus appeal to his sinless Substitute (who willingly, for his sake and the sake of all his fellow-transgressors, was bearing the same condemnation) and receive from the very lips of God in the hour of the Saviour's agony the joyful announcement of assured salvation.

There is, however, much confusion and perplexity in the minds of Christian people regarding the real meaning of Christ's response to the penitent's prayer, the time of the fulfillment of the promise made, and the location of paradise. Many are at a loss to know how to harmonize the last statement Jesus made to man before His death, and the first statement He made to mortals after His resurrection. According to the King James translation, in His last conversation before His death, the words of our Lord to the penitent thief were: "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." But in His first conversation after His resurrection, He said to Mary: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father."

How can both of these apparently contradicting statements be reconciled? According to the Scriptures, paradise is the third heaven (2 Cor. 12: 2, 4) where the tree of life now is (Rev. 2:7) and where God and His throne are (Rev. 22:1, 2). Hence, paradise and God's dwelling place have the same location, which implies that paradise is another name for the third heaven, the heaven of heavens, which is God's dwelling place. Our Lord therefore could not be in paradise without ascending to His Father, for paradise was the heavenly home of many mansions which Jesus said were in His Father's house. It surely is no sane solution to the problem to merely assume, contrary to scriptural fact, that paradise is some half-way house or place for departed souls which is neither heaven nor hell. Surely paradise would not be a purgatory paradise. How then could Jesus say to the thief on the sixth day of the passion week: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise" and then on the first day of the following week say to Mary: "I am not yet ascended to My Father." These two statements were made within forty-eight hours. One before his death, the other after His resurrection. On the crucifixion day He said, "To-day", whereas on the resurrection day He said, "Not yet." What is the explanation of this seeming dilemma?

Let us read from the translation of the New Testament according to the Eastern text, translated from the original Aramaic sources. The Aramaic translation of Luke 23: 42, 43, reads thus:

"And he said to Jesus, Remember me, my Lord, when you come in your kingdom."

"Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you to-day, You will be with Me in paradise."

You will doubtless especially note the punctuation and rendition of the phrase: "Truly I say to you to-day." In this translation the word "to-day" is an adverb of

time modifying "I say" and not as in the King James rendering, modifying "be with me." In other words, the adverb "to-day" states the time in which the promise was made and not the day on which it was fulfilled. This rendition is also in harmony with the grammatical construction of the Greek New Testament. In the Aramaic version, the punctuation mark, the comma, was placed after the word "to-day" indicating that it referred to the former part of the sentence, the time when Jesus was speaking, while in the King James version the comma was placed before the adverb "to-day" which completely changes the sense of the statement.

Thus the placing of the comma preceding or following the adverb of time "to-day" alters radically the meaning of the passage in question. When one realizes that punctuation marks did not appear in the original manuscripts of the inspired word, and were in fact invented in the year A.D. 1490, many centuries after the manuscripts first appeared, by a learned printer of Venice by the name

of Manutius, it is not difficult to see how man's belief might determine the placing of the comma either before or after, according to the prevailing orthodox conception of the times. It is evident that both translations cannot be correct, and when perplexities arise regarding the doctrinal content of any given passage, such questions must be solved by comparing scripture with scripture and ascertaining from other passages having a bearing on the subject the true import and meaning of the text in question.

It will be observed in this connection that the Aramaic translation before quoted reveals no contradiction between the two statements of our Lord made to man; namely, the last one before His death:

"You will be with me in paradise"—and the first one after His resurrection:

"For I have not yet ascended to My Father."

Likewise the Concordant Version agrees with the Aramaic translation and renders the words of our Lord to the penitent thief thus:

"And Jesus said to him, 'Verily to you I am saying to-day, with me you shall be in the paradise.'"

And the preferred text of the Rotherham translation conforms to that of the Aramaic and Concordant versions, and reads: "And He said unto him, Verily I say unto thee this day: With me shalt thou be in paradise." And the text of the Curetonian Manuscript of the Syriac Version (British Museum) also agrees with the three above quoted, and renders the passage: "Jesus said to him, 'Verily I say to thee to-day, that with Me, thou shalt be in the Eden's garden.'" Of course there are other translations which agree with the King James. Since there is a disagreement in translations in the punctuation of the text which determines the meaning and use of the adverb "to-day," one must appeal to the context of the scriptures themselves to ascertain the truth and by comparing scripture with scripture arrive at the scriptural interpretation which will give harmony and doctrinal agreement between the passages concerned. We, therefore, propose this question: Which translations accurately render the thought of Christ as expressed in His answer to the last prayer of the penitent thief who believed in Christ when he saw Him literally dying the death of a felon? What Bible facts determine the correct placing of the comma with reference to the modifying position of the adverb of time "to-day"?

The solution of the problem will be found in the answer to the question: "Did Christ and the penitent thief enter paradise together on Friday, the crucifixion day?" The Bible answer, as we shall see, is "NO!"

1. It is abundantly clear that Jesus did not go to paradise the day He died, for even after His resurrection He stated to Mary that He had "not yet ascended." John 20:17. Thus we have our Lord's own words to the effect that He did not ascend from this earth to His Father during the hours of His decease. In fact, He did not leave the earth at all from the

time of His crucifixion until after His resurrection.

2. In the second place, Jesus and the thief did not die at the same time, and consequently there could be no simultaneous departure of disembodied souls at the moment of death winging their flight heavenward to paradise at precisely the same moment, nor could the thief have come a few moments later and joined him there that day, for not only did Jesus Himself reveal that He did not ascend to paradise that day, but the thief did not die that day.

In John 19:31-34 we read that the soldiers of Pilate were sent to Calvary to remove the sufferers, "that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day," but to prevent their escape, they came and "brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs." The death of Jesus preceded the death of both the malefactors who were crucified with Him. He was buried before sunset, at which time the Sabbath began; but the strong inference of the Word is that the thieves did not die at all that

day, but in order that they might be removed from the cross before the Sabbath their legs were broken before they were taken down from the cross, to prevent any possibility of their escape or survival, and they were left to die.

3. More than this, a careful reading of the penitent thief's request, and our Lord's answer, reveals that neither one expected to be in paradise that very day, but rather in the day when the Lord would come into His kingdom and paradise would be restored to redeemed man. The thief prayed: "Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." He was not asking to inherit the still future kingdom and paradise that very day, for it was not to be restored to man that very day, although on that day the restoration of paradise was being purchased by Christ's blood shed for man. He did not say to Jesus: Lord remember me when Thou goest—but rather "when Thou comest." He was looking forward to the glorious return of our Lord and the coming of the Saviour in glory, and not to a present departure to some abode of disembodied spirits. Matthew wrote: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory . . . then shall He sit upon the

throne of His glory." Matthew 25:31. And Paul in II Tim. 4:1 uses the scriptural phrase, "at His appearing and His kingdom." His kingdom was not restored at His decease but will be subsequent to His appearing. Looking forward to this glorious event by faith, the sin-forsaking and repenting transgressor appealed for a place in God's sinless kingdom. And Jesus, the great Sin-hearer and Advocate for man, unmindful of His own agony, hastened to give on that very day of His apparent humiliation, the assurance of companionship in paradise when He should come into His kingdom.

Frequently in scripture the word "today" is used as an adverb of time, indicating the hour when a declaration was made. (See Zech. 9:12; Deut. 15:15; etc.) and the absence of a comma after the word "sick" in Acts 19:12 reveals that one must depend on the context of scripture in the text more than upon the placing or misplacing of a comma. Moreover God's plan is not that each of God's children should go to their reward at death, but rather that all should be perfected together when Jesus comes and brings His reward with Him. (Heb. 11:13, 39, 40; Rev. 22:12.)



Unless more substantial help comes soon, as a nation

China Is Doomed!

THE Chinese are dying and starving — by the million! For over seven years unprovoked and savage war has ravaged their land. To a great degree unaided, unclothed, and unarmed, they fight on for liberty. Compared with what other needy peoples have received from their allies, help has come to them in a mere trickle. They are the world's outstanding victims of rocketing inflation, and are isolated, trapped, all but hopeless. They can well help themselves, for they are not beggars nor do they ask the world for anything but a chance. But their predicament now is such that they must be helped to help themselves.

The Foreign Mission Board of Seventh-day Adventists is doing a stupendous work for China. It has poured millions of dollars into the country for the uplift of the common people. Its schools, hospitals, sanitariums, clinics, are still operating in spite of the war. It has saved thousands of the people from starvation, and from death by other means. But it wants to do much more.

Readers of this magazine whose hearts are moved to help worthy Chinese are earnestly solicited to send money, however little or much, for this good cause to the Editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He will send a receipt, and guarantees that every cent thus donated will go to those who are in dire need of the necessities of life, which if supplied will inspire hope for the future.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES,
Box 398, Oshawa, Ontario.

"One picture is worth ten thousand words."

— An old Chinese proverb.

The FAMILY



A WELCOME FOR FATHER

"Is it six o'clock yet?" asked little Nora, running into the kitchen.

"Not quite," said her aunt who had come to take Mother's place for a few days, and was now busy preparing the dinner. "Why are you so eager for it to be six o'clock, Nora? You have asked me several times."

"Because Daddy comes home at half past six," explained the child, "and Mother and David and I always begin to get ready for him at six o'clock. We put away our toys and help to make the house look nice, and then we wash our hands and faces. Mother says everything must be spic and span to welcome Daddy. David puts Daddy's newspaper in his big chair, and I get his slippers. When he comes in, David takes his coat, and I put his hat away, and he rests while we help get dinner. After dinner we all have fun together."

"That is a lovely idea," said her aunt, "and now it is six o'clock, so you may begin your welcome. I shall go and cut some flowers for the table and that will be my part."

When Father arrives home after a day's work or a business trip, the atmosphere which greets him will somewhat influence his attitude toward his family. A welcoming atmosphere quickly warms the heart of a man, if he steps into a house especially made ready to receive him, he can hardly help responding graciously.

"Oh, hurry and change your face! It's time to smile," cried a little boy to his baby brother who was crying. "Don't you know Daddy will feel sorry if he can't find smiles in the house?"

Father's standing in the home depends largely on the mother, for the children will more or less respond to her example and imitate her attitude. If the day's cares and difficulties are relieved before Father, who already has encountered the hardships attendant on the responsibility of maintaining and protecting the home, he is not likely to feel that his home is the place of rest and refreshment that it might be. Not but what it is his privilege to share all real problems and to give them the benefit of efficient and considerate attention, but without doubt there is a better time and place for the discussion of such things than when a man first enters the home at night. After he is cheered and rested by the loving home atmosphere, he will be far more

willing and better able to co-operate in the home affairs, and this will lighten Mother's tasks.

Children can easily learn to remember the pleasant things to tell their father when he first comes home. They can be taught to look their best for him, to be busy but not noisy in their play, so that he may relax, to show their affection in quiet ways that will not annoy. They can be interested to help welcome their

father in such a way that they may lighten his cares. If they show consideration for his tastes and preferences, evince appreciation of his good qualities and co-operate in his plans, it will mean much to him. Such a procedure is wise; it creates a home atmosphere of thoughtfulness and graciousness that is wholesome and beneficial to all the family.—*Lydia Lion Roberts, in Bulletin of National Kindergarten Association, New York City.*

The DENTIST Is not a BOGIE MAN

By D. S. Teters, D. D. S.

CIVILIZATION has been a curse to man's body while being a blessing to man's external surroundings. Civilization has brought the change for the worse due to faulty diet and false ideas of rest and recreation and work.

Teeth have suffered along with the rest of this bodily degeneration. Too many people are prone to think of teeth as something separate and apart from the rest of the body—a convenience, of course, but something one could more or less conveniently do without.

In the first place we are given two sets of teeth for the sole purpose of preparing food so that our bodies may be kept in strength, growth, and repair. The first set is temporary because the size is adapted to a child's small mouth. The second set is designed to fill the dental arches and provide masticatory service for the balance of the adult's life.

Many people question the need of dental care in childhood or ignore it except when the child keeps them awake a few nights with toothache! A child should have a regular dental check-up every four to six months beginning at the age of two years. This will enable the dentist to keep the child's teeth in a good state of repair should any faults be found. On these first teeth, twenty in all, rests all the responsibility of preparing the food for digestion. They also act as guides and space holders for the second or permanent teeth. If they are neglected their early loss impairs mastication and the straightness of the second set; or if decayed and diseased, they are very likely to cause heart trouble, rheumatism, or a host of other ills. A sturdy, strong child cannot be developed if the teeth are diseased or lost too early.

As adult people become responsible for

In England, a dental surgeon treats a patient while intent students, girls as well as boys, look on.



their own health, especially dental health, they are far too often prone to come to the dentist only when driven by the sheer desperation of a toothache. Fear of the dentist, which is unnecessary in this modern age of advanced knowledge in anaesthetics and the use of especially adapted instruments, is the main reason for not going to the dentist; another is the absence of pride in one's entire appearance.

Just why should an adult "keep" his teeth? In the first place the preparation of food by the teeth for digestion is of prime importance. The first step in digestion takes place in the mouth, the food is cut and crushed by the teeth and mixed with the saliva which digests the bulk of the starch in the food. If a tooth is sore to bite upon or has a cavity in which food collects and is disagreeable, the individual shuns that place in the mouth and food is hurriedly chewed, improperly mixed with the saliva, and as a consequence will eventually cause digestive upsets. The unchewed particles are not acted upon by further digestion because of their size and the food is lost as far as giving up its nutrition on which the body depends is concerned.

The second reason is for the prevention of diseased teeth which, in turn, act adversely on bodily health. Food mixes with the disease accumulation and it is unfit for the stomach to receive. The pus when present also enters the blood stream and the result can be one of many distressing ailments; rheumatism, arthritis, neuritis, bowel and stomach complaint, heart trouble, and many more.

The question is often asked: How far should one go in retaining unsound teeth before they are detrimental to the general health? There are varying degrees and many kinds of illness to which the whole body is liable, and so, too, teeth are unsound in varying degrees and types of disorders.

Foremost is dental decay. A tooth may have a small pin point cavity, or a cavity involving several areas on a tooth. The earlier a cavity is discovered and filled the better; not only is there less discomfort but the chances are the tooth can be preserved indefinitely. As long as the tooth can be preserved alive, the "nerve" not killed, it will cause no damage to the health. A tooth in which decay has been allowed to be so extensive that the "nerve" has either died or is exposed when the cavity is prepared for filling, is the tooth which is subject to causing ill health because it will abscess eventually and become a source of infection. By regular visits to the dentist, at least once in six months, cavities can be found and filled before they become extensive.

Another type of disease found in the mouth comes from not having the teeth cleaned at regular intervals. The deposits accumulate and irritate the gums, which bleed, and often pus pockets form about the necks of the teeth. Proper diet also influences the gum health. Firm, sound gums hold the teeth in proper position; flabby bleeding gums allow infection to enter and jeopardize the health.

A third reason for the retention of all

the teeth is appearance. One must look successful to be successful. Clean, well-cared-for teeth in a man whose appearance in general is good, inspires confidence. No woman, no matter how beautifully gowned she may be, is considered attractive if her smile reveals

missing or broken-down or unclean teeth.

Health and charm are dependent on well-cared-for teeth. Care at home in daily brushing, care in the dental office—twice yearly, at least, for cleaning and repair—pay big dividends in well being in general.



THAT EXTRA PILLOW

The porter came through the day coach with his arms full of pillows. "Pillows! Pillows!" he shouted, "Rest on um; sleep on um, slumber on um!"

One elderly man took two. Interested, I watched to see what he would do with the extra one. He put it on his lap, under his arms—and went off to sleep.

For years, with me, that extra pillow lay as smooth and untouched when I left the hotel room and the sleeper berth as when I entered them. One man, one pillow, was my motto. That extra pillow was of no more use to me than the buttons on my coat sleeve. Then I learned something, in fact several things.

When in a train berth, and especially in an upper berth, put it between you and the outer edge—and gone is that sleep-banishing fear that you might roll off in your sleep as the swerves and the curves toss you about.

When two sleep in a double bed, and the mattress sags toward that sleepless hollow, you can afford to take one of the pillows, or get a third, and erect a billowy, pillowly barricade. Then no more

of that worry of being kicked or kicking the other fellow in your sleep.

The nerve doctors tell us that the best way to relax is to lie in a normally relaxed position. To achieve that normalcy, lie on your back, pull your pillow up under your neck and over your shoulders, put a small one under your knees; then take two more small ones for your arms, placing the arms well away from the body with the fingers draped over the lower edges of the pillows. The legs should be apart and the toes turned outward. Then drop your lower jaw and snore away to your adenoid's content.

When you lie on your side, try putting a pillow between your knees. Knees weren't made to hit, but even the bow-legged can't prevent them when they go to bed.

Let those who can sleep any time any where just skip this; but be sure to save it for reference in later years. For sooner or later you will be pillow-minded—and -necked, and -armed, and -kneed, and -backed. Who ever decreed that only your head needs downy rest?

IN SPEAKING OF High Blood Pressure

the word "cure" is seldom employed. This is because so many factors may be involved in its causation.

However it is a known fact that rest, freedom from worry and anxiety, and simple diet are often surprisingly effective. And undoubtedly extremes of climate are not helpful. Perhaps this is the reason that so many come to the West coast where they can get a more even climate and a lower altitude.

All these advantages are available at Rest Haven Hospital and Sanitarium and are enhanced by hydrotherapy and electrotherapy treatments administered by skilled technicians.

Write for rate sheet and further particulars.

REST HAVEN, SIDNEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA



"There Is No Bad Weather"

It was some such man as John Ruskin who said in some such words, "There is no bad weather, only different kinds of good weather."

Even the cold and snow and sleet make the above-ground parts of the tree stop growing only in order that the roots may grow in their turn and more firmly bind the whole tree to the earth, and thus save it all from the fierce storms of wind.

Even the drought forces the roots of the plants to seek deeper for moisture, and thus be able to hold more tenaciously in the violence of the gale.

All weather is good for something for somebody; and in reality good for everything, for everybody. We all benefit by the benefits of each. All sunny days would insure pleasant weather for picnics; but with all sunny days we would soon have no shade nor anything to eat at the picnics.

There is nothing more talked of and complained of than the weather, yet all the wisdom of men combined could not invent so nearly perfect a system for blessing the earth. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above"; and every gift from above is perfect.

God sends His rain on the just and on the unjust, and it depends on the attitude of each as to how beneficial or harmful it is. To the unjust person, all weather is bad, for he uses even God's blessings to his own hurt. To the just, all weather is good, because he learns wisdom from it, adapts himself to it, and makes it do his bidding.

So, too, to the Christian there are no good and bad times. Sorrows, tears, pain, temptations, trials,—all are good to accomplish the good purpose for which they are sent. They "work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The Son of God Himself, sinless though He was, needed them to perfect His character. And who will decry difficult means to a great and glad end?

A child's definition was, "Weather is every few days, but climate is all the time." Climate is what we want, that broad sweep of vision which takes in a lifetime of



good that comes in varied ways according to the time and the need.

To consider all weather good weather is always to be above the weather, never under it. And happy is that man who is never under the weather.

Christ chided the people of His day for being able to predict the weather from signs in the sky, and not being able to predict the future from signs in both the sky and the earth. Then He described some sinister signs of His return to earth.

We are apt to think that because these signs were disasters, they forecast His coming to be a disaster. Instead, they are signs that the evil in this world has reached such a terrible extreme that the advent of Christ's kingdom is a necessity if a vestige of mankind is to be saved out of it.

To the whole world the sky is red with danger. But to those who are above the weather, ready for Christ to come, "it will be fair weather: for the sky is red." Matthew 16:2.