

THE BIBLE AND
OUR TIMES

All Eyes on IRAN!

By A. S. Maxwell



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A striking aerial view of the vast Abadan refinery.

THE Western Powers find themselves to-day in much the same situation as a householder who, having bolted his front and back doors, awakens to find burglars entering through the kitchen window which he forgot to latch.

While attention was focused on securing the defences of Europe, and battling against aggression in Korea, few gave thought to Iran—until the Iranians announced their intention to “nationalize” the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. That increasingly familiar word sounded extraordinarily like “expropriate,” used so frequently when Mexico took over certain American oil companies some years ago. To make matters worse, it was noticed that the would-be “burglars” were waving red flags and speaking with a northern accent.

Suddenly all eyes were turned upon Iran, and a new fear entered many hearts. Perhaps, after

all, the main peril was not in Korea, or in Germany, but in far-off, forgotten Persia. Not on the Imjin, or the Rhine, but on the Tigris and the Persian Gulf.

What everyone saw first, of course, was oil. Floods of it. Forty-two per cent of the known oil reserves of the world!

They learned—to their surprise—that this oil company about which all the fuss was being made was the largest oil company on earth, producing 700,000 barrels of oil a day—ten per cent of the world's production and almost as much as Russia and all her satellites produce together. They discovered also that the oil refinery at Abadan is the world's largest, with a capacity of 500,000 barrels a day, supplying seventy-five per cent of all the petroleum used in Western Europe, plus twenty-five per cent of Britain's oil needs, including fuel for the Royal Navy.

Eyes opened wider. Eyebrows lifted. And more so as two more facts came to light: First, that the average Iranian well produces 5,000 barrels a day against the average American well's twelve; and secondly, that while American oil reserves are dwindling, Near East reserves are increasing. Soon some of those who had been first to ask, Why don't the British let the poor Iranians nationalize their oil industry? began to advise against too hasty action. Time should be taken to study the matter, they counselled. A little delay would be desirable.

Desirable indeed. For here is one of the most vital assets of the Western Powers lying naked and unprotected, a standing invitation to any “burglars” who might take a notion to walk off with it—or, possibly destroy it. For an enemy could scarcely deal a more deadly blow at the whole defence programme of the West than

by eliminating this greatest single source of its lubricants and power.

No wonder tension mounts and new fears multiply! How remarkable, too, that, just as everybody was feeling sure that the next great crisis would break out in the Far East, or maybe Europe, the Near East should draw the spotlight upon itself once more as the possible centre of the impending conflict!

Vortex of Ancient and Last-Day Conflict

There would seem to be something almost prophetic about a statement made by General MacArthur in his famous speech to Congress. Having referred to the sudden, dramatic awakening of the teeming millions of Asia, and their new sense of destiny, he remarked that "the whole epicentre of world affairs rotates back toward the area whence it started."

Thus indeed it seems to be. Recent developments in Palestine, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and now in Iran, all seem to be moving toward a climax. Could it be that here, where history began, it will close? Could it be that in the selfsame area where "God planted a garden eastward in Eden," where the ark rested on Mount Ararat, where Abraham dwelt in Ur of the Chaldees, where patriarchs and prophets lived and died, where the Son of God walked among men and gave His life for their redemption—could it be that in this sacred circle of earth events will move to that last tremendous consummation which shall bring Christ from heaven again?

Only Bible prophecy can answer that question; and it appears to answer in the affirmative. Wrote the prophet Joel long ago:

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, 'I am strong. Assemble yourselves and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause

Thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and *come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat*: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe, come, get you down: for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3:9-16.

Likewise the eleventh chapter of Daniel focuses attention upon Palestine and its environs as the arena where the final scenes of history shall occur. It speaks of a power which, disturbed by "tidings out of the east and out of the north," will go forth "with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in *the glorious holy mountain*; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that

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One of the Persian oil wells
supplying crude oil to the re-
finery at Abadan.



By Anton Dorph

"I am the Resurrection and the Life," said Jesus.

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THE GATES OF HELL

SHALL NOT PREVAIL

By J. A. McMillan

It was an outstanding crisis in the experience of Christ and His disciples. The hostility of the religious leaders of Jewry was gathering momentum and the shadows of the cross were shortening. Jesus asked the disciples what current opinion had to say about Him. Then He pressed home the personal query: "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matt. 16:15, 16.

Jesus acknowledged this confession and assured Peter that such spiritual insight had not come by human reasoning or learning, but by the Spirit of God. This personal and implicit faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the Son of the living God, comes "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13. And it is upon this

divinely implanted trust that Christ promised to build His church. "Upon this rock I will build My church," He said; "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

No mechanical succession or external organization can measure up to this divine ideal. It was the church claiming patriarchal succession that crucified our Lord. It was the church claiming apostolic succession that corrupted the true doctrines of the Word and produced such monsters of iniquity as John XXIII and Alexander VI. Again and again through the ages God has demonstrated that the dispensations of His gifts and His grace could not be limited to official organizations. As Jesus reminded Nicodemus: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and

whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John 3:8.

The Spirit of God has changed the hearts of men in every generation; here a Savonarola, there a Luther, in another place a Wesley, a Spurgeon, a Moody, or a Livingstone. Often the organized body has disowned the agency used by God, but always wisdom has been justified of her children and the work of grace has gone forward despite the prejudices and weaknesses of human nature.

The Lord Jesus assured His disciples that the gates of hell would not prevail against the church of God. The gates of hell (Hades) has reference to the forces of darkness and particularly to the final foe of mankind—death. "Hades" is commonly translated "the grave" in the New Testament, thus making this expression really synonymous with "the gates of death." Jesus took many of His richest phrases from the Old Testament, and this expression is reminiscent of David's words: "Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death." Psa. 9:13.

Jesus Was Triumphant Over Death

What a commentary history affords of this re-assuring promise of our Lord. First in respect of His own experience. Wicked men plotted His downfall and engineered His death. They sealed His tomb and congratulated themselves that they had rid the earth of His presence and influence. Never were men so completely mistaken. That death was but the gateway to a fuller and more influential life. Just as Samson, when his enemies thought him trapped in Gaza, "arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them" in triumph from the city; so Jesus "having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them," because Him "God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it." Judges 16:3; Col. 2:15; Acts 2:24.

But soon the Victor rose,
Triumphant o'er His foes,
And led the vanquished host in chains:
He threw their empire down,
His foes compelled to own
O'er all the great Messiah reigns.

The risen and glorified Lord later revealed Himself to John on Patmos' isle and declared: "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hades and of death." Rev. 1:17, 18. Yes, Jesus has the keys that open the gates of Hades and liberate the dead. This is another way of emphasizing that He is the resurrection and the life. The gates of hell could not prevail against Him, for God lifted Him up from the gates of death.

Resurrection from the Dead

Similarly, against the true church of God, which is composed of the faithful in every generation, the gates of hell cannot prevail. Time and again, the enemies of righteousness have sought to encompass the overthrow of Christ's church. Their rejoicing has been as short-lived as was King Saul's when he cried: "God hath delivered him [David] into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars." 1 Sam. 23:7. On each such occasion, the Lord has demonstrated that He holds the keys that open the gates of hell. He has "the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Rev. 3:7.

In every time of apostasy and waywardness, the Lord has raised up witnesses to His transforming grace. Even from the very centre of rebellion, the Lord has called forth champions of truth and righteousness. The covenant promise made to Abraham has been fulfilled repeatedly: "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." Gen. 22:17.

The gates of hell may seem to prevail against the church since generation after generation are borne away by death. But even here the Lord's assurance holds good. Jesus not only conquered death for Himself, but for all who believe in Him. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. . . . Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear

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By B. Mockhurst

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"This day . . . is born a Saviour."

ALMOST every mechanical magazine we pick up tells us of inventions that are unfathomable to the average mind. This is an age of inventive mysteries. Many people use and operate such modern inventions as the motor car, the aeroplane, the telephone, and television without understanding the principles of their operation. Even electricity, which has become the servant of so many, remains a deep, dark mystery.

However, mysteries are not confined to modern inventions. They prevail, and always have, in the spiritual and natural realms. More than seven hundred years before that epochal

The Mystery of **GODLINESS**

(First Article of a New Series)

By Dallas Youngs

event of Christ's birth in Bethlehem's stable, the prophet Isaiah rejoiced: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isa. 7:14.

This prophecy not only constituted a wonderful promise, but it introduced a very great mystery—the mystery of godliness.

The intervening centuries were wistful ones. Hardly an Israelitish maiden but cherished the hope that she might be the chosen of God to give birth to Him that should redeem Israel. The promise of His coming was the hope that buoyed up the Jewish people during their long night of captivity. Sighing, crying, weeping, they kept the eyes of their faith fixed upon the prophetic Word. This was a household hope—parents transmitted it to children from generation to generation. They talked about it, prayed about it, and sang about it. Daily and yearly the sacrificial service depicted to every mind the coming advent of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The Gospel prophet named the child before He was born, but it was the Gospel writer, Matthew, who gave the interpretation of the name: "They shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Matt. 1:23. Here we have the divine Son of God come down to us, His divinity clothed in human form. Previously He had veiled His divinity in the pillar of cloud and in the pillar of fire. He veiled it from Moses in the burning bush, and now, wonder of wonders, He veiled it in human flesh and for thirty-three and a half years walked among the lowliest of earth.

This is indeed a mystery. Not only that God could in the person of His Son blend divinity and humanity, but that He would. "And without controversy great is the mystery

of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." 1 Tim. 3:16.

Nature's Many Mysteries

The finite mind cannot comprehend this mystery. It is and must be accepted because God states it to be a fact. However, if this were the only mystery, either in or out of the Bible, that man is called upon to accept, it might perhaps be somewhat more difficult. But the Bible, the world, and the universe are filled with unexplainable mysteries. Wise as man may be, actually he has but few of the answers.

There is the mystery of the sun. For thousands of years this heavenly body has burned on with apparently undiminished glory, sending its light and heat across millions of miles of space. Yet, who will undertake to give a certain explanation of the origin of solar energy?

Consider the mystery of space. Have you not wondered as you looked into the heavens: "What is beyond what I can see? Is the universe of God unending? If it were possible for man to travel with the speed of light in a straight line across the universe, would he finally come to the end of space? And when and if he reached the end of space, what would be beyond that?" The mind refuses to contemplate the idea of illimitable distance.

Man himself is a mysterious creature. There is the mystery of life and birth. Who is able to understand how the body takes inanimate food and transforms it into living tissue? The subconscious mind, the memory, the processes of thought and reason are still other mysteries which contribute to our general welfare, and without which we could not successfully get along.

Spiritual Mysteries

Mysteries abound in the spiritual realm. There is the mystery of mercy: "The cherubim of the earthly sanctuary, looking reverently down upon the mercy-seat, represent the interest with which the heavenly host contemplate the work of redemption. This is the mystery of mercy into which angels desire to look—that God can be just while He justifies the repenting sinner, and renews His intercourse with the fallen race; that Christ could stoop to raise unnumbered multitudes from the abyss of ruin, and clothe

them with the spotless garments of His own righteousness, to unite with angels who have never fallen, and to dwell for ever in the presence of God."—E. G. White in *The Great Controversy*, page 415.

The work of the Holy Spirit in the transformation of the sinful nature is a deep mystery. How this divinely appointed medium is able to convict of sin, give repentance, move to confession of sin, and inspire to godly sorrow is a mystery that none can understand.

No mystery in the spiritual realm is so important to the sinner as that of the "new birth." Jesus left no doubt as to the necessity of this experience to salvation: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:3, 5.

When the fact of the "new birth" has been accomplished, man is spoken of as a "new creature." "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. 5:17. Says one commentator upon this point:

"A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or to trace all the chain of circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. Christ said to Nicodemus, 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' John 3:8. Like the wind, which is invisible, yet the effects of which are plainly seen and felt, is the Spirit of God in its work upon the human heart. That regenerating power, which no human eye can see, begets a new life in the soul; it creates a new being in the image of God. While the work of the Spirit is silent and imperceptible, its effects are manifest. If the heart has been renewed by the Spirit of God, the life will bear witness to the fact."—*Steps to Christ*, pages 45, 46.

Man is dependent for his very existence upon the operation of mysteries which he cannot understand. This is true in the spiritual as well as in the physical realm. The Spirit

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Will Rome

By W



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A Jesuit researcher studies
a seventeenth century
Roman Catholic
baptismal record
from Missouri.

['lamb-dragon power of the New World'] exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed." Rev. 13:12.

An Almost Unbelievable Transformation

That such a transformation could take place in a nation originally founded by refugees from the spiritual tyranny of the Old World, would seem well-nigh unbelievable were it not

written so clearly and unmistakably into the prophetic outline of history.

But there it is. The American nation would, in the course of its rise to world power, undergo so radical a change of heart that the system which in the beginning it hated it would at the last cleave unto and elevate to the spiritual leadership of the world.

We are entitled to ask, therefore, whether any such profound change in the spiritual climate of the United States has occurred during the past century and a half, and whether to-day Roman Catholic pressure from within is directing this great last-day power along the road delineated in the prophetic picture?

No sooner do we begin to look than we are startled by what we see.

A Dwindling Minority

One hundred and sixty years ago the suggestion that the voice of Rome would ever be able to make itself heard in the United States would have been met with ridicule and derision; for not only were Roman Catholics at that time a tiny minority, but their numbers were dwindling almost to the point of extinction.

In the apostle John's visions of the miraculous revival of the power of the "beast," or papal Rome, in the latter days, we are told how the nations of the Roman earth would come together with "one mind" and agree to "give their power and strength" into the hands of "the beast." Rev. 17:13.

To-day we can glimpse the beginnings of the fulfilment of this prophecy in the growing collaboration of the Western European nations and in their increasing desire for spiritual reinforcement from the Vatican in their opposition to the Soviet menace.

In the thirteenth chapter of the same prophecy, the Revelator foreshadows an equally striking change of attitude toward the "beast" in the New World in the closing days of history. So much so, that the "lamb-turned-dragon" of the Western hemisphere (Rev. 13:11) would actually be instrumental in raising the church of Rome to a pinnacle of international prestige of power, from which it would fill up its cup of iniquity and call forth the final wrath of God.

These are the prophet's words: "He [the

Rule America?

Emmerson

The passage of the Toleration Act in 1689 was actually an act of intolerance to Catholics. It arrested Catholic immigration to a large degree and caused the numbers already there to decline steeply. The Spanish and French threats to the independence of the colonies during the eighteenth century further increased antipathy to the Catholics, with the result that by the time of the War of Independence there were probably no more than 25,000 Catholics in the whole of the settled territories, of which number 16,000 were in Maryland, and 6,000 in Pennsylvania.

"At the time of the Revolution," states Paul Blanshard in his *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, "only about one per cent of the people of the American colonies were Catholic. The greatest political leaders, writers, and reformers of our early national history were all non-Catholics, and all the early centres of higher learning were dominated by Protestant influence.

"In such an atmosphere the colonial Catholics were treated as outsiders by the other colonists, and when the new nation broke away from European control, the Romanists, as they were often called, were doubly suspect because of their continued allegiance to a European ruler."—Pages 8, 9.

The Turning Point Coincides with "The Time of the End"

It is a remarkable fact, therefore, that, just as we have noted in connection with other "signs" of the last days, the end of the eighteenth century, or the beginning of "the time of the end," also marked the turning point for Catholicism in North America. And the man who was chiefly instrumental in reversing the fortunes of the church was the one Catholic

Lengthening Shadows.—8

signatory of the Declaration of Independence, Charles Carrol.

In his enthusiasm for this outpost of the Catholic church, in which even Rome seemed to show little interest, he got himself appointed "Prefect Apostolic" in 1784, and Bishop of Baltimore in 1789. As a result of his energetic reorganization, Catholic adherents in the colonies had grown by the year 1800 to something like 100,000.

Progress, however, was comparatively slow until about the middle of the nineteenth century when the fearful Irish potato famine in the 1840's resulted in the emigration of about a quarter of the unhappy island's population, the greater proportion of them to America. As a consequence of this tragedy in the Old World, the Catholic population of the United States shot up by 1850 to no fewer than 1,600,000.

This dispersal of the Irish people across the Atlantic was supplemented in succeeding



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Cardinal Spellman leads New York Catholic pilgrims into St. Peter's, Rome.

JULY 26, 1951

decades by other Catholic emigrant "streams" from Germany, Italy, Hungary, Poland, and other European countries, causing the Catholic population of the United States to rise to 4,600,000 in 1870, 6,400,000 in 1880, 8,909,000 in 1890, and 12,041,000 in 1900.

During the first half of the present century as a result of continued immigration, intensified by totalitarian oppression in Europe, the high Catholic birthrate, and conversions from the Protestant churches, the Catholic population has again more than doubled and to-day, according to the latest *American Catholic Directory* (1950), it stands at 27,766,141.

Religious Balance Completely Changed

This "large transoceanic Catholic world," as Hilaire Belloc has called it, has completely changed the balance of religions in the United States, for the Roman Catholic Church has caught up with, and now left far behind even the largest of the Protestant denominations, the most recent figures for which are 15,464,000 Baptists of various types; 10,492,000 Methodists; 5,715,000 Lutherans; 3,349,000 Presbyterians, and 2,160,000 Protestant Episcopalians or Anglicans. Actually, at the present time, three out of every sixteen Americans are Catholics.

Naturally the organizational strength of the church has grown in proportion to the membership and whereas it was only in 1875 that North America got its first cardinal, to-day it has five cardinals heading a vast hierarchy of archbishops, bishops, and priests, with thousands of monks, nuns, and religious serving an immense system of schools, colleges, and universities.

Financially, the past few decades have seen the American Catholic Church move from being an item on the expense sheet of the Vatican to Rome's greatest asset. As late as 1908, remarks Paul Blanshard, the American Catholic Church was "a missionary branch within the Roman system, supported partly by contributions from abroad, and treated with conspicuous condescension by the European hierarchy." To-day "it contributes more money to the hierarchy at Rome than all the other national branches of the Catholic Church put together."—*American Freedom and Catholic Power*, page 8.

An Overwhelming Pressure Group

On first thoughts it might seem that this development, spectacular as it has been, has still

not lifted the Roman Catholic Church out of its minority status, and should not have seriously modified the traditional policies of the United States. The fact, however, is that this minority, being concentrated largely in the cities of the United States, exerts a quite disproportionate influence in the political, social, and economic realms compared with the predominantly rural Protestant population.

Actually, in thirty-eight out of the fifty largest American cities Catholics are in a majority. Of these, Boston has a 75.3 per cent Catholic population. There are sixty-six per cent Catholics in New Orleans, and four other cities have between fifty and sixty per cent Catholics. Three cities have over a million Catholics. In the aggregate, therefore, the Catholics in the cities outnumber the Protestants by about three to one.

Furthermore, while the Protestants are split up into some 256 separate denominations, besides many more minor groups, the Roman Catholic Church forms one solid bloc, so thoroughly organized and active in every sphere of the nation's life, that it constitutes an overwhelming pressure group which is rapidly swinging the United States into line with, and in support of, the world programme of the resurgent Roman Catholic Church.

In external relations this same Roman Catholic pressure has in recent years resulted in a new approach on the part of the United States Government to the Vatican and a corresponding pressure by the United States on the governments of other nations to align their world policies in harmony with those of the Holy See.

At the beginning of the second World War President Roosevelt took the unprecedented step of appointing Mr. Myron Taylor as his personal representative at the Vatican, and Mr. Taylor continued to serve President Truman in the same capacity until a few months ago. No new liaison officer has yet been nominated, but considerable pressure is being brought to bear on the president to make a new appointment, if not to make even more permanent arrangements.

Communism Cements the Links

The rise of Communism since the end of World War II has further cemented the links between the United States and the Vatican. Because Communism is Enemy No. 1 of the
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What To Do With Good Intentions

By R. D. Vine

WITHOUT good intentions no man can please God. To serve our Maker and our fellow men successfully, and to have our hopes of a happy hereafter realized at last, we must all have good intentions. In themselves, however, good intentions are not sufficient. Many, it is said, lie buried in the graveyard; and as Dr. Samuel Johnson truthfully reflected, hell will be paved with them.

The Bible presents no more tragic a picture than that of certain unhappy men and women whose ardent longing was for heaven, but who will be excluded at the last. (Matt. 7:21.) Among this group will be many whose intentions were flawless. They sincerely intended to serve God fully, they intended to give their hearts to the Saviour, to join the church, to make reconciliation with some offended friend or loved one, to resist and overcome some cherished sin, but because of various plausible excuses, they failed to translate these intentions into positive action.

Nothing wrong with their intentions, but how sad that they should never have been carried out. The apostle James says: "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. There's danger, deadly danger, in delay. For our present peace of mind and happiness, and for our welfare hereafter, we must remember Paul's assurance that "now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2. It has been solemnly remarked that: "Procrastination is the thief of time; year after year it steals till all are fled, and to the mercies of a moment leaves the vast concerns of an eternal scene." The tragedy is that such a moment may find a man wholly unable to benefit by it.



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A novel style in gloves from Frankfurt, Germany.

How many well-meaning folk there are who genuinely intend some time to fulfil God's will by joining the Christian church, but who excuse their delay by the fact that there are so many hypocrites in it. Dwelling on the shortcomings of hypocrites leads to complacency about one's own spiritual condition. One naturally reasons: "If those folk get to heaven, there'll be no doubt about God's verdict on me. I'll be safe enough." Of course, the sombre fact is that such folk, no matter with what enthusiasm they may have entered into church activities, and no matter how zealously they may have professed belief in Bible truth, will never get to heaven. "The hypocrite's hope shall perish," is God's assurance in Job 8:13. So also will it be with those who failed to carry out their good intentions because they unwisely looked to the hypocrites instead of to God. Let us then avoid making the excuse: "If he gets to heaven, I'll surely get there too, for my life is better than his."

Grace to Cover All Our Sins

Other well-meaning folk, with the loftiest intentions prolong indefinitely the moment of

decision for Christ—and may even feel that such a moment can never come—because of their past sins. The memory of a chequered past weighs like a crushing burden on the mind and heart, stifling every impulse to carry out the good intentions by the insinuation: "You're too bad for God. Your sins are too many and too great for God to handle. Your cup of iniquity is full, and you must therefore abandon all hope." This is one method whereby Satan, our adversary, deprives many of the joys of a fully consecrated life. He's wrong, of course; for God mercifully assures us that "if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby," Ezek. 33:19. King David proved God's willingness to reach down even to the most dismal depths of the pit of sin to deliver and transform those who call upon Him. Said David: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Psa. 40:2. What God did for David, He will do for you. He is more than willing to do so. His power is limited, however, not by the multitude or heinousness of man's sins, but by man's attitude to Him. Remember the promise that if our attitude is one of turning to the Lord with all the heart, He will restore unto us "the years that the locust hath eaten." Joel 2:12, 25. Wise are we if we look to Him now, without delaying, that this work of grace may be done in our hearts.

Give God a Chance

There are, lastly, quite a number who offer the excuse that they've tried and failed: and that while their intentions are good, God's saving power seems to have proved inadequate in their case. The fault, however, is not with God, for we have the inspired assurance: "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7:25. The fault is with ourselves. Not less trying, but much more trusting in Him, is the invariable remedy. If we daily meditate on a portion of His Word, and kneel in humble, private prayer—believing, in spite of the natural disposition to doubt, that He actually hears us, then Christ's promises of redeeming grace and adequate power will be fulfilled in us.

Fullness of joy will be ours here and now,

as well as the surpassing joy of eternal fellowship with Him in that future perfect world after His glorious second coming.

All Eyes on Iran

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shall be found written in the book," Dan. 11:44, 45; 12:1.

In the book of Revelation, another striking prophecy of the last days reveals that "the spirits of devils, working miracles," will "go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. . . . And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Rev. 16:14, 16.

"Epicentre" of History

Whatever varied interpretations may be placed upon these inspired predictions, one fact stands out: they all centre in the Near East. And because they do, it behoves us to watch carefully the unfolding of history in these lands.

Exactly how each prophecy will be fulfilled no one can say, but the outlines are clear and the trends are obvious. "The epicentre of world affairs" is moving back to where it started. History's climax is at hand. The coming of Jesus is near, even at the doors.

The main question facing each one of us to-day is, What is my relationship to Him? Soon all eyes will leave Iran, and Korea, and Europe, and will be turned toward Jesus as He descends the skies in power and glory. God grant we may see in Him a Friend, a Saviour, a Redeemer, in that day.

The Gates of Hell

(Continued from page 5.)

His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life." John 5:24, 25, 28, 29.

Ultimate Victory for the Church

The forces of evil go on from triumph to triumph toward ultimate defeat. On the other hand the church of Jesus Christ marches for-

ward from apparent defeat to ultimate victory. Each child of God can testify with complete confidence: "Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death; that I may show forth all Thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion. I will rejoice in Thy salvation." Psa. 9:13, 14. Yes, the gates of Zion shall prevail over the gates of hell and of death. The Lord of life will not suffer His faithful ones to be vanquished. The hour is coming when prophets, martyrs, and saints will rise from the grave—and the gates of hell will be carried away for ever. Then "in that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." Isa. 26:1, 2.

Dear reader, if you feel despondent, if the outlook at times appears discouraging, recall the words of Jesus, "I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This is the faith that overcomes the world, the flesh, and the devil. The gates of hell can never prevail against those who have entered through the gates of Zion into the church of Jesus Christ.

Will Rome Rule America?

(Continued from page 10.)

Papacy, the United States has sought its spiritual backing in the "cold war" against the Soviet Union, while the Papacy recognizes in the United States its most powerful ally in fighting the Communistic menace.

So close have relations now become that President Truman has assured the Pope that the resources of the United States and "all the forces striving for a moral world" would be exerted to build an enduring peace "upon Christian principles," while the Pope in return has assured the president that the United States would receive "wholehearted co-operation from God's church" as it seeks to protect "the individual against despotic rule."—Quoted by Avro Manhattan in *The Catholic Church Against the Twentieth Century*, page 439.

"The U.S.A.," in fact, says Avro Manhattan, "has become the key to the policy of the Catholic Church, not only with regard to the American continent, but in relation to the whole world."—*Ibid.*, page 409.

"Star-Spangled Shadow"

Here lies one of the greatest temptations of American preponderance in the world to-day.

If Roman Catholic pressure continues to increase within the United States and to influence the United States government along pro-Catholic lines, it can readily be seen that the United States would increasingly compel the nations of Western Europe, as well as Britain and the Commonwealth, to move along similar lines.

And if as a result of the alliance between the Western nations and the Vatican, Communism were to be overthrown, there would be no obstacle to the spiritual world dominance of the Roman Catholic Church.

Back in the days when the United States acquired the Philippine Islands, President McKinley gave utterance to the sentiment:

"There was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift, and civilize, and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them as our fellow-men for whom Christ died."

Seeing that thirteen out of the sixteen millions in the Philippine Islands are now Roman Catholics, making them the most Catholic territory in the Far East, one cannot but wonder what might happen if an increasingly pro-Catholic America took in hand the "rechristianization" of the world!

Unless, therefore, the people of the United States address themselves seriously to the penetration of Rome into its internal affairs and its international policies the "star-spangled banner" may become before they have time to realize it, a "star-spangled shadow" across the face of the earth.

(Next Time: "America and Pan-Protestantism.")

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THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

Agnes' Chocolate Cookie

By Eirene Adair

LITTLE Agnes Balmer simply loved baking day. The only snag was that it didn't occur often enough to please her, as her mummy had to save up sufficient of her precious fat and sugar ration to bake with, and could only manage it now and again. Agnes enjoyed the fun of helping to bake, and she did love the way Mummy included her as a helper and said, "What shall we make?"

One day as they were having lunch together Mummy said: "Well, I think we could bake this afternoon, Agnes. What shall we make? I haven't any fruit, but what about fairy buns or chocolate cookies? We haven't had

either of those for a long time."

"Ooh! let's have chocolate cookies," exclaimed the little girl. "They're nice and sweet."

"Chocolate cookies it shall be," said Mummy. "Now I'll just wash these dishes and then you shall help me."

Soon all was set for the cooking. Agnes helped Mummy to set out all that would be needed for the buns, on the big kitchen table. Then Mummy tied a little apron on her, and gave her the cookie tins to grease while she made the mixture. The chocolate mixture looked very inviting as it was whipped round and round the bowl.

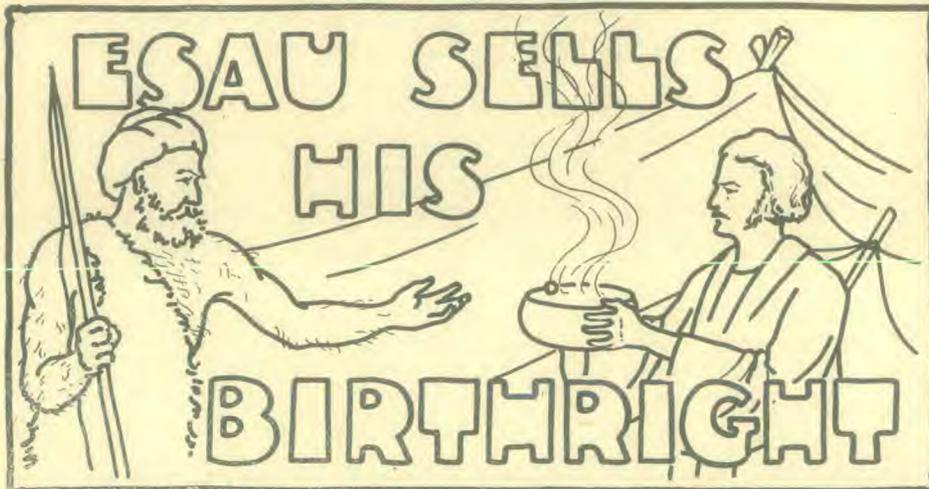
Mummy filled the cookie

tins and she left some of the mixture in the bowl so that Agnes could make one for herself in her own tin. Agnes scraped out the very last drop from the bowl and made a wonderful cookie, licking her lips in anticipation of the feast she would have when it was baked. She was not really greedy, but most little girls do love sweet things, and Agnes was no exception.

Once the tins were in the oven they washed the utensils they had been using. Soon came the great moment when the finished cookies were taken from the oven and spread out on a wire tray to cool. Oh, what a delicious smell filled the kitchen!

Mummy had just put the last empty tin in the sink to be washed when the front door bell rang. She went to open the door and, of course, Agnes ran behind her to see who was there.

On the doorstep stood a thin, pale young woman, very clean but ragged, holding a tiny baby wrapped in a black shawl and also a basket in which she had things for sale—pins, needles, wools, elastic, hairclips, and soap. By her side was a little girl just about



See how nicely you can paint this picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Margaret, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than August 9th.

the age of Agnes. She, too, was clean but ragged, and she did look thin and hungry.

Mummy bought some articles, and while she went to get her purse to pay for them Agnes just stood and looked at the other little girl.

"Yes, she does look hungry," she thought, "I'm sure she would like my big chocolate cookie."

Mummy, and her Sabbath-school teacher, too, had always taught her that it was wrong to be selfish, and that Jesus loved wee children to share with others, especially poor and hungry ones. But it was a wrench to part with the lovely cookie she had just made for herself. Of course, she would get a share of Mummy's cakes at tea-time,

but they would not taste the same as her very own.

While she stood thinking, Mummy came back with the money, but as she went to close the door Agnes said: "Oh, wait a minute, please!" and she darted away into the kitchen. She reappeared in a moment or two, carefully carrying her still warm chocolate cookie which she thrust into the hands of the surprised little ragged girl and whispered, "Do eat it up. I made it all by myself."

She then ran indoors again so that she would not see the cookie disappearing, but she felt a warm glow at her heart because she had, in a little way, resisted the temptation to be selfish, and had tried to please Jesus.

THE Sunbeams' CORNER



My Dear Sunbeams,

WHAT a grand time you must all be having these long warm days. I want to thank you for your many interesting letters, for I know how hard it is to write letters when the sun is shining and our friends want us to play outside.

Miriam Harris has been having fun swimming with her sister, and Geoffrey Trigg has been helping his father in the garden, and lots more of you have told me of your outdoor activities. I am sure many, like Mary Watkins, have visited the Festival of Britain Exhibition. I wonder if you have thought that it is because the British people have always loved the Bible that God has made them wise, and helped them so wonderfully as a nation? How glad we should be that we still are free to worship God and tell others of His love. How happy we should be that our beloved King and Queen set us a good example in reading God's Word.

You will see that some more

results of Competition Nos. 6, 7 have been published. Congratulations, Dorothy Marriott, on winning the prize. Congratulations also to John and Pearl Rich for winning a prize each for six "Honourable Mentions." We really have some fine artists among our Sunbeams. Keep shining, boys and girls.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE MARGARET.



Partial Results of Competition Nos. 6, 7

Prize-winner.—Dorothy Marriott, 110 Cavendish Avenue, Colchester. Age 15.

Honourable Mention.—Kenneth Williams (Newcastle, Staffs.); Richard Payne (Bishops Cleeve); G. Hampton (Norwich); Elsie Foster (Nottingham); Betty Slaughter (Worthing); Constance Freeman (Raynes Park); Gillian Hall (Hedon); Maureen Woodman (Southampton); Valerie Chambers (Newcastle, Staffs.); Judy Skillings (Watford).

Those who tried hard.—Margaret Cutler (Birmingham); Gail Darlington (Stretford); Bernard Dean (Hull); Sheila Alice (London, S.W.9); Anthony Bowling (London, E.17); Janet Sowden (Watford); Robert Trickett (Shrewsbury); J. Payne (Leicester); Eileen

Atkins (London, N.21); T. Harvey (Liverpool, 22); Ruth Price (Wokingham); Roy Bowling (London, E.17); Mavis King (Middlesbrough); Doreen Cady (Swansea); Janette Fox (Norwich); Anthony Ellis (Plymouth); Edward Howells (Newbridge); Sylvia Freeman (London, E.16); Adrienne Edwards (Torquay); Patricia White (Plymouth); Keith Parritt (Monkseaton); Robin James (New Addington); Malcolm Yates (Bradford); Rita Moss (Southampton); Albert Budden (Carlisle); Marion Paget (Wokingham).

(Further results of this competition will appear later.)

Results of Competition No. 11

Prize-winners.—J. K. Hodgson, 49 Woodside North, Upperby, Carlisle. Age 15; Marion Paget, Sunny Bank, Barkham Ride, Wick Hill, Wokingham, Berks. Age 6.

Honourable Mention.—Marion Cass (London, N.13); Christine Smith (London, S.W.20); Margaret Cutler (Birmingham); Jeannette Grant (Newcastle-on-Tyne); John Rich (Launceston); Molly Rich (Launceston); Roger Smith (Southampton); Valerie Hastings (Ipswich); Gloria Snowden (Beccles); Andrew McIlvenna (London, S.W.16.); Pearl Rich (Launceston); Olive King (Chelmsford); Susan Clee (Leeds, 11); Caroline Catto (Rickmansworth); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Graham Baird (New Malden); Amy Randlesome (Beccles).

Those who tried hard.—Eileen Hodgson (Carlisle); Margaret Hansell (Southampton); Lucille Hamblin (Watford); Ursula Proudlock (Newcastle-on-Tyne); Heather Whitmore (Chalfont St. Giles); Joyce Payne (Portslade); Pat Woolley (London, S.W.19); Carol Ayton (Ponders End); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Raymond Tyrrel (Portslade); Pearl Smith (London, S.W.20); Beryl Palmer (Norwich); Pamela Sanders (Newquay); Maureen Brain (Bristol); Linda Hechle (Liverpool, 4); Marie Pepper (Downham Market); Pamela Wakefield (Bristol, 5); Patricia White (Plymouth); David Evans (Liverpool, 4); Kathleen Scattergood (Birmingham, 8); Elizabeth Ball (Yelverton); Penelope Downham (Sowerby Bridge); Siegfried Baron (Church); Jean Fuller (Bournemouth); Valerie Johnson (Norwich); Elizabeth Barker (Huntingdon); Esther Dunstan (St. Mabyn); Judith Connors (Rickmansworth); Barbara Ferguson (Blackburn); Brenda Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Gillian Bennett (Oldbury); Valerie Decker (London, S.W. 20); Josephine Dunstan (Bodmin); Nicolla Gibb (Glasgow, W.1.); Pat Longmore (Liverpool, 4); Ruth Price (Wokingham); Brian Prior (Bournemouth); Eleonore Baron (Church); Veronica Whitmore (Chalfont St. Giles); Delphine Williams (Abercynon); No name.

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STRAWS in the WIND

EMERGENCE OF THE EAST

"By the end of the nineteenth century it seemed that Asia had lost its personality and its voice and was content to allow Europeans to carry on its administration and to speak for it in its dealings with foreign states," said Victor Purcell in a recent broadcast. To-day, however, he continued, "Matthew Arnold's 'The East bow'd low before the blast' no longer has any meaning, and it is absurd to talk any more of Europe's 'holding the Gorgeous East in fee.' Asia is reasserting itself with ever-increasing tempo, and a new continent is emerging."

MOON TRIP

DR. DAVID MARTYN, the Australian scientist, believes that within our lifetime human beings may fly around the moon and back in a rocket ship. He also considers that it may become possible to project and maintain indefinitely a robot-controlled space station 250,000 miles from the earth.

SUEZ TONNAGE

THE volume of sea traffic through the Suez Canal is indicated by the fact that the peak tonnage of 81,796,000, which passed through last year, was an increase of 18.8 per cent over 1949, which in its turn showed an increase of twenty-five per cent over 1948.

The Mystery of Godliness

(Continued from page 7.)

of God that works to transform the sinful heart cannot be seen, but the effects of His work are clearly manifest in the life. How vital,

therefore, that we do not deny or resist the operations of the Holy Spirit upon the heart!

From the cradle to the grave we have to do with mysteries that confound us—mysteries at every hand that we must accept by faith. Since this is true shall we allow our faith to stagger at the biblical teaching of the "mystery of godliness," God tabernacled in human flesh?

Are we able to comprehend the mystery of Luke 1:35: "The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God"? Can we understand this? Of course not. We can no more comprehend the processes of the incarnation than we can understand the mysteries of the cross, the resurrection, or the ascension.

Meeting face to face those things that are out of the realm of our understanding, shall we become discouraged? Shall we deny, therefore, all mysteries? Not at all! It is far better that we build upon those things which we can comprehend, grasping by faith those things which cannot be explained.

Eternity is a school, and it is long. God will reveal to His people the secrets of the universe and the mysteries of salvation in His own time, and in accordance with His own good pleasure. Suffice it for us to know that God has revealed in His Word all that is needful for us to know about it at present. The Bible depicts the plan of salvation in such simple, direct language that it is possible for even a small child to grasp it. Let us read the Bible more earnestly, and search its pages more carefully. God will reward us by revealing more and more of His wonderful love.

