



THE BIBLE AND
OUR TIMES

Beyond the FESTIVAL

A Symbol of Our Times

By R. D. Vine

50,000 people in community singing of some of her favourite songs.

But for still another day the exhibition's life was prolonged. Perhaps the carefree gaiety of the gala was not the most appropriate means, after all, of celebrating. And so, on that floodlit Fairway which, a few hours before, had witnessed a prolonged session of whirlwind revelry, there now gathered the massed bands, drums, and pipes of the Brigade of Guards, to beat the Retreat. Then the 55,000 remaining visitors took over the Fairway. They sang hymns and songs, culminating with "Jerusalem," and finally the "Old Hundredth":

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.

The Flags are Lowered

Over the loudspeakers, which throughout the exhibition period had charmed the visitors with well-known and much-loved music, came the command: "Stand by for a general blackout." Lights gradually faded until only the glimmer from floodlit Big Ben, other North Bank buildings, and the river ships, partially dispelled the prevailing darkness. Then, to a roll of drums, the Festival flags were lowered by the Royal Fusiliers.

For a few brief minutes the lights came on again. For the last time those fantastic yet fascinating buildings, those architectural and engineering triumphs, were bathed in splendour—the colossal Dome with its largest-ever roof built by man, the incredible floating Skylon soaring three hundred feet skyward, and the radiotelescope and brilliant beacon surmounting the old Shot Tower. A few minutes later the loudspeakers spoke forth their final message: "For the last time, good-



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Guardsmen stand ready to lower the flags and close the great festival of Britain.

BRTAIN'S unique exhibition on London's South Bank is now closed. During its life of 149 days, eight and a half million people surveyed its wonders. It was planned to have "a whirlwind finish to the exhibition" on the final Saturday night, and many thousands of Festival revellers had booked well in advance for the consummating gala. Under the soft and colourful glow of myriads of fairy lamps, more than 70,000 people danced and sang until midnight. Wearing carnival hats, many danced rumbas and sambas on the light-studded Fairway between the colossal Dome of Discovery and the four-storey Transport Exhibition Building; and Gracie Fields led

night," and it was all over. South Bank's glittering skyline, according to schedule, finally faded out.

I could not resist the urge to compare this exhibition with its predecessor of one hundred years ago. Visitors left the old Crystal Palace full of hope. Their spectacles assumed an infinitely rosier hue. The 1851 exhibits seemed to provide a firm basis for belief in the approaching "golden era."

It is different to-day. Buoyancy and optimism have long since been expelled by fear and apprehension. Though the skilfully arranged assemblage of modern exhibits was bewilderingly in advance of those which stirred Victorian hearts, they served not a wit to lessen the prevailing atmosphere of apprehension — an atmosphere which seemed most palpable in the "nuclear physics" section of the Dome of Discovery.

The Basic Trouble

The basic trouble to-day is, of course, that God is forgotten. Generally He is relegated to the background, and is variously ignored, slighted, or completely denied. One potent cause of this malady was strikingly illustrated at the very beginning of the exhibition. For the exhibition began with beautifully modelled and brightly coloured tableaux of Britain in the "evolutionary ages" of the past. There was "Tropical Britain of 220 million years ago," "Desert Britain of 160 million years ago," "Volcanic Britain of 150 million years ago," and then we were transported to "Glacial Britain of 20,000 years ago." Nearby was a "scientific" film showing how the land masses were thrown up and these British Islands formed. "The cycle never ends," was the self-assured declaration of the cultured speaker. Right here we were in the realm not of scientific discovery but of imagination.

And not only here, but in the great Dome itself where the beatified Darwin had a section to himself,

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Sounding the "Retreat" on the Fairway in front of the Dome of Discovery.

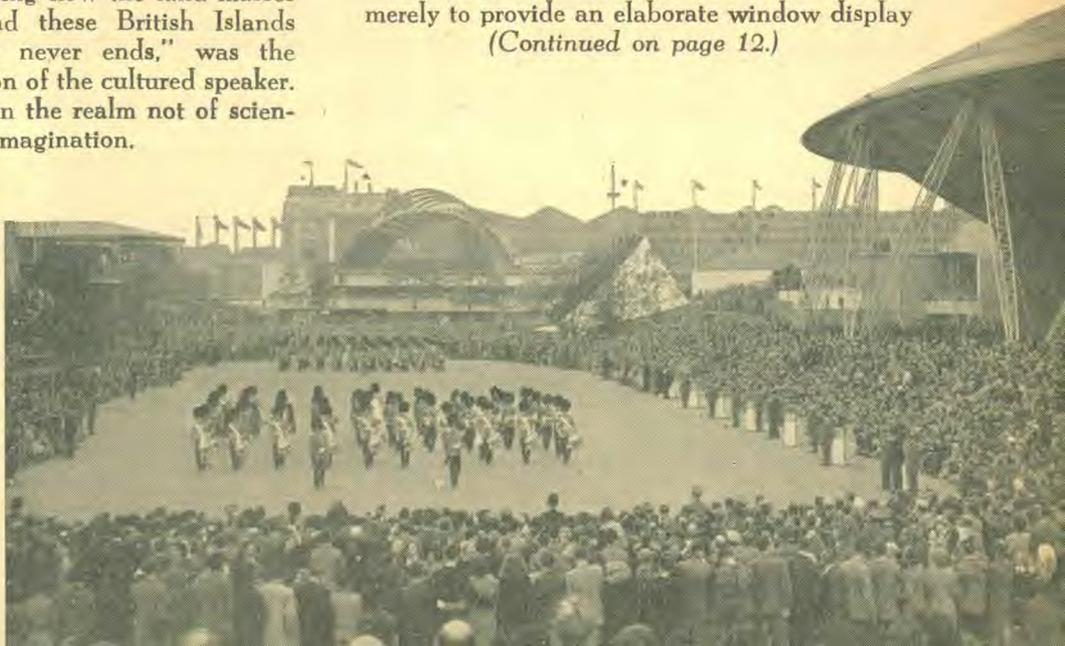
modern evolution was lauded as a truth for whose discovery and initial promulgation Britons have the doubtful honour. Truly the "discovery" represented by the specially arranged heads from that of the "Proconsul Africanus," through the so-called "stages" of the "Australopithecus," "Pithecanthropus," "Sinanthropus," etc., to the "Cro-Magnon" is the most tragic of all modern inventions—that of evolution. For this popular theory has substituted ridicule for faith in God's Word which alone contains the remedy for the world's problems. It has destroyed in millions of hearts confidence in the Bible and in God, with all the fearful implications of this loss.

"The Great Beacon"

It was refreshing to see, however, the incongruity (in view of the above) of a special display of Bibles in the "Lion and Unicorn" section of the exhibition. The British and Foreign Bible Society, on request, had provided specimens of Tyndale's, Coverdale's, and other Bibles. The official guide declared: "The English Bible is still the great beacon for the language," and the exhibition recognized the moulding influence for good which God's Word has had on the English-speaking world. It is true to-day, as ever, that "righteousness"—as is described in the Word of God—"exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Prov. 14:34. How regrettable that the brightness of this Beacon should be shielded and diverted from desolate hearts by the sterile and barren philosophies of men.

A Fingerpost

The purpose of the whole exhibition was not merely to provide an elaborate window display
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My Favourite Text

By Robert H. Pierson

ALTHOUGH I have not counted them, I am told that the Holy Scriptures are made up of 31,173 verses. What a treasure of blessed promises—what a wealth of priceless instruction and admonition! Every one of those thirty odd thousand texts contains some gem of truth helpful to the earthly pilgrim on his journey heavenward.

Probably every Bible-lover has a "favourite text"—one that has been especially dear to him through the years. Perhaps it has been a voice of comfort in the hour of grief or a tower of strength through days of trial and hardship. Such a special text will be treasured and repeated over and over again.

From among all of the thousands of truth-filled gems, doubtless the best known and possibly the favourite of more persons than any other is John 3:16. This verse has no doubt led more sinners to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ than any other single passage of Scripture.

Nearly every Christian—nominal or practising—whether he can repeat any other portion of Scripture or not, knows this one by heart: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Sometimes I like to paraphrase these wonderful words by reading them like this:

"For God [the greatest Giver] so loved the world [the mightiest motive] that He gave His only begotten Son [the greatest Gift] that whosoever [the widest invitation] believeth in Him [the easiest escape] should not perish [the greatest deliverance] but have everlasting life [the most priceless possession]."

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Happy are they who make the Word of God their guide and guard.

In our consideration of history's sweetest love story as set forth in John 3:16 let us follow the thoughts suggested in the paraphrasing.

First, let us notice who it is that makes this wonderful offer of eternal salvation. Ah, it is God—the greatest Giver of time and eternity. The One by whose power the Universe consists. The God who "laid the foundations of the earth" (Job 38:4), who "shut up the sea with doors" (Job 38:8), who had "commanded the morning; . . . and caused the dayspring to know his place." Job 38:12. There can be no question concerning His power! Neither should there be any uneasiness regarding His ability to make good any promise He makes to the children of earth. Sometimes you and I make promises that because of circumscribed conditions which later arise, we are unable to fulfil. But when God, our heavenly Father, promises us all of the riches of eternal life, through His Son Jesus, we need not be anxious, for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness

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thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psa. 24:1), and He "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Ph. 5:20.

The text reads on, "For God so loved the world." What a depth of affection lies behind that one syllable "so"! Those two little letters seem to plumb the depths of an ocean of affection. It is manlike to love those who love us. It is natural for us to bestow our affections upon those who are lovely and those who are kind to us and who love us. But it is God-like to love those who despise us and who go out of their way to maltreat us. Just stop and recall the circle of your acquaintances, and you will think of some unlovely characters that naturally you would have difficulty in loving.

Some years ago the then Prince of Wales visited a small private hospital where thirty-six hopelessly injured and disfigured veterans of World War I were being cared for.

After he had visited and shaken hands with twenty-nine of the patients, he inquired regarding the other seven he had not yet seen. He was told that because of their terrible condition he had not been shown the rest. He, however, insisted that he greet them all.

Going up to one of the poor men, so badly maimed and so hideously disfigured that he scarcely appeared human, the prince stooped and kissed the cheek of the broken hero. With tears in his eyes he paid tribute to the great sacrifice he had made for his country.

What grace on the part of the prince! Yet, friends, how much greater grace was displayed on the part of the Prince of princes that He should stoop to the ignominy and shame to which He was exposed in order to redeem you and me!

Now, our text speaks of God loving the world in general. I like to turn to the words of Paul and find a more personal application of this boundless affection that flows forth from the Father's heart. In Galatians 2:20, Christ is revealed as the One "who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Oh yes, my friend, I'm glad that God loves the millions of earth and that He loves you, but most of all, because there is so much at stake, I thank God that He loves me. Had I been the only sinner in all of earth's history, the Father in heaven loves me enough that He gladly would have made the sacrifice of His only Son for me!

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
Were the whole world of parchment made,
Were every single stick a quill
Were every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God alone
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Though stretched from sky to sky.

Love compels one to give! And God's great love constrained Him to give Heaven's greatest gift—"His only begotten Son."

The Greatest Gift

Heaven could not make a lesser gift, for Christ was the only One who could pay the terrible penalty exacted by sin. Without doubt any one of the host of heavenly angels would gladly have taken their beloved Commander's place. But the death of an angel would not suffice. An angel might have died, but there would have been no resurrection—no life beyond the tomb. Jesus, being equal with God, could lay down His life and He could take it up again. (John 10:18.) "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." John 5:26.

It would be easy for us to fill several pages and devote our entire discussion to just one portion of John 5:16. But we must pass on to the next word of our text.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that *whosoever*." "Who-so-ever"—there, dear reader, is *your* name in the Holy Scriptures! You may unhesitatingly put it in there right now if you are willing to meet the simple condition of believing. Could a wider invitation possibly be extended? *Whosoever!* Why, that includes every human being ever born into this world! And it is blessedly true that God has made just such a literal provision. Listen to His many assurances: In 2 Peter 3:9, He says that He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And again in 1 Timothy 2:4: "Who will have *all* men to be saved." Yes, Jesus tasted "death for every man."

So the provision has been made that all should be saved. The choice is left to the individual! If we are saved it will be because we have chosen to be saved. If we are lost eternally it will be because we have deliberately chosen to be lost! "Ho, every one that thirsteth," the Gospel prophet invites, "come ye to the

(Continued on page 15.)



The Truth of the TRINITY

Father, Son, and Spirit

By Ernest Cox

PROBABLY the foremost among the accepted doctrines of a fundamentalist Christianity being attacked to-day is the truth concerning the Holy Trinity, or the manifestation of one God in three Persons.

There are even some professed Christians at the present time, no doubt sincere enough in purpose and intention, who unequivocally assert that the Trinity in Unity is a concept altogether contrary to human reason, and, as such, is not worthy of credence.

To this assertion, the fundamentalist believer can only reply, in brief, that the doctrine of the Triune God, so jealously held and guarded by the Christian church for many centuries now, is not so much *contrary* to human reason, as it is, in many aspects, quite *above and beyond* human reason.

The Lord Himself declares that this would be so. He says that we must not expect to be able, with our very finite intelligence and experience, completely to comprehend the Being and manifestations of the eternal God. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts," the Lord declares, "neither are your ways My ways. For

as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. 55:8, 9.

But a present insurmountable difficulty of comprehension need not, and logically should not, when it comes to the Being of God, imply any difficulty of acceptance and belief. Indeed, because we cannot fully understand the Being and might of God, we have the opportunity to exercise a proportionately greater wonder and faith. In this matter, the humble child of God finds himself in an expected situation. His reason tells him clearly that the finite cannot possibly comprehend the Infinite. His belief, then, in the ineffable Trinity is not at all contrary to his reason, but is strictly and logically in harmony with it.

There are a number of truths implicit in the sacred Scriptures which it has taken mankind many centuries to realize at all adequately. For example, the enlightened Christian now clearly understands that the old-time system of human slavery, though tolerated by Christendom itself for so long, is quite contrary to God's will. Similarly, any degree of Romish ecclesiastical dictatorship is averse to the spirit and precept of Scripture. But this fuller appreciation of the mind of God is of comparatively recent development.

It is somewhat similar with the fundamental doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The Trinity is implied in many remarkable passages in the Old Testament. But the nature and the mode of manifestation of the three Persons concerned we find revealed with increasing clarity in the New Testament.

Let us consider briefly some of the implica-

tions concerning the Holy Trinity in the Old Testament.

In the early chapters of the Bible we find that in reference to God the *plural* personal pronoun is repeated with significant frequency. At the time of the creation, God said: "Let *Us* make man in *Our* image, after *Our* likeness." Gen. 1:26. After Adam's fall, "the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of *Us*." Gen. 3:22. And again, concerning the Babel incident, God said: "Let *Us* go down, and there confound their language." Gen. 11:7.

That this phrasing means far more than a mere "editorial modesty" is amply proved by the fact that in the early days of Bible history there were frequent appearances to men and women of the Angel (or Messenger) of the Lord, a Person distinct from the Father, yet possessing divine attributes; acting always under a divine commission, but with an *unmistakably divine authority and power*.

We find that upon His own authority this Angel of the Lord graciously makes to the outcast and discouraged Hagar a strikingly similar promise to that which was given to Abraham. "And the Angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." Gen. 16:10.

The marked similarity of the two promises made respectively to Abraham and to Hagar will not escape the notice of the earnest Bible student. The form and sentiment of the promises make their common origin apparent. Therefore He who is here described as the Angel of the Lord, is Himself a divine Person—surely the One who was called by John, the "Word," who from the beginning was "with God," and who "was God." John 1:1, 2.

The Angel of the Lord also appeared on later occasions both to Gideon, the deliverer of Israel (Judges 6:11-24), and to the parents of Samson (Judges 13:2-25). In each case the appearance was attended with a miraculous incident—sufficient to impress upon the persons concerned that they had been honoured with a heavenly Visitor—Someone obviously distinct from the Father, but certainly closely and divinely allied with Him.

In the New Testament is the record of how this Being, so beautifully and appropriately described by Isaiah, as "Wonderful, Counsel-

lor" (Isa. 9:6) "was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14. With Peter, it is our delight to acknowledge and honour Him as the eternal Son of God (Matt. 16:16), though He frequently emphasized His identity with us by speaking of Himself as the Son of man. (John 5:27; 6:27.)

Also, in all the Scriptures we have the office and work of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Holy Trinity, constantly portrayed. While, naturally, we look to the New Testament for the fuller revelation of the Spirit, there is much in the Old Testament which speaks to us of His personality and power.

The Holy Spirit of God was present during, and indeed, took part in, the creation of this world. (Gen. 1:2.) He is spoken of later as striving earnestly with men to turn them from their sinfulness (Gen. 6:3). As a distinct and divine Person, He encouraged and inspired the prophets, for Isaiah declares, "I have not spoken in secret; . . . the Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent me." Isa. 48:16. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach." Isa. 61:1.

When we add to these suggestive implications in the Old Testament, the fact that our Lord when He came to this earth spoke very definitely of His own glorious pre-existence with the Father (John 17:5), and that He also told us much concerning the independent power and activity of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 17, 26), we have a clear biblical basis for an intelligent and sanctifying belief in the Holy Trinity.

There is doubtless much that we cannot, as yet, understand. There is much that we cannot yet define with mathematical precision. But what has been revealed to us is sufficient for us to understand, in broad outline, the Being and the wondrous threefold manifestation of the eternal Godhead.

Let it be sufficient for us to accept in simple faith the Saviour's pronouncement, which is in itself at once a welcome and a benediction. When we make our entry into the church of Jesus Christ, and become members of the great "family in heaven and earth" (Eph. 3:15), by our loving Saviour's express wish and command, we are baptized into the wonderful and surely inscrutable "Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. 28:19.

MANKIND to-day is desperately worried about its future. And no wonder, for within the past four decades it has been wracked by two shattering world wars, and now faces the stark possibility of a third, which may bring the vast achievements of civilization down in unutterable ruin.

To the great majority this crescendo of catastrophe has come as a fearful shock. Until comparatively recently those who claimed to know were telling us that our world was set for inevitable progress and that increasing felicity was man's sure portion.

Taught by the evolutionary philosophers, it was the general belief that the spectacular discoveries and inventions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were stepping-stones to an ever more brilliant future and so on, world without end!

In 1914, however, as Arthur J. Toynbee has strikingly put it in his book, *Civilization on Trial*, history took our generation "by the throat." Man has not revealed himself to be getting better and better, but worse and worse, and the spectacular material advances of our time, instead of carrying us triumphantly forward into an evolutionary Utopia, have brought us to the point of universal catastrophe.

As a result, the idea of inevitable progress in history has been largely abandoned and a completely agnostic interpretation of history has taken its place. We may survive and go on until the next catastrophe overtakes us. Or we may not even survive this one. No one knows. No one can tell. "No further outlook" can be issued.

Is There No Illuminating Word?

Faced, on the one hand, with the disillusionment resulting from the collapse of the rosy evolutionary visions, and on the other by the bleak alternative of stoical despair, many are asking, Is there not somewhere an illuminating word upon the tragic human situation?

In answer to such questionings we can unhesitatingly reply that there is indeed. From out of the gloom an authoritative Voice is speaking: "Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons, and concerning the work of My hands, command ye Me." Isa. 45:11.

It is the voice of the Creator Himself! And not only does He, through the mouth of His messenger, invite man to inquire as to the destiny of the world and all that dwell therein,



The great map of the modern world which looks

History's G

—AND ITS G

By W. L.

but through another of His human mouth-pieces He assures us: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." Amos 3:7.

Nebuchadnezzar Ponders the Future

It was in the early days of the Jewish bondage in Babylon that the great king Nebuchadnezzar was pondering the future of his empire. An answer to the questions of his heart as to its durability and destiny came spectacularly to him in the form of a remarkable dream, not, however, so much for his own benefit as to



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upon the United Nations Assembly in New York.

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assure the people of God whom he at this time held in bondage, that the Lord was still in control and that His purpose of blessing for them and for all who put their trust in Him would yet come to pass.

In the dream, which was recalled to the king's mind by Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar saw a great image composed of four diverse metals—a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron merging into feet and toes which were formed out of a curious composite of strong iron and brittle potter's clay. (Read Daniel 2:31-33.)

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Explaining the significance of the image, at the command of God, Daniel began: "As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. . . . Thou art this head of gold." Verses 29, 38.

Nebuchadnezzar was naturally elated to think that the most high God should so highly esteem his empire as to typify it by the most precious of metals. But he was taken aback when the prophet went on to say: "After thee shall arise another kingdom, inferior to thee." Verse 39.

To learn that his kingdom was to pass was a sobering thought, but to be told that it would be overthrown by a kingdom less glorious than his own was mortifying indeed.

Nebuchadnezzar's immediate reaction, as indicated by the story of the third chapter of Daniel, was to refuse to accept the prophet's forecast of the destiny of Babylon. The image which he constructed all of gold proclaimed his faith that Babylon would not pass away. But what has history to say? Did the word spoken by Daniel in the name of the God of heaven prove true?

The Passing of the Golden Empire

It did indeed. When Nebuchadnezzar overran the Middle East and extended his empire from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, from the Mesopotamian plain to the river of Egypt, he never expected any trouble from the wild tribes of Media and Persia beyond the Zagros Mountains. It was from thence, however, that Cyrus, at first but a minor prince of the province of Anshan, but in due time the conqueror of all the northern lands from Asia Minor to India, swept down into the Babylonian plain and overthrew the golden empire in 538 B.C.

Continuing his interpretation of the dream to the now sobered and wondering monarch, Daniel went on: "And another third kingdom of brass, . . . shall bear rule over all the earth." Verse 39.

The prophet himself lived to see the word he had spoken concerning Babylon fulfilled, but there was no sign of any diminution of Medo-Persia's power when he died. The second empire, was, in fact, far from its zenith. But what was to befall it long after Daniel, who foresaw its rise, and Cyrus, its creator,

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had passed away? Just what the prophet had said!

Burning with desire to avenge the incursions of the Persian kings, Darius the Great and Xerxes, into Europe, Alexander, king of Macedonia, at last aroused the proud Greeks to action. Ferrying his tiny army across the Hellespont, he marched eastward to Granicus, from Granicus to Issus, and from Issus to the plains of Arbela, defeating army after army of the Medo-Persians, until their resistance was utterly broken. (531 B.C.) Whereupon Alexander, now truly called "the Great," set up his empire upon the ruins of the shattered silver kingdom.

Who indeed but omniscient God could have foreseen that the "brass-mailed" Greeks would have the audacity to pit their insignificant armies against the vast hordes of Medo-Persia, and that they would succeed in overthrowing them? Yet so it was.

The "Iron Monarchy" Rules

Continuing his narration, Daniel next spoke of a "fourth kingdom" represented by the legs of the image, which would be "strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." Verse 40.

Looking back over the centuries the veriest schoolboy remembers how the Greek Empire was in the second and first centuries B.C. swallowed up by the "iron monarchy" of Rome to produce the Graeco-Roman civilization which covered the known world at the beginning of the Christian era.

When Daniel talked with Nebuchadnezzar in the golden palace of Babylon, the Medes and Persians comprised a multitude of small and obscure tribes wandering over the Persian highlands, the Greek city states were in an early state of development, while the Romans were no more than a group of small tribes on the banks of the Tiber in far-off Italy.

No one with only finite human vision could have foreseen that in a period of less than half a millennium, these three peoples would raise up successive empires, each expanding beyond the bounds of its predecessors and culminating in the great Roman Empire stretching from Spain to Babylon and from Britain to the deserts of North Africa.

Who then could have revealed this in-

credible panorama of history to Daniel and to the first world ruler, Nebuchadnezzar? It could only have been, as Nebuchadnezzar himself confessed, the "God of gods and . . . Lord of kings," the divine "Revealer of secrets" to the children of men. (Verse 47.)

But Daniel was not yet at the end of his interpretation. He now directed the king's attention to the feet "part of iron and part of clay."

"Whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron," he said, "the kingdom shall be divided." It "shall be partly strong, and partly broken [brittle]." Verses 41, 42.

Was the Roman Empire in course of time divided into fragmentary kingdoms, some strong and some weak and brittle, as Daniel foretold? Yes it was. From the third century of the Christian era, barbarian tribes from Central and Northern Europe began to press against the Roman frontiers on the Rhine and Danube, and in the sixth century the dams burst and the barbarian flood swept down into Italy, France, and Spain, and even across the Mediterranean into Northern Africa. The Roman Empire ceased to be, and in its place there sprang up ten barbarian kingdoms corresponding exactly to the ten toes of the image, of diverse size and strength just as the prophet had indicated.

Seven Words that have Defeated Every Dictator

As if in anticipation of Nebuchadnezzar's question whether some new conqueror would arise to recombine the broken fragments into yet a fifth earthly empire, Daniel went on by inspiration to declare:

"And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Verse 45.

How true those momentous words have proved! If only Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Wilhelm II, Hitler, and Mussolini had taken note of these words they would never have embarked upon their ill-fated attempts to restore the unity of the ancient Roman Empire, and Europe would not time and again through the centuries have been deluged with blood.

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The Transient and The ENDURING

By R. A. VINCE

ONLY a few months ago I was walking through the stifling, sunbaked streets of ancient Pompeii in Italy. A seemingly short distance away towered the barren volcano Vesuvius, which in A.D. 79 engulfed this busy coastal town in boiling lava, and sealed it for centuries as a grim mausoleum to the mighty powers of Nature. The ardent archæologist has uncovered and restored the streets and buildings in such a remarkable way that I felt transported back to ancient times. But though on every side were evidences of solid building, I could not help being impressed with the transience of human accomplishments. More impressive still was the thought that man himself is even less enduring than his works. That is why our prime responsibility in this life is to create within us, with the help of God, something of eternal substance.

In the Shaking Time

In this era of atomic blast, it seems that God would impress on our hearts that there are just two kinds of things in this world—the transient and the enduring. In Hebrews 12:25-27 I notice these words: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh: . . . whose voice then shook the earth [that was at Sinai at the giving of the Law]; but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that these things which cannot be shaken may remain."

More convulsive than atomic fission will be the "presence of the Lord" again in this earth. Says Jeremiah: "The mountains . . . trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. . . . And all the cities thereof were broken down." Jer. 4:

The works
of man may
crumble to
ruin but the
kingdom of
God will
endure for
ever.



24, 26. When the divine fiat is heard, "It is done," then we shall be glad if we have built our faith upon the unshakable rock, Christ Jesus.

An Irish lad was once trapped upon a rock by the rising tide. He was rescued just in time. Someone asked him: "Jimmy, did you tremble when you saw the water rising?" "Sure I trembled," he said, "but the rock never trembled once." It is surprising to read in Psalm 102:25, 26 that the heavens and the earth "shall wax old like a garment; . . . They shall perish. . . . as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed." Think of the mighty mountain ranges like the Alps or the Himalayas, which have stood like motionless sentinels for millenniums, being changed like old clothes for new. If they do not endure for ever, little wonder that the psalmist exclaims: "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away; and, lo, he was not."

Prophets and philosophers have often discussed the seeming prosperity of the wicked, and some have concluded that there is no profit in righteousness. But the Lord says: "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be: . . . but the meek shall inherit the earth." Psa. 37:10, 11.

The glory of man is of no enduring quality either. Peter describes it as "the flower of the grass [that] . . . falleth away." 1 Peter 1:24. The silent vaults of the pyramids, the desolate wastes of Babylon, the ruins of Athens or of Rome, mutely speak of a glory that is faded, but which in its time had all the semblance of indestructibility.

Yes, even those activities which are not in the category of human pleasure, but which engage the thought of our finest men, are not in themselves a sufficient goal. "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease, whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." Only "faith, hope, charity" shall abide when "that which is perfect is come." 1 Cor. 13:8-13.

Friend, are the pleasures of sin claiming your devotion? Do you worship at the altar of knowledge, fame, or glory? Will the righteous Judge find you pursuing the bubbles of transient things alone, or will He find you seeking "first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," which is the prime purpose of man's probation?

A Challenge and an Invitation

Why did Jesus say we should seek first the kingdom of God? The answer is in Hebrews 12:28: "We receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved." Basically, it is a matter of survival. God wants us to live eternally and to escape the inevitable wages of sin. Says G. A. Studdert Kennedy: "Evil is nonsense. It is irrational and mad. That is the very essence of it. It has no ultimate objective existence. . . . Evil has no substance because it has no absolute value." But the kingdom of God is different. It cannot be moved, because its foundation is "the Word of the Lord [which] endureth for ever." 1 Peter 1:24. Again, Jesus advised: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you." John 6:27.

The publisher of a great American news-

paper is building a blast-proof atom bomb shelter under the newspaper building, and is stocking it with oxygen and food sufficient for a long period. This may be good, sound sense indeed. "Providence provides for the provident," says the proverb. But if there is one thing that our heavenly Father wants to provide for all of us now, it is a passport into the unshakable kingdom of heaven. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Here is a challenge to you and to me; an invitation and a guide to join hands with those who shall come to the kingdom which cannot be moved. Will you heed it? There will be all eternity to praise the Lord, but there are only a few hours before sunset to win it.



Beyond the Festival

(Continued from page 5.)

of the nation's inventive genius. It was skilfully planned to tell an interwoven story which had a beginning, a middle, and fingerposts to the future. Perhaps the Dome's "Physical World" section, more than any other part of the exhibition, provided the vital fingerpost.

Here was a model of the atomic pile at Harwell. Enclosed in a case nearby was a two-ton cube of coal, and upon it a three-quarter ounce piece of uranium—each capable of producing the same amount of energy. Part of the display consisted of a mural painting portraying the "Nuclear Physics Laboratory, Harwell." Whether by design or accident, the artist had endowed every figure with a frighteningly grotesque expression, as if they feared—as many people fear to-day—that their endeavours would inevitably bring world destruction. Yet one caption hopefully ran: "Nuclear reactions can liberate energy as heat, and heat can be used to drive engines. There are many difficulties to be overcome, but we may thus use nuclear power in the future." The vital word here, of course, is "may." Since most people seem to have the conviction that bombs, not engines, will benefit by nuclear power, this section of the exhibition seemed to be far less patronized than the others.

Striking evidence of the godlessness and hopelessness of modern art were the sculptures around the grounds. These sculptures were attempts to "express" a state of mind and a state of humanity which ought rather to be repressed and forgotten.

A Sign of the Times

The exhibition as a whole, however, was eloquent of man's scientific progress, but even more eloquent of time's progress. For as time hastens toward its feverish climax, one of the greatest evidences of the end, according to the prophet Daniel, would be that of the increase of knowledge. (Dan. 12:4.) Though gross darkness should cover the earth, with a growing anxiety because of the dismal threats of the future, yet man's inventive genius would, according to Bible prophecy, come to spectacular fruition. And there, concentrated on those few transformed acres of old London, was stunning evidence of the truth of Daniel's declaration.

Did men but know it, God's purpose behind these phenomenal advances—in industry, transport, radio, television, and science generally—is that the promulgation of the "everlasting Gospel" may be facilitated and speeded to earth's remotest bounds. He "in whom we live, and move, and have our being," who "giveth . . . power to get wealth" by creating and sustaining human brain and brawn, has ordained this dazzling upsurge of human skill and knowledge so that, though He may be forgotten and even spurned by millions who have appropriated His gifts to their own selfish ends, His work on earth may be wound up, and thus the great and final reckoning day be hastened.

My Favourite Text

(Continued from page 5.)

waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isa. 55:1. Have you accepted this blessed invitation?

The text reads 'on: "For God so loved the

world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish."

Here we have the easiest escape. Many of the non-Christian religions are built upon works. In the Orient I have often seen men and women making long and tedious journeys to bathe in the river Ganges or the Godavary or some other of the holy rivers of India. I have seen men sitting on beds of sharp spikes where they had been sitting for years. I have seen the followers of heathen deities performing all sorts of works and subjecting their bodies to all kinds of cruel tortures in the name of religion.

But when the convicted Philippian jailor cried out to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" the two men of God answered simply: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:30, 31. How easy God has made salvation for the sinner! No long pilgrimages. No cruel penance! All that we can do about our sinful condition is to go to Jesus for cleansing and believe that cleansing comes because He has promised it.

Next we come to the most priceless possession held out to those who believe—everlasting life! Think of it—life without end! When you have lived a thousand years you are still a babe. When a thousand millenniums have slipped into eternity you are yet a child. Our finite minds fail to fathom such calculations. Imagine a life that measures with the life of God. And the Holy Scriptures say:

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor. 2:9.

As you have read these wonderful assurances contained in one of the Scripture's choicest verses, doesn't it make you feel that, cost what it may, heaven is cheap at any price? And don't you find yourself determined in your heart that you will respond in a more definite manner to the wonderful love of Jesus?

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THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

Barbara Big Eyes

By Mrs. M. McLeod

"BARBARA Big Eyes," that was what Daddy called her—not just because she had big blue eyes, but because, as Daddy said, her eyes were bigger than her stomach. Whenever she sat down to a meal, she really thought she should have as much on her plate as Mummie or even Daddy sometimes. She would promise so faithfully that she would eat up every bit, but

she rarely did, and so the food was very often wasted.

This worried Barbara's mother, for after all, she thought, it is wrong to waste food which God has caused to grow for us, especially when there are many people in the world who are often hungry and would be glad of the good food which some children throw away.

Then one day Mother had

an idea. When five-year-old Miss Barbara came home from school she said, "Barbara dear, I want to show you something."

She opened a missionary magazine in which were several pictures of the little boys and girls of Africa and India and China who were often hungry and sick and homeless, and who needed all the help we could give them. They needed schools, too, where they could learn to love Jesus.

Barbara was really very sorry when Mother talked to her about these children, and she said, "Oh! Mummie, couldn't we do something more to help them?"

Then Mummie said, "Yes dear, I think we could. You know very often you don't finish your dinner, and you don't finish your tea, and sometimes you leave your breakfast, too."

At this Barbara hung her head, for she knew it was all very true.

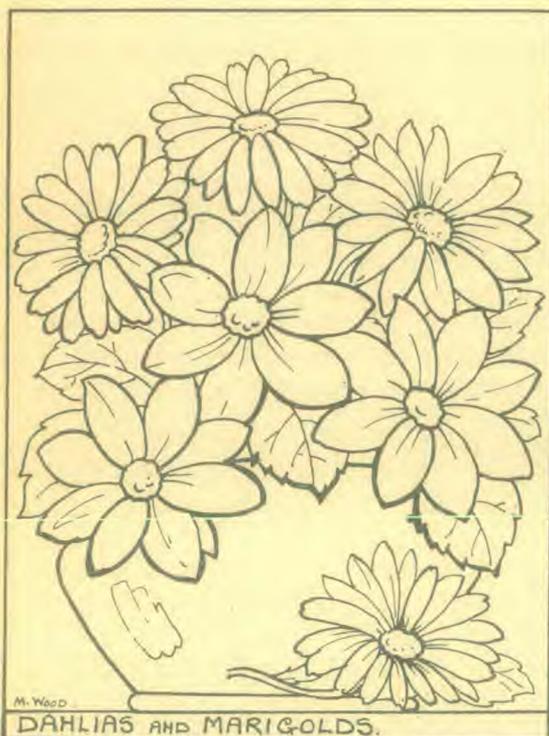
"Well," continued her mother, "I have decided to give you a penny for every meal which you eat up properly. Remember, that means drinking every drop of milk, too. Then you can put these pennies in your missionary box to help these hungry little boys and girls."

"Oh! Mummie," cried Barbara, clapping her hands, "that will be lovely."

"Yes, and this is the first week in October, so you should have a lot of money by the end of the quarter."

Barbara sat down to quite a small plate of salad for tea that day; but she was quite content, and ate up every bit, and drank every drop of milk, and she didn't leave a crumb of bread on her plate either.

However, at breakfast time, it was rather different. Barbara



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 November 29th.

M. Wood
DAHLIAS AND MARIGOLDS.

didn't get up the first time her mother called her, and then while she was having her breakfast she kept stopping to talk to Rex, the new puppy. So it happened that on this particular morning Barbara didn't get her penny, because she just hadn't time to finish her breakfast. Of course, it was a very disappointed little girl who went to school that day, but it taught her a lesson. Now she never needs calling twice in the morning, and if she wants to play with Rex.

she always eats her meal first. Missionary Day arrived at last and to her joy, Barbara had several shillings to take to Sabbath - school. How proud she was as she walked along that morning carrying her well-earned treasure, and how delighted the teacher and the other girls were, too, especially when the superintendent announced that class number two had collected twice as much as any other class and even three times as much as some.

join our Band? Everybody is welcome. Just tell them to write to me for details.

Keep shining, Sunbeams.

Yours affectionately,
AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 19

Prize-winners. — Ann Culbert, 32 Liberty Flats, Phipps Bridge Road, Merton Abbey, London, S.W.19. Age 14; Nigel Payne, 21 Bishops Drive, Bishops Cleeve, Nr. Cheltenham. Age 7.

Honourable Mention.—John Rich (Launceston); Molly Rich (Launceston); Maureen Woodman (Southampton); Amy Randlesome (Stockton); Pearl Rich (Launceston); Leonard Oatham (Dalston); Pauline Weller (Coventry); Albert Wagstaff (Rickmansworth); Irene Upton (Hoddesdon); Olive King (Chelmsford); Margaret Cutler (Langley); Jean Sparkes (Clapham Common); Janet Lister (Birmingham, 20); Maureen Allan (Carlisle); Maureen Codd (Luton); Jean Barlow (Manchester); Sally Bentley (Alresford); Patrick Gorman (Wandsworth); Margaret Mayell (Hastings); Ada Dull-gall (Carshalton); Eileen Sunley (York).

Those who tried hard.—Anne Tyers (Nottingham); Jannine McBain (Carlisle); Stephanie White (Norwich); Brian McTaggart (Carlisle); Roger Chisnall (Maldon); Barbara Elliott (Somercotes); Mary Watson (Carlisle); Hilton Sanderson (Carlisle); Ann Gentle (London, S.W.17); Robert Ashcroft (Wavertree); Maureen Browning (Falmouth); Jean Hammond (West-cliff-on-Sea); Susan Judd (Carlisle); Ruth Price (Wokingham); Paul Martine (Stockton); Barbara Cammish (Sheffield); Carol Osborne (London, S.E.1); Ron Burton (Norwich); Joy Doggett (Norwich); Kathleen Weatherall (Coventry); Kenneth Flowers (Norwich); Barbara Sanders (Newquay); Valerie Hughes (Bristol, 4); Keith Rant (Norwich); Graham Moulder (Cardiff); Eleonore Baron (Church); Muriel Forder (Norwich); Brenda Mace (Norwich); Jean Baldwin (Westcliff-on-Sea); Brenda Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Sylvia Cully (Belfast); Judith Connors (Rickmansworth); Elizabeth Ball (Yelverton); Jeanette Duffill (Erdington); Maisie Hannah (Kirkfieldbank); Ann Trimble (Norwich); Siegfried Baron (Church); Sheena Thompson (Huntly); Jim Doble (Watford); Sally Hunter (Choppington); Patricia Johnson (Mansfield); Mariebelle Gauld (Huntly); Janet Wheeler (Clapton); Diana Kay (Kettering); Roger Smith (Southampton); Gillian Walker (Loughborough); Carole Braimbridge (Hull); Marion Paget (Wokingham); Riette Ryman (Kensal Rise); No Name (Croydon); No Name (Cheltenham).

THE Sunbeams' CORNER



Cheer With a Smile

There's need of a smile, let me tell you to-day,
For sad, weary hearts you will pass on the way,
And you may whisper some sweet words of cheer,
When skies are all dark and dangers are near;
And so as you pass life's pathway along,
Do not leave out the smile nor the song.

Cheerless, sad eyes, that never may smile,
Keep always watching through life's little while,
With friendship all lost and bright visions fled;
Your smile may kindle bright in their stead,
Some ray of hope, of love, or of peace,
Whose heavenly missions will never cease.

Then make your life a clear beacon light,
And so let it cheer in some darkened night;
Let words and actions, all born of love,
Point ever to that Friend above.
Lighten earth's darkness with your smile,
Help sweeten some life's little while.

Robert Hare.

Your Letter

My Dear Sunbeams,

Our very pretty painting picture this time reminds me of a hymn I used to sing when I was young. I still love to sing it whenever I am able to be at a children's service. The chorus goes like this:

"Beautiful flowers, beautiful flowers,
Bright with morning dew;
Beautiful flowers, beautiful flowers,
We would be like you."

That's a fine desire to have, isn't it? Few flowers are more gay or bright than the ones in our picture. And when we think of brightness, we always think of our great family of Sunbeams. The flowers are bright and cheery even when all around may be dull and ugly; that's how we should be. The flowers tell us of God's love; we should do that, too. The sweet fragrance of the flowers gives real pleasure and joy; our lives also should be like sweet fragrance. They should be the kind of lives that give joy and pleasure to others.

If we keep our Sunbeam rules we can always be sure that our lives will be good. What this old world needs most to-day, is good people.

Why not try to get others to

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STRAWS in the WIND

DANGER SPOTS FOR BRITAIN

Writing to the *Times* recently, Mr. Somerset de Chair, M.P., says: "There are probably only two places where the British Empire can be irretrievably lost. One is on the shores of the English Channel, and the other is the Middle East. . . ."

FIVE MILLIONS EACH

The new intercontinental eight-jet bombers ordered by the U.S. government will cost over five million pounds each. The bomb sighting device alone will cost over £60,000.

History's Grand Design

(Continued from page 10.)

Because they failed to read in the prophetic page the sure fate of all dictators, they essayed to do what God said would never be done. And just as Daniel foretold, each one disastrously failed. God said they would not cleave and they have not cleaved! And if any other dictator has it in his mind to do what Hitler failed to accomplish, he will fail, too.

How Will it All End?

So far so good. But the anxious question still remains: Is history then to comprise an endless succession of nations rising and falling, expanding and contracting, overrunning and being overrun for ever?

Oh no, answers Daniel, interpreting the dramatic termination to the long story of the great image: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall

break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Verse 44.

Here at last, then, is history's grand design and glorious climax. This is the "one divine event to which all creation moves."

That it has been delayed so long is in the determined purpose of God that man's incapacity to order himself and his world in alienation from his Creator might be conclusively demonstrated. And in our time that final, tragic demonstration has been provided. The past half century has seen the culmination of human pride; it has also brought on its inevitable catastrophic fall. From the lips not of the prophets, but of scientists and statesmen, the alarm is being sounded to-day that civilization is tottering on the brink of the abyss. The hearts of men everywhere, as Jesus Himself foretold, are "failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:26.

The time, therefore, has come for God to act, and His intervention will not be long delayed. Sooner than perhaps even the people of God realize a startled world will "see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke 21:27) for the consummation of His purpose of salvation.

Urgent therefore is the appeal of Peter: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, . . . be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. . . . Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." 2 Peter 3:11, 14; 1:10.

God grant that all who read these words may be among those who will be ready and waiting when Jesus returns "the second time" (Heb. 9:28) unto the "salvation" both of His people and His world.

