

Greetings



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Christmas is home coming time the world over.

CHRISTMAS WEEK dawns, and the great rush home begins. Little green pasteboard tickets, which during the year trickled like an idling stream from the booking office window, now pour out in full spate into hands, whose owners' eyes see friends afar to whom no train can rush them quickly enough. And meanwhile, on far-away platforms, mothers and sweethearts await with longing the arrival of their kin, as between the two, the duplicated crack expresses and Christmas excursion trains rattle and roar. The song of the wheels is in rhythm with the songs in the hearts of the travellers, until the brakes grind and then squeal, doors are flung wide open, widespread arms embrace, there are hugs and kisses and smiles, an

Going Home for Christmas



By John R. Lewis

affectionate welcome to every homecomer. As on no other occasion is there such universal joy as when Christmas is spent with the family at home together around the fireside. And Christmas is only Christmas when all the family is at home.

Christmas spells more than tinsel and cards, parties and presents. It is an annual migration to the parental nest, an occasion when the eyes of loved ones gaze fondly into great depths and the universe awhile stands still. The lonely widow, the desolate orphan, unvisited and unthought of, these but emphasize by contrast the true nature of Yuletide, the season when the God-given desire for families to dwell together is gratified.

A Greater Reunion

Christian dogma asserts that this feast of embracing is prophetic in nature. That is to say, there is to be another day when there will be another journeying, to another home, when there will be a greater reunion, and a greater season of united heartwarming. This will be the day of the great second advent.

Christmas annihilates distance between those of one flesh. But it cannot ever annihilate the grave by resuscitating a dead father to take his old place in the armchair, nor can it ever annihilate time by bringing back those "loved long since and lost awhile." Time and the grave are barriers, impenetrable barriers, which we cannot break through yet.

On the other hand, our loving heavenly Father has "appointed a day" when there shall "be time no longer," a day when "dead men shall live . . . and the earth shall cast out the dead." The irrecoverable past, and the inscrutable grave will be no more when "all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." Imagination

holds a mirror to catch a reflection of that day. The generations of Noah will mingle with the contemporaries of Peter, and they with the latest converts from Indonesia and the Solomons. Children torn from their mothers' arms by death will be restored once more.

A lovely marble stands in the cathedral at Gloucester depicting a mother and her children being drawn from the sea (in which their ship foundered), to link hands with husband and father. What reunions! "From earth's wide bounds, and ocean's farthest coast" they come, and into the city of God "streams in a countless host."

*O then what raptured greetings,
On Canaan's happy shore.
What knitting severed friendships up,
Where partings are no more.
Then eyes with joy shall sparkle,
That dimmed with tears of late.
Orphans no longer fatherless,
Nor widows desolate.*

When the Curtain Lifts

The traditional observance of Christmas could not be better regarded than as a rehearsal of a reality to come when the curtain lifts on the kingdom of God; and the cynical Scrooge, and the godless doubter will be wise to refrain from rejecting this as a phantasy, until they have soberly considered the sayings of Scripture.

Jesus said to one bereaved woman, "Thy brother shall



them" and so be "ever with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16-18. This holiday, in holly-decorated Norman naves and in Gothic cathedrals, thousands upon thousands of throats will chant or sing of their understanding of the resurrection meeting and homecoming: "I believe in the resurrection of the dead, and the communion of saints." Many will sign themselves with the cross as a personal acceptance of this "blessed hope."

The original sowing of a seed, and the subsequent plucking of a fruit are undivorceable events, the one demanding the other. Which parable being interpreted means that the first advent, Christmas, far from being an isolated happening, is linked by time to the second advent.

Between the birth of Jesus in the manger and His glorious appearing in the heavens, there spans a bridge which humanity has now almost crossed.

Listen this Christmas to the carol singers, their trebles and basses filling the frosty night air as they sing first of the past when "it came upon the



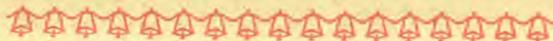
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In mansion and humble cot
col the spirit of Christmas
hallows family life,

rise again," and He accepted her faith when she replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." John 11:23, 24. And to this Paul adds more, saying, "the dead in Christ shall rise," and we shall be "together with

midnight clear," and then of the present: "For, lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old, . . . when the new earth and heavens shall own, the Prince of peace their King."

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Bethlehem Means VICTORY!

By Arthur S. Maxwell

❁ BETHLEHEM! The name is known to every man, woman, and child in Christendom; and to millions more who do not acknowledge Christ. Beyond question it is the most famous little city in the world.

Nor is there any danger of anyone's forgetting its existence, or the reason for its fame—not with the almost endless repetition of "Silent Night" and "O Little Town of Bethlehem" at this season of the year.

We all know—or should know—what happened there some nineteen hundred years ago, that night when Christ was born. But do we fully appreciate the wonder, the glory, the stupendous significance of the event?

All down the centuries, from David's time till now, thousands of babies have been born in Bethlehem, but only one made the name immortal. And that was Jesus. And why? Because He grew up to be an unusually good Man? Because He founded a new religion? No, but because He was the Son of God. In this He was fundamentally different from all others who have been born upon this planet.

To His virgin mother the angel Gabriel said: "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." Luke 1:35.

The Holy Child

And thus it happened. The holy Child was born. And in the fields near Bethlehem the angel declared to the shepherds, amid a blaze of heavenly



The victory bells of Bethlehem.

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radiance: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour; which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11.

At this moment was fulfilled an amazing prophecy, spoken long before by the prophet Micah: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Micah 5:2 (margin).

This prophecy, perhaps more than anything else, reveals the vast significance of what took place in this "tiniest township" of Judah in the long ago. It declares that it was not merely another birth that occurred that historic night, but rather

an invasion. Heaven broke in upon the human scene. The Eternal entered Time. God became man.

This is why we say so boldly that Bethlehem means victory; that it is the greatest source of hope ever offered to hopeless humanity.

For it tells us that this world is of infinite concern to its Creator; that He *so* loved it that He gave His only-begotten Son "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. It tells us that He cared from the infinite past and will care for the infinite future; that He who came out of "the days of eternity" into the limitations of Time will lead all who love Him out of Time into eternity. It is an assurance of life and happiness and peace without end.

Destiny of Nations

And more. Bethlehem tells us that the destiny of nations—and of the whole wide world—is not directed from any man-made capital, but from heaven. Not from Moscow or London, Peking or Paris, Rome or Washington, but from the throne of God. It confirms our faith that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that He has a plan for the future of this planet and its inhabitants which will most certainly be carried out.

Bethlehem also means victory for righteousness, truth, justice, love—all that is most precious in the sight of God—because it brought Him so fully into human affairs that He can never detach Himself from them until His principles and policies prevail. It involved Him so completely in man's struggle with evil that His honour, His integrity, His very existence, are at stake until the battle is won.

Having committed Himself with such selfless abandon to the ever-glorious, ever-mysterious incarnation, He cannot withdraw from the grim controversy with the powers of darkness until utter, incontestible triumph shall be His—until, as the apostle Paul says, Christ "shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. 1 Cor. 15:24, 25.

This sublime, universal, total triumph of the Eternal God, and all who love and serve Him, is traceable back to Bethlehem. Without Bethlehem and what happened there one night in the long ago, it could never be. What reason for rejoicing this Christmastide! What bulwark of hope for the years to come!



Going Home for Christmas

(Continued from page 3.)

Of course, while the prospects of living together for ever are so attractive, it must be remembered that this hope centres in our relationship to Jesus Christ. The questions, "What think ye of Christ?" and, "What will ye do with Jesus?" are questions we must all face, especially at Christmas time. If you can say in reply, "My Lord, and my God," then the bells that ring on the twenty-fifth of this month will ring very joyfully for you; they will be a prelude to that lovely day when the children of God all go home together, to their heavenly Father, nevermore to be separated from the warmth of His love for us all.



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We can be
"more than
conquerors"
through the
holy Babe.



By H. Lerolle

The shepherds find the divine Child lying in a manger.

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His Birth and Your Rebirth

By G. Elliott

IF WE can say that the population of the world is now increasing at the rate of one per cent per annum, it means that another human soul is ushered into the world for every second that passes. Who can compute the aggregate of the ages or assess the influence of any individual life?

The question-mark of destiny hovers over every human birth. Some who have entered this world have proved to be a curse to it. Their memory is recalled with execration. Multitudes have come and gone inconspicuously. Not a few have brought benefit to their fellow-men by their faithful exercise of talent and lives of consecrated service. Their birthdays, where known, are milestones in the records of history.

But of all the star-studded names of honour there is one which towers like a majestic beacon amid the surrounding plains. It is the name of Jesus Christ. For His brief, illustrious stay upon earth has not merely moulded history. It has effected its complete transformation. On a stupendous scale it has begotten hope, reoriented knowl-

edge, defended righteousness, defined peace, and diffused love. In so doing it has altogether changed innumerable lives. Millions have taken up the eulogy of one so blessed, saying, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!"

Appropriately, and in a tangible way, the world has seen fit to commemorate the advent of Jesus. There is an outward and visible sign of humanity's recognition of the Nativity, of its noblest and greatest Benefactor. We call it Christmas.

This emblem of age-long esteem may not in every aspect of its employment be praiseworthy. Indeed, in terms of time as an anniversary it cannot even be regarded as accurate! But in this providential concealment there is wisdom. A date on the calendar can command slavish adherence, or descend to a mere formality. It is the person within the event which demands attention. The glorious *fact* of Christ is sacrosanct.

What Bethlehem Has Meant to the World
Christmas, therefore, is the accepted token of

a birth that is supercharged with significance. In the historic appearance of Jesus Christ upon the earth was envisaged all the resulting beatitudes which have accrued to the human race as a direct consequence of His birth. For they could never have been but for the hallowed occasion marked by the celestial messenger nearly twenty centuries ago when he announced, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10, 11.

The burden of gladness sounded by the heavenly host at that time has been echoed ever since by mortal voices. Charles Wesley's famous doxology is an apt example:

*Hark the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.*

Here the precious message of the Gospel is put in a form which all can understand. It was not, of course, as a Babe that Jesus Christ carried the plan of redemption to its climax and brought about man's reconciliation with God. It was what He did subsequently when He had passed through adolescence to early manhood and reached the hour appointed. Nevertheless His birth initiated man's salvation. It led inevitably to the cross of Calvary where Jesus incurred the penalty and became the Sacrifice for our sins. Who can fail to see that this ultimate and tragic miracle of grace is logically traceable to the purpose for which He came into the world? As Wesley in the hymn continues:

Born that man no more may die.

But there is something else. Conceivably a large number of those who join in the season's festivities, who send their gifts and greet their friends, unite around their firesides to sing the verse of a Christmas carol to which they have given all too little thought. They may not consider, at all the vital change in their *own* experience the developments stemming from Bethlehem should have effected. Yet it is clearly brought to view in the astonishing words of the last stanza:

*Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth!*

Birth and Rebirth

Those who are poorly acquainted with the

truths of the Bible may perhaps be pardoned for asking, "Whatever did Charles Wesley mean?" When our Lord taught precisely the same doctrine, He met with a similar reaction from some in His day. To the statement of Christ, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," Nicodemus, in bewilderment, asked: "How can a man be born when he is old?" John 3:3, 4. It is certainly a poser. Yet it has so simple an explanation.

In the salvation of God through Jesus Christ there is a wondrous provision for the status of fallen man to be altered. The one who is "dead in sins" may be made "alive unto righteousness." He who is "alienated from the life of God" may be "made nigh through the blood of Christ" shed to bring about his reconciliation. The prodigal who admittedly is "no more worthy to be called Thy son," can be reunited to God's family. But how? Only through Christ who has made it possible for us to be "begotten of God." 1 John 5:18. Jesus, the sinless One, entered our world by means of a human birth. We, as repentant sinners, can only enter His world by way of a spiritual birth. He died for our sins that we might live again through His righteousness. He was "cut off" that we might be "grafted in." He came to end our powerless life and to bring to us "the power of an endless life."

That is the secret. The world's Redeemer did not, of course, have in mind anything so foolish as the second physical birth of an adult! He meant and taught quite clearly that just as a person normally becomes a member of the human family when born into it, so he or she can become one of the heavenly family only by being spiritually reborn "from above," not of flesh and blood "but of God." John 1:13. Receive Christ and His Word and the miracle is accomplished. (Verse 12 and 1 Peter 1:23.)

Christmas, therefore, for those who will take time for reflection, should have a dual significance. It stands first as the token of a birth—Christ's birth. But it is too, through all that developed from Bethlehem, a pointer to the new birth in Christ that every one of us must experience if ever we are to live with Him in His kingdom. (John 3:5.) It is good to know the facts about our Lord's appearing. Shall we not "follow on to know the Lord" in a new and joyous relationship?





Hail to the

PRINCE OF P

AT THIS season of the year our thoughts turn naturally to the ever-lovely story of the Babe of Bethlehem. The coming of the Christ-Child into this world was undoubtedly the greatest event of our human history. All previous ages reached their quiet climax as this "silent night" spread its holy hush over the gentle Judean hills. And every succeeding age has increasingly felt the power and wonder of that divine Life which had so humble a human beginning that first Christmas.

A well-loved child invariably has many names. The affection of a fond mother, and that of a fond father too, will lead them spontaneously to

apply to the "little stranger" special terms of endearment which they would carefully refrain from mentioning to the registrar!

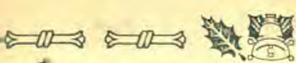
The Babe of Bethlehem also, was given many names. Some were bestowed upon the Child by inspired prophets centuries before He was born. Other glorious names, of profound and arresting significance, were given to Him by His heavenly Father at the time of His birth. (Matt. 1:21-25.) Still other wonderful names and titles have been applied to Him by later apostles and prophets as they have struggled with language to express, not only their own awe and adoration, but also all that He was, and is, and will be, to a desperately needy human race.

Probably one of the noblest of all the names that our Saviour bears, the title that holds for us such infinite comfort and appeal, is that which was used by the saintly Isaiah when he prophesied concerning the first advent, seven hundred years before it occurred. Speaking of the coming Deliverer, he declared: "Unto us a Child is born: . . . His name shall be called . . . The Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6.

"Princes of War" and the "Prince of Peace"
The suffering human family, from its earliest

The watching shepherds hear the news of the birth of the world's Saviour.





ACE



beginnings until now, from Nimrod to Alexander—from Attila to Hitler, has ceaselessly groaned under the cruelties and rapacities of "princes of war." Men have arisen who have gloried in carnage—who have made an increasingly "fine art" of bloody conflict. Homes by the million have been desolated, hearts riven, and happy communities torn asunder through the misguided ambitions and the often purely selfish manias of these proud "princes of war."

But in Bethlehem's manger there was born the Prince of peace. Nimrod is now almost a legend, Alexander is remembered chiefly as a pitiable spectacle, Attila is a forgotten barbarian, and Hitler a repulsive memory. But the Prince of peace lives on, His conquests more mighty and far-reaching than ever before.

At the time of the Saviour's birth, an angelic announcement specified what would be the main effects of His mission. The angel declared that Jesus would so live as to bring, first, "Glory to God in the highest," and, secondly, to bring "on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:14.

How definitely this angelic prediction was fulfilled! The Saviour's supreme aim, in all that He said and did, was to bring glory to His Father. Toward the close of His earthly ministry, while bowed in almost His final prayer of resignation, Jesus was able to say to His Father, "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." John 17:4.

But just as Christ was concerned to bring glory to God, He also endeavoured to bring real, satisfying peace—the peace "which passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4:7), into the hearts of men. He did this by revealing to men that God was their Father in the highest and tenderest sense of the word. To a perplexed and care-worn generation He declared, "The Father Himself loveth you." John 16:27.

Jesus showed us how we may most quickly and truly become our heavenly Father's acknowledged

By B. Ploekhorst
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"Peace on earth, good will to men," sing the angels.

children—by being, in all our words and actions, peace-lovers and peace-makers. At the very outset of His ministry, when He embarked upon a clear and forthright statement of His message, Jesus declared most emphatically, "Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. 5:9.

Although constantly subject to bitter attacks from many quarters, Jesus was essentially, both inwardly and outwardly, a Man of peace. His method was quietly, powerfully effective. "He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets." Matt. 12:19. He was never a party to public unrest or disturbance, and when His disciples, humanly enough, had any

By ERNEST COX

disputings or disagreements among themselves, it was significantly always in their Master's absence; and invariably their Master's presence and counsel solved their problem.

Indeed, such was the inspiring serenity of His habitual demeanour—such was the happy tranquillity they had always felt when with Him,

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The Transforming Word

By W. L. Emerson



These Solomon Islanders are typical of the miracles of grace wrought in all the earth by the transforming Word.

THE inspiration of the Bible is, as we have shown in earlier articles, clearly indicated by its inspired unity, its incomparable teachings, its timelessness, the universality of its appeal, and the divine foreknowledge revealed in its prophecies. But the supreme evidence that the Bible is God's Word is the way in which it transforms the lives of those who submit themselves to its influence and power.

"In the Bible," said the poet Samuel Coleridge Taylor, "there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together; the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit."

When a man takes the divine diagnosis of the human heart to himself, like the publican in the parable he cries out in deep humiliation and contrition of soul: "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Then led by the Book to the throne of

grace he finds in Christ forgiveness, justification, and a new power for living.

What spiritual transformations the Bible wrought in the days of the early church! Coming into a world fast falling before the tide of luxury, social corruption, and licentious idolatry, it produced Christians whose eminence in virtue has perhaps never been surpassed.

In fact, the emperor Julian held up the Christians to the imitation of the pagans for their love to their enemies and for the sanctity of their lives.

In later days, the Bible took a poor prisoner from an English jail and made of him John Bunyan, author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

It inspired the calm endurance of the Waldenses and the Huguenots, the courage of Huss and Jerome, the fervour of Luther, of Calvin, of John Knox, of Whitfield, and of the Wesleys. It sent the Pilgrim Fathers across the seas to the New World to find a sanctuary in the wilderness.

And today the power of the Bible is winning its way into the darkest corners of the earth. It has wrought a work in the hearts of head-hunters and cannibals of the South Seas, among the teeming millions of the Orient, in the villages of India, amid the jungles of Africa, far up in the South American Andes, and down in the forests of the Amazon.

North, south, east, and west it has penetrated, and wherever it has gone it has lifted men out of degradation and sin and revived in them the image of their Creator.

Miracles of the South Seas

How was it that the flyers of World War II who parachuted down from their burned-out

planes upon the islands and atolls of the South Seas found there natives who bandaged their wounded bodies, carried them to shelter and safety, and supplied their every need until they could return to their own people? Because the Bible had gone to these islands long before war struck and had made of these one-time savages courageous and loving Christians.

An evangelist to the Indians of North America records the inimitable testimony of one converted chief. Holding what he called the Big Praying Book in his hands he declared:

"Big night! All dark! No light! Dark night! Above dark! Inside dark night! This book rising sun, make light for feet, words sweet. I keep Big Praying Book near."

And that indeed is the testimony of millions, civilized and erstwhile savage.

An old Highlander once said to Claudius Buchanan: "I cannot argue with you; I cannot present facts or reasons; I cannot explain the philosophy of revelation; but I know this, that when I was a man of evil character the Bible got hold of me and quelled the tiger in me."

True, this transforming power of the Book is not evident in every life, for all are free to receive or reject it. But wherever its message is allowed free course the Bible remakes men.

Guide and Guard Through Life

Not only does the Bible make new creatures in Christ Jesus, but it is for ever after the Guide and Guard of those who commit their lives to its keeping.

It is the Instructor of the young. It sanctifies marriage and makes of home a heaven on earth. It comforts in sorrow. It steadies the keel of life's barque in time of storm. It sustains in trial. "It has a word of peace for the time of peril, a word of comfort for the day of calamity, a word of light for the hour of darkness." The Bible is indeed a book for bad times as well as good.

When the Lagerkommandant of Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp came to ask Dr. Martin Niemoller if he had any wishes, he said: "I have many wishes, but one wish above all—that you give back to me my Bible, and that right away!" And though Bibles were prohibited in the camp by

strict regulations, Niemoller got his Bible back.

"What did this Book mean to me," he writes, "during the long and weary years of solitary confinement, and then for the last four years at Dachau Cell-Building? The Word of God was simply everything to me—comfort and strength, guidance and hope, master of my days and companion of my nights, the Bread of life which refreshed my soul."

"Today," declared Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, hero of one of the most thrilling rescues of the Pacific in World War II, "I realize that I probably would not be here had it not been for the spiritual light and the moral power learned from this Book which has carried me through the many crises of my life."

Yes, the Bible meets the needs of all men everywhere and at all times, and it gives to man a "blessed hope" of a place and a part in God's ultimate purpose.

The Bible the Source of Liberty and Order

Not only has the Bible through the ages remade men, but through individual men it has remade communities and nations. True it is that Western civilization during the past half century or so has been no recommendation for the Christianity it is supposed to profess, but that is because it has



Won from heathen darkness through the power of the Word, these Ethiopian nurses are preparing to follow in the steps of the Great Physician.





largely deserted the spiritual bases upon which the founding fathers of the West first built.

But take a map and follow the spread of enlightenment, freedom, and the amelioration of human relations during the past five centuries and you will see that these conditions came with the free spread of the Bible.

However far the West has departed from its primal faith, it is a fact that the Decalogue is the foundation of the jurisprudence of the nations of the West and the Sermon on the Mount outlines the principles of true social rights.

Where the Bible has gone and its principles have been incorporated into the lives of men and communities there has come equality and freedom, respect for law, and mutual service. "Dictators fear the Bible—and for good reason," asserted Lowell Thomas. "It inspired the Magna Charta and the Declaration of Independence."

Bible Uplifts the Degraded

The Bible has done more than any other power in the uplifting of the degraded peoples of the world, both in the transformation of their temporal lives and in the conversion of their souls. The men whose names stand out as pioneers in the darkened lands of earth are those who have been fired by the dynamic of the Book—Livingstone and Moffatt in Africa, Carey in India, Judson in Burma, Paton in the South Seas, and multitudes more in recent times.

Who, in most cases, have reduced the language of heathen peoples to writing and provided them with a means of intercourse with the outside world? The men of the Book. Who have educated them, taught them the principles of health and cleanliness, kindness to others, and especially to the children, the women, and the aged? The men of the Book!

It was a hard, individualistic world into which Christianity came. There was little thought for the sick, the distressed, the children, the aged, and the poor. The Bible maxim, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," has wrought the change.

The early Christian churches were centres of relief for the poor and sick. It was the Reformation of the sixteenth century which revived the idea of communal charity and friendship from which the organized charities of our own times have developed. The wellsprings of benevolence are

in the message of goodwill which has radiated from the Book of God.

The Bible has always fostered education. It was in the Christian communities that the light of education was kept burning during the barbarian inroads, and the heritage of the past was preserved. The universities of Europe invariably began as religious foundations and it was through Bible-loving Christians that schools were first provided for the children of the poor. The modern system of day-schools is the outcome of the Sunday school movement which played so important a part in the education of the masses, in both secular and religious knowledge, in the early days of the industrial revolution.

Space will not permit to multiply evidences of the salutary influence of the Bible upon society, but where its spirit has been allowed to work it has invariably brought liberty, tolerance, equality, charity, into the relations between men. It has uplifted the degraded, transformed the dissolute, imparted moral strength, and fostered spiritual regeneration. It has ministered to the poor, the weak, and the helpless.

In a word, the Bible has been in the forefront of every great movement for the betterment of domestic life, social life, national life, and international relations. And the lands where these blessings have in our time been extinguished and replaced by unparalleled tyranny and brutality and disregard of life, liberty, and truth, are the lands where the Bible has been proscribed and destroyed.

In direct proportion to the departure of men and nations from God, darkness has replaced light; degradation has succeeded enlightenment; hate has superseded love; and brutality, kindness and benevolence. Moral and spiritual deterioration have invariably followed the casting out of the Bible from the lives of men and society.

Whence, we ask, comes the amazing power of this Book? From myths, legends, allegories? Are natural causes adequate to explain these unique and marvellous effects? No, the power which has produced these transformations lies in its source, which is God, and its principle, which is love. And that power of God, inherent in His Word, is still able to transform those who will submit themselves to its influence and prepare them for an entrance into the kingdom which God is soon to establish in all the earth. Who then are willing

to allow their lives to be transformed by the dynamic of divine grace which is waiting to be released from the pages of the Book of God?

(Next Time: "The Enduring Word.")

The Prince of Peace

(Continued from page 9.)

that, as the dreaded hour of separation approached, Jesus promised the disciples that His peace should always remain among them. Despite the expedient withdrawal of His presence, He promised them, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. . . . These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace." John 14:27; 16:33.

The Saviour's parting gift of inward peace was not merely for the disciples' own benefit or satisfaction. Jesus, as the Prince of Peace, gave His followers this rich spiritual endowment because He well knew that their preaching of His cross, their establishing of His church, would involve them in a relentless struggle "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6:12.

The disciples would be contending against the evil forces of Satan, the prince of darkness and war. They could only hope to overcome, both for themselves and for others, as they were equipped with the mighty resources of the Prince of Light and Peace.

Later, when Jesus was arraigned before the Roman governor, Pilate—not unaccustomed to the presence of princes—was conscious that no commoner or mere pretender stood before him. It was apparent to him that there could be some foundation for the Jews' charge that Jesus claimed to be "Christ a king." Luke 23:2.

On being questioned, Christ did not disclaim His kingship, but He explained the character of His kingdom. It was "not of this world." John 18:36. Jesus was, and is, the Prince of the kingdom of peace. His kingdom will not, and cannot, be fully established until He has made "wars to cease unto the end of the earth." Psa. 46:9.

We realize today, more than ever, how difficult a matter it is, to bring about peace where before there has been strife. And even when a measure of peace has been restored, what delicate dealings become necessary in order to preserve it.

Jesus has been striving now for over six thousand years to promote His policy of peace. The happiness of God's universe suffered its first tragic disruption when Satan made "war in heaven." Rev. 12:7. Eventually the devil and his minions were expelled from the sacred courts and heaven regained its former tranquillity.

But though Satan was displaced, his contentions were not entirely disproved nor his forces finally defeated. This unfortunate earth became his convenient stronghold. But now his consistent policies of deceit and division among men, leading ever to yet more horrible slaughter, have been amply demonstrated.

Soon, however, the Prince of peace will return to intervene on behalf of His saints and to "scatter . . . the people that delight in war." Psa. 68:30. He will show to all that war results from wickedness, but "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." Isa. 32:17.

At that glorious day, the angels' Christmas song, inspiring as it was, will give place to the yet nobler anthem from the glad hearts and lips of the whole creation, "Worthy is the Lamb . . . to receive . . . honour, and glory, and blessing."

Then, at last we shall see, and for ever serve Him "whose right it is," as Prince of peace, to reign. (Ezek. 21:27.)

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CHILDREN'S PAGES

What a Christmas Card Did

By M. G. Belleini

RAT-a-tat-tat!
Joyce, who had been listening eagerly for this welcome sound, ran to the door, for it was Christmas morning and she knew somebody would be thinking of them.

"Six cards for me," she called

gaily; "four for Cyril, and ever so many for Mum and Dad."

Cyril glanced at his cards, and then, boy-like, pushed them aside and busied himself with a new game. Joyce looked at hers more carefully, and then exclaimed, in rather a disappointed tone:

"Oh, Mummy, one of my cards is addressed to 'Mrs. J. Cooper.' It did so look like 'Miss Cowper.'"

Mrs. Cowper took the card from her little daughter. It was a large one, highly-coloured and adorned with tinsel flowers and lettering.

"What a pity!" she said. "It is from a child, and she has addressed it here by mistake. I'm sure it is not meant for me, because I do not know a little girl named Nancie."

Joyce came to her mother's side, and read the writing on the card. It said: "With lots of love to dear Mrs. Cooper from her little friend Nancie."

"Isn't it a lovely card?" Joyce said, for she loved bright colours. "The lady would have been pleased with it. And I wonder who Nancie is. But what shall we do with the card, Mummy?"

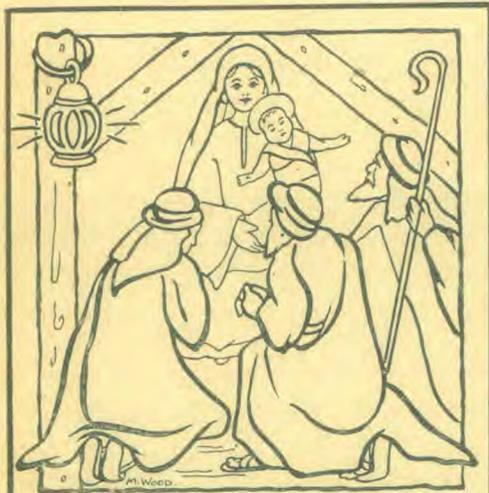
Mrs. Cowper said they would give it to the postman when next he came, or else write "not known" on the envelope and post it again. Then, as they were all going to spend Christmas with friends, the card was put carefully away with others, and for the time forgotten.

Christmas soon went by, and New Year's morning was bright and clear.

"It really looks 'new,'" said Joyce. "Just as a New Year should begin."

She was preparing to go shopping when a timid knock was heard at the door. Outside stood a little girl about the same age as Joyce. Her coat was rather thin and worn, she wore no gloves, and her hands were cold.

"Please," she said, in answer to Joyce's smile, "please did the postman bring a card here on Christmas morning for Mrs.



WHEN THEY
SAW THE STAR
THEY REJOICED

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 December 24th. (In case OUR TIMES arrives late, still send your entry. All attempts will be considered.)



Cooper? I must have made a mistake and put 'No. 12 Crown Road.' instead of 'Crown Court.'"

Joyce, who had quite forgotten the card, was beginning to shake her head when she suddenly remembered.

"Oh, are you Nancie?" she asked. "Please, wait, and I will find it."

Having found the card, she handed it to the little stranger, who looked at it sorrowfully.

"Thank you," she said; "but I am sorry poor Mrs.

Cooper did not get it for Christmas. I called there, and she told me she had not received it, nor had anyone been to see her. You see, she is very old and lonely, and I sometimes go and see her: but this Christmas the baby was ill, and as Mother could not spare me, I saved up and bought this card to let her know I thought of her."

Mrs. Cowper, who had heard all the little girl said, now came forward and said kindly:

"It was a pity, dear; but it is not too late now to let your friend know you had remembered; take the card and let her see it. And wait, I will send her a little cheer for the New Year from my little girl."

"Oh do, Mummy," said Joyce, excitedly. "And please can I go with Nancie and see the old lady?"

"If Nancie would like you to," replied Mrs. Cowper, after a slight hesitation, as she wondered if "Crown Court" were a fit place for her dainty little Joyce to visit. But Nancie's face was bright with pleasure at the thought of Joyce's company, so she cast aside her fears and the two little girls were soon on their way, with a basket of good things, feeling, as Joyce said, like "little Red Riding Hoods."

Mrs. Cooper was agreeably surprised that New Year's morning. She was a dear old lady who



STAR

had "known better days," but who now was very poor in her lonely old age.

But that New Year's morning was the beginning of a really happy New Year for her, for she found a real friend in Mrs. Cowper, besides the many visits

from her "twin sunbeams," as she named the two little girls, who became firm friends in a very short time.

It was not long before Mrs. Cowper was able to make friends with Nancie's mother, and found she could help in many ways. Joyce's brother, Cyril, and Nancie's brother Bob, also became chums.

When Christmas came the next year, Mrs. Cooper had cards and good cheer in plenty; and, better still, she had a warm fire-side, with happy, friendly faces around her, all doing their best to make up for the lonely Christmases of the past. And all this came about because a Christmas card was sent to the wrong house.

Results of Competition No. 21.

Prize-winners.—Lydia Harris, 119 Fallowfield, Cambridge, Age 12; Colin Doggett, 58 Wellesley Avenue, Norwich, Norfolk, Age 9.

Honourable Mention.—David Wright (Wirral); Eleonora Baron (Accrington); Nigel Payne (Woodmancote); Antony Peart (Gloucester); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Amy Randlesome (Suffolk); Siegfried Baron (Accrington); Richard Payne (Woodmancote).

Those who tried hard—Leon Liddament (Norwich); Sylvia Esson (Scotland); Stuart Payne (Woodmancote); Bill Stevens (Bristol); Myra Brown (Glasgow); Christopher Slade (Watford); Linda Boyd (Pontypridd); Graham Hardy (Derby); Margaret Peart (Gloucester); Stephanie Port (Upton); Patricia Going (Essex); Lesley Hardy (Derby); Raymond Evans (Walworth); David Booth (Plaistow); Rosemary Going (Ashingdon); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Gay Field (East Dulwich); Janis Bellringer (Lymington); Lucy Farnell (London); May Gamble (London); Adrienne Edwards (Torquay); Margaret Ramsay (Greenock).



*Auntie Margaret
sends
Christmas Greetings
to all her Sunbeams*



Bethlehem

By Pamela M. Jones

Little Baby as we steal
Round Thy cradle bed to kneel,
Lost in wonder, love, and grace,
May we see Thy lovely face?

As we hear the angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King,"
May we learn as ne'er before,
How to love Thee more and more.

As of old the shepherds came,
May we worship just the same,
Though we bring no gift as they,
Must we sadly turn away?

Little Baby as we steal
In our hearts be born anew,
Making this our birthday, too.

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Wondrous STAR

Oh wondrous star, that shone so bright
O'er Judah's hills of old,
Shine still upon our way tonight
And lead us to the fold,

The world is cold and filled with strife
Which thou alone canst calm,
Sing to our hearts thy song of peace
And heal us with thy balm.

Oh, lead us back to Bethlehem
Where bitterness is o'er;
Oh guide us to the cattle stall
Where self shall be no more.

Beam now upon our waning love,
And with thy light divine,
Rekindle, as of old, a flame
For lost mankind to shine.

Shed thy pure light upon our lives,
Our thoughts, our words and ways,
Till murmurings and discord change
To joy and endless praise.

Oh, wondrous star, shine on till night
And time shall pass away,
Till heaven's morning dawns and all
Is lost in perfect day.

By D. A. R. Aufranc

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