

# SIGNS *of the* TIMES

WORLD EVENTS  
IN THE LIGHT  
OF PROPHECY

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*"Unto Us a  
Child - -"*

● THE GLORIOUS MYSTERY  
OF THE INCARNATION

*H. F. De'Ath*

The Madonna and Child.  
This picture is attributed  
to the Flemish painter Jan  
Mabuse (1472-1532). The  
picture contains anachron-  
isms, but has great beauty,  
and the figures are painted  
with ethereal grace.

THE conception and birth of a new life is always fascinating and wonderful; and, under proper conditions, it may be very beautiful. But the most wonderful and the most beautiful happening of all time was the conception and the birth of Jesus; for God was in it from first to last, all the time, as Luke, the Gospel writer, makes so clear.

The story is linked with the conception and the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. And the way these two women, Elisabeth, the mother of John, and Mary, her cousin, the mother of Jesus, compared notes of their experiences is both reverent and touching. Both became mothers apart from the ordinary course of nature, although in Mary's case the miracle was much more marked, as it was fraught with much greater consequences to the world.

Three months before Elisabeth was due to give birth to John, "the angel

Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel . . . said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." Luke 1: 26-28.

This gracious but apparently vague salutation puzzled Mary, until the angel came to the heart of the message: "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus." Verses 30, 31.

"SILENT night, holy night;  
Shepherds first saw the light;  
Midst the angels' hallelujah  
Loud resounds from far and near,  
'Christ the Saviour is here,  
Christ the Saviour is here.'"

The inexpressible thrill of Mary's womanly heart as the angel tenderly pronounced her name and told her of God's great favour must have been great indeed. This simple, trusting maiden was to be the mother of the Son of God; through the transcendent operation of the Holy Spirit within her, she, a woman of lowly birth, was to be the envied mother of the long-cherished Hope of Israel. Wonder of wonders! How could it be? That was not for her, nor for us, to know or to understand. It was to be, "for," as the angel truly said, "with God nothing shall be impossible." So Mary believed the angel's message, and expressed that belief by these simple, trustful words, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Verses 37, 38.

And it came about that "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped Him in



swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Luke 2: 6, 7.

Yes, the promise of the angel had come true; but here again was apparent cause for misgiving—"no room for them in the inn"! There was only a stable, where the breathing of cattle was felt and heard. When a king is born, it is usually in luxurious surroundings and under ideal conditions. Heralds announce it publicly, and crowds rejoice over the event. But the Son of God, the King of kings, attracted less notice than did the most obscure babe in Bethlehem!

But that is just God's way. Mary, so far, had believed the impossible. So far her faith had been rewarded. But she must go on believing the impossible in spite of forbidding appearances. At every turn, her Son, Jesus, was to be the living reminder that "with God nothing shall be impossible." He was the Son of God—the Almighty had said so through the angel Gabriel. Yet every human circumstance of His birth and His life seemingly denied that declaration. In nothing was He to be like the kings of earth. His birth, His upbringing, His demeanour, His home, His message, His death, were to be as unlike those of an earthly king as the kingdom of heaven is unlike the kingdoms of this world.

Many, many times Mary was perplexed in her mind about the destiny of her Son, but she "pondered" the word of God, and gained thereby faith and assurance at each stage of His career; and, only as we ponder the record of His birth and life and teaching are we able to apprehend and appropriate the power of God that is in and through Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus was born of comparatively poor parents, and brought up in a modest working-class home, that He might appreciate the struggles of the masses of mankind. He learned, by the very things He experienced, to be a true representative of God and of all mankind.

He went about everywhere, moved freely among all classes of people, high and low, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, that He might familiarize Himself with the manifold needs of mankind. He was, and is, our true exemplar. No wholesome joy of life did He attempt to kill; but He sought with all His soul to teach man to put first things first, and so to make sure above all things of possessing that life which is eternal.

BEGIN by denying yourself, and by and by you forget yourself. The kindness which was at first just a duty becomes a pleasure and a joy. Self-denial becomes glorified into self-forgetfulness.—*Brooke Herford*.

# BETHLEHEM

● Ernest Lloyd



A glimpse of modern Bethlehem, with the belfry of a modern church in the foreground.

HOW poor this world would be today if there had been no Christ-child in Bethlehem, no cross on Calvary, and no risen Lord! Who can resist the ennobling and regenerating power that had its birth in the little town of Bethlehem? Who does not feel the magnetic influence of Him who said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me"? John 12: 32. The masters of brush and chisel, the makers of song and story, have given their best to tell all men of the deathless power of Bethlehem's Saviour. Libraries groan with the weight of books telling how Bethlehem has divinely influenced literature, laws, education, and the moral and physical uplift of mankind.

"Wherever men struggle for liberty, wherever home life is cherished, friendships cultivated, childhood protected, peace maintained, self-sacrifice encouraged, spiritual values recognized, there you will find a living connection with Jesus of Bethlehem."

The teachings of the lowly-born Jesus have been translated into more than one thousand languages and dialects of earth, bringing joy and peace and hope to countless millions of grateful readers the world round. No popular best seller among books can even compare in circulation with His Book. Who would spend twenty-five years translating Shakespeare to some savage tribe? But such periods of

unremitting toil have been given hundreds of times for the Man of Galilee.

On the backs of horses and camels, elephants and llamas, goes His message of redeeming love. Hauled by dogs, reindeer, and men, loaded into canoes, roped on arctic sleds, balanced on the heads of African porters, travels this same living Word. It is read in the huts of the headhunters of Borneo, and by the heart hunters of Bolivia; in the igloo of the Eskimo by the light of his blubber lamp, and in the palatial homes of the rulers of earth.

As we meditate on the wonderful birth of Jesus, and its beautiful and eternal meaning, the heart is fired with a consecrated passion for the redemption of men, women, and children whom He came into the world to seek and to save.

We remember, too, the angel's message at the ascension—"This same Jesus" will come again. He calls upon His disciples everywhere today to prepare the way for His imminent return. His commission comes ringing down the centuries to us: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Mark 16: 15; Matt. 28: 20.

With His promised presence and power to accompany them, nothing will stop His messengers in their glorious work for the establishment of His kingdom.

## The Inner Chamber

I CANNOT choose my surroundings, but I can choose my thoughts. I cannot hinder evil entering my mind, but I need not, unless I like, bid it welcome and ask it to stay. I can get rid of it best not by direct attack, but by what soldiers call a flank movement. To face the evil thoughts in your own mind, and try to think them away, is, in most cases, to make the trouble worse by concentrating attention upon it. The better way is Paul's—whatsoever things are true, pure, lovely, and of good report, think on these things. The good will expel the evil. Beyond our profession, they declare what we are. If, beyond our poor speech and imperfect discipleship, we want our lives to speak for Christ, we must love Him and worship Him, and cleave to Him, just in our inmost hearts.—*Archibald Alexander*.



# NOTE and COMMENT

Current Topics Reviewed



## Dr. Carrel on Present-Day Mistakes

THE great French scientist, Dr. Alexis Carrel, after thirty-three years of brilliant biological research at the Rockefeller Institute in the United States, retired from that Institute in 1939, having reached the age of sixty-five years. Dr. Carrel had perfected the surgical technique that made blood transfusion easy, and was world famous also for a number of other brilliant achievements, and he could not retire from work and endeavour, so he returned to France to offer his surgical experience to the government. He witnessed the collapse in France—saw what has happened to an easy-going people lacking self-discipline. He has since returned to America. In an article in one of the American magazines, Dr. Carrel says:—

"Everything has been too easy for most of us. All life has aspired to the condition of an English week-end—a Thursday-to-Monday holiday of minimum effort and maximum pleasure. Amusement has been our national cry; 'a good time' our chief concern. The perfect life, as viewed by the average youth or adult, is a round of ease or entertainment, of motion pictures, radio programmes, parties," and alcoholic and other excesses.

He goes on to say:—

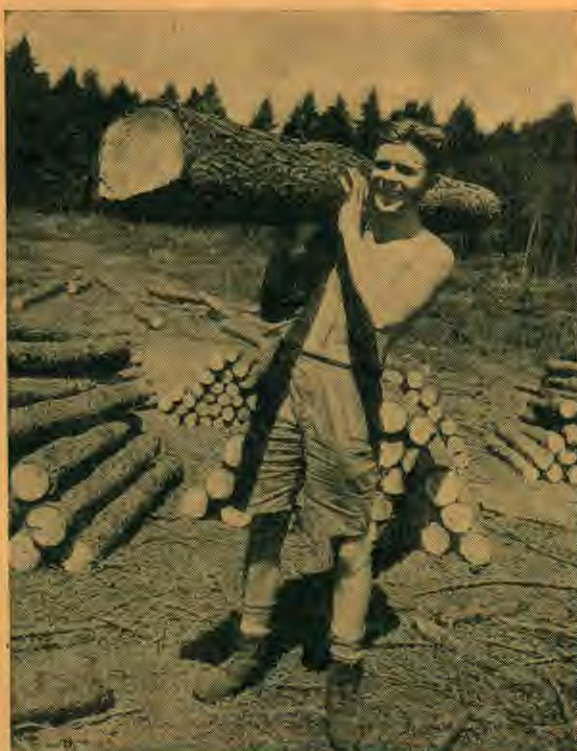
"This indolent and undisciplined way of life has sapped our individual vigour, imperilled our democratic form of government. Our race pitifully needs new supplies of discipline, morality, and intelligence. . . . Although vast social betterment schemes have been projected, we have forgotten that these ultimately depend for their vitality upon the individual citizen. 'You cannot carve rotten

wood,' says the Chinese proverb. Nor can you carve decayed character into the durable under-pinnings of a better race."

Dr. Carrel says that discipline is necessary if physical fitness is to be attained. A multitude of ease-making inventions tempt people to muscular flabbiness. If the physical powers are not exercised, they degenerate. This famous French surgeon says that, appalled by bodily degeneration, people make resolutions to take more exercise—to walk home from the office or take exercise in other forms, but, after a few days, resolution flags and "the underbrush of laziness grows up around us again."

Dr. Carrel rightly insists that outdoor exercise, with its contact with the sun and fresh air, is necessary for bodily vigour and good health. "We all need," he says, "more sun, wind, and weather as tonic for the body. Exposure whips up effort in sweat glands, lungs, and circulatory system. This effort is quickly translated into health and energy."

Self-discipline is necessary to the obtaining of the regular exercise that builds health and vigour, and is essential also to securing and preserving mental strength and vigour.



"Man's intellect must be kept supple by discipline," he says. He points out that in Plato's academy young Greeks of old discussed political and moral problems, while, in the twelfth century, students walked a hundred miles to hear a simple lecture by the scholar Abelard. "Today," says Dr. Carrel, "our young people slump into a silly cinema, or seek the jittery stimulation of a radio band. This flagrant waste of life's formative years arouses no protest from parents. It is shocking."

Dr. Carrel also puts in a plea for moral culture, which is just as essential as physical and mental culture. He says: "Morality, too, demands discipline. Moral beauty is a rare but very striking phenomenon. It confers upon those who possess it an inexplicable energy, a conspicuous charm, a commanding power."

Physical, mental, and moral and spiritual culture are all necessary if the character is to be well rounded out and balanced. In other words, there must be true education, which a great Christian writer has well defined as "the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers." It prepares one for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.

The great book that inspires one to self-conquest and self-discipline, and unfolds the principles upon which all right thinking, speaking, and living must be based, is of course the Bible. There is nothing that begins to compare with the Bible as a builder of moral and spiritual excellence, and it is also a wonderful strengthener of the intellect, improving the memory and giving a sound, well-balanced mind. It develops a right attitude toward physical work, puts the things of time and eternity in true perspective, develops a correct attitude toward duty and service, and imparts a distaste and aversion toward amusements and practices that injure and demoralize.

Those who spend time with its pages and obey or live out its precepts, will not be guilty of making the mistakes that Dr. Carrel so roundly condemns—the mistakes of seeking mere amusement and a so-called "good time," and the following of practices that are destructive of the physical, mental, and moral powers.

The Bible presents the highest incentives to self-discipline and righteous living, and gives full directions for living a life that is an honour to God and a blessing to one's fellow-

An Oxford University undergraduate engaged in forestry work at Savernake, England, during the vacation. It is wise to combine useful physical work with mental labour.



men, and hence a happy and successful life.

"And now, brethren," said the Apostle Paul to the elders of the church at Ephesus, "I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts 20: 32. And to Timothy he wrote: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17. K.



## To the Country and the Seaside!

ONE of the writers on the staff of a large Melbourne daily newspaper stated not long ago that she preferred the country to the city. That writer is, of course, not alone in that choice. There are numerous people who love the green and the charm, the restfulness and the peace, of the countryside, with its sweet fresh air, picturesque scenes that delight the eye, and bird melodies that give such exquisite pleasure to the ear. The lines of the poet Cowper are well known: "God made the country, and man made the town." And someone has added, "And the devil made the cities."

The holidays that accompany the Christmas and New Year season afford a good opportunity to many city dwellers to get away from the dust and noise of town life, and to enjoy a change to the country or the seaside; and if it is at all possible to manage, it is eminently wise for city dwellers to get this change.

That great lover of nature, Thoreau, who wrote so beautifully of the woods and life within them, has said:—

"We need the tonic of wildness—to wade sometimes in marshes where the bittern and the meadow hen lurk, and hear the booming of the snipe; to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds her nest, and the mink crawls with its belly close to the ground. We can never have enough of nature. We must be refreshed by the sights of inexhaustible vigour, vast and titanic features, the seacoast with its wrecks, the wilderness with its living and decaying trees, the thundercloud, the rain."

The great Hebrew Psalmist lived as a boy very close to the heart of nature as he kept and tended his father's sheep among the Judean hills; and the charm of the country—

the hills, the valleys, the streams, and the verdure—never palled upon him.

He knew that when one reverently and with an open mind and heart studies nature, he is led to the God whose wondrous mind has designed and whose almighty hand made all the things we see in nature. Take Psalm 23, for instance, with its mention of "green pastures" and "still waters," or as the margin says, "waters of quietness." Or take Psalm 19, where the majestic heavens are said to "declare the glory of God," and the firmament to show His handiwork.

In another of the Psalms we read:—

"Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy works: I will triumph in the works of Thy hand. O Lord, how great are Thy works! and Thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this." K.



## The Power of Music

AT the birth of Jesus, a great choir of angels, as we read in Luke's Gospel, chapter 2, sang above the fields of Bethlehem the praises of God, and said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." It was right and fitting that praise should have accompanied the announcement of the Saviour's birth. How brightly Bethlehem's fields must have been lighted up that night by the glory of those angelic hosts! How sweet and thrilling must have been the heavenly music that the shepherds heard!

Good music is a help in worship and also in life. It is now used to help the sick to health, and has been introduced into factories to relieve the hum-drum monotony of modern mechanized industrial life, to lessen the strain of the toilers, and to awaken harmonious and cheerful feelings, which give rise to better work and greater production.

An interesting story, which well illustrates the power of music, is told concerning the prison camps in Siberia in the World War. Mr. Bartholomew, a Yale University man engaged in relief work, found in those Russian prison camps hopeless misery among the German and Austro-Hungarian prisoners. We read: "Homesickness and monotony, more than brutality, were wearing men down, and suicides occurred daily."

Mr. Bartholomew had had experience in teaching music and composing, and he decided to try music in the effort to relieve the homesickness of the prisoners and the monotony of their prison life, and to bring into the

camps more cheerful and happier feelings.

He organized music clubs and orchestras. We continue the story, as told in the *Reader's Digest*:—

"Skilled craftsmen among the Hungarian prisoners carved instruments. Bartholomew had strings. There might have been no bows had not a provision-laden *troika* drawn by three horses reached the camp. When the *troika* left, the horses were minus most of their tails, and fiddlers were tuning up.

"Then," Bartholomew says, "I witnessed the miracle of music: its power to lift men out of despair, physical suffering, homesickness, and hatred." Suicides almost ceased.

"One prison commandant, a retired Russian general, attended a celebration that Christmas Eve in one of the crowded, 800-men barracks, sunk half underground for protection against the fierce Siberian cold. A small Christmas tree had been stuck in a barrel in the midst of the densely packed prisoners. Bartholomew stepped in front of his singers—Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, and their Russian guards.

"There is one song all can sing tonight," he declared, raising eloquent hands to lead them in 'Silent Night, Holy Night.'

"They sang, each in his own tongue, but all united in the beloved melody. When its last note died away, tears were streaming from the Russian commandant's eyes. In halting, broken German, he said:—

"Tonight is the first time in more than a year of war that I have been able to forget that you and I are supposed to be enemies."

"From then on the prison camp was a changed place. Between prisoners and captors were understanding and friendliness."

There is a story told of a clergyman who, when he heard his daughters quarrelling, used to get them singing. Through the influence of the beautiful words and enchanting music of good and lovely songs, the girls forgot their quarrel, and a spirit of harmony, friendship, and love prevailed.

Music is one of the handmaids of religion, and no one can limit the uplifting influence of good sacred music. In all the best hymn-books there are many beautiful hymns that deserve to be often sung, and no one can fail to be greatly benefited by singing them. Beautiful words of advice and exhortation spoken by the Apostle Paul are: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts . . . teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Col. 3: 15, 16. K.



# SIGNS of the TIMES

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## Luke the Beloved

**E**VEN amid the rush and excitement of the holiday season, most men and women like to pause in reverent contemplation of the stories of the Nativity. They see again the rude inn yard, and the Holy Babe lying cradled in a manger; they see the humble shepherds worshipping in awe and adoration before the eternal God whose glory was veiled in the human form of a helpless infant. They hear again the angels' song as it rang out above the Judean hills, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." And as they pause, they are uplifted and blessed, and a new peace and joy fill their hearts.

This supreme event in history, the advent of our Lord and Saviour, broke upon a world of darkness and despair, of hatred and oppression; a world which paganism had failed to satisfy, and yet a world in which the professed people of God had sunk into cold, dead formalism.

It is in such a dark setting that these shining stories come to us who live in a world that is tortured by war and disfigured by hatred, oppression, and despair.

Yet how many of us pause long enough to think of the man who wrote the longest and most comprehensive of the four Gospels, and who, in all, wrote more than one-fourth of the New Testament?

We know almost nothing of Luke from direct references. In the introduction to his Gospel, he mentions the reasons that led him to write it, but he remains invisible. In the Book of Acts, he recounts the stirring narrative of the spread of the gospel, but keeps his name out of it. We are aware of his presence, moving dimly among the shadows, as it were, in his journeys with Paul, by his change of the pronoun from "they" to "we"; but we are left to conjecture what was his part in facing the perils of the journey, and in sharing the triumphs of the cross.

He is named in the New Testament only three times, in each instance by the Apostle Paul. In his letter to Philemon, Paul conveyed greetings from "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas,

Lucas, my fellow labourers." In Col. 4: 14 he gives the first direct allusion to the character and profession of Luke: "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you." And in his last epistle, written to Timothy shortly before his martyrdom, the aged and suffering apostle pays a touching tribute to the tender love and steadfast loyalty of his friend and physician: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me."

So throughout history the world has been blessed by many modest and retiring men and women, who, avoiding the limelight, have been content to serve, to relieve suffering and distress, and to strengthen and uphold those who bear heavy responsibilities.

It is generally understood that Luke was not a Jew, but a Greek. "It is probable that he was born and reared in Antioch, a city of Syria, though he spent his later years elsewhere, as in Philippi, Caesarea, and Rome. That he was a most cultured man cannot be questioned. As a physician, he in all likelihood re-

ceived his medical education either at Alexandria, Athens, or Tarsus, where flourished the great universities of the day. Close by Tarsus was the temple of Æsculapius, which furnished the nearest approach to the modern hospital to be found in the ancient world. From the university lectures Luke got the theory of medicine; in the temple of Æsculapius he got the practice and experience needed."

We know nothing of Luke's conversion to Christ. Perhaps some of those Christian Jews whom the bitter persecution that followed the stoning of Stephen drove from Jerusalem, went to Antioch, and there came in contact with the young doctor. Possibly the Apostle Paul himself had the privilege of telling Luke the wonderful story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. But whoever was the human instrument, the work that was wrought in the heart of Luke by the Holy Spirit was deep and permanent. Even in his busy life of service, Luke always found time to meditate upon the wonders of the life of Jesus, and a deep realization of the human compassion and unfailing sympathy of the Great Physician, seems to have gripped his heart.

From a study of the few meagre facts about his travels, and from a study of his character as revealed by the Apostle Paul and by the internal evidence of his own Gospel and the Book of Acts, we know that Luke was peculiarly fitted to write the portion of the Word of God that came from his pen.

We know that on at least two occasions he visited Jerusalem, and on the last occasion the visit culminated in the arrest of Paul in the temple, and his imprisonment in Caesarea. Luke remained with him during this time, and it is reasonable to suppose that these two years spent in the little land of Palestine, where his beloved Lord lived and died, would be charged with deep meaning to him. Perhaps he sought out and spoke with Mary, the mother of Jesus. He may have found an aged shepherd who had seen the angels and heard their song. Perhaps, as he moved up and down the dusty roads, he conversed with some of the common people, who had listened so gladly to the fresh and living teachings of the young Prophet of Nazareth. The parables recorded by Luke, with their intense human appeal, would live long in the hearts of those who heard. The Good Samaritan, the lost sheep, the lost coin, the prodigal son—these would be recalled in many a humble home, as this kindly, understanding man, so cultured, yet so warmly human, questioned concerning events twenty years in the past.

### A Prayer

MARJORIE WILCOX

LET there be peace  
On earth! Let there be light!  
As when a star  
Led kings to Jesus' birth,  
And angels sang  
Upon that loveliest, holy night:

"The Lord is come!"  
Lord of our heart's desire,  
Who from on high  
Enkindlest sacrifice,  
Grant us to know  
Thy love through purifying fire:

That we may kneel  
With kings in lowly grace;  
With shepherds sing  
Thy glory 'neath the stars;  
With Mary see  
The Christ of God in Jesus' face.



Published in the *Atlantic Monthly* under the title, "The Man Who Gave Us Christmas," an article by Winifred Kirkman gave a deep and penetrating study of the life of Luke as revealed and suggested in the Bible. Her character sketch of Luke follows her traced outline of the known facts of his life:—

"Indeed, all this is a fragmentary basis of fact on which to build supposition that dares to penetrate the personality of the man who gave us Christmas. But he has left the world a book which reveals himself as well as his Master. Research supplies us with certain probable facts, and we may employ human insight and sympathy in interpreting them. The bare facts of Luke's life point to certain conclusions about his character. Even the most cursory examination of Luke's Gospel and the most superficial study of his life suggest at once his singular fitness for giving the world its Christmas.

"It was the 'beloved physician' who could describe motherhood in all the holiness of our Christmas narratives. It was one who had given all his being to the service of others, and who was never to hold a child of his own in his arms, who could set down the rapturous words, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord.' It was one whose life was consecrated to the relief of suffering who could describe with such exaltation Jesus' miracles of healing. Long before he had ever heard of the mysterious Man executed in a distant city, Luke, a joyous-hearted young Greek, must have chosen a career of kindness. He had himself gone about doing good before he was equipped to write of all the wealth of kindly deeds and sympathetic words that he records in his life of Jesus. Of all four evangelists, it is Luke who best reveals Jesus the man, friend always of the poor and the down-trodden, comforting even the despairing thief crucified beside Him, as Luke alone tells us. It is a joyous human Jesus that Luke presents, probably because he himself had learned high joy in his close contact with an unseen Master. In spite of all its tragedy, Luke's Gospel gives the reader a sense of unconquerable gladness, gladness like that of the two disciples on the walk to Emmaus when their Master returned to share a meal with them, an incident that Luke alone has saved from oblivion. Truly Luke was mysteriously fitted to transmit to us for ever the joyousness of Christmas."

Through Luke's portrayal of the scenes clustering around the Nativity, Miss Kirkman sees another insight into the rare character of this sacred historian:—

"Let us read once again the first two chapters of Luke's Gospel. Then

let us pause to consider where our Christmas comes from, picture by picture, chant by chant. The most beautiful book in the world, so Renan has described the Gospel of Luke. And in that book, for sheer unearthly loveliness, the opening chapters are the most beautiful of all. Only a painter could have conceived the strange stark beauty of the scene in which the tall angel delivers his message to a wondering, awe-struck girl. In fact, some early statues of Luke represent him as an actual artist, carrying palette and brushes. Only a dramatist could have seen and made us see that doorway meeting of two rapt women, one young, one old, each bearing beneath her heart a little child. Only a man attuned to music like a harp could have given us those immortal chants uttered by Zechariah and Mary and Simeon. The first thing, then, that we know about Luke is that he was a genius. The second thing we know is that, from the first



## The Summer Land

ROBERT HARE

It shines through the darkness all radiant  
and clear,  
And fair as the star-spangled sky.  
Soft whisperings float through my holiest  
dreams  
Of friendships that never can die.

No winter snows fall, no frostings destroy,  
And love sheds never a tear;  
While sweet balmy breezes breathe over  
the sea,  
In spring charms that last all the year.

No night shadows darken, and death is  
unknown,  
While sorrow has passed with its gloom;  
No withered leaves fall to tell of decay,  
In whispers that speak of the tomb.

There life is unending, all radiant and fair,  
And rich in its perfect delight;  
No sickness can pain, no weariness spoil  
Where years are all endless and bright.

The blossoms that wither so quickly below,  
And scatter their leaves with the dead,  
Will smile in a beauty more perfect and  
sweet,  
When time's changing ages have fled.

Wait on, weary heart, the changing of  
years  
Must yet bring that glorious day,  
When under the smile of Eternal Love,  
Earth shadows will all pass away.

written word of his Gospel to the last, Luke must have dedicated all his endowment to the delineation of an invisible Master, always, from Bethlehem's manger to the supper table of Emmaus, alive and shining before his eyes."

We shall give one more tribute to the purity and beauty of Luke's Bethlehem story. It is written by Percy T. Magan, himself a physician:—

"Luke as a physician had written his birth reports and his death reports, but never one like this. Deep was his reverence for childhood and motherhood. His was the soul of the saint and the insight of the scientist. Godly students of the Word have held that he must have obtained the story from Mary herself. In Luke's lovely narrative we seem to be looking through a glass into the innermost sanctuary—into the holy of holies of Mary's heart. The sweet innocence of her soul entrances one. There is a fragrant purity about it all, a precious delicacy marks the Virgin Mother's reserve, and inspired exaltation lights up her every word. Add to this her patient committing of herself into God's hands to vindicate her honour, her deep, brooding, thoughtful spirit—how truthlike and worthy of the fact is the whole picture!"

How much poorer we should be if the Gospel of Luke had found no place in the Sacred Canon! We recall with joy its inspired scenes, old, yet ever new, and they help us to forget the misery and the suffering that lie all around us.

But there is a danger that we shall look to this revelation of God in humanity as an event wholly in the past. The narrative of Luke, as well as those of the other inspired writers, cannot have its full meaning for us unless we look at the first advent, when God revealed Himself as a Babe in Bethlehem, to live a life of sorrow and hardship, as the preliminary to His second advent in power and glory.

The first advent of Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures, and by His life, death, and intercession He is preparing His church to receive Him in peace at His second appearing. We must look not only backward to the manger and the cross, but forward to our returning Lord and His everlasting kingdom. We must not give all our attention to the perfect life lived in Galilee and Judea two thousand years ago, for of equal importance to us is that same perfect life that may be lived out in our own lives here and now, until we are transformed into His glorious character, made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

H.





# Christ Coming Again

## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Donald W. McKay

**A**T this holiday season, especially in the large cities, everyone seems to be rushing to and fro in preparation for the great day of Christmas.

Buses, tram-cars, motor-cars, and all types of conveyances are crowded with passengers, all eager to get home with their cumbersome bundles. Crowds jostle one another good-naturedly. Everywhere a carnival spirit reigns. In many countries streets are gaily decorated.

In many homes parents are making hurried preparations for the arrival of sons and daughters from school or business; in others, sons and daughters are awaiting the coming of fathers and mothers. Christmas is home-coming day. Surely in all the year no other day causes so much excitement and joy.

Too many, however, welcome the holiday solely as an opportunity for mercenary gain, and others use it as an excuse further to indulge in the senseless and unbecoming pleasures of the world. For them it is merely a time of revelry and carousing.

Christians, most certainly, cannot unite in such objectionable features of this universal holiday; yet they may welcome its emphasis upon kindness and charity, especially toward the poor and unfortunate.

Today the true followers of Christ will be not only thinking back to the first advent of their Lord, but, even more definitely, forward to His coming.

Those who have not studied the Scriptures may be surprised to learn that Jesus is to return to this world—and in this generation. The Babe of Bethlehem is coming back as King of kings, and Lord of lords. The Apostle John has recorded the very words Jesus uttered: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14: 1-3.

Jesus' first advent was literal; He came as a real being among men. Even after His resurrection He said

to His disciples: "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see." Luke 24: 39. As He came literally the first time, so will He come literally the second time. The Bible gives specific evidence to support this natural conclusion. After Christ ascended, two heavenly messengers proclaimed to the disciples: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1: 11); and the Apostle John, from his confinement on the dismal Isle of Patmos, wrote: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." Rev. 1: 7.

Paul, in describing the second coming of Christ, said: "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.

"But," someone may ask, "how do you know Jesus will come soon?"

The Bible tells us so.

As Jesus was sitting one day on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him with the question, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24: 3.

They listened in rapt silence to the reply: "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21: 25, 26. "False prophets shall rise," He continued, "and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed." Mark 13: 22, 23.

Jesus said that His followers would suffer a long period of persecution; then would begin to appear the signs preceding the second advent—the darkening of the sun and the moon, and the falling of the stars of heaven. Mark 13: 24, 25.

John, in the Revelation, was given in vision a picture of these events.

He wrote: "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Rev. 6: 12, 13.

As prophesied, about the middle of the eighteenth century religious persecution markedly decreased. Then, on May 19, 1780, a mysterious darkness enveloped a large section of the Western Hemisphere. On that memorable day people were filled with fear at this unexplained phenomenon. "Birds sang their evening song, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barnyard; and candles were lighted in the houses."—*Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, edition 1883, page 1604, in article, "The Dark Day."

The world-famous astronomer Herschel has said: "The dark day in Northern America was one of those wonderful phenomena of nature which will always be read with interest, but which philosophy is at a loss to explain."

"The darkness was such as to occasion farmers to leave their work in the field, and retire to their dwellings. Lights became necessary to the transaction of business within doors. The darkness continued through the day."—*Gage's "History of Rowley, Massachusetts."*

Many well-known authorities agree that this unusual phenomenon cannot be explained. R. M. Devens, on pages 89 and 90 of his book, "Our First Century," writes: "Almost, if not altogether alone, as the most mysterious and yet unexplained phenomenon of its kind in nature's diversified range of events, during the last century, stands the *Dark Day* of May 19th, 1780—a most unaccountable darkening of the whole visible heavens and atmosphere in New England. . . . Indeed, thousands of the good people of that day became fully convinced that the end of all things terrestrial had come. . . . The extent of this darkness was also very remarkable."

Although the moon was nearly full the night following this dark day, it gave no light for several hours, and,



when finally it did appear, it had a reddish appearance "as blood."

### The Greatest Meteoric Shower

And the next prophecy, that of the falling of the stars, was fulfilled on November 13, 1833, over the Eastern States of America, from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and as far west as the Mississippi.

Famous British astronomers commented upon this meteoric shower as surpassing any previously seen.

Professor Denison Olmstead of Yale wrote an article to the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, Vol. 25 (1834), in which he stated that this wondrous display "was the principal topic of conversation in every circle."

The *New York Journal of Commerce*, on November 14, 1833, quoted the words of prophecy: "Truly 'the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.' Rev. 6: 13. This language of the prophet has always been received as metaphorical. Yesterday it was literally fulfilled. . . . Here is the exactness of the prophet. The falling stars did not come as if from several trees shaken, but from one. Those which appeared in the east fell toward the east; those which appeared in the north fell toward the north; those which appeared in the west fell toward the west; and those which appeared in the south . . . fell toward the south; . . . they flew, they were cast, like the unripe fig."

These prophecies of striking celestial signs have been fulfilled. Likewise Christ's description of conditions on the earth are coming to pass before our eyes. We are therefore driven to the conclusion that Christ will soon appear in the clouds of heaven with power and glory; "and every eye shall see Him."

Those of every nation who are not prepared in heart and life for the kingdom of heaven will be destroyed by the brightness of His presence. But those who are ready to meet their Lord will rejoice. They will exclaim: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." Isa. 25: 9. May we be among that number!

This season of the year is a most appropriate time to rededicate yourself anew to Christ. Give Him the key to your heart, and He will abide with you. Let Him come in to stay. Then you will have nothing to fear in the day of His glorious appearing.

I NEVER drink. I cannot do it on equal terms with others. It costs them only one day, but me three—the first in sinning, the second in suffering, and the third in repenting. —Sterne.

# Limiting God

• SANFORD WHITMAN

YEA, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." Ps. 78: 41.

How often do we make that sin of Israel our own! How often do we tempt God, and limit the Holy One of Israel!

Every material thing known to man has a limit, a boundary, a place



## The Master Sculptor

'Tis the Master who holds the mallet, and day by day

He is chipping whatever environs the form, away;

Which under His skilful cutting He means shall be

Wrought silently out to beauty of such degree

Of faultless and full perfection, that angel eyes

Shall look on the finished labour with new surprise,

That even His boundless patience could grave His own

Features upon such fractured and stubborn stone.

'Tis the Master who holds the chisel: He knows just where

Its edge should be driven sharpest to fashion there

The semblance that He is carving; nor will He let

One delicate stroke too many, or few, be set

On forehead or cheek, where only He sees how all

Is tending, and where the hardest the blow should fall,

Which crumbles away whatever superfluous line,

Would hinder His hand from making the work divine.

With tools of Thy choosing, Master, we pray Thee, then,

Strike just as Thou wilt, as often and where and when

Thy vehement stroke is needed; we shall not mind

If only Thy chilling chisel shall leave behind

Such marks of Thy wondrous working and loving skill,

Clear carven on aspect, statue, and face, as will,

When discipline's ends are over, have all-sufficed

To mould us into the likeness and form of Christ.

—Margaret J. Preston.

of beginning and of ending. So nearly universally true is this fact that it is not difficult for the mind of man to accept it as true of all things. There is a limit to the length of a board, to the height of a mountain, to the breadth of the ocean; and so there must be a limit to everything—yes, even including the Holy One of Israel. How often we take this attitude! and with what disaster to our spiritual lives!

Limiting God! Many are the ways and the times we fail in this respect! Every fear, every doubt, every discouragement, every lowering of our eyes from Him to ourselves, every attempt to discern the way with our own eyes and to carry the burden with our own strength—infinity endless and varied are the ways in which we may set limits to the fullness of God.

What losses these failures inflict upon us! The hosts of Israel, because of their unbelief, could not enter into the Promised Land. All the joys and blessings of the earthly Canaan were lost to them for one reason—unbelief.

Today the same truth is in force. Unbelief, limiting God, brings separation from the promises of God, and loss of the promised inheritance. The fearful and the unbelieving have a part in the day of final reckoning; but their portion is not in the heavenly Canaan. It is in the lake of fire, which overwhelms all that is evil. Only they who "endure to the end" shall be saved. Matt. 24: 13. And the great supporting pillar of endurance is unshakable belief.

As infinite as time and space is the Holy One—the God of Israel. "From everlasting to everlasting" He is God. He is before all things. He is above and beyond all things. What error, what loss, to disbelieve, to limit by whatever means, the power, the wisdom, the perfect greatness of Israel's God!

Do not limit God. Look up into the unmeasured vaults of heaven. Focus your eyes on the unnumbered hosts of the starry heavens. As you behold, remember that far above this vastness is God. And do not forget that matching this physical, material greatness, and no less vast or enduring, are the attributes of infinite loving-kindness and mercy.

"Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." Isa. 26: 4.





# BIBLE REALITIES

★ Robert Hare

ROMANCE has ever had a large place in the realm of human thought. Imagination has served as its daily bread, and the unreal has so mingled with its dreams that tangibility of the invisible has been forgotten or set aside as uncertain.

In no direction has this uncertainty appeared more evident than in its dealing with the things of God. No man has seen God, and the incredulity of the human mind will reason that such an invisible being does not exist.

The great apostle assures us that the invisible things are to be seen and understood by the things that "are clearly seen." Rom. 1: 20. He would have us reason back from the effect seen to the cause that is unseen. This is wise counsel, and it is the plan often employed in worldly affairs. "Every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God." Heb. 3: 4.

Now, in the Scriptures we have many cities mentioned—great, small, near, and distant cities. We may not have seen them, but we are sure they existed. Among these many historic cities Jerusalem occupies an important place. In the Bible record it appears as a typical city. According to Josephus, Melchizedek was its first builder, and he was the king of peace.

But there is an unseen Jerusalem which is pictured as the dominant reality—"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Gal. 4: 26. It is the royalist city of all the many that have linked with human history or thought, the holiest of all and the abode of peace. John, in the Revelation, gives a full description of this beautiful empire capital as he beheld it in prophetic vision. To him it was perfect in its reality. All the cities mentioned in their historic setting, in the sacred Book, are real cities—why may not this one be a real city also?

Let it be remembered that the Bible is a veritable geography of the ancient world. Kingdoms, empires, nations, mountains, rivers, seas, and countries are definitely located, named, and described. But beyond

all these, there is also named and located "a better country," a heavenly land where disease, pain, and death are to be unknown. Now, if these kingdoms named and located are real kingdoms—and they are!—why should we not link reality with the kingdom-land above? If the Nile, Euphrates, the Abana, and

that reality is to be an immortal possession.

Death, with its darkened windows and silent tombs, hushes all our songs and calls from the human heart a flood of tears. It wrecks all our day-dreams, rends asunder the golden chain of friendship, and leaves in the great human family a countless multitude of mourners. It is described in Scriptures as "the enemy," "the last enemy," and "the king of terrors." But the work of death is to be undone. In evidence of this, Christ entered the tomb, and burst its bands asunder and rose again. Now from the highest heaven He calls to His people, "Because I live, ye shall live also." John 14: 19.

In His life-work Christ called three persons back from the power of the enemy and they lived again. Then we hear His divine declaration: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves . . . shall come forth." John 5: 28, 29. Man cannot explain how this is to be, but he can believe in the power of a God who is able to work all things after the counsel of His will.

Bible realities are realities indeed, for "the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4: 18.

## A Strong Helper

THE Christian always has a strong helper in the Lord. The way of the Lord's helping we may not know; but this we do know: He will never fail those who put their trust in Him. Could Christians realize how many times the Lord has ordered their way, that the purposes of the enemy concerning them might not be accomplished, they would not stumble along complainingly. Their faith would be stayed on God, and no trial would have power to move them.—E. G. White.

A KIND voice is a joy, like a lark's song, to a hearth at home. It is a light that sings as well as shines. Train it to sweet tunes now, and it will keep in tune through life.—Elihu Burritt.

## The Old Year

ROBERT HARE

ONE year nearer to that shadow,  
Where the light is never seen,  
One year nearer to that darkness,  
Where the day has never been.  
Nearer! yes, but then remember  
We are one year nearer home,  
Nearer to that land of glory,  
Where the death-shades cannot come.

Pass, old year! with all thy burdens;  
Life and love would hold their smile;  
Pass! with all thy grief and sadness;  
Leave life's friendships for a while.  
We remember time is fleeting,  
That its moments ne'er return,  
We would catch the rays of glory,  
Where eternal sunlights burn.

Pass, old year, we kneel in sadness  
O'er the loss of such a friend;  
Life and hope thine hours have brought us,  
Still will bring us till the end.  
Yes, farewell, thy moments hasten,  
Though thy lips are strangely dumb;  
Yet we hear thee sweetly whisper,  
"Endless life is yet to come!"

Pharpar are real rivers—and we know they are—why question the reality of the river of life? The prophet saw it, flowing wide and free with its crystal tide.

National life spreads widely over our old world. More than fifty nations stand in the catalogue. These are all real peoples, differing, of course, in language, in appearance, and in customs. But they are all sons of earth in their reality. We know and believe about these people though we have never seen them. Why not know and believe about the "nations of them which are saved"? Rev. 21: 24. The redeemed are to be as real as the earthly are now, but



# The Changing East

## Amazing Contribution of Christian Missions

★ H. G. WOODWARD

*Superintendent, Telugu Mission of Seventh-day Adventists*

IN an article in the *Washington Post*, by Jerome Beatty, we find the following: "The Near East is going Western lickety-split. Hard by Nazareth steam shovels are chewing up Mount Carmel to feed cement mills for the building boom. Mecca pilgrims travel by motor-bus to the strains of radio music. Flying-boats alight on the Sea of Galilee. Arabs drive donkeys loaded with firewood past a Beyrouth cabaret that features 'The Arab Al Jolson.' You can drive from Egypt to Jerusalem overnight—the forty years' journey of the Israelites.

"Bagdad is going in for air-conditioning in a big way. Tractors pass camels on the ancient roads the Wise Men trod—roads new-surfaced with asphalt. Mickey Mouse is playing in Sidon tonight. The Dead Sea is now but an appanage of the chemical industry. Power lines cross the hills the crusaders wearily climbed."

The writer then comments upon the social changes, which he declares to be even more startling. He speaks of the women, who, from time immemorial, were never seen out of doors unveiled, now romping unconcerned at mixed bathing parties in the Mediterranean. He tells us that often half the audience in a theatre is made up of unveiled womenfolk, and speaks of the unpaid social service, such as teaching free schools for the poor, cleaning up the water supply in the villages, and instructing young people in Western sports, by Moslems.

After residence in the East for more than a quarter of a century, I can certainly bear witness to the fact that what was once looked upon as the unchanging East is now experiencing a great renaissance. The flood of nationalism that has had such indescribable results in the West has not escaped the East. The orange, white, and green nationalist flag of India

is to be seen flying in the breeze from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas.

The people of the East are in a condition of ferment, and they are beginning to assert their individuality. In no more pronounced manner has this truth been demonstrated than in the Untouchability Movement in South India. Until very recent days the great body of people constituting those known as the depressed classes, or, in the language of the newspapers, "the untouchables," a vast community of sixty-odd million souls, were dominated by those of higher caste. Only a few years ago the low-caste man was not allowed the use of certain districts of the towns, and often I have been compelled to make a detour, because the driver of the conveyance in which I was travelling was a member of this proscribed community. But now—by royal command—they even have access to the temples. This social upheaval is but another proof of the fact that the spirit of self-assertion is manifest in the Orient and that the East is changing.

One of the causes for the changed attitude the East has assumed is

doubtless the Great War and its aftermath. Men of every colour and from every nation were called upon to participate in the conflict. The man from the East was thrust against the man from the West. And when he returned to his home as a hero, with stories of his triumphs over the Westerner, the prestige of the white man was for ever lost. With all his faults, the European in service in the East was respected until the Oriental saw that he was no better than himself.

Unfortunately also the only West that most of the Eastern peoples know is the West of the motion pictures and the pictorial magazines. The natural result is that the portrayal of loose marital relationships, gangster holdups, and the undesirable side of Western life is accepted without question.

Sadu Sundar Singh is authority for the statement that had not Gandhi and Tagore visited the West, they would have become Christians. How many a bright and promising young Indian, in many cases a graduate of one of the large and fine universities of that land, after taking further



In what sore need India is of gospel light can be seen from this picture. This man, in his heathen blindness, has sought to gain righteousness by sticking safety-pins and fish-hooks in his body.



studies in the Western lands, returns to his home having lost far more than he has gained!

Another evidence of the spirit of change that is sweeping through the East is the fact that thousands of the outcaste population are flocking into the Christian fold. The missionary knows only too well that comparatively few of them conform to anything like the ideal; but they are dissatisfied with their condition of suppression, and are reaching out for something better than they have hitherto known. So widespread is this movement that in the opinion of the late Bishop Whitehead of Madras it is only a matter of time before the whole of the untouchables will be nominal Christians.

Until lately the non-Christian population has been content to have it so! But now there is another change in the East, and Christian missions are meeting with very strong opposition. The methods of the missionary are now being copied by leaders among the Moslems, the Hindus, and the Sikhs. The Baptist *Watchman-Examiner* is responsible for the following: "Dr. Stanley Jones recently declared that the Sikhs in India are levying about one-eighth of a day's pay on all their members to get funds to convert the untouchables to Sikhism; the Moslems of India are organizing to raise a fund of one million rupees for the training of one thousand Moslem evangelists."

Another change that is seen all over the East is the spring cleaning that is going on in every non-Christian religion. With the spread of education, men are beginning to take notice of the undesirable elements in their religion. A greater factor still is the contact such religions have for so long made with Christianity. It was but a few days ago that the Nizam of Hyderabad made an appeal to his Mohammedan subjects to abstain from participation in the gross ceremonies of their festival days.

#### Stimulated by Christianity

Likewise, the Maharani of Travancore suppressed the institution of temple prostitution some time ago. Non-Christian men of education and culture are ashamed of much that is part of the religion they profess, and a purge is taking place. As a recent article expresses it, "there is no doubt that Christianity has had a wonderful effect on Hinduism itself. There is a subtle change in the whole tendency of Hindu thought."

Not only are these non-Christian religions opposing Christianity; they are competing with it. I have before me the letterhead of a Hindu missionary society. The president, secretary, and other officers have all of

them a number of degrees behind their names, and are all prominent government servants. Hindu places of worship, after the pattern of the Christian mission churches, are erected, and the worship conducted is very much like that in the churches with which we are familiar. Buddhist Sunday schools, Young Men's Mohammedan Associations, and Hindu church services are quite common. In all these things we can see the influence of Christian missions.

This truth was emphasized by the *Literary Digest* some years ago, when it stated: "For making the untouchable a human being, for beginning modification of centuries-old caste, for raising the level of women, for a reduction in illiteracy, and for bringing them to Jesus Christ, the people of India and Burma may thank Christian missions."

This state of unrest in the Orient, this mighty upheaval in non-Christian lands, this change that is taking hold of the East, are surely a challenge to those in whose hearts has been shed abroad the light of God's Word.

We often speak of doors being opened to the gospel; today doors are closing to the gospel. It can be said with truth that it will never be so easy again to preach the gospel in many Eastern lands as it is today. Here is a word from one who has given many years of service to Africa: "There is a wave of Mohammedan proselytism sweeping down from the north of Africa, and from the east

coast into the interior. Africa is now ripe for conversion; but if we do not send sufficient men to win the Dark Continent for Christ, there is a grave danger that millions of the people will turn to Mohammedanism."

The church of Christ is faced today with a situation unparalleled in the history of mankind. Never before has it been presented with so many opportunities for the preaching of the gospel. But the time is coming—and how soon none can tell—when doors now standing wide open will be for ever shut.

May God give grace to those who have taken upon themselves His name, that they may consider no sacrifice too great if by some means they may be instrumental in sending the light to those who now sit in darkness. We have a changeless Christ for a changing East.

### St. John Ambulance— Alcohol and Snake Bite

ALCOHOL should be avoided, says the latest edition of "First Aid to the Injured," by St. John Ambulance Association.

Medical temperance leaders proved to be in vanguard of scientific practice.

For years the St. John Ambulance text-book on first aid to the injured, has advised the administration of alcohol in cases of snake bite, in spite of the fact that some of the greatest authorities on tropical diseases have declared that it was dangerous. This advice has been given, with the authority of the text-book, by many lecturers on the subject who were not in a position to become acquainted with the pronouncements of men like Sir Leonard Rogers, C.I.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., etc., probably the greatest authority in Great Britain, and Dr. Kellaway, of Australia.

We are glad to note that the *thirty-ninth edition of the text-book has been brought up to date*, and we read in regard to treatment for snake bite: "If the patient is able to swallow, give hot drinks such as strong coffee, tea, or milk; *alcohol should be avoided.*"

It is satisfactory to know that once more our temperance leaders have proved themselves to be in the vanguard of scientific practice.

### True Penitence

CHRISTIAN penitence is an act of our whole personality; it involves a rational condemnation of, and an emotional sorrow for past sin, together with a resolution of the will to do better for the time to come.—J. R. Illingworth.

### Probation's Lamps Burn

ROBERT HARE

It breathes across the ages wild and dim,  
That message of our Lord's return;  
It whispers sweetly through the gloomy night,

And when the fiery sunsets burn.  
Time's restless fingers cannot tear away  
The hope its inspiration brings;  
Prophetic lips that whispered, now repose,  
But still the deathless promise rings.

Sages of long ago rejoiced to hear  
The call that echoed o'er the years;  
Through them, the message reached the sons of earth  
To gladden hearts and dry their tears.  
Prophetic lips lie silent; still the voice  
Calls to the careless sons of clay:  
"Redeem the time, the Lord Himself is near,  
These are the hours to watch and pray."

Above, below, and ever all around,  
The signs of destiny repeat,  
And over earth, with all its crowding fears,  
The angels hymn the message sweet.  
The Prince of heaven now calls His people home,  
And loyal hearts will welcome His return.  
Ring on, glad promises of life, ring on!  
For still probation's lamps do burn.



# "Remember Lot's Wife"

## • A Warning to Modern Civilization

EDWARD F. WHITE

THE children of today are the makers of the civilization of tomorrow. What, therefore, is being taught to these children is of profound importance. Unfortunately multitudes of young children and young people are being led to believe that licence is liberty, that pleasure is the highest end, and that man is accountable only to himself.

This is particularly significant in view of its correspondence with a remarkable picture of the last days which is recorded for us in the Gospel of Luke (chapter 17: 24-37), in which our Lord compares the days immediately prior to His second advent with the licentious days of Noah and of Lot. One of the most solemn of His injunctions in that discourse is: "Remember Lot's wife." Verse 32.

### "Lovers of Pleasures"

Lot's wife is a symbol for all time of the "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." Her whole life was in the social round of Sodom; her thoughts were centred on self-aggrandizement and the successful marriage of her two remaining daughters. When she was literally dragged out of the city with her husband and two daughters (Gen. 19: 16), and saw only bleak hills in front, she thought of her gay and easy life in Sodom, and turned back to where her heart really was; and as a result she perished.

Jesus therefore urged that we remember her amid the prevailing wickedness of the last days, as an example of the sure fate that must overtake all who, forsaking God, live lives of selfish pleasure and sin. "They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded." These things were not in themselves evil, but they were directed to selfish ends. "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before Me." Eze. 16: 49, 50.

### Modern Uses of Leisure

Hard work was not a characteristic of the city of Sodom, and we can say today that the life of the ordinary



### What Time Is It?

WHAT time is it?  
Time to do well;  
Time to live better;  
Give up that grudge;  
Answer that letter;  
Speak that kind word to sweeten a sorrow;  
Do that good deed you would leave till tomorrow.

Time to try hard  
In that new situation;  
Time to build upon  
A solid foundation;  
Giving up needlessly, changing and drifting;  
Leaving the quicksands that ever are shifting.

What time is it?  
Time to be earnest,  
Laying up treasure;  
Time to be thoughtful,  
Choosing true pleasure;  
Loving stern justice—of truth being fond;  
Making your word just as good as your bond.

Time to be happy,  
Doing your best;  
Time to be trustful,  
Leaving the rest;  
Knowing in whatever country or clime,  
Ne'er can we call back one minute of time.

—Author Unknown.

citizen, compared with life in the last century, is very different by reason of the amount of leisure that the present-day workman has. True, this leisure is well used by many, but by others it is spent unceasingly in pleasures that do not satisfy, in occupations that enervate rather than refresh, and in the pursuit of that fickle jade, licence. When Lot chose Sodom as his future home, he saw that it was well watered and provided an easy living for the tiller of the soil. To his uncle Abraham he left the rugged mountains which provided but sparse pasturage for his flocks and herds.

When Lot leaves Sodom, there confront him again those same hills, bare and forbidding, that he had relegated to Abraham. His spirit sinks, and in despair he asks to be taken to a city, if only "a little one." He was not used to wresting a hard-earned living from unfruitful soil, and his stay in Sodom had formed a habit of laziness which God was seeking to cure by driving him to the mountains. Lot's wife was even more distressed at the bleak prospect of life without society in the savage hills, and rather than face it and learn the lesson God had for her she turned back to the scene of her gay pleasures.

### Judgment Certain

Today the world needs to heed the warning that Jesus gave. Destruction is certain for those who forsake God for the "giddy pleasure of the eye." When the authority of God is jettisoned, when self-restraint is thrown to the winds, when licence and corruption stalk through the land, then, warns our Lord, be sure that judgment will overtake that city just as in the days of Sodom.

Sodom was allowed to wax worse and worse, but judgment descended ultimately, severely, and surely. So does our Lord indicate that judgment will fall at the end of the world. "Whosoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered." Luke 17: 37. As a carcass left in the desert is soon besieged by the birds of prey, so will the rotting carcass of sinful humanity be devoured by the visitation of God's judgments.



**Will Men Learn?**

Living as we do in a time when anarchy is rife, when little regard is paid to laws, human or divine, we are reminded that justice is not dead, neither is judgment fallen in the streets. And Lot's wife is set forth as a solemn example, exhorting us not to look back, but to persevere in the way of escape which God has pointed out for us. Though the way may be hard as the mountains were to Lot, our choice *must* be for the eternal things. The world's call of pleasure is illusory. Only in "Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand

there are pleasures for evermore." Ps. 16: 11.

That we are living in the last days is, as we have mentioned, evident from the spirit of anarchy which is abroad, from the spirit of war, strife, and bloodshed; from the subjection of the individual conscience to the claims of the total state. These influences all tend to lead the mind away from God and from His dealings with men. "Remember," then, "Lot's wife," "hold that fast which thou hast"; "no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Rev. 3: 11; Luke 9: 62.

## The Wine Industry in a Jam

REV. W. G. CLARKE

THE wine industry is facing a crisis of unprecedented severity, and it is difficult to see how it can struggle out of the impasse in which it finds itself. And as this state supplies at least 85 per cent of the wine and well over 90 per cent of the brandy produced in Australia, it can be understood that the local producers are considerably perturbed in spirit. For several years there has been serious over-production, and at present the wine-makers find themselves with a surplus equal to market demands for at least four years without any further intake of grapes. In addition, they have to face the fact that the English market is to a very severe extent lost to them, both through lack of shipping space and the heavy increase in duty imposed by the British Government—equal to a preference in favour of British wine of 6s. 6d. per gallon. Concerning lack of shipping space it is interesting to note that while space cannot be provided in any measure equal to the demands of the wine-makers, Britain has bought the balance of the available surplus of Australian currants, sultanas, and lexias of the 1940 season, amounting to something like 25,000 tons. The British Government evidently knows how to distinguish between what is food and what is a mere luxury. And as everybody knows, or should know, while raisins and currants are a most wholesome food, wine is not only a luxury but a luxury with poison alcohol as its chief ingredient.—*Clarion Call*.

### The Test

A JEWELLER will tell you that an imitation diamond is never so brilliant as a genuine stone, but sometimes the inexperienced eye cannot detect the difference. A simple test is to place the stone under water. The imitation diamond is practically extinguished, while a genuine diamond sparkles even under water and is visible. The contrast between the two when under water will be apparent to the least experienced eye. Many of us have failed at the "water test." God places us under the waters of trouble, and we no longer shine for Him. But if our faith is true, we shall shine even under water.—*Selected*.

"Do not run after happiness, but seek to do good, and you will find that happiness will run after you."

Page Thirteen

## YOUR

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# HOME and



# MOTHER

## The Gift Without the Giver

Martha E. Warner

**A**T Christmas time a woman stood looking at a tiny package which she held in her hand. The package was marked, "From Harold."

Now Harold was the woman's husband; but he did not see her open the box, nor did he see her eyes fill with tears as she looked at the diamond brooch in its nest of satin; for Harold was not at home, neither would he be at home until the small hours of the morning. He had gone to a party, so he said, specifically to contact an important business man who was to be there.

During the year there had been so many parties and so many business men to contact that the woman had grown suspicious, especially so after the morning when she had found in Harold's pockets a cobwebby scrap of lace, presumably called a handkerchief, some lipstick, and some bobby pins.

Harold could not, or would not, explain how the accumulation of feminine articles came to be in his pockets, but he saw to it that it never happened again. But what Harold did not know, and under the circumstances could not prevent, was the subtle odour of an expensive perfume which clung to his clothes. The woman knew, and she also knew the woman who used the perfume; therefore she understood just why, on a party night, beautiful flowers and expensive presents were sent to her.

The woman did not want the flowers, their perfume made her sick; so she usually sent them to a shut-in or to some hospital. And the gifts, after one—or possibly two—wearings, she put into a box labelled "Conscience Gifts." To the collection in that box the sparkling diamond brooch would presently be added.

"Oh," sighed the woman, as she brushed away her tears, "if he only would give me *himself*, I would be the happiest woman on earth, but a 'gift without the giver is bare'—so bare!"

All through the years people rush here and there; they eat, drink, and make merry, with scarcely a thought of the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, until along about Christmas

time. Then they pause. They must do something. So to ease their consciences they slip an extra five shillings into the pay envelope of the office boy, or perhaps they give to the Salvation Army money to provide



### Gain or Loss?

If you sit down at set of sun,  
And count the acts that you have done,  
And, counting, find  
One self-denying deed, one word  
That eased the heart of him who heard—  
One glance most kind,  
That fell like sunshine where it went—  
Then you may count that day well spent.

But if, through all the livelong day,  
You've cheered no heart by yea or nay—  
If through it all  
You've nothing done, that you can trace,  
That brought the sunshine to one face—  
No act most small  
That helped some soul and nothing cost—  
Then count that day as worse than lost.

—N. O. Moore.

dinners for poor families, or they magnanimously give orders to have sent up to the orphans' home "all the ice-cream the kids can eat."

Thus giving gifts quiets the consciences of people, lifts them up in their own estimation, exalts them, as it were, to a higher plane, until it is easy—so easy—to believe that the Lord in heaven at Christmas time will write beside their names: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

These people seem to have forgotten that "the gift without the giver is bare"; but God has not forgotten, and so today, right now, and at Christmas time, He pleads: "My son, give Me thine heart."

### A Song in the Heart

SOMETIMES you may feel that it is difficult to keep a song in your heart while at work, for you may pound a finger or make a mistake; but I learned that you can always keep a song in your heart. If you have Jesus' love in your heart, you can be happy under any situation, and always have a song in your heart. On the other hand, no matter how much money, time, and so-called pleasure may be yours, if you do not have Jesus, you cannot really be happy.

Here is a little poem I have learned:—

"Work a little, sing a little, whistle and be gay;  
Read a little, play a little, busy every day;  
Talk a little, laugh a little; don't forget to pray;  
Be a bit of merry sunshine all the blessed way."

—Selected.

## Radio Programmes with a Message!

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Dubbo: Station 2DU, Sunday evening, 6.30.

Broken Hill "Prophetic News Broadcast": 2BH, Sunday, 9.30 to 9.45 p.m., S.A. (10 to 10.15, E.S.T.).

2HR, West Maitland, N.S.W., every Sunday evening, 6-6.30. "Prophecy Speaks Through the Voice of the Hunter."

#### QUEENSLAND

Advent Radio Church, Townsville: Station 4TO, each Sunday from 9.30 to 10 a.m.

North Queensland Home Bible League: 4AY, every second Saturday morning at 11.

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

"The Prophetic Watchman": Station 5KA, every Sunday, 5.30 to 6 p.m.

#### VICTORIA

Advent Radio Church, Warrnambool: Station 3YB, 6.30 to 7 p.m., each Sunday. Central Gippsland: 3UL, Warragul, Sunday evening, 6.30 to 7.

Mildura Advent Radio Church: 3MA, 1.30 p.m. every Sunday.

#### TASMANIA

Hobart Advent Radio Church: Station 7HO, Sunday evening, 8.40 to 9 p.m. Devonport: 7AD, Sunday evening, from 6.15 to 6.30.

"The Prophetic Watchman": 7BU, Burnie, Sunday, 6.45-7 p.m. 455 metres.

#### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Perth Advent Radio Church: Stations 6AM and 6PM, Sunday evening, 6 to 6.30 (8 to 8.30, E.S.T.).





### How Much Is It Worth?

"How much did my jacket cost, mamma?  
Is it worth as much as Grace Lyle's?  
And, mamma, mayn't I have some new  
gloves?"

These old ones aren't like the late styles.

"Have I not worn this dress a long time?  
Oh, my! You should see Jessie's hat!  
It must have cost three times what mine  
did,  
And maybe, more, even than that.

"How much is our house worth, I wonder,  
Is Maud's father richer than mine?  
Dear me! She has lots of new dresses;  
But Grace says they're not very fine."

Said mother: "My daughter, I'm sorry  
If you value things by their price.  
The good it may do us or others,  
Is that which makes anything nice.

"The horse cost more money than baby;  
But which do you love the most, think?  
And whisky costs more than good milk  
does;  
But would you prefer it to drink?"

"The prison cost more than our house did,  
Yet you would not like to live there;  
And many men richer than father,  
Get drunk, and cheat people, and swear."

And now our dear little girl says but little  
Of new styles, or old styles, or price;  
What feels good, and looks good, and is  
good—  
Why, those are the things she counts  
nice.

—Ada D. Wellman.

### Corner Seat

Frederick Hall

**A**LWAYS, as long as Joe could remember, as soon as breakfast was over, they would all go into the front room and mother would take the Bible from its place on the marble-topped table. Little John on his stool would sit close beside her, Elie would be at one front window, Joe himself at the other, and Mae, the oldest, in the corner seat opposite mother.

Mother's voice was low and beautiful, almost as beautiful in reading as in singing. They would listen to a psalm or perhaps a Bible story, and after that all would kneel and she would pray to God for the help that, every day, everyone needs, and thank Him for His many gifts to them—the beautiful world in which they lived, enough every day to eat and

wear, a home to shelter them from storm and danger, and most of all, the great love that bound them to each other, to the millions of good people in all the world, and to God Himself.

Joe had once thought that it was the same everywhere; excepting perhaps that, where there was a father, he might read. He learned later that he was mistaken. In some houses they didn't read the Bible each morning, and, among the boys he knew in school, some he suspected might have thought it "queer."

They of course did not understand, but then no one likes to be thought "queer," and so, one morning after Billy Dean's people moved into the house across the street and Joe looked out the window and saw Billy sitting on their fence, he quickly crossed over and sat down in Mae's corner, and she, a bit puzzled, had to take his usual seat by the window.

He could not have told just why he did it. He was not ashamed of their morning worship, it seemed the only right way to begin the day, but—well, if Billy looked in, he could see them and Billy might ask him about it, and he was not at all sure he could make it plain. He hoped Mae would not question him: it might be hard to explain even to her. So, as soon as the Lord's prayer, in which they all joined, was over, he hurried out into the back yard, not the front yard, and there—if you'll believe it!—on an orange case by the woodpile, sat Billy.

"Hullo," he said, "I want to ask you—do your folks do that every morning?"

"Sure," Joe answered.

"What did you read this morning?"

"That story about the boy who thought things were too slow at home, and went away; he was going to have a big time. Then when all his money was gone, the only job that he could get was feeding pigs. It's a good story."

"I know," Billy agreed. "Afterward he got sensible and went back home. When your mother prays, what does she ask for?"

"Well——" Joe tried to recall the prayer he had just heard. "Not for many things. You see, we've got everything that we really need. She prays for us to be brave—a person ought to be that. She prays that we'll know what we ought to do. A

Bible verse says you can get wisdom, if you ask for it. Then she prays that we'll be strong. Those," he ended, "are the main things."

Billy thought for a minute.

"You know—we don't do that. Of course," he hurried on, "we go to church, to Sunday school, and such things. Last summer, though, when we went to the farm, to visit Grandpa and Grandma Dean, they did the same way, every morning. I believe," he added gravely, "that it's a good way."

"Sure," Joe nodded solemnly, "it's a good way."

Billy rose and turned toward home.

"You know," he announced, "I'm going to ask dad about it."

Which is all that there is to this story, excepting that next morning, when they sat down for worship, Joe did not take the corner seat. He went back to his old seat by the window.

### Taking a City

"GIVE me that top, Arline. I mean what I say."

John spoke sternly, but the little girl did not give up the top. John seized a small piece of kindling wood lying near, and hurled it at his sister's face. The missile struck near the temple, and the blood flowed down over Arline's face. She screamed with fright and pain, then sank to the ground.

The boy raised her tenderly and bore her to the house. How sorry he was!

"Is this the result of your temper?" the mother asked, her own face whitening with fear. "Go to the barn, son, and tell your father."

John dreaded to go, but he dared not disobey.

There followed hours of anxiety on the part of every member of the family.

"It will leave a scar," the doctor said as he left the house, "but it might have been much worse."

Arline looked pale for two or three days, and her brother was very attentive to her. He brought her violets from the woods, bought coloured crayons for her, and tried manfully to atone for his fault.

"He that ruleth his spirit," the boy murmured. "I will try with God's help to do that."

For years no one has seen him lose entire control of his temper. Whenever he looks at the scar on Arline's face, he is reminded of the fact that "he that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Prov. 16: 32.—Selected.



## AROUND THE WORLD

\*BETWEEN the South Pole and Latitude 60° S. there are no land animals larger than insects.

\*FOR five centuries more than 33 per cent of the world's total silver production has come from Mexico.

\*THE noisiest street corner in the world is said to be Sixth Avenue and 34th Street in New York City. It is so noisy that it makes a normal person two-thirds deaf for the length of time that he stands there.

\*IN spite of the fact that Venus is the planet closest to the earth, at times approaching within 26,000,000 miles, astronomers have never been able to observe its surface because its atmosphere is so cloudy. From the observations, scientists believe the atmosphere of this planet is largely carbon dioxide.

\*THE successful grafting of potato and tomato plants to produce a new kind of starchless fruit known as "topato" was recently revealed by George H. Chisholm, horticulturist, says an American journal.

In addition to the "topatoes," which grow on the roots of the plants like ordinary potatoes, the bushy upper growth also produces tomatoes.

The potatoes grown in this manner are completely starchless, and are the first of their kind ever to be produced.

For his experiment, Mr. Chisholm used the ordinary variety of Irish potato plants, and then grafted tomato plants to the tops.

These plants, about a dozen of them, are kept in the greenhouse and are grown in gravel without soil. They receive nourishment from magnesium sulphate and six "secret" chemicals which are applied twice a day.

\*FROM June to October, visitors to Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico behold one of the strangest natural wonders which America has to offer—the bat spectacle.

Each evening at dusk throughout the summer, millions of bats stream upward from the caverns in a twisting, smoke-like spiral which finally disintegrates as each bat goes its own way. The flight outward lasts for three hours.

The bats make their nightly foray upon the desert insects, and by morning they have all returned; the tourist going through the caves during daytime hours will never suspect their presence.

It has been estimated that during the summer months the bats consume a total of eleven and a half tons of insects nightly.

The bat cave, in which naturalists say some three million bats spend the summer, is 180 feet below the surface, and is kept closed to visitors.

\*THE Roman Catholic press in the United States numbers 139 newspapers and 197 magazines, with a total circulation of seven million.

\*SPECIMENS of a South American tree that is normally garrisoned by fighting ants have just been received at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., from a geologist and explorer in eastern Colombia.

The tree, known as *barrasanta*, is a small, slender growth with showy red flowers. Its hollow stem is always inhabited by the furious ants which swarm out to attack anyone who disturbs it. Both Indians and white men customarily give it a wide berth.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We wish to express our sincere thanks for £5 sent in for mission work by "D."

### NOTICE

Next SIGNS dated January 6, 1941.

THROUGHOUT the years it has been our custom to publish only fifty-one numbers of the SIGNS each year, and this number therefore completes the volume for the year.

Our next issue will be the first in the New Year, and will be dated January 6.

We take this opportunity of sincerely thanking all our readers for their interest and patronage during the year, and we wish them all the compliments of the season. May every reader have very much of God's blessing and guidance throughout the coming year!

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## FOR YOU



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