

Signs of the Times



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Sing!

● Daughter of Zion



R. PAVITT BROWN

PARADOXICAL as it seems, the thickening trouble and distress of these momentous times provide ever greater reason for the Christian church to rejoice and sing. The most astonishing aspect of the present situation is the general failure of the church to do so. This has given cause for much raising of eyebrows among writers generally. Typical is the following from Dr. Charles C. Morrison of the *Christian Century*: "I see more evidence of impending doom on the front of my newspaper than I hear from the pulpit of my church."

Associated with the Bible description of the end of the world is the joyful news of the return of Christ. Can it be that church folk generally are so uninterested in this glorious event that their preachers are failing to see any significance in the current furore about "hell" bombs triggered by atomic energy? The fact that the churches generally are silent upon the remarkable resemblance between newspaper descriptions and the scriptural account, would seem to indicate to the casual observer, either complete ignorance of, or distaste for, revealed truth. If so, we are in sorry shape. The watchmen on the walls of Zion are evidently asleep. The rank and file of Christians are in an uneasy slumber, hearing the approaching thunders of doom, yet unprepared and without any certain voice to rally them for whatever may impend.

"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord." Zech. 2: 10.

The rejoicing of His people is fed upon the certainties of the approaching festival. For long enough the guests awaiting the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom have been asleep. Theirs is the responsibility of keeping the whole

earth aglow with the lamps of welcome. The parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25) is well applied to the present experience of the church. "All slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Verses 5, 6.

When preachers and people alike will read their Bibles in conjunction with their newspapers they will truly sing for joy. But now is perhaps the last opportunity to get a preparation in character and life. In the parable there were five of the ten who slumbered on leaving it altogether too late to obtain the necessary oil for their lamps of welcome. They were shut out from the wedding. The oil clearly represents godliness of character built upon knowledge of the programme of events. That character may now be obtained through belief in and obedience to the Word of life, and that programme in the response of current events to the prophetic blueprint.

If the shout of the archangel shall wake the dead then surely the blast of the atom bombs should awaken our spiritual consciousness. Whether or not they will occasion the plagues of Revelation the sixteenth chapter, their strikingly similar effect should arrest the attention of all sober folk. Particularly so when one recalls that the sixth vial of that chapter has to do with the battle of Armageddon.

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon . . . men."

The medical report from Hiroshima reads in part as follows: "Beginning about two weeks after the explosion a



★ Miss Adele Leigh, twenty-one-year-old North London girl, singing one of her arias at rehearsal at Covent Garden.

strange new syndrome appeared. Individuals who had previously been well and apparently free from all injury by the explosion fell ill in large numbers, manifesting extreme weakness, pallor, and loss of hair. Innumerable petechial hæmorrhages appeared in the skin and there was ulceration and bleeding from oral mucosa. They became febrile, and succumbed in large numbers to invasive pulmonary and pharyngeal infection. Examination revealed extremely low red cell and hæmoglobin values, low white blood count, particularly the granulocytes, and an extremely prolonged bleeding-time with no clot formation. The condition progressed to death."

Thousands have since developed what medical men now call a new type of bleeding cancer commencing with a small pimple due to exposure to radioactive rays.

"And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch [fry or grill] men with fire." The following description from Japan might well be said to compare with this Scripture:—

"With the explosion, the blinding light allowed but an instant for the mind to react. Glass windows burst inward with a crash cutting the bodies of the inmates, burying fine glass into the flesh. At the same time plaster on the walls, as though pushed by a mighty hand from the outside, covered the people who yet could not realize what had taken place. The heavy tile on the roof of every house poured like rain from the eaves to the

ground. The buildings groaned as the timbers gave way under the strange shock of the convulsion of nature, never before experienced by man. The people on the street exposed to the direct rays of the white heat above them fell in their tracks, their flesh scorched and bleeding from many wounds. Those protected beneath shelter were injured in one way or another. For fear of the fire they rushed into the streets. Here they met the burned and bleeding without signs of fire upon them. Some were dead drawn into all kinds of shapes, while others moaned in pain, the brain burned, the heart raced like mad, and lungs hurt as they panted for breath."

Said the pilot of the bomber at Bikini: "I saw a solid ball of fire fifteen miles in diameter cover the entire target area over the lagoon." Yet we are assured that the Hiroshima and later test bombs are but fire crackers in comparison with present stocks. The hydrogen, or "hell" bomb is calculated to be able to wipe out Melbourne with its more than a million inhabitants in one searing blast of fire.

A pamphlet recently to hand gives the following summary of aerial forces almost within coo-ee of Armageddon. "It is estimated that Britain has 1,200 jet-propelled planes, fighters and bombers in Iran and Iraq—about 400 miles from Armageddon. The United States has a task force stationed permanently in the Mediterranean less than 300 miles from Armageddon. She also has 6,000 first line planes and 1,200 reserves in the Balkans about 700 miles from Armageddon. And, since the 30th of November, 1947, when the United Nations voted to partition Palestine, the Jews and Arabs have been fighting their holy war in the very valley of Esdraelon, the site of Megiddo, the battle-field of Armageddon." Well might these growing forces precipitate earth's final woes making the narrow plain of Armageddon storm centre and touchstone for a worldwide holocaust.

Finally there is to be a tremendous hail storm, every stone weighing about 56 lbs. Photographs of the 1st July, 1946, Bikini test explosion show columns of smoke, steam, and gases rising to a great height. Across the top of the column was a white formation 5,000 feet long described as an ice cap. The column at an altitude of seven miles struck temperatures of from 75 to 100 degrees below zero, and consequently turned to ice. A naval officer said, "We still don't know what caused certain types of destruction that we have found, especially the peculiar 'dints' topside some of the vessels." It is very probable that hailstones, approaching the weight of those described in the Apocalypse, fell back

into the target areas causing the "dints" on some of the ships' decks.

Thus it may well be that God has permitted these events to take place as a preview of the certain and *exact* fulfilment of inspired predictions. Scientists, military men, statesmen, and educators have already translated the fireworks as signals of the inevitable doom of civilization. It is said that the first atomic experiment in the Mexican desert gave off heat that was felt a hundred miles in every direction. The air shock was felt for 150 miles and the earthquake for 250 miles. "The flash of light was much brighter than the sun and a blind woman waiting on the corner for a streetcar in Albuquerque, 120 miles away, exclaimed, 'What's that?'"

Well might even the blind and deaf to spiritual realities exclaim, "What do these things mean?" Of all people on the face of the earth every professing Christian should be able to provide the answer. That so many are not even interested is both a startling and dreadful phenomenon and a commentary in itself. These are they of whom Paul wrote to Timothy, who in the last days of earth's history would have "a form of godliness" but deny "the power thereof." And he admonishes further, "from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3: 1-5. The inference is plain that there are folk who acknowledge and possess "the power thereof" and are authorities to whom all may turn for an explanation of the times.

For many years we have been dedicated to the task of just such enlightenment. We are in exactly the position stated by Pope Pius XII last June in speaking of his church as an evangelical agency to enlighten non-Catholics. "Show yourselves towards . . . [non-Catholic Christians] as those who differ rather than as opponents. . . . Unite now with them in charity as far as you are able, since you have long been prepared to give them the fullness of truth." The pope has just taken a page out of our book, as this is exactly our position towards Roman Catholics. We owe a responsi-

bility to the thousands, yes, millions of Catholics, who are inquiring after the truth of fulfilling prophecy in the signs of the times. We are not interested in the overthrow of the Catholic system, but we are definitely interested in helping these millions to find Christ in the fullness of truth and happiness.

That this is so is evidenced in the tens of thousands of ex-Catholics who form part of the very backbone of our movement. This explains why we feature in our paper so much that deals with the Catholic faith, and calculated to help Catholic inquirers toward the light of truth as depicted in Holy Scripture. Our paper is therefore an evangelical medium to be used in the hands of consecrated workers to just such an end. All therefore who would hear the call of Christ to "sing and rejoice" because He is "even at the doors" will realize their sacred responsibility to scatter the SIGNS OF THE TIMES like the leaves of autumn to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord.

The power of song in the midst of darkness and distress has long been recognized. Troops in battle areas realize the marvellous psychological reactions of entertainment. The visit of Miss Gracie Fields with her gaiety and sentiment brought a tremendous lift to battle-shocked men. Perhaps her greatest appeal was in her rendition of such songs as "The Holy City," which she sings with so much beauty and feeling. These "deeper notes" are what the heart of humanity craves for today. We have a wonderful song to sing, "for, lo, I come . . . saith the Lord." What deeper note could be sounded than this?

"Sing," then, "O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem." ("For Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.") "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will be silent in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." Zeph. 3: 14, 17; Gal. 4: 26.

TALHAIRN'S PRAYER

GRANT me, O God, Thy merciful protection;
And, in protection, give me strength, I pray;
And, in my strength, oh, grant me wise discretion;
And, in discretion, make me ever just;
And, with my justice, may I mingle love,
And, with my love, O God, the love of Thee;
And, with the love of Thee, the love of all.

—From the Welsh.



Restoring

the

FOUNDATIONS

MARIAN M. HAY



REBUILDING OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON

THROUGH the years many misconceptions have arisen and gained currency regarding the faith and the position of Seventh-day Adventists among the larger church bodies of the religious world.

Seventh-day Adventists have been regarded as a strange and fanatical sect who believe new doctrines and whose interpretation of the prophecies is bizarre and fantastic in the extreme.

The truth of the matter is far otherwise, as anyone who will read Adventist literature or converse with an Adventist minister will find. In a special sense today they are fulfilling the prophecy of Isa. 58: 12:—

“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”

Here is no new doctrine, no strange, unknown belief, but a building again, upon old foundations, the repairing of a wall that has been breached, the restoration of old positions that have lain waste for a long period. The beauty and symmetry of the original plan becomes evident and its vast scope is revealed as the encumbering rubbish is cleared away.

Scattered over the ancient lands of earth are many structures and monuments which tell of the efforts and ambitions of mankind in far-off days. Some

of these are crumbling ruins whose origin and purpose, lost in the mists of antiquity, can only be guessed from the few vague clues they offer. Others, like the temples, friezes, and sculpture of Greece's golden age, remain for us to see, and their beauty and exquisite proportions still reflect honour on the names of Phidias, Praxiteles, and other sculptors and architects of the period.

In England and Europe are medieval castles and cathedrals whose strength and beauty delight the eyes, though the stone of which they are composed is crumbling. Even buildings of more recent years are crusted with grime, and much of the beauty of detail is hidden and lost.

The study of the mysterious relics of the past is of absorbing interest to palæologists. Stonehenge and other ancient monuments whose origin and meaning are lost, have come in for new study since greater outlines have been revealed by aerial photographs. Reconstructions have been worked out, and theories have been propounded attempting to solve the mystery of its purpose. But there is little to work upon, for no records or traditions remain of those who built so stoutly before the dawn of history.

In a different category are the monuments of Greek and Roman culture, for the history of them is preserved in literature. A study of this with the ruins of the Acropolis, makes it possible to construct a model of the Parthenon and sur-

rounding structures that captures something of their former beauty.

The restoration of British and European buildings is less difficult, for in many cases the plans are preserved, and the purpose and ideal of the long-dead architect may guide those who would restore his work to its original beauty.

The work of restoring ancient buildings and monuments is rewarding and satisfying, whether it be merely cleaning off the soot and grime of recent years, rebuilding crumbling walls and buttresses before their original form is forgotten, or seeking to restore beauty to fallen and chaotic ruins.

It is to a work of spiritual restoration and rebuilding of more absorbing interest and more vital importance that Seventh-day Adventists have been called today. They preach no new doctrines except that they emphasize the prophecies fulfilled and fulfilling in our day, God's special message to this generation. Their doctrines are those which fortified and comforted our grandparents and great-grandparents, but which have been forgotten or neglected today. Other beliefs they hold had been lost since the days of the apostolic church, when, shining with purity and glowing with faith and love, the church was built upon the foundation laid by Christ and the apostles. Men and women came out of darkness into the marvellous light that transformed their lives. Persecution, suffering, and loss only made the church more beautiful and served to purify the characters of its members.

There came a time, however, when the church which had survived persecution was deceived and led astray by flattery

and favour. Kings and rulers came to her; proud and arrogant men brought their principles into the church and corrupted her purity and simplicity. The foundation left by Christ was too narrow, so another structure was raised, founded on pride, cruelty, cunning, and the lust for power. The builders of this new structure made unceasing efforts to tear down and destroy the original building, and though at times it almost seemed that they had succeeded, yet the foundation could not be destroyed.

As the Reformers arose their first concern was to correct the errors of the apostate church, to reform its abuses, but not to leave it. But as they studied and preached, they found that the foundation was wrong. There was nothing to do but leave the church and build again upon the original foundation.

They built again the great doctrines of the authority of the Holy Scripture, righteousness by faith, the complete salvation provided, and free access of all believers to God through Christ.

The great evangelical revivals under Wesley, Moody, Spurgeon, and others brought more of the forgotten apostolic truths to light, and the church grew and did exploits.

But as the years passed, this new building, so well begun, again began to be neglected and fall into ruins. Under the impact of higher critical methods of study and of the theory of evolution, men lost their faith in the Bible as the infallible Word of God. Materialistic philosophy invaded the church, and coloured and moulded men's thought of spiritual things. Many ministers, educated in the great universities, lost their faith also, and did not hesitate to spread their doubts and unbelief in their churches.

How fitting that at such a time God would bring into being a people whose task it would be to build the old waste places, to raise up the foundations of many generations, to repair the breach, and restore the forgotten paths!

Seventh-day Adventists worship God as Creator who in six literal days spoke the world into existence. (Ps. 33: 6, 9.) This immediately rules out all belief in the evolutionary theory with its slow development over millions of years. Though now there are few who hold confidently to the doctrine of creation, even among ministers of the gospel, yet it is not a new belief. Before the publication of the "Origin of Species," faith in creation was unquestioned. Since then, under the guise of demonstrated science the evolution theory has captured the thinking of men so that they have surrendered their faith in God's Word.

There is another aspect of faith in God as Creator which must not be overlooked.

As the memorial of creation, God gave to men the Sabbath to be a continual reminder of His power, and to be a blessing and a delight to man. It is significant that the text following that which we have quoted (Isa. 58: 12), is a promise conditional upon Sabbath observance: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; . . . then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." Isa. 58: 13, 14.

The seventh-day Sabbath was observed and preached by Christ and the apostles. No change of the day is either expressed or implied in the New Testament.

The second coming of Christ is another distinctive belief of Seventh-day Adventists. Although the literal, personal, glorious, and imminent return of our Lord to this earth finds little acceptance among the churches of today, it has ever been the "blessed hope" of the church, and faithful ministers in all ages have held it before their flock.

Seventh-day Adventists teach that the transforming power of God in conversion enables a man to keep His law. Obedience to the law of God is the fruit of God's saving grace. As the evidence of the new life, obedience to the moral law is expected of all Christians. This was the belief and teaching of Paul, of John, and of Christ Himself. It is written into the creeds and confessions of faith of all the great Protestant churches. The current teaching that faith in Christ does away with the need to keep His law is foreign to all true apostolic and evangelical teaching.

But it is in the realm of prophetic interpretation that men regard Seventh-day Adventists as presenting something new and strange. When they listen to an Adventist minister preaching on the symbolic beasts of Daniel and the Revelation, and applying them to political and religious powers that reach down to our day, though they might be convinced of the truth of the exposition, many have an uneasy feeling that it is strange to have such truth held exclusively by one small denomination.

Many would be greatly surprised, and confirmed in their convictions, by the knowledge that Seventh-day Adventists

are no innovators in the field of prophetic interpretation. They are the heirs, the present-day representatives, of the great historical school of prophetic interpretation, dating back to the apostles, and coming down through the Reformers and the great Bible students of the nineteenth century.

Except that they preach with more clearness and certainty regarding prophecies fulfilling in these days, Seventh-day Adventists have nothing new to bring to the world in the matter of prophetic interpretation. The explanations of prophecy that form such a large part of Adventist preaching are not applications they have ingeniously accommodated to history. Far from it.

It is in the plan of God that when the time draws near for the fulfilment of any specific prophecy great numbers of independent Bible students are led to an understanding of it, and preach it before and at the time of its fulfilment. Though in general outline a line of prophecy might be clear long before its fulfilment is due, its detailed application has usually been vague until its time drew near. This is in harmony with the words of Jesus, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." John 14: 29.

It would amaze many living today to see the vast volumes of exposition that have in the past been devoted to the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. From the days of the apostles, through the centuries that followed amongst the Celtic and Syrian churches which held to their pure faith, here and there through the Dark Ages, and increasing in volume among the early and later Reformers, the interpretation of the symbols and the times of these prophetic books was essentially the same as that which may be heard from the platform of any Adventist preacher today.

The image of Daniel 2 and the four beasts of Daniel 7 were understood to apply to Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The little horn, mystic Babylon, the woman in scarlet, and antichrist were all applied to the Papacy. The year-day principle of interpreting prophetic time was early understood, and men eagerly looked for the time of the closing of the twelve hundred and sixty years of papal supremacy.

We shall quote in closing LeRoy E. Froom's summing up in Volume III of his masterly work, "Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers," a detailed study of prophetic interpretation through the centuries:—

"The great majority of these interpreters of prophecy were graduates of various institutions of higher learning

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A PEACEFUL SCENE ON LAKE GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

RIVAL CAMPS

in Europe's Struggle



V. W. STOTESBURY

DARK shadows were falling across Europe: the ambitious Nazi pressed his claims further with increasing arrogance: in the West it was at long last realized, almost too late, that appeasement was futile, and a feverish programme was launched to "redeem the time." In such an atmosphere the College of Cardinals met in March of that fateful year, 1939, to appoint the highest executive to the world's oldest sovereignty. Its choice was significant, and in keeping with the grave international scene. Eugenio Pacelli was indeed the Roman hierarchy's greatest diplomat. He had been papal nuncio to many lands, and, as the Vatican's ambassador-at-large, was an international figure. His office as Secretary of State ideally fitted him to assume the dual role of leader of the Roman Catholic Church, and head of the Vatican State.

Since 1929, after the signing of the Lateran agreement, the prestige and influence of Rome have developed rapidly, and the nations of earth have sought diplomatic representation at the Holy See. Here, in this small state, in the heart of enemy territory during the war, were representatives of the Axis powers, the Western allies, non-Christian lands, and even of the president of the United States of America. It is significant that one great power, the mighty U.S.S.R., has had no such representation, for the doctrines of one are the antithesis of the other. Joseph Stalin is alleged to have once sneered, "the pope! How many divisions has he got?"

But the Papacy is more than just a little geographical state. It is an international organization; or, rather, supra-national. It has been estimated there are near four hundred million Roman Catholics who owe first allegiance, not to the country of their birth, but to the pope. It has been the policy of the present pope to broaden the power of the Roman system, and, in February, 1946,

for the first time in centuries, there were more non-Italian cardinals. This regrouping of forces along a world-wide front was, in the words of Pius XII himself, "a Catholic map of the world."

In June, 1946, on the eve of the French and Italian elections, the pope made a strong plea to the electorates to vote for "the firm rock of Christianity" as against "the unfeeling omnipotence of a materialistic state." In the political tangles of Europe, there have emerged strong parties representing the policies of Rome, the most recent and outstanding success politically being the election of the new West German Chancellor. The struggle between Rome and Moscow is being pursued relentlessly, and each sees in the other a threat to its existence. In the fierce conflict in Czechoslovakia we see the world-wide conflict for supremacy epitomized.

We are conscious of a struggle, not between nations, but between two creeds: not national, but supra-national. Each has its adherents in every land. The Vatican aims at spreading its power to

the whole world. "There is but one way in which the unity of Christians may be fostered, and that is by furthering the return to the one true church of Christ of those who are separated from it." (Pope Pius XI in his encyclical, "*Monitium Animos*.") I quote now from the Rev. L. Dalton, M.Sc., (Roman Catholic): "... Catholics everywhere must bestir themselves to a new, intense and concerted effort to unite the war-scarred and dispirited people of the world in the peace and love and light of the church, which is the city of God. There must be a forward movement right along the line." Speaking of the struggle against communism, Monsignor Fulton Sheen envisaged it as world-wide, and as between Rome and Moscow. "In the future there will be only two governments in the world—Rome and Moscow." The pope in addressing members of the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee who visited the Vatican, said civilization would have to unite to defeat the "colossal threat of Russia."

At the same interview he further said: "Law and order may sometimes need the strong arm of force, but force should always be held in check by law and order, and exercised only in defence of law and order." We wonder whether, in the eyes of Rome, subsequent to the Mindszenty trial and the church-state crisis in Czechoslovakia, the time is at hand for the use of "the strong arm of force." Some time before these developments, Pius XII said to four hundred thousand eager listeners crowded into St. Peter's Square, and to millions of listening ears around the world, "The great hour of Christian conscience has come. At this time of anxiety and danger, fraught with perhaps irreparable world decisions, the shadow of singular gravity has fallen upon us. Rome is in a phase which demands the highest vigilance, continuous action, and unconditional readiness from Christians." To this challenging statement and impassioned appeal were added the words of Christ, "He that is not with Me is against Me."

In the struggle between East and West, many see in the Vatican a mighty instrument for welding the free, Christian mass of mankind in a crusade against the cruel dominance of the Kremlin. A widening circle of men—thinkers, writers, statesmen, soldiers—declare the pope a champion in this ideological conflict which threatens to erupt into an incomparable and unprecedented holocaust.

However, the call for "unconditional readiness from Christians," coupled with the threat "He that is not with Me is against Me" [the "me" in this instance

indicating the Roman hierarchy] demands an answer from every thinking Protestant. In this intense global conflict Rome envisages but two camps, two houses—"In the future there will be only two governments in the world—Rome and Moscow." Monsignor Fulton Sheen declared at St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney.

We see then two warring elements striving for supremacy, with all other allegiances eliminated, or made subservient to one or the other of the two "governments." Thus would Protestantism lose its charter of freedom and be incorporated into the very system it so nobly fought against in the Reformation. The heroism of her founders and the blood of her martyrs would have been in vain. The subtle influence of a united Christian front against Moscow and the tyranny of the Kremlin, must be seen in its bare-faced objectives, and Protestants everywhere stand guard over a heritage of freedom that has been too dearly bought to be so easily sacrificed to an ambitious Roman policy.

Protestants stand against the cruelties and ruthless suppression of Moscow; they have been shocked by the sad story of millions in bondage behind the iron curtain, but, while being anti-communistic in thought and doctrine, they are as equally against the dogmas of Rome.

When to Be Happy

Why do we cling to the skirts of sorrow,
Why do we cloud with care the brow,
Why do we wait for a glad tomorrow—
Why not gladden the precious now?
Eden is yours! Would you dwell within it?
Change men's grief to a gracious smile,
And thus have heaven here this minute
And not far-off in the afterwhile.

Life, at most, is a fleeting bubble,
Gone with the puff of an angel's breath.
Why should the dim hereafter trouble
Souls this side of the gates of death?
The crown is yours! Would you care to win it?
Plant a song in the hearts that high,
And thus have heaven here this minute
And not far-off in the by-and-by.

Find the soul's high place of beauty,
Not in a man-made book of creeds,
But where desire ennobles duty
And life is full of your kindly deeds.
The bliss is yours! Would you fain begin it?
Pave with love each golden mile,
And thus have heaven here this minute
And not far-off in the afterwhile.

—Nixon Waterman.



The firm foundation of true Protestantism—in favour of the Scriptures—has, and must remain immovable. Rome, by virtue of the Lateran agreement, has once again assumed temporal power by the rebirth of the Vatican State, and has declared herself as against the principle of our Lord. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18: 36. He further precluded the seizure of arms to defend or to advance a religious state on earth—"if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight." To those of us who aspire to be "His servants," there is no need to fight in defence of any creed. We look neither to Moscow nor Rome. With Abraham we look "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11: 10.

With Paul in 2 Tim. 3: 1, we see that the perils of today indicate that we live "in the last days." In the same chapter, verse 13, we are made conscious that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived," but we realize too that rather than for such conditions and times to cause us to weaken in our adherence to the things of God, we must the more earnestly give heed to the counsel contained in the succeeding verses, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." See also Acts 17: 11.

Our Lord and Saviour depicted these very times in which we live. In Luke 21: 25 and 26, He forewarned of "distress of nations with perplexity," of "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." At this hour, this grave hour in human history and allegiances, He asks us to "look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21: 28. For the Christian it is not an hour of despair; it is rather the hour when hope is to be centred on the coming kingdom, not an earthly kingdom sponsored by any church, but the kingdom of God. "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." Luke 21: 31.

Then, dear reader, hold firm the things of God; keep steadfast in His Word. Soon Jesus will come; earth's night of anguish passeth, the dawn of God's great sorrowless tomorrow breaketh. In this crisis hour take the words of Jesus to heart, as the balm of assurance, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12: 32.



THERE is no question of greater moment than that regarding the real nature of the Man who appeared two thousand years ago in Palestine claiming to be a ransom for the sins of the world.

A solution to this problem would end most of the controversy which divides the religious world and would unify the honest in heart. Church-goers come under two broad headings: those who believe in the Bible as the infallible Word of God and those who accept it only as a book of good moral teaching. The first class believe, in conformity with Scripture, that Jesus Christ was divine, the Creator of this world (John 1:3). The others suppose Him to have been a good man, perhaps the best that ever lived, but only human.

If Christianity is the truth of God, on belief in which the salvation of His creatures depends, we would expect that God had prepared evidence sufficiently simple and conclusive to convince the sincere seeker of average intelligence.

Ten minutes of time are sufficient to solve the problems of Christ's true nature and the authenticity of the Book by which He lived. In a court of law, a man's evidence, his words, save or condemn him. Let us examine the words of Jesus called the Christ—His words regarding Himself, His gospel, and the institution He founded.

Our familiarity with His words inevitably causes that their impact on our minds is lessened—their significance not wholly grasped. But let us for the purpose of fair investigation consider the words of Christ as we would had we lived two millenniums ago in the

JESUS Proved

ancient city of Jerusalem. In imagination let us join the crowd that listens to the melodious yet earnest voice of the former carpenter of Nazareth. His words are breath-taking.

Pointing to the orb blazing in the heavens He says, "I am the Light of the world." John 8:12. In thus comparing Himself to the sun of the natural world, Jesus claims to be the author and preserver of all life and of all truth, the fountain of energy, strength, and knowledge, of all things good.

How does this claim survive the test of two thousand years of subsequent history? Let us see.

That which distinguishes progressive from unprogressive countries is that the former are Christian, and as Christianity advocates the physical and mental development of society as well as the spiritual, civilization has always followed in its wake. Barbaric communities have been entirely transformed by the efforts of such men as Livingstone, Moffat, Carey, and Paton. Education has always been the aim of the followers of Jesus. At the time of the Reformation Protestants aimed at placing a school by every church. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32) is the motto of true education.

Christ placed a high estimate upon men as the sons of God and since the preaching of His gospel, efforts to pro-

tect and preserve life, and to increase happiness have swelled an unceasing stream of benevolence. For example, in the degenerate society of Christ's time infanticide was a common practice of parents unwilling to support children. They murdered their sons and daughters without compunction. This is now a rarity. There were approximately sixty million slaves in the Roman Empire, the property of a privileged few. Today slavery of that type is almost unknown. Organizations such as those fostered by Florence Nightingale, George Mueller, Dr. Barnardo, and others had their mainspring in the love for humanity which succeeds a love for Christ.

The Ten Commandments, the sermon on the mount, the example of the spotless character of Jesus have done more to enable men to overcome inherent evil tendencies and attain to righteousness than all the philosophy of centuries. Thousands from every generation have testified to changed lives, to the substitution of love for hate, temperance for intemperance, cleanliness for filth, purposeful and beneficial activity for aimless and sinful pursuits.

Those discoveries most beneficial to humanity can be traced to men who found in Christ their inspiration and their strength. Sir Isaac Newton, probably the greatest of all scientists, claimed that his findings came in answer to prayer. Lord Kelvin, famous for his

nautical inventions and electrical researches, made a similar claim. Kepler and Herschel, famous astronomers; Lord Lister, discoverer of the antiseptic methods in surgery; James Simpson, who introduced chloroform; and hosts of others who have forwarded civilization were energized by devotion to the Galilean who had declared Himself the Light of the world.

The greatest literary, art, and musical creations have been inspired by the religion of Jesus. "Paradise Lost," Dante's "Inferno," "Pilgrim's Progress," are the acknowledged classics of the world. "The Last Supper" is regarded as one of the world's masterpieces in art. And the "Messiah" reigns in music. All these found their themes in Christianity.

These facts remarkably fulfil other words of Jesus—words which prove His foreknowledge. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." John 12: 32. Christ did

above the tumult of the centuries. Each passing year lends its witness to the fulfilment of this amazing prediction. Inscribed on the stone of edifices, in millions of books, indelibly written on the hearts of men are the imperishable words of Jesus. At birth, marriage, and death, in times of joy and in times of grief His words flow, once more an inspiration, again a healing balm. Only one divine could speak as Christ spoke, only one divine—the One who fashions the future—could foretell the unfading influence of His words.

"Upon this rock [Himself] I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16: 18. This explains the previous statement. His words were to be preserved and His gospel preached by an institution that was to last as long as the world. Men and women of every generation would follow Him, though opposition and fierce persecution ("the gates of hell") would

birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Matt. 13: 31, 32. From the day of Pentecost when three thousand accepted the gospel, the church grew miraculously despite persecution, until in the days of Constantine in the fourth century Christianity was so widespread that the Emperor himself embraced it.

Christ knew also that many would enter His church without a genuine change of heart and that the greatest peril of the church would not be from without but from within. "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." Matt. 13: 24-26.



d DIVINE

by His Own Predictions

DESMOND FORD

more here than predict His death by crucifixion. This ignominious fate, He declared, would result in the attraction to Him of the men and women of all ages and climes. So it has been.

If this Man was not what He claimed, how can we explain His influence on the world? the fact that He has indeed been its sun? that He has drawn millions from all races to His banner? If He were only a Jewish peasant how did He foresee the enduring and beneficial influence that His life was to shed over all mankind? Who revealed to Him the revolution in morals, habits, and social life that was to succeed Him?

About three days before His death as a malefactor the disciples heard Christ say, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matt. 24: 35. Thus Jesus claimed that for as long as heaven and earth would last a peasant's words would be known and echoed from generation to generation. Civilizations would fade, empires be overturned, systems and "isms" appear and pass, but the sentiments of a penniless Nazarene were to shine as a beacon

continually threaten to extirpate them. Jesus further predicted the persecution of Christians in these words. "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake." "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Matt. 24: 9; John 15: 20; 16: 2. The Jews were the first to persecute the Christians, whom they regarded as renegades. Next the Roman emperors sought to crush out the unorthodox sect and tar beacons to light the streets of Rome were made from captured Christians. Later came the papal persecutions of the Middle Ages by sword and faggot. During the period of papal supremacy the blood of at least fifty million martyrs flowed.

The dimensions to which His church would grow were no mystery to Jesus: "The kingdom of heaven [the gospel] is like to a grain of mustard seed, . . . which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the

"Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just." Matt. 13: 47-49. Speaking of His second coming Jesus said, "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? . . . and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Matt. 7: 22, 23. Thus we have Christ's prediction that right down through the centuries and including the last there would be multitudes of insincere professors of religion. Those who condemn Christianity because of church-going hypocrites have been forestalled by the Founder Himself.

Just prior to His crucifixion Jesus calmly promised His disciples that the day would come when His teachings would be published wherever there were

(Please turn to page 14)

ROME'S *Salvation.*

by

Law



EVERYTHING in the well-gear'd mechanism of the Roman Catholic Church is regulated by a complex system of law. The technicalities of this legislative code are applied with exactitude to every thought, word, act, and omission of its members—from what, when, and how much one may eat and drink, to the intimate details of the manner and frequency of sexual intercourse between husband and wives.

This system of legislation is not a mere abstract, theoretical, or speculative blueprint. Disobedience of its requirements exposes one to the risk of eternal damnation. For in the Roman Catholic Church a man's relation to God and his chances of eternal salvation are determined, not by the quality or measure of his spiritual growth, but by jurisprudence.

This framework of law, by which men are judged worthy of heaven or condemned to hell, was taken over in its entirety from the law and penal system of pagan Rome. The Catholic Church's own existence by universal succession, its pardons and indulgences, its *privilegia*, the protection of its property rights by the establishment of impersonal corporations known as "moral persons," all are part of the law system of imperial Rome. Its chief aim is the conservation and advancement of the corporative structure of the Roman papacy. In his valuable treatise, "*Christian Thought to the Reformation*," Professor Work explains the set-up as follows:—

"In its conception, the individual, as *individual*, has no place. His salvation is conditioned from first to last by his belonging to a *corporation*, in whose principles and functions he shares (according to certain conditions laid down) and by whose sacramental life (also

L. H. LEHMANN



according to certain conditions) his soul is nourished. Through this corporation alone is he brought into touch with his Saviour; outside this corporation his soul is lost."—In *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. XI, page 706.

By this incorporation, the millions of individual consciences of its obedient members are merged into the corporate conscience residing in the supreme pontifex, the pope, in Rome. Upon his absolute and unquestionable rulings depends the eternal salvation of all. Furthermore, whether they like it or not, the salvation of all mankind is made to depend upon the will of this Roman pontiff and the laws he makes. Not only baptized Roman Catholics, but all Christians are counted as members of this mammoth Roman corporation. It is claimed that they, too, could be obliged, under penalty of eternal damnation, to attend mass every Sunday and to abstain from eating more than two ounces of meat on Fridays. Few Protestants know that it is only since the promulgation of the *Ne Temere* decree of Pope Pius X in 1908, that their marriages, although performed by their own ministers, have been counted as valid by the Roman Catholic Church.

This bold claim of the Roman Catholic Church to be the universal law-maker for all Christians is fundamental to the whole structure of Roman Church law. It is asserted that this absolute and universal power has been transmitted

through the Apostle Peter to all the popes of Rome from Christ. This claim was made irrevocable by the bull *Unam Sanctam* of Pope Boniface VIII in 1302, which decreed that "every creature," civil and ecclesiastical, is dependent for salvation upon the laws and regulations issued by the Roman papacy. In 1870, the decree of Pope Pius IX in the Vatican Council, which defined as a dogma of faith the absolute supremacy and the personal infallibility of all the popes of Rome before and after him, confirmed and broadened the claim of Boniface VIII, making it, now and for all time, an unalterable truth in the galaxy of fixed Roman dogmas.

The hard, rigorous lines of the Roman legal structure of this papal corporation are carried over and applied to its conception of the spiritual life. This spiritual structure is made strangely anatomical. It has its directing head and automatically responsive members. Of utmost importance are its indispensable veins—the seven sacraments—which act as channels through which the life-stream of grace can alone flow into the souls of all men. The wafer of holy communion has recently been made the necessary sustaining food as well as the remedial and preventive medicine for all its members. The confessional is its exhaust—the excretory organ for the release of accumulated waste and injurious matter—the purifying process of the body corporate. The intricate network of centuries of theological casuistry is its protective skin shielding it against outside inimical and heretical forces.

This papal corporation also has its spiritual treasury—a vast banking centre—which holds the huge reserves of grace. These are the accumulation of the superabundant gains, not only of Christ's re-

demptive work, but also of the excess profits earned by what are called the works of "supererogation" of the Virgin Mary and the saints. The key to this treasure is in the sole keeping of the pope. He alone can dispense at will of the stored grace through many channels, some of which, like the seven sacraments, are set for all time, others for special occasions, such as, for instance, when he proclaims a special jubilee and grants indulgences and pardons by drawing upon extensive credit balance of these reserves.

Modern methods of advertising and propaganda, to overcome spiritual sales resistance, were known and practised by this Roman Catholic world-corporation long before American business copied and put them into use in our commercial world today. I do not think that any commercial business agent has been able to improve upon the efficiency of the propaganda methods of the Roman Catholic Church. The very word "propaganda" was originally coined by the Roman Catholic Church for the special purpose of publicizing its doctrines and claims. The word has been plagiarized and made into a science today by business men and politicians.

As used by business and politics today, Roman Catholic propaganda has always had its main appeal to the human fear-complex. History proves how this has been cleverly played upon by the propagandists of the Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages. Business and politics play upon the fear of earthly discomforts—the fear of pyorrhœa for all at forty unless you use a certain kind of toothpaste; of a double chin or throat injury, which only can be avoided by smoking a certain brand of cigarettes; of millions of disease-carrying germs that infect every breath of you and your neighbour; of the superiority of the Joneses because they own a bigger and better motor-car than yours. To add to these fears, created in the mind by radio and sales talk, glaring picturizations of them are made to catch your eye wherever you go. Even the most sceptical in time become conscious of the need of the protection offered by the use of the articles so advertised.

These advertising methods are copies of the more effective play upon the fear-complex of spiritual ruin originated by the propagandists of the Roman Catholic Church many centuries ago. Men fear most what they cannot see, especially when it concerns eternal life in heaven or hell after death. There is no sacrifice or suffering that believers in God and the hereafter will not make if convinced that it is necessary in order to obtain happiness beyond the grave.

It was easy for the Catholic Church all through the centuries to create the consciousness in its members of the absolute need of corporate protection from the danger of eternal damnation. It used glaringly coloured pictures of an eternal flaming hell and the cruel pitchforks of grinning devils to stress the need of the saving grace which only a priest of the Catholic Church can obtain for a soul before its fearful journey through the portals of death. These same pictures may be seen in the homes and churches of Roman Catholics today. Souls of departed loved ones are pictured in the searing flames of purgatory, their arms upraised beseeching from those on earth the prayers and masses which can alone soothe them in their torment. This grace is painted in these pictures as being poured upon these burning souls by the merciful hands of the Virgin Mary. The quantity thus doled out is believed to be limited by the number of masses which priests are paid to say for these suffering souls. The golden gates giving entrance to eternal bliss in heaven are pictured as opening only to the magic touch of the hands of Roman Catholic priests.

The executives of this papal corporation are the bishops and priests. They alone have the power of remitting sins and dispensing grace. But this power they in turn can receive only from the supreme pontiff in Rome. Bishops are appointed and receive their spiritual powers directly from the pope in Rome. All their credentials permitting them to exercise these powers are worded in the



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preamble as follows: "By favour of the Apostolic Roman See. . . ." Since this is granted only as a matter of favour, the pope can withdraw this power from bishops and priests at will.

The Catholic people also live in constant fear that the grace of spiritual benefits may be taken from them at any time. If a congregation of lay Catholics should object even to the disposal of a piece of Church property, or the appointment of a pastor, the threat of the denial of the grace of salvation will immediately follow. If a priest should refuse to obey an order of his bishop to remove himself to another parish, the power of transmitting the grace of salvation to his people and of absolving them from their sins is promptly cut off from him. For this grace of salvation is made to flow from the pope through the fingers of the priest to the souls of his congregation. It can be cut off as promptly and efficiently as the electric current from your home if you fail to pay your bill to the utility company.

The foundation of the Roman Catholic Church is rooted in its claim to be a perfect corporate entity, whose charter was written in heaven by Almighty God and delivered on earth to the popes of Rome by Jesus Christ. It is further claimed that this charter makes the Roman papacy independent of and superior to all human corporations and institutions. This claim was made to function among the nations of Europe by the "theory of the two powers," of the two and only two "perfect societies" that ever can exist—the Roman Catholic Church and the

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state, represented by the pope and emperor; two dictators, one in the church and one in the state. The two are held to be independent only in theory, however. In practice the state must bow to the superior power of the church.

This corporate law system through which the Roman Catholic Church pretends to be able to dispense and withhold the grace of salvation is a direct denial of the whole spirit of Christ's teaching. It is rooted in the error that the spiritual kingship of Christ is a mere second edition of Cæsarism flavoured with an external sacramental process. It continues to make law the universal schoolmaster and contradicts St. Paul who says (Gal. 3: 24-26): "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all children of God in Christ Jesus."

Thomas Jefferson, father of American democracy, copied St. Paul when he declared: "The care of every man's soul belongs to himself. No man has the power to let another prescribe his faith. . . . History, I believe, furnishes no example of a priest-ridden people maintaining a free civil government."

From this contradiction of true Christian teaching in the Roman Catholic Church flow all the other contradictions and spiritual poverty so evident in every phase of its beliefs and practices. The Bible at once became a danger to its over-weighted law structure and had to be denied to the people. On the other hand, the Bible had to be preserved as a mere reference book for the theologians and priests to sustain the power of the priesthood by plausible, elastic interpretation of certain texts. But as far as the people are concerned, the existence of God's autobiography is best forgotten.

Roman Catholic people never stop to think that Jesus Christ completely ignored the high priest and the seventy members of the Sanhedrin of the Jewish Church. He always spoke directly to the people along the country roads, in the fields, by the lake shore, and in the public market place. Only on great festival days did He enter the synagogue, and then only because on such occasions He had access to a larger crowd of people. Law or metaphysics never entered into His discourses, nor did the political intrigues of kings and statesmen in the least way ever influence His teaching of the message of the kingdom of heaven and His new way of salvation. Even when these people came and tried by force to make Him king, "He fled away into the mountains alone."

The pope of Rome, on the other hand, who claims to substitute for the same Jesus Christ on earth, insists on being a king, the king of kings. When the tiara, or triple crown, is placed upon his head at his coronation ceremony, the ritual prescribes the following declaration: "*Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art the father of princes and kings, ruler of the world, and vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ.*" Thus this so-called "vicar of Jesus Christ" accepts the position of ruler of the world which the devil offered to Christ, but which Christ spurned with the command to Satan: "Get thee hence!"

The hierarchy of honours, distinctions, and titles among the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church is the natural consequence of the sky-high position taken by its supreme ruler. The longer the list of grades and shades of distinctions ascending and descending the hierarchical ladder, the nearer the highest rung on which the pope sits approaches the misty skyline separating earth from heaven.

Jesus Christ made Himself the lowliest of men. But by this He did not mean that Christianity must be identified with poverty and misery. He meant it as an example that the new order of relationship that He established among men and between men and God was to be one of universal brotherhood and divine sonship. He made it clear that this new order would be destroyed by the assumption of prerogatives by any one member of the kingdom, even by the one who is elected to preside over the others.

For it can easily be seen that the moment even one such prerogative or title is given to any one individual, by which he is raised one step above his fellows, others directly below him must be given a lower grade of honour or title, in order to make his foothold secure and to enhance the pre-eminence thus accorded to him. This pre-eminence of superiors ascends in relation to the descent of inferiors, until top and bottom respectively reach zenith and nadir. He on top is thus pushed up until he becomes lost, from the neck up, in the clouds of heaven. Those at the bottom are pushed down until their feet rest on the very floor of hell. Victims for this hell must be found the moment a triple-crowned pope on his throne begins to make his laws and launch his anathemas.

In such a religious system the need at once arises for law and metaphysics, even though these are divorced from ethics and human needs. Salvation for all, except a favoured few, is made dependent upon the laws fashioned by the one at the top of the ladder. The pope himself is able to shake hands with the Almighty in the clouds of heaven, not because of

any individual merit or sanctity on his part, but by virtue of the old Roman law of universal succession. By the same law code of ancient Rome, disobedient outcasts are thrown upon the pitchforks of the devil in hell.

The pope is called "His Holiness" (*Sua Santità di Nostro Signore*—"The Sanctity of our Lord"), even though he should be the greatest villain on earth. Cardinals are called "eminent princes"; bishops are "your lordships"; monsignors "most illustrious"; priests "very reverend" or just mere "reverend." Kings and princes obedient to the pope are placed in special compartments, such as "the supreme order of Christ"; "his most catholic majesty." Rich laymen are given titles of "marquis," "knights," and "commanders." The great mass of the people go unnamed, and are referred to as "the simple faithful," the servitors. Finally, as if made to bear the whole weight of this towering structure of titles, honours, and distinctions, the "heretics" are crushed underneath it all and branded as *anathema*.

Each ascending grade in the Roman Catholic hierarchy has its own exclusive ritualistic function to perform; also its own distinctive shade of dress to wear. These are shared by all above that grade, but denied to all beneath. The pope can wear all the vestments of all the other grades beneath him, plus those that he alone can wear: his triple crown, his cloak trimmed in ermine, and white cassock. Only he may drink from the mass chalice through a golden tube and seated on his throne. All others drink from the chalice direct and standing at the altar. Only the pope may be carried aloft on men's shoulders. Only he may have his toe kissed, and only before him are carried the oriental ostrich plumes, called the *flabellæ*.

Even the power of forgiving the sins of the people is meted out according to grade. A simple parish priest may only absolve certain classes of sins. A bishop is limited in forgiving sins only by special reservations made by the grand penitentiary in Rome, and by the power of the pope to forgive a choice selection of sins. The pope alone can forgive every kind and degree of sin committed by all classes of people. A bishop, at certain times, can grant an indulgence up to three hundred days. There seems to be no limit to the amount and quantity of indulgences that the pope, by his own power, can grant at any time.

Even cardinals are not of equal grade. Some are cardinal deacons; others cardinal priests; others cardinal bishops and archbishops. Bishops are also graded, and are distinguished by the number of tassels hanging from their hats. Monsignors are allowed an extra lighted

candle at mass. For a bishop two extra tapers are lighted, and for all those above bishops in dignity as many tapers are permitted as occasion demands. Mon-signors are facetiously called "mule bishops" by the lower clergy, because they cannot, like fully consecrated bishops, generate priests. They may, however, wear purple on their street dress, and some are allowed to wear the

mitre and vestments of a bishop when saying mass on special occasions.

Such elaborate ritual is foreign to Christian worship and destructive of true Christian teaching. It lowers faith to mere credulity and superstition. It endows priests with a fictitious character of dignity and mysterious awe. The injunctions of Jesus Christ are opposed to such priestly dignity. Much of it grows out of the mystifying mannerisms of priests, the mumble-jumble of the unknown tongue they use at the altar, the dimly burning tapers, the whiff of the incense

and flowers associated with their every action on the altar. These may be all right in a theatre, but are out of place in a Christian church.

This legal and ritualistic spirit of Roman Catholicism is not the spirit of Christ. It is a pagan spirit dogmatized into Christianity to suit the ends of Roman Catholic power. The true spirit of Christ does not lend itself to law and ritual, but rather is destructive of them, since by means of them men are enslaved, not made free. Christ's formula for freedom is knowledge of the truth.



"The Word Is Nigh Thee"

BERTHOLD H. SWARTZKOPF

Article No. 3 on Quiet Bible Talks on the Light and Life of God

human flesh, and that now possessed and in the hands of the many—the Word in human language—man may contact God.

The Life of God in His Word

The studied purpose of the enemy of both God and man seems to be a constant attempt to make the things of God and salvation obscure and mysterious. He seeks to make God distant and unapproachable. Man must of necessity, it is widely asserted, perform all manner of painful penances and undergo periodic pilgrimages. By way of an arduous and circuitous route he eventually may arrive, if his efforts merit virtue satisfactory for acceptance with a forbidding being, whom he may never be certain of having sufficiently appeased.

The gospel of Christ on the other hand, is not something mysterious. It is not something so distant that it may never be grasped. The obtaining of salvation is simplicity itself. It consists in *believing* or having faith. And "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing [the thing heard] by the Word of God." Rom. 10: 17. Through this avenue man is brought into the presence of God. When hearing the Word, he hears *God*—he believes *God*!

Of all the animal creation man is unique in the possession of speech. With the use of words innermost thoughts are conveyed one to another. Through this marvellous word-forming mechanism, a message is communicated by word of mouth, and with the receiving of it, man receives facts which he believes or rejects. And the God who made man's mouth, and gave him words to speak,

speaks in turn to all through His own Word in human language. All who truly hear, and "whosoever believeth" may have eternal life. Salvation has ever been thus. Moses in the distant beginnings of man's history is heard proclaiming the gospel in its simplest character.

"This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Deut. 30: 11-14.

So Near it Can be Grasped!

Along the embankment of a river which flows through a large city in Europe, there is a steep wall. At intervals from the piers along this wall, a chain is let down which touches the water's edge. The purpose of the chain is to provide something that can be grasped. A poor drowning soul struggling with death must otherwise perish, even though his hand might touch the wall. The chain let down, however, provides the medium by which he may reach safety and life.

Having no other legacy than that obtained from Adam, man's nature is of necessity corruptible. The Bible speaks of it as "corruptible seed." There comes a time in the experience of all born of Adam's seed when the breathing mechanism of the body no longer functions.

WHEN in the long ago, the wise men and counsellors of old Chaldea were brought before the king to make known, not only his dream, but also the interpretation of it, they declared it to be a hard thing. Indeed they protested and confessed that they were faced with the impossible. "It is a rare thing that the king requireth," they declared, "And there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." Dan. 2: 11. And what was expressed by these men of old is a true declaration of the hopelessness and the helplessness of man when left to himself.

Equally, in the dim distant past, the question was sceptically put to the bard and prophet under affliction, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" Job 11: 7, 8.

In both these instances we see portrayed the darkness and blindness of man in the state of unbelief. It is the philosophy and religion of heathenism, without the gospel of Christ. The truth which the gospel conveys to man, is the blessed fact that God *does* "dwell with flesh." It is, in short, the glorious truth of God meeting man, where man could never meet God. The steep and rugged ascents of heaven, which could never be scaled by human effort, have been levelled and brought within grasping point. Through no other medium than the Word in

The splendid organism called man, into whose nostrils God breathed the breath of His own life, producing a pulsating "living soul" (Gen. 2: 7), now becomes a "dead soul." As the grass withers and the flowers fade, so man decays and the glory of a few flourishing days becomes but a memory in the ashes of what used to be.

This is precisely the situation into which the breath of God's life has again been introduced. Now however, the breath of God is seen operative in His Word. Here is a living thing which does not flourish for a season and then cease to exist. Ever fresh with the very life of God, it is the seed of a new kingdom. As the seed in nature has in itself the germinating principle of life, which when sown in the soil produces growth, so the seed of the Word of God works in those who believe and accept it. A new creature

is born, not of the flesh, but of the incorruptible life of God. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* . . . And this is the Word which *by the gospel is preached unto you.*" 1 Peter 1: 23-25.

"We may not climb the heavenly steeps
To bring the Saviour down;
In vain we search the lowest deeps,
For Him no depths can drown.

"But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He;
And faith has yet its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

"The healing of the seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

"O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine!"

Jesus Proved Divine

(Concluded from page 9)

communities of men and women. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14. This prediction is now being fulfilled. The last century has been a century of missions. Men on fire for Christ have penetrated into Africa, Burma, India, China, and the South Sea Island groups. All nations are hearing the gospel preached to them in their own tongues. One striking aspect of this prophecy is found by studying its context. This universal preaching was to occur suddenly, to take place in the last generation. Only the sixteenth century invention of printing and the twentieth century invention of wireless and modern means of transport could fulfil this specification of the world-wide dispersion of truth in a generation.

Christ's view of the future embraced the fate of His own nation. He foretold the destruction of the capital Jerusalem, the razing of the temple and the dispersion of the Jews among all nations. The fact that Palestine was to know alien owners until the last days of earth's history was also prophesied by Christ. "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down to the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This statement, recorded in Luke 21: 24, is only one of many uttered about the future of the Jewish race.

Coming down to our own day we find existing conditions outlined by the Prophet of Nazareth. Speaking at a time when one empire ruled the world and the

great Pax Romana held sway Jesus described the days before His return: "Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: . . . for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." "Distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Matt. 24: 6, 7; Luke 21: 25, 26. These words need no other commentary than our daily newspaper.

Only the Alpha and Omega of human history, the Author of creation and redemption, only He could describe so minutely the events of the Christian era. The Man of Galilee who claimed to have existed before Abraham and who professed unity with the Father stands justified by the words of His testimony.

Listen now to some of the sweetest words of the Divine One as He speaks to sinners: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." John 6: 37, 35.



Restoring the Foundations

(Concluded from page 5)

and held posts of recognized leadership in different denominational organizations; they therefore had highly trained minds and maintained well-balanced viewpoints; they were neither ignorant nor gullible; they were not given to fancy or vagary, but were sound, sensible, and stable; they were men of accomplish-

ment, the intellectual peers of any in their day. . . .

"They were not confined to any one sect or denomination but were scattered through all, established churches as well as nonconformist. They were clergymen for the most part, but included many laymen of conspicuous talent and achievement. And they banded together in group study and joint promulgation of the prophetic message.

"These men were accomplished in Biblical languages, Latin, and history, and were well acquainted with the principles of sound exegesis. They were not inclined to catch up some fanciful or irrational theory. On the contrary, they were rather matter of fact and exacting in their scholarship. They had come to their conclusions on the basis of substantial evidence, after painstaking study consuming years and sometimes decades. Such was the calibre and character of the nineteenth-century Old World expositors of prophecy. The expressed convictions of the champions of the Historical School of prophetic interpretation are therefore entitled to due weight, and respectful consideration." — Pages 749, 750.

The message borne to the world by Seventh-day Adventists is worthy of earnest thought and prayerful study.



God Walks in the Mountains

IRIS O. HARMAN

God walks in the mountains, the mists of His splendour

Are seen in their beauty at break of the day;
The grey peaks adorning,
With dew-spangled morning,
God walks in the mountains at dawn of the day.

He walks in the mountains when noon-tide is flooding

The crests of the hills with a glorious light;
When star-gems are shining,
Their soft light refining;
God walks in the mountains mid curtains of night.

God walks in the mountains with thunders resounding,

And arrows of lightning stabbing the sky;
With water floods pouring,
The mountain side scoring;
He walks in the mountains when tempests are nigh.

God walks in the mountains and spans o'er the valley

The bow of His promise in radiant sheen:
With glory tints blending,
His mercy descending;
God walks in the mountains the rainbow between.

He walks in the mountains when snowflakes are falling,

Enfolding the crests with their mantle of white:
His promise reminding,
Our righteousness finding,
He covers our souls with His mantle of light.

NEWS in brief

► **SURPRISE!** Genuine Panama hats come from Ecuador, not from Panama, as many suppose.

► **BEFORE** the recent world war Argentina had virtually no merchant marine. Now the Argentine flag flies over more than a million tons of shipping.

► **AT** the present time one person in every seven in the United States draws money from the government. This is compared with one in forty about twenty years ago.

► **THE** Indian Constituent Assembly has decided, according to the New Delhi radio, that the English language will continue to be used as the official language of India for a period of fifteen years.

► **JOHN** CHAPIN, manager of a Chicago travel bureau, thinks he has sold the longest bus ticket on record. It was thirty-one feet long, bought by a salesman who planned a round trip to New York with stopovers in fifty-six towns.

► **COMPULSORY** teaching of religion in Hungarian public schools was ended recently by a decree of the country's presidential council. The decree referred to the new constitution of Hungary, which calls for separation of church and state.

► **IN** 1949 Australia received more immigrants than Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand together. In the first six months of 1949 there were 76,000 new arrivals—about 10,000 more than the combined totals of the other three Dominions.

► **HAVE** you seen the newest thing in the steel world—black steel? It is rustless; and for military purposes, where a glint of light might reveal the position of troops or defences to an enemy, it has obvious advantages. Also it is being used for novel jewelry, which is gaining in popularity even though it is dark and sombre in contrast to more gaudy metals.

► **A** 2,500-YEAR-OLD glass factory recently was discovered at Kipia in the eastern United Province of India. Many glass beads of different shape have been found. It appears that glass melting was done in crucibles, several fragments of which have been recovered, with glass sticking to them. Evidently quartz was first melted and then refined by sand, which was obtained from the bed of a near-by river.

► **THE** Mark Twain papers, which include forty-five notebooks and diaries, 400 manuscripts (many still unpublished), an autobiography, and thousands of letters from eminent men, have been given to California University by his daughter, Mrs. Clara Clemens Samosoud.

► **A** NEW pipeline is to be laid under the ocean; but this one will end a long way out in the Atlantic so that its contents will run to waste. It will get rid of all the atomic waste from the atomic research centre at Sellafield, Cumberland.

► **THE** machine age has caught up with the grave-digging business. A device that can dig a grave in thirty minutes was recently demonstrated in Seattle, Washington. It takes a man four to six hours to dig a grave with pick and shovel.

► **Now** Venice police have put up traffic lights on the Grand Canal! "There I was," complained one gondolier, "just hitting the high C in an aria when a policeman shouts that the lights are against me! How can an artist work under such conditions?"

► **THE** twin cities, Fort Williams and Port Arthur on the north shore of Lake Superior, are together called "the grain-shipping capital of the world."

► **THE** wingspread of the original Wright aeroplane was thirty feet. In comparison the B-36 American bomber has a wingspread of 230 feet.

► **ENGLISH** is now the most widely used language for scientific articles, having pushed German and French into the background.

► **THE** average man shrinks three-fourths of an inch in height from breakfast to bedtime; and the average woman, about half an inch.

Signs of the Times

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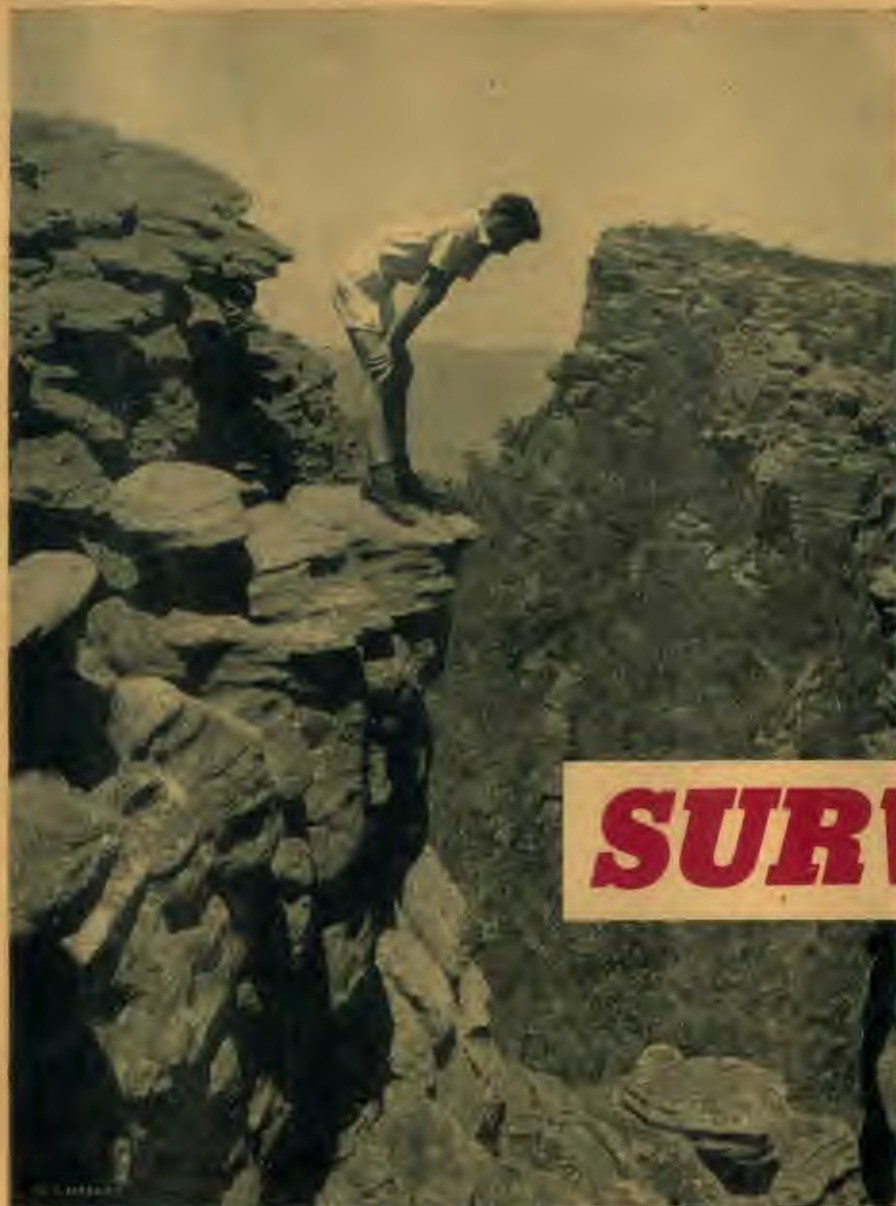
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SURVEYING

The

DEPTHS

THE grandest scenery, the scenery that touches a responsive chord in the soul of man, is that which has either height or depth. Mountains and canyons, fords and precipices and chasms carry the eyes upward or downward. The heights convey a sense of stimulation, of challenge. They invite one to aspire.

To look down into any great deep is awe-inspiring, intensified by a certain element of fear which, almost with a sensation of pain, zig-zags down the backbone to the legs and even the toes.

To stand on some rocky battlement of the Grampians and look sheer down the perpendicular, sun-drenched walls is a breath-taking, soul-shaking experience. Again, the vast depths of the Jamieson

and Grose Valleys of the Blue Mountains convey an overwhelming impression of the power it must have taken to carve these great canyons from the mountain. The stark outlines are softened by countless creeping rock and alpine plants, and fifteen hundred feet below forest trees rise in full growth, but their tops look like the folds of a green plush rug far below. The music of singing waterfalls and laughing cascades floats upward through the blue mist that fills the sunlit valley. What once must have been a vast, ugly void is filled with beauty and music.

There are times when we leave the drab level of our daily life and are permitted to gaze up at the heights, or down into the depths. It might be the challenge of a new awakening to truth, a consciousness of the beauty of holiness. Or it might be

the experience of treading alone the depths of some dark valley of pain or grief.

Again, it might be a new revelation of the love of God, or of His hitherto hidden purpose. Such an experience came to Paul as he reached the climax of his great argument of God's amazing, all-inclusive, all-sufficient plan of salvation as unfolded in Romans, chapters one to eleven. In reverential fear he exclaimed, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Rom. 11: 33.

There is nothing like a vision kept before the eyes of the soul to break the lure of less worthy things. An apprehension of the vastness of God's plan for His people, and the greatness of His love for His redeemed will keep earthly plans and values in their right proportion.

So part of Paul's prayer for the Ephesian church was "that ye, being rooted

and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. 3: 17-19.

What a tonic for the soul to survey such spacious spiritual scenery! "Wide as the farthest limits of the inhabited world, long as the ages of eternity through which God's love to His people will endure, deep as the abyss of misery and ruin from which He has raised us, high as the throne of Christ in the heavens where He has placed us." M. M. H.