

The **WITNESS**

DECEMBER 20, 1956

10¢



THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER

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In Leading Churches

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The WITNESS

For Christ and His Church

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a.m., prayers, sermon 12:05; Wed.,
H.C. 7 a.m., 11 a.m., Healing Service
12:05.

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Story of the Week

Christmas Celebrations Vary In Anglican Churches

★ Christmas is a family occasion, because it is centered around a family of three very simple people, even though one of them was the Incarnate Son of God; also because that same Son of God was born into the family of humankind, and because when his work on earth was done he left behind him a family he had gathered to be the means of carrying on his work amongst men until the whole world is his family.

We belong to that part of the family of Christ which is called the Anglican Communion or Fellowship. How will the absent members of our Christian family be spending Christmas? It is our duty to think about them on this great festival, for though more than miles may divide us "we in this Lord Jesus are for evermore one," as the old bidding prayer for an ancient Christmas carol service says. One broadcasting company has for a number of years put through calls to a family of nations on Christmas afternoon, asking them how they are spending Christmas. As you sit back in your chair, let us in imagination call-up some of our brothers and sisters in the family of which the Episcopal Church is a part and ask them how they are spending Christmas.

Canada

First, our neighbors to the near north. "Hello, Church of

England in Canada, how are your people spending Christmas?"

"Well, we here in Canada are in many ways like you in the States. We have enormous congregations at our midnight celebration of the Holy Communion, and at that hour, as on Sundays, the street cars have special "church stops"—they will stop outside of any church, whether or not they do so on weekdays. This reminds our people that the Church matters in their lives. Our standard of Christmas church-going is very good indeed. What is even better is that it is not confined to that day only, they will be back next Sunday as well. This is true of our remote country districts just as much as of Toronto, Montreal or Quebec. Some of the most picturesque Christmases you could ever share in are to be found in the simple Christmas ceremonies of our country churches, and particularly of our Indian settlements in the more remote north. How shall we spend the rest of the day? Much the same as you are doing, a good deal of fun in the family circle."

Ireland

Now across the seas to Ireland. "Hello, Church of Ireland, what are you going to do at Christmas?"

"In our Churches the day will begin very early with cele-

bration of the Holy Communion. This service will be repeated as many as four times by mid-day. We believe that we should greet our Lord at his altar as the first thing we do on Christmas Day. So our people will go hurrying down the road to their churches as early as 6 o'clock on Christmas morning, and those churches will ring to the rafters with their carols of praise. The rest of the day will be spent quietly at home, the children will open their presents, we shall sit around the fire and crack nuts, and we shall not forget to leave our Christmas gifts outside our doors for the milkman, the postman, and for the poor."

Scottish Christmas

The next visit is of especial interest, for it concerns our sister Church—The Episcopal Church of Scotland, which gave us our first bishop here in the States.

"How shall we spend Christmas? At church, of course. The witness of Episcopalians to the feast of the birth of our Lord was what kept that day from dying out completely in this country. There are still places where the shops are open, and only the slightest observance of the feast is kept, for, you see, there were those in our country who for hundreds of years regarded Christmas as popery and idolatry. Oh, yes, they believed in the coming of Jesus just as much as we do, but it just didn't seem right to them to set apart one day when they should give thanks to God for 'his unspeakable gift.'

Now, that is changed, and

we are so thankful that the simple, faithful witness of our church people to the meaning of Christmas helped make that change possible. Ours is a small Church in numbers, but we have no 'passengers.' Every man, woman and child who can walk will attend the midnight service of Holy Communion, in churches ranging from the tiniest chapel in the heart of some hunting forest to the great cathedrals of Glasgow and Edinburgh, of Perth and Inverness.

Iona Island

"We wish you could come to be with us and worship the Christ-child in our tiny little church on the Island of Iona, the cradle of Christianity in this country, to which you too, are closely bound. It is a tiny little church, simple and unadorned. Its walls are pure white, and against the evergreens with which they will be decked on Christmas Eve they will look so pure that you would feel you are back at Bethlehem. The atmosphere of this little church on Christmas Eve is past description. It is as though St. Columba, who founded the Church of Christ here, and who was such a simple soul, and St. Aidan, who left here to found the Church in wild Northumbria 1,215 years ago, telling his brother monks that he would give 'these babes in the Gospel the milk before he gave them the meat of Christ'—were with us.

"Nearly all of the worshippers will be simple islanders, and truly to such as

these is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven. To watch them worshipping is to know that they are back with the Holy Family themselves. These people have the grace of a deeper spiritual insight than almost any other people in the world.

Then, tomorrow we shall have our Haggis, our traditional Scotch dish, consisting of nearly every kind of spice and meat that you can put into it. Plum-pudding will complete the feast. And we will certainly complete the day as only Scotsman can—with real Scotch!"

England

Now, south of the Border, to England.

"We here in England have a great many customs connected with Christmas, in fact, every county has its own peculiarities. Many of our churches will hold a midnight celebration, though there is a divided opinion here now as to its value. Some of us think that a better preparation is secured if we get up and go to church as the very first thing we do on Christmas morning. Certainly, many of us will be back in church for the 11:00 a. m. service on Christmas morning. Meanwhile, there will have been excited whoops from the younger members of the family as they have opened their stockings and discovered their presents, for even if their presents are too large and numerous to be accommodated in the traditional stocking, the stocking will be

hung close to the fireplace just the same, so that Santa Claus shall not have too much trouble in finding it when he comes down the chimney.

"Before the war, we used to have lots to eat at Christmas, but now all the ingenuity of the housewife is required to make both ends of the food situation meet. But, you know, that shortage has helped our people to see the really good thing about Christmas—Christmas itself. There has been a noticeable increase in our congregations at Christmas services, for we have learned to see a little deeper into the privations which surrounded the birth of Jesus. All of our churches will have at least three services on Christmas morning, and it will be a real family homecoming. We wish you could see what a village Church looks like when all the members of the various families, separated for the rest of the year all over the country in their various jobs, come to adore the infant Christ on Christmas morning. Then there are such things as the nine lesson carol service which is broadcast from the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge, every Christmas Eve and which has one of the largest listening congregations of the year, or the local carol singers who go from place to place around the town or village 'waissailing' (that's the Old English word) Christ's Birth.

Nativity Plays

"Many of our Churches will



produce nativity plays on the chancel steps, just as they used to do hundreds of years ago. Some of them will time them so that they lead straight into the midnight Eucharist. Then, on Christmas afternoon at 3:00 o'clock we shall tune in the wireless



(radio) and hear the Queen broadcast as a family woman to his family. As our time is five hours ahead of yours, you will be just about having breakfast, we imagine. We shall join in lots of fun in our family parties, singing carols, pulling crackers and wearing the paper hats that come out of them, and we shall not forget our turkey and plum pudding either."

"Thank you, England!" Now we go overseas, calling in at many ports where our seamen's chaplains are working with their lay helpers for those who will have to work all through the Christmas season — lighthouse keepers, coast guards and others whose job is to protect that we can be safe.

Malaya

Time is getting on, so we must hurry to our next call. "Hello, Malaya, what are you doing this Christmas Day?"

"When your Christmas Day begins we shall be thinking of

going to bed, with the memory of our happiness. It seems strange here to eat Christmas fare, of course, with the temperature at 80 degrees in the shade, that is if the monsoon has already broken, but we enjoy Christmas just as much as you do. Many of us will go to our cathedral—graga bazaar, (big church), as the people of the land call it—where there will be a midnight celebration of the Holy Communion, at which possibly 1,000 people of all races will be present, representing about 200 more than our normal congregation. Our choir is led by a Chinese girl-organist of 18 years of age, whose work for the Church during the war is one of the heroic deeds of modern Church history. For some of us it will seem strange, being away from frost and cold for Christmas, but we shall enjoy it just the same."

Christmas Hot!!

Now, on "Calling Australia, and also New Zealand."

"The conditions of these countries are much the same, Christmas will come at the height of our summer, possibly it will be the hottest day of the year. Imagine eating your traditional Christmas dinner with the heat outside at 110 degrees, and with hose playing on the varandah! But that's what we shall be doing. Perhaps you would see the

most interesting Australian or New Zealand Christmas if you could wait outside one of our country "bush" churches around 11:00 on Christmas Eve. The air will be pleasant, that nice relaxation that comes after a hot day. The larger part of the countryside will be unspoilt. There will be felt that great silence of the bush. Gradually along the road, there will come the lights of farm carts, ancient, very ancient motors, lorries, station wagons—all of them bringing the congregation of that little church.

The Bush Church

"Many of those people will never have met each other for months, for Episcopal parishes in Australia can be as large as 400 square miles. But there they all will be on Christmas Eve. The service will be simple, the altar decked with masses of summer flowers, and instead of carols about ice and snow, we here in Australia are gradually collecting new carols, which bring into their meaning the thanksgiving that we give in high summer for the birth of our Lord. Because, you see, deep down it is the same joy, winter or summer, God has sent his Son, and we 'proclaim his holy birth.'"

As we say "Happy Christmas, Australia" we leave with that same con-



viction. If we could visit China, where it is hot in the South and icy in the North, and where the same conditions are intensified in Japan, or Korea, it would be the same joy we should know.

As it is, our last call must be on Bishop Kennedy of our Church and his people in Hawaii. We shall see them preparing their cathedral in Queen Emma Square, Honolulu, with palm trees providing cooling shade overhead, in all that lovely color that goes to make that beautiful island. There is a wonderful sense of peace around St. Andrew's Cathedral, Honolulu, even though not far away at Pearl Harbor there are the visible signs of the ruin that man can bring upon his civilization when the peace of the Child who was born on this Holy

Night is left out of the foundations of men and nations.

Word Made Flesh

So we come back home, and what is the result of our trip which we can bring with us to the altar as we make our own Christmas Communion? Surely the words of the Book of Wisdom, "While all things were in quiet silence, and night in the midst of her swift course, thine Almighty Word leaped down out of Thy Royal Throne" and as St. John says, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," so that as one of the Fathers of the Church has said, "The sons of men might become the sons of God," for it is in the worship of that Son of God that all that is best in our Christmas observance begins.

large cities, the divided denominationalism of Protestantism has rendered its total moral—and dare I say political?—influence of much less consequence than that of the Roman Catholic Church.”

Dr. Blake praised recent pronouncements of Pope Pius XII and the Catholic hierarchy of the United States.

"But surely it is only fair and right that the majority Christian position should be heard and read and pondered as fully as that of the Roman Church," he said.

The council president called upon members of Protestant and Eastern Orthodox Churches to strengthen and support their local, state, national and world councils in order to make their collective voice heeded.

"As Christian Church members," he said, "we need to think of these organizations as necessary and valuable extensions of our own Churches. Then when we criticize them it will be self-criticism leading to improvement, rather than attack, which can lead to destruction."

Increased Budget Adopted By National Council

★ The 1957 budget of the National Council of Churches is \$13,290,000. an increase of \$275,000 over this year.

Included in the new budget was an item of \$7,636,000 for relief rehabilitation and world missions.

Francis S. Harmon of New York, vice-chairman of the council's business and finance committee, said it was expected that the growing demands upon the Churches for assistance in the resettlement of Hungarian refugees may mean budget increases during December and in 1957.

A total of \$2,441,000, or about 18 per cent of the 1957 budget, is designated for "interpretation of the Christian message" through Christian education, evangelism, radio, films and television "and application of Christian ethics

to all areas of the common life."

Home mission extension was budgeted for \$1,147,000. The work embraces ministries to migrant farm laborers, Indians and others, plus development of cooperation among the Churches, including activities of United Church Women and United Church Men.

About \$1,538,000 is earmarked for publishing operations and film productions and \$360,000 for administration of the council's over-all program and supervision of general services.

The Rev. Eugene Carson Blake, president, warned the general board, meeting in Los Angeles, that a divided Protestantism threatens its influence in the nation.

He said that "for a generation or more in most of our

FREE

Read the offer of books by Bishop Johnson on page fourteen, then use the order form on the back cover page

The Witness

Tunkhannock - Pennsylvania

THE WITNESS — DECEMBER 20, 1956

The Prince of Peace

By Francis B. Sayre Jr.

Dean of Washington Cathedral

WE OFTEN forget the import of that disquieting saying of Jesus: "New wine must be put into new bottles". The wine he meant was himself, and the new containers are ourselves! If Jesus comes, then we shall have to be transformed—made as if brand new—to receive him, else, as the Bible says, "the new wine will burst the bottles and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish".

If you relate words like these to what an impatient friend of mine once called "the great pre-Christmas disturbance", the shallow pantomime of this hectic season is clearly revealed. Here we are all busily preparing for Christmas: making ready with neon lights and recorded hymns for the coming of Christ—but doing next to nothing to prepare ourselves for his ever-new appearance in the depths of our hearts. I think all of us have a certain sympathy for the sales girl who before the Third Sunday in Advent was passed said she was already sick of Christmas. The worldly side of it is such an old old tiresome ritual: the poor dead trees piled in gas stations, the tinsel in the drug store, mailmen and policemen and firemen making their begging rounds. And Santa Claus, who by the way, has been banned in a place or two for the first time this year.

But what has it all to do with Christ? Forgiver of sins, liberator of truth, ferment of sacrificed spirits, and the Saviour of the world?

Nay, more: What has it to do with us? We, who perhaps escape into the commercialized orgy, dreary as it is, precisely lest we have to gird ourselves to meet that living Lord whom others than ourselves have found to be the Prince of Peace.

Ah, perhaps you will think this last an almost cruel reference—to speak in these agonized times of the Prince of Peace! That is the claim of Christmas that cuts us to the quick more than any other. With what wistful foreboding—like some orphan waif looking in at a lighted window—do we recall the scene of the shepherds and hear, as in some remote play, the angels singing "on earth peace, good will toward men". For we seem so far from that in our world. So dim and unreal in terms

of the political and international outlook is the Prince of Peace. The world seems like an old old bottle. Indeed, cracked and chipped by its ancient prejudice, its scar-torn battle. Not the bottle at all for the new wine of Jesus Christ—"Peace on earth"—"Joy to the world".

Some there be that would take that old bottle and heave it against a rock—put a fire-cracker inside and see it pop! Drop a few H bombs where they would do the most good, and may the Devil see to the explosion. Others, wise to the self-defeat of preventive war, occupy their despair by building walls ever higher and higher by which, at the same time they keep the enemy out, they hem themselves in. Little wonder then, that few Christmas cards today have much to declare of the Prince of Peace, but convey instead merely a snapshot of the family or a sprig of holly!

Holy Cause of Peace

AS PART of our Christmas preparation this year we ought to remember what we can do as our private part in the holy cause of peace.

First of all, let us begin with God. Forget the bustle and rush of the department-store Yule-tide, and pause long enough to make a fresh beginning within. For it is there that God's little Son steals in, in the quietness of humility. Peace begins with him: bearer of God's love into life. What else but the mighty caring grace of God can overcome the ancient barriers dividing men? All else has failed, though men have twisted and turned in every conceivable direction, even if only out of the mere desire for self-protection.

All the old bottles are broken, but God's way is breath-takingly new: the way of self-denial and of a Cross. The way of giving instead of keeping. Each step of that way God trod himself in Jesus Christ, who is ready still to set our feet upon that faithful path. We have first only to turn and walk with him, who is the author of peace, even though it be "past our understanding". But for that we must be ready to be transformed lest this goblet too be broken.

If we begin thus by letting God plant his

peace deep within our souls, then the next step that we may expect is that the inner peace will emerge in a calmness that can be neither frightened nor stampeded. Ethics are rooted in faith. If there be an inner radiance there will follow an outward assurance that will constitute the only solid support of any leadership for peace. It is here that we shall make our best contribution to the peace of the world. For we will not be so frightened by the horrifying extent of atomic armaments as to forget that it is still possible within the providence of God and the reason of man to patiently discover the means of living together. A million bombs only accentuate the problem of one bomb, and we shall never believe that what man has invented he cannot control—and even learn to use serviceably and constructively.

And neither will we be stampeded. One of the most dreadful indications of the amorality (and therefore of the faithlessness) of our time is the recent display of the theory that righteousness is simply a matter of telegrams. Wholly apart from the merits of any given issue, whether it be one of the personal integrity of a United States Senator, or one of foreign policy, it is a sinful mistake to think that right and wrong is to be decided by how big a flood of opinion can be curried up on this side or that. How easily people are stampeded. In a way this is the modern equivalent to the practice of primitive peoples in trying to cajole the benevolence of the deity by an abundance of sacrifices. We may not slaughter rams upon some bloody altar. We do it instead with telegrams!

Yet righteousness is something knit into the very nature of the universe. So is peace. We cannot break the laws of God; we can only break ourselves against them.

One of the fruits of faith therefore is a certain calmness which makes its contribution to peace by refusing to let our support be dragooned by any ambitious demagogue for some ill-considered and hasty panacea. Peace will depend upon that kind of self-discipline and trusting patience which the Shepherds showed as they too "kept watch over their flock by night", waiting for the star that would appear. Let the faith of our people, then, lend substance to the hope of peace by steadfastly refusing to countenance that sort of shallow impetuosity which can so easily shatter it.

Only so will the decanter be sufficiently girded to contain the heady wine: the demanding responsibility of peace.

Prayer

ANOTHER thing is Prayer. Certainly the deepest contribution we Christians can make is to underwrite the political and social leadership of statesmen with the spiritual force which through us God is ready to send into the world. Peace can never be simply a matter of technical formulae; treaties can only grow out of a moral groundswell underlying. And prayer is the means of bringing this to focus and to power.

Prayer begins with communion with the Father. It ends with community among men. The one gives reality to the other. And ultimately, as our latterday cynics so keenly perceive, there is no other reality. Men have striven for peace all through these centuries, but never has it been securely realized when God has been forgotten. Christ is indeed the prince without whom there can be no kingdom of understanding or forbearance.

Who knows how that prince will come? The kings of Orient never imagined that it would be as a tiny child, and the shepherds never dreamed the star would lead them to a stable. Our prayer, in contrast to our wish, will never seek to direct the living Lord, but only to beseech his mysterious mercy upon our perplexity.

We will pray first of all for our enemies—for the Christians behind the iron frontiers with whom we secretly share the Christmas gladness. Perhaps peace will come through them as much as us. May not God use the faithful nameless martyrs of Russia and Red China to somehow leaven those oppressive lumps? Christians have been true against terrible odds in both those lands for more than a thousand years. Pray that their witness may be strengthened now and their courage to find the way.

Then let us pray for ourselves. Not merely that our horizons be enlarged instead of narrowed, but that we may be transformed; made into new bottles for the new wine.

Pray that we may have the humility to cooperate with the other peoples of the world, and not merely to choose the easier course of domination.

Pray that we may show forth our goodwill

in loyal support of our leaders rather than in the petty opposition of pride.

Pray that we may make ready in our lives for the coming of the Prince of Peace who is ever ready to pour out the grace of his peace upon all mankind.

Advent & Christmas

By Howard R. Kunkle

*Rector of St. Augustine's, La Brea,
British West Indies*

THERE is a family in our community that was involved in eight "Christmas" parties and programs this past season, between Thanksgiving and December 24th. This family is likely typical rather than exceptional. For weeks they saw "Christmas" decorations, heard Christmas songs and carols, heard the Christmas story read from one of the Gospels, and "exchanged" Christmas gifts. Other families had their Christmas trees up as early as the first week in December and were eating special "Christmas" foods all the while.

When December 25th and its Eve finally arrived, what was left? Nothing—exactly nothing. It was a hollow anti-climax.

Over many, many centuries the Church evolved the Christian year, beautiful and meaningful in its symmetry. Advent ("the coming!") is a season of anticipation and preparation. It repeats annually in a condensed way the whole Old Testament period of anticipation and preparation for the Messiah. And it solemnly reminds us to prepare today for the Lord's return. In either case it emphatically is not Christmas, and to celebrate it as such is to ruin both. You prepare for the birth of a baby weeks ahead, but you don't celebrate the birth until it is born. You prepare for a marriage weeks ahead, but you don't celebrate the marriage until after the marriage service.

It is necessary to shop, bake, clean, send greetings, make things, rehearse music and drama ahead of time. That is all necessary, as part of the preparation. But one should stop there.

The Chamber of Commerce is concerned about selling merchandise. This is not to be criticized, except that the wearisome use of sacred Christmas carols and hymns for weeks for the purpose of stimulating trade is down-

right wrong. Let them have Santa Claus if they will, but let's keep "the little town of Bethlehem" out of the cash register. The Church does not take its cue from the Chamber of Commerce.

Radio and TV stations are also strictly commercial projects, in addition to being a reflection of community standards. They are not themselves concerned with the historic Christian year. The Church does not take her cue from them, either.

In many of our smaller communities it is assumed that the public schools are synonymous with the Protestant churches, and therefore their misconceptions of Advent prevail. Since the course of least resistance for the music department is to seize upon Christmas carols for public programs anytime during December, children and parents have their Christmas appetites further dimmed. Some of our own people are bound to say, (or think); "the schools do it; it must be right." But the Church does not take its cue from the public schools.

We Know Better

Most Protestant churches have little understanding of the Christian year. They do follow the lead of the Chamber of Commerce, the radio and TV stations, and are both a reflection of and an influence upon the schools. They are only now dimly beginning to get the point of the Christian year, and as yet have it rather confused. Three or four major Church bodies in this country do know better, in theory, and we are one of them.

Then how should we celebrate these two seasons as intelligent Christians?

First, Advent. At home, with your necessary domestic and personal preparations for Christmas. But you won't neglect the spiritual preparation. This may include special family devotions aided by an Advent calendar (the stationery stores are now selling them) or the Advent wreath, and the singing of Advent hymns, if you have a piano.

You will not decorate your home for Christmas until the last possible opportunity. You will do all in your power not to participate in semi-religious "Christmas" parties during Advent. Make it a quiet season, socially.

At church you will notice the different spirit of the hymns. Violet or blue is the liturgical color. The Te Deum and Gloria in Excelsis

are not heard. Preferably flowers are not used. The Advent wreath is lit at the reading of the Old Testament lesson (it is prophetic, anticipatory) at Morning Prayer which precedes the Eucharist. And no service or church activity will be "Christmassy" before the afternoon of December 24th. This includes the church school. Your parish church ought to offer you special Advent services as preparation for the Feast of the Incarnation. The Church has planned well for your Advent worship.

Christmas

AT HOME you'll put up your Christmas decorations on the 24th or as late as possible. You'll include a manger scene with your Christmas tree—or even instead of it. You'll thoroughly enjoy the decorations, the special foods, the gifts, the carol singing because you have waited for the great event. Therefore you won't feel like throwing out your tree on December 26th and thinking, "glad that's over once more."

Instead, you'll enjoy all these fine things for a week or ten days or more. You won't want to stop. You'll want to share the spirit with your relatives and friends during these days. Here is the proper time for Christmas parties. Having them here will not exhaust you before Christmas.

At church, you will find that the feast of the Saviour's birth is celebrated for eight days (see the Book of Common Prayer, pages 77 and 96) with Eucharists expected for December 26th (St. Stephen), December 27th (St. John), December 28th (The Holy Innocents), and the Sunday after Christmas. There may be two Sundays after Christmas some years. Here is the time for Christmas hymns, carols and anthems. Here is the time, too, for church auxiliary organizations to have their Christmas parties.

As Epiphany is just as truly the sequel of Christmas as Advent is its forerunner, the decorations (trees and manger) can well carry over to the Sunday within the Octave of the Epiphany, for the Feast of the Epiphany itself is bound to be badly neglected. Some parishes emphasize this Sunday with a children's procession to the manger bearing gifts for overseas missions. It helps, too, to keep the two distinct, yet related, historical events

of the Nativity and the Epiphany separate and in focus.

Used rightly and intelligently, the grand trilogy of Advent-Christmas-Epiphany can be six weeks of spiritually rich Christian drama in both home and church.

NOW HEAR THIS

By Frederick A. Schilling

Gospels for Christmas Day

I. St. Luke 2:1-14

"Unto you is born . . . a Saviour."

The Advent ring is closed. The one who was last said to be standing unrecognized among us has now come into view. But his way of appearing is a surprise. He comes as a new born infant. The environment is ordinary and unpromising. The place of birth is uncomfortable. The family has no standing. They are poor. The birth is a back-country episode that takes place while the ponderous imperial tax machine is regimenting people.

The birth itself is passed over so quickly that we get the impression that St. Luke is trying less to draw a manger scene than a drama of the announcement. His artistry is conveying the meaning of the birth, and in the very way it accomplishes this we can discern also the steps by which he himself found his Saviour. From the message he moved back to the manger, or, inwardly speaking, by the message the Lord was born in him. The holy birth is delicately covered against curiosity, but the proclamation of it is bathed in brilliant light.

When St. Luke wrote this part of his Gospel he was probably in Rome with St. Paul (Col. 4:14), and in Rome the radical contrast between Caesar Augustus and "Christ the Lord" of Judean stock must have been felt more strongly even than in the remote province. The night is dark. The message comes to such as are not present at the birth. It bursts like a strange, fearsome light in the sky. But when the meaning is perceived fear turns to rejoicing.

St. Luke's picture describes the normal way by which people become Christians. Christ is born as a baby so he can grow in us and we grow up together. The prior event, however, is the message. Its radical nature, so often

at variance with our usual state of mind, is frightening. It is startling with a light that betokens a new day. There is hope in a new day and in a baby. We are not challenged to the sudden acceptance of a full-grown Christ in the full light of an intellectual high noon. But we are bidden to get up and set out on a search. "You shall find." The announcement wants to be verified by discovery. Two directions are given for the search. The one pertains to scriptural history: "the house and lineage of David," and "the Christ" (i.e. Messiah), and the other to the condition which results from accepting him as "Saviour" and "Lord," that is, peace and good will among men. People have found him by one or both of these lines of study and experiment, but the final mature understanding (and preaching) of him combines both.

The birth of Jesus is the focal point of human affairs, and the Christmas message, as St. Luke so effectively illustrates it, combines the elements of factual history, scriptural interpretation, and ethics.

In the heavenly host we hear the joyful chorus of those who have found the Lord Jesus. Because they know him they are able to sing praise to God and to devote themselves to proclaiming him as the ground for peace among men. The genuine Christmas message therefore illumines and heartens and gives direction and ethical effectiveness for the new day.

II. St. John 1:1-14

"The Word was made flesh."

Some seventy years after the crucifixion, St. John of Ephesus gathered up his long reflections and preachings about Jesus and published them as the fourth of the Gospels. His perspective was that of one who stood far off in time from the holy events that had transpired in Palestine, but was intimately involved in the continuing action of the Lord in the wide pagan world. He saw the life of Jesus as an eternal fact and heard the word of Jesus as speaking ever, everywhere, bringing things into life since primordial beginnings. This is the large circle of existence that St. John viewed when he composed this prologue.

This Christmas Gospel should extend through verse 18. All of these verses together compose St. John's *Hymn of the Incarnation*. The personal specification is not made until verse

17 where the name, Jesus Christ, is given—and that is materially important for the evangelist's purpose. The dividing point of this poem is verse 14. There the pre-incarnate Word becomes the particular person, Jesus, and Christian history begins. The name is not given until verse 17 in order to set it besides that of Moses both as historical successor to Moses, as it were a second Moses, and as one greater than Moses ("grace and truth" above "law") The name of John the Baptist (v. 15) is used to designate the spokesman of the World before the birth (v. 6.) Thus, while John of Verse 15 is the immediate forerunner of Jesus, the John of verse 6 is a type.

In pre-Christian history (verses 1-13) people became "children of God" (verse 12) by receiving the Word as it came especially through the witnesses, the "Johns" of those times. Such birth was not one of race but of spirit. As a whole the people of Jesus' race did not receive the Word that came through the prophets (v. 11). Now, however, since the Word came in the person of Jesus, God is known as he could not be known before. The glory, the grace and truth, we not only see but we receive in increasing measure (v. 16). "We all" (v. 16), says the Evangelist, and means himself, his churches, people without racial distinction, people who did not see Jesus in Palestine.

This Hymn of the Incarnation sounds philosophical, and it is. But it is the wisdom of seer and poet. There is no analysis, no abstract dualism. Mind and matter, creation animate and inanimate, past and present, man and God are united. Only light and darkness are in opposition, and these are moral forces, not metaphysical essences. It is a vision of the entire orbit of life with Jesus Christ the personalized creative word from whom, as from a point of radiation, all things take their being and purpose.

For the Christmas feast this selection announces the universal significance of Jesus Christ. It also proclaims the divine destiny of man in him. God became man so that man may become child of God. The incarnation of God is for the sublimation of man. Word became flesh so that flesh become Word.

This hymn has all the positive force of a confessional affirmation. Christmas is the time for a strong witness: "We have beheld

his glory" "from his fullness have we all received" "the only Son . . has made (God) known."

Now we, in our own years, can not only see what really happened for the world when Jesus was born, but also what has always been going on between God and his creation—and always will.

Pointers for Parsons

By Robert Miller

Episcopal Clergyman of Campton, N. H.

The Deanery was meeting but the speaker had not been able to come so the Rural Dean suggested that the brethren might read and discuss the editorial "Treason of Intellectuals" in the Witness of Dec. 6th.

"I found it confusing and disturbing," he said.

"The Witness editorials are often disturbing," remarked Gilbert Simeon. "What is this one about?"

"It is called 'Treason of Intellectuals.' "

"Does it say who the intellectuals are?" I asked.

"No. It seems to refer to professors and scientists, possibly poets and artists. I don't think it means clergymen."

"What does it mean by treason?"

"The term is used loosely. The writer seems to feel that the intellectuals are betraying their ideal."

"What ideal?"

"Well, really. It's hard to say. I suppose the ideal of humanity."

"Has humanity an ideal?"

"Of course it has an ideal," broke in Buffers. "It's ideal is Jesus Christ."

"I wouldn't say that," said Charlie Emerson. "I think he is the ideal man, but I should be one of the minority."

"Let's read the article," suggested the Dean.

Gilbert read it for us and when he had finished the Dean went round the table asking for comments.

"Charlie?" he said.

"I don't think Nazi-ism can be blamed on the professors, the poets and the artists," said Charles. "I think Hitler captured the state because he capitalised on its hatred, its humili-

ation, its national pride and its unemployment."

"The intellectuals should have resisted him," declared Buffers.

"At the price of exile like Thomas Mann?"

"At a concentration camp like Niemoller?" asked Gilbert.

"Decidedly," affirmed Buffers.

"Perhaps they should," conceded Emerson. "Would our intellectuals have made a better showing?"

"Protest against wrong is not the duty of intellectuals alone," said the Dean.

"It is the duty of every Christian," Buffers told us.

"Let's come to the meat of the article," proposed the Dean. "It says—and it uses the editorial 'we'—that our country is embarked on what is potentially a more destructive and inhumane course of action than the Nazis were. Gilbert?"

"I suppose it refers to our bombs and nuclear weapons?"

"Yes. And further on it says 'we hold it to be the duty of every thinking person . . . absolutely to disengage himself from the making and use of atomic weapons.' "

"Does the editorial object to armed forces or only to forces armed with nuclear weapons?"

"I think the objection is to the bombs. It argues that only the United States and Russia 'have it in their power to destroy by radio-activity the steel and brick of human society, and the flesh and blood and chromosomes.' And it says that if one of these two powers were to 'forego the use of such weapons' the other would have no need of them."

"If we destroyed our bombs," I broke in, "would we bring about Russian domination of the world?"

"We should have the moral approbation of the world," asserted Buffers.

"I am not sure," I said. "If our rejection of the ultimate weapon resulted in Russian control of Middle Eastern oil, Russian dominance of India, Russian leadership of the world, I think we should get little approbation and plenty of condemnation."

"The Witness seems to be proposing unilateral semi-disarmament," reflected Gilbert. "I think the election showed that the country would not stand for it."

"What has that to do with it?" asked Buffers who was beginning to be annoyed. "The

Witness has always seen in the bomb a threat to the very existence of man. How can a Christian tolerate it?"

"How can a Christian put an end to it?" asked Emerson.

"The article seems to be addressed to intellectuals," I said. "But it says the bomb sprang from the American way of life. What of European science? Did it play no part?"

Tompkins had said nothing as yet so the Dean called on him.

"The Witness feels that the bomb indeed threatens the very existence of humanity and it maintains that something has gone wrong with the way we live 'and the one necessary thing is to set it straight.' Our friend Buffers would trace the thing gone wrong to original sin and the one thing necessary to redemption through Christ. Not many will listen to him."

"They should be made to listen. The Church should proclaim its message from the house tops," said Buffers.

"What message?" asked Emerson.

"Why, the gospel of peace and love."

"Who takes that seriously except the saints?"

"You are nothing but defeatists," cried Buffers angrily. "The Church should apply the teaching of Christ to every human situation even though it meant we were attacked and persecuted and thrown to the lions."

"What do you think, Gilbert?" asked the Dean.

"I don't think it is easy to apply the teaching of Christ to every human situation. Take slavery. How long did it take the Church to decide it was wrong. Take war. Has the Church made up its mind that war is always

against the teaching of Christ? Take our American way of life. The Witness thinks something is wrong with it. But who would exchange it for the Russian way of life?"

He paused, but no one spoke, and he went on:

"Men are not sanctified. Evil and wickedness are ever present. I think of the parable of the tares. I reflect that God often saves us from evil. Sir Winston Churchill has said that safety is the sturdy child of terror. Fear of the bomb is a deterrent to war. If we discarded our bombs would the deterrent still deter?"

"Then you'd do nothing," Buffers almost shouted. "You'd sit by while the world blew up?"

"Oh come, Buffers," said the Dean. "You know Gilbert has tried all his life to follow the way of Christ. He hasn't blamed the intellectuals. He hates war but he is not a pacifist."

"You all ought to be pacifists," Buffers told them. "Even if you oughtn't before you ought now."

"Has the bomb made war more immoral?" I asked.

Tompkins laughed.

"Not more immoral, only more destructive. What we don't like to admit is that men are sinful and our society is a sinful society. Atomic power was born in war but we pray that it may be used in peace. I do not think it is for the intellectual to lay down the terms of its use. He may warn but it is not his to decide. In America the people must decide, and I think they have decided. No unilateral abandonment of the bomb."

What Do You Want For Christmas?

By Gardiner M. Day

Rector of Christ Church, Cambridge

HOW many adults reply, "I really don't want anything"? Yet my contention is that as Christians we ought to want at Christmas time. Yes, we ought to want things for ourselves, but not so much material things as spiritual gifts. We should strive for what St. Paul calls the "fruit of the spirit," love, joy,

peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

It is important that we want, for in the spiritual realm unless we desire, we will not receive. Desire and receptivity are two sides of the same coin. Desire is the mainspring of man's creativity. Hence the desire to travel

swiftly to the uttermost parts of the earth produced the airplane, and the desire to aid suffering produced the first hospital. The desire of Jesus to give men the fullness of life transformed the cross from a criminal to an heroic symbol. The desire of men to share with others the love of God as experienced in Christ has inspired men to go to every corner of the globe.

Is it any wonder that Jesus commanded his followers to want, saying, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Conversely, if we don't ask, we will not receive, for our desire is the measure of our receptivity. There is no such thing as an effortless spiritual life.

At Christmas we ought not simply to want but to pause long enough to discern our deepest spiritual needs. What are the spiritual gifts that we particularly lack? However strong our desire for material things may be, our desire for spiritual gifts is often so feeble that we are not receptive to them and consequently do not receive them.

If Christmas is to have the fullest meaning in our lives, we must first face ourselves realistically enough to know that we need what Christ can give, and then we must desire to open our hearts and minds so that his spirit may be reborn in us.

Is it too much to hope that this Christmas we want above all Christ and his spiritual gifts?

Know The Rules

By William P. Barnds

WE ALWAYS enjoy a game more if we know the rules. We are at a disadvantage when we are vague about how to play the game. We may not be able to play it very well, but it helps never the less to know the skills and techniques involved.

Even in our public worship it helps if we know the various postures and responses. We can all the better express the sincerity which we have in our hearts as we worship God. If you do not quite know "what to do when" in church, get some good devotional booklet to help you, or ask the clergy to give you some guidance. You will enjoy your worship all the more and feel more at home in the service.

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THE WITNESS — DECEMBER 20, 1956

Church Has Unique Opportunity In Europe Says Niemoeller

★ Martin Niemoeller, German pastor, predicted that the return of a Soviet-dominated Communist government in Hungary will have no ill effects on Church life there.

He said in an interview in New York that as soon as the situation there calms down Hungary will find itself in the same situation as Poland.

He maintained that Russia is not interested in a return to Stalinism and that its action in crushing the Hungarian revolt was intended "to prevent Hungary from becoming a member of the Western World, as the Soviet Union sees it."

Niemoeller, who wound up a month's lecture tour of the United States, said he expects to visit Hungary in the next few weeks. Following his return to Germany he will visit Budapest and several other cities in Hungary on his way to Romania where he is to address German-speaking congregations.

The present ambition of Soviet leaders, he said, is to move into Asia and the rest of the "Eastern World" because the possibility of their making major advances in Europe is "very limited."

He expressed approval of the United States policy of "handing things over to the United Nations which have done a good deal to prevent something worse."

"The real issue today is not the struggle between East and West as represented by the so-called free world and the so-called Communist world," Pastor Niemoeller said, "but how the white race, as represented by Europe and America,

will solve its relations with the Asians and Africans."

The white race will inevitably have to face the fact, he said, that the so-called colored races are outgrowing them fast and the only way to avert a catastrophe is to work for good neighborly relations.

Niemoeller spoke at New York University's school of education on "What Future for Europe's Youth?" The program was sponsored by the Christian Association.

He said young people in Europe "embarrassed by the emptiness of human existence" are fighting against the

futility and frustration of their lives which are dominated by materialism.

"A sedative will not do," he said. "They will not accept it. Their criticism is acid and sharp and not to be deceived."

Despite the hold which materialism has on young Europeans, he said, "if the question of freedom is raised, there is and will be a response in their hearts, breaking through the barrier which materialistic interests normally constitute."

He called the "spiritual situation" of young Europeans "a tremendous and unique challenge to the Christian Church and to its message."

"If it really has the answer and if it really will give the answer," he said, "then there is an opportunity as possibly never before."

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Opponents of Segregation Arrested as Communists

★ The government of South African arrested 140 persons earlier this month for alleged contravention of the Suppression of Communism act. A broadcasting station in Central Africa stated however that the arrests were a "crack down" on the opponents of the segregation policies of the government.

Two Anglican priests were among those arrested; the Rev. J. A. Calata and the Rev. W. S. Gawe. The radio stated that they were to be defended by Bishop A. H. Cullen of Grahamstown.

The Rev. Douglas Chadwick Thompson, superintendent minister of the Springs circuit of the Methodist Church of South Africa, was also arrested.

The arrests were carried out at dawn throughout the country by a special branch of the police. All those taken into custody were charged with high treason.

Mr. Thompson is a British-born South African citizen who has lived in Johannesburg since 1907. He was refused a renewal of his South African passport when it expired in 1954, and also denied a British

passport. That year police raided his manse three times.

Among other white persons arrested were Lee Warden, representative in the South African parliament from Cape Western; Fred Carneson, former member of the Provincial Council; Ben Turok, a surveyor; Mrs. Sonia Bunting, wife of Brian Bunting, a former member of parliament; and I. O. Horwitch, an architect.

Among the Non-Europeans taken into custody were Professor Z. K. Matthews of Fort Hare University, and Albert John Lethuli, who lost a tribal chieftainship by government decree a few years ago and is now head of the African National Congress.

Police searched the homes of those arrested and confiscated books and documents. Among the volumes seized was a copy of the book, "Naught For Your Comfort," written by the Rev. Trevor Huddleston, former head of the Anglican Community of the Resurrection in South Africa, an out-

spoken foe of the government's apartheid policies, whose articles have been featured in the Witness.

Later a Johannesburg court rejected an application for bail made on behalf of Mr. Thompson.

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son, who was one of the first group of six defendants to request bail.

The court denied bail in all six cases. However, the Attorney General informed the judge he was prepared to withdraw his objections to bail by Dec. 24.

Mr. Thompson's application and those of his co-defendants were opposed by the Attorney General on the basis of an affidavit submitted by Lt. Col. W. C. Prinsloo, head of the security branch of the South African police.

"I firmly believe," Col. Prinsloo said, "that the influence which the applicants exert is such that if they are released at this stage, the police will lose the further sources of information which are now, after the arrest of the applicants, available to them, and the loss of which will seriously prejudice the administration of justice."

The police chief further stated that the charge of high treason arose from the activities of certain organizations with a large membership, of which the applicants are some of the leading personalities.

In handing down his decision denying bail at present, Judge Bresler said his ruling would apply to all 140 defendants.

PSYCHIATRIST TALKS TO CLERGY

★ Robert Hyde, psychiatrist of state institutions in Rhode Island, was the speaker at the clericus of the diocese, meeting December 10 at St. Paul's, Pawtucket. He spoke on the role of the clergy in mental illness.



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PRISON CHAPLAINS HAVE MEETING

★ Episcopal prison chaplains asked the Church to set up a continuing committee on prison work with a full time director, at the closing session December 5, of their first national conference at Seabury House.

The chaplains also asked that a statement be drawn up on standards of the chaplaincy and the theology underlying this area of the Church's mission. Their recommendations will be taken up with the division of health and welfare and eventually with the National Council, according to the Rev. Kenneth E. Nelson, head of the division.

Earlier, the Rev. E. Frederick Proelss, chaplain of the penitentiary of the City of New York, Rikers Island, said that the prison chaplain suffers from a sense of loneliness because he is outside "normal cultural and denominational homogeneity." The chaplain's compensation, he said, is "the intensity and acuteness of human relationships developed inside prison walls."

Discussing the psychic effects of imprisonment, he said that prison constitutes "a sub-society or sub-culture with its own unique codes and atmosphere," and the chaplain must be prepared to deal with guilt, regression, and free-floating hostility. "Rebuking and moralizing sermons may have their place in our work with the strong and healthy and free," he said, "but they are not commendable for the broken ones."

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SHATTUCK STUDENTS GIVE GENEROUSLY

★ Students of Shattuck School, Faribault, Minn. have oversubscribed their goal for the 1956 campus chest by ten per cent.

Allocations have been made to united fund of Fairbault; St. Francis' Boys Home, Salina, Kan.; Randall House, Chicago; Hare School, Mission, S. D.; St. Philip's School, Botahun, Liberia; CARE; St. Peter's Boys Home, Detroit; Rice County Junior Red Cross; and Christmas Seals.

MARYLAND STARTS NEW MISSION


★ The diocese of Maryland has formed a mission in Manchester. At present it is meeting in a prefab building given by Gordon Cade on a six acre lot. Another member, William F. Stone Jr., has drawn plans for a church, parish house and rectory. The rector at Westminster, the Rev. A. F. Schildwachter, is vicar.



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CRAINE ACCEPTS INDIANAPOLIS

★ Dean John P. Craine of Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis, elected bishop coadjutor of the diocese of Indianapolis on the 11th ballot on December 4th, announced acceptance to his congregation on December 9th.

Bishop Hatch, suffragan of Connecticut, received the necessary number of lay votes on the 4th ballot to elect, but was two short on the clerical side.

On the final ballot the runner-up was the Rev. John H. Vruwink, rector of St. Paul's, Indianapolis.

INTEGRATE CHURCHES IN MINNEAPOLIS

★ Border Methodist Church, Minneapolis, has been invited to join the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church. The former, which is a Negro congregation, is soon to lose its church because of a housing project.

The white congregation of 4,000 members voted unanimously for the merger, with its pastor saying that the congregation believes "Christians should worship together regardless of race or cultural background."

CHURCH OF IRELAND ELECTS PRIMATE

★ Bishop George O. Simms of Cork has been elected Archbishop of Dublin, thus becoming the primate of the Anglican Church in Ireland. The new primate, but 46, succeeds Archbishop Arthur Barton, 75, who resigned in October because of illness.

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BOOKS...

Kenneth Ripley Forbes

Book Editor

A Year Book of the Stars by Christine Chaundler. Morehouse-Gorham. \$2.40

This is a pleasant and informative book. It combines an interesting account of the ancient legends of the astrologers about the zodiac with simple instructions on how and where to find in the sky the numerous constellations, together with the chief stars and planets, which means an elementary knowledge of modern astronomy. The book concludes, very appropriately, with a chapter on the Star of Bethlehem and what it signifies to us today of the fact of the Incarnation of our Lord.

Prophecy and Religion in Ancient China and Israel. by H. H. Rawley. Harpers. \$2.75

In this brief study the famous British Protestant Old Testament scholar draws on an early interest in Chinese culture to produce a stimulating survey of the points of contact between the classical Chinese sages and the eighth and seventh century Hebrew prophets. Readers who may not know Rawley's many Old Testament works will meet for the first time his clear and concise style, and his facility for distilling the contents of volumes of exhaustive scholarly research into a few simple sentences. The author does not suggest that the sages and the prophets bear remarkable resemblances to each other; but he proves that the understanding of either group is considerably illuminated by throwing it into contrast with the other.

Without revealing the "secret" of the book, it may be said that the similarities between the thought of the two groups is in the political rather than the religious area. Comparative religion at its best.

—George H. MacMurray

The Christian and his America by Gerald Kennedy. Harpers. \$3.00

The author of this interesting book is a bishop of the Methodist Church who is "a prolific writer, a popular lecturer and an indefatigable traveler," as his publisher's note tells us. This is his twelfth book and it reads like a series of popular sermons, replete with anecdotes, illustrations and interpretations. It does not give evidence of profound thought, but it is highly readable and suggestive.

In the final section of the book, the writer deals with the state of the disillusioned world and with America's place and duty in it. It is very clear—and very unfortunate—that the writer seems to have no conception of the part which this country's foreign policies over a long period of years have played in the present tragic impasse in world affairs. One finds no protest against an American economy sustained by colossal spending for armaments nor any recognition that our far-flung cordon of military bases in Europe have contributed substantially to the lamentable state of today's world. The need to fight and threaten Communism is accepted as a sufficient reason for present policies.

A serious study of economics from the ethical angle and some time off to read Toynbee's monumental work on the history of civilizations would be good for this versatile writer of interesting sermons.

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BACKFIRE

MRS. IRVINE

Ass't to Dean, New York Cathedral

In your issue of November 29, it is stated on page six that Norman Coke-Jephcott is organist at the Cathedral. Mr. Alec Wyton has been organist and master of choristers for the past two and a half years and in the circumstances we should appreciate it if you would correct this statement.

WILLIAM SULLIVAN

Layman of Los Angeles

Fines do not seem to be the answer to our traffic violations. Perhaps better results could be obtained by impounding the car from one to thirty days. If we had to do without the car for a few days each time maybe we would wise up.

RALPH E. ELLSWORTH

Director of Libraries, Iowa State University, Iowa City.

In the September 1, 1956 issue of the *Firing Line*, we read something about your publication. We think *The Witness* would be a valuable addition to our special collection of patriotic literature which both reflects the ideological tensions of our times and presents the views of diverse groups.

The purpose of this collection is to provide first-hand material for objective students of American culture. We, of course, are neutral in any controversies which manifest themselves in the literature we receive and file.

LUTHER D. WHITE

Layman of Waterford, Conn.

One of the great questions today is how to apply Christian principles to everyday life. A Christian should show by his life that he is a follower of the Master. Professions without performance are of little value. "Faith without works is dead." Integrity and consideration

for others are important factors.

A Christian nation also has its responsibility in world affairs. Peace and fairness toward other countries are the chief necessities. It is not necessary to believe in the economic or political principles of other nations in order to live at peace with them. In so doing let us remember that Jesus Christ was the Prince of Peace.

J. G. C. TYLER

Layman of New York

The editorial *Treason of Intellectuals* (12/6) was as challenging a thing as I have ever read. Whether or not I can agree with it, I am not yet sure. Being far beyond military age, the question of whether or not to be a CO is not a personal question, though I think I would be.

On the matter of atomic weapons, the realistic fact is that they will continue to be made so the best thing we can do, I think, is to press for their international control under the UN.

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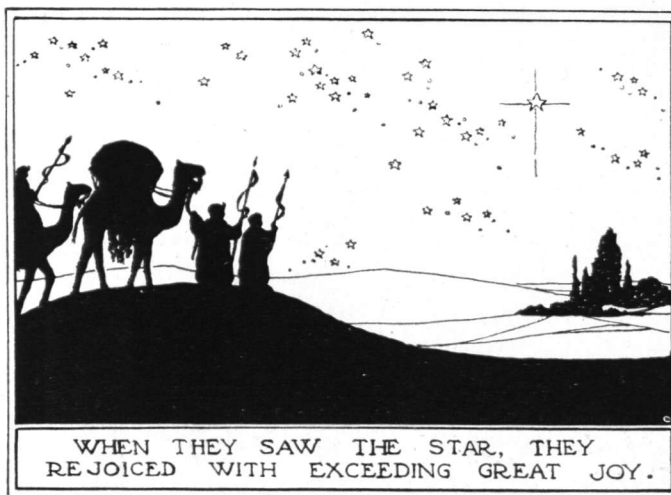
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