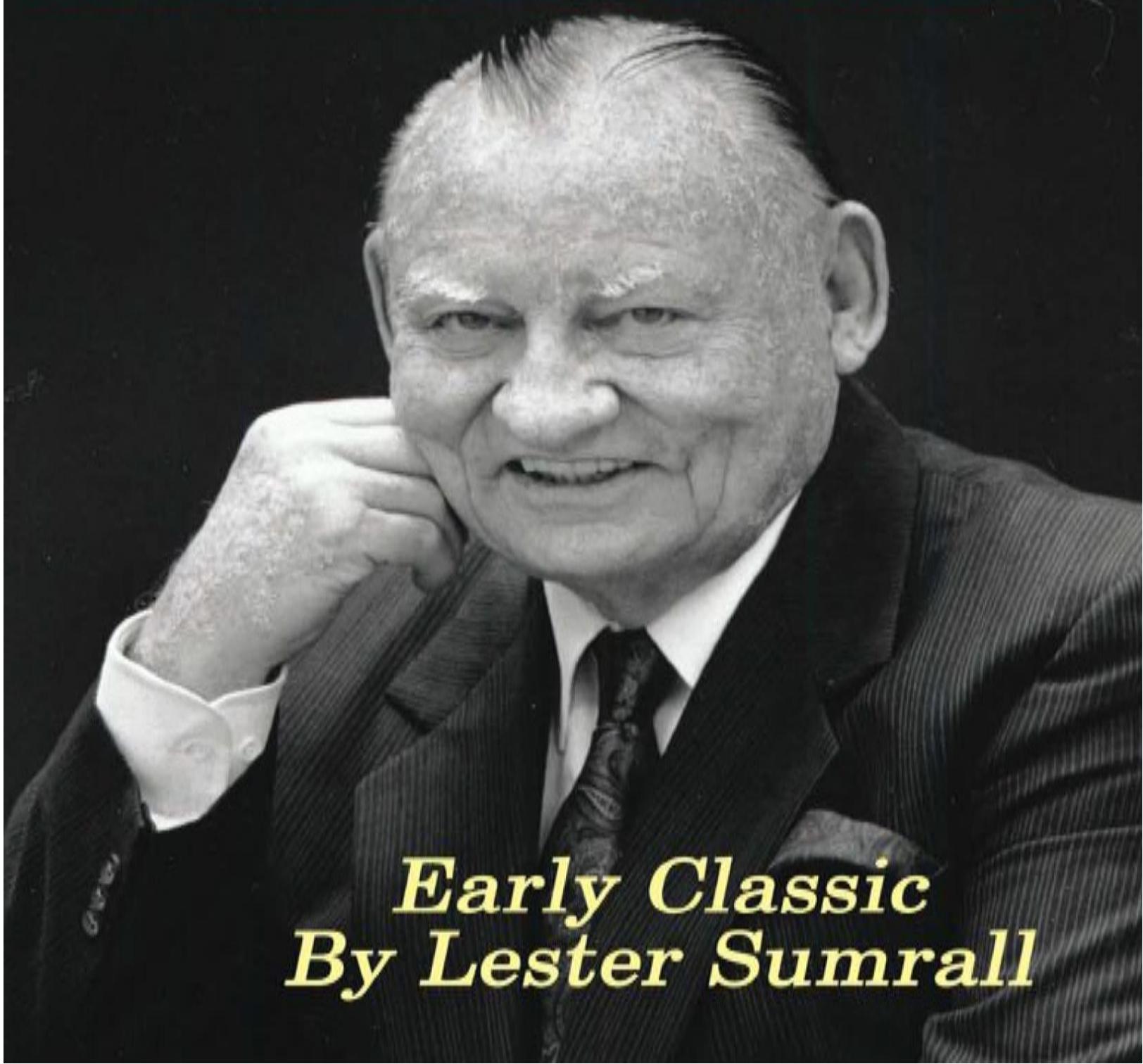


TRAVELS IN 55 COUNTRIES

SUMRALL'S

SHORT STORIES



*Early Classic
By Lester Sumrall*

SUMRALL'S SHORT STORIES

by Lester F. Sumrall

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**LeSEA PUBLISHING
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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *King James Version* of the Holy Bible.

Sumrall's Short Stories

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TELL ME A STORY

In Keijo, Korea, I was speaking through a Korean interpreter who did not have perfect understanding of the English language; during the course of my message I said, "Now, I will tell you a story." To the limited English of my interpreter a *story* could only be an untruth; therefore he interpreted in Korean: "Now I will tell you a *lie*." Fortunately, a missionary present who understood both languages came to the rescue and explained to him in Korean that the English word "story" was also a true illustration. The native congregation enjoyed the "confusion of tongues" immensely, but they re-adjusted their position on the oriental grass rug floor, and leaned forward to hear a *true story* from a foreign land.

While speaking for a number years to people of many languages, every color, and varying stages of culture, from primitive jungle Indians in the Gran Chaco Boreal of Paraguay to university students in centers of learning, I have observed that the human mind relishes a lively, true story, possibly more than any other prepared material. The true story is a powerful illustration if dexterously used by the public speaker, as it not only illustrates and defecates his discourse but becomes an integral part of the personality of the audience. They live on in the hearts of men from generation to generation, after synthetic-fictional stories have been buried by the vicissitudes of time.

Hundreds of persons in the course of my travels have said, "Tell me a story of your world travels." Mr. Clarence Jones, co-founder and director of HCJB, the Voice of the Andes, Quito, Ecuador, after hearing some of my stories given over his radio station requested, "Put them in book form and send me a copy to read over HCJB."

Therefore I present a volume of true stories.

LESTER F. SUMRALL

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THE REAPPEARING CHRIST

Rio de Janeiro harbor is reputedly one of the finest works of nature in the world. After viewing it at various times over a period of 10 years from the air, by steamer, from train, from car and on foot, I feel its beauties are indescribable. God made Guanabara Bay and encircled it with those gorgeous mountains, leaving the blue channel-door to the open seas, with majestic Sugar Loaf Mountain as a 1200 ft. high granite guard on eternal duty. Overlooking this great harbor and city is the world famous statue of Christ.

One day I was looking out of my hotel window admiring the great white statue with a background of blue sky, standing with outstretched arms from Mt. Gorcovado. As I looked a heavy mist swept over the rugged mountain and before my eyes the statue disappeared. The sky looked as if there had never been a Christ there.

My mind went back to my travels in Japan where the *mist* of Shintoism had enveloped Christ: to Russia where atheistic Bolshevism had shrouded Christ: and Germany where the cloud of Nazism had hidden the true Christ.

But even as I meditated *the mist rolled away*, and there in the dazzling Rio sunlight was the gigantic *Cristo de Corcovado*, with great-outstretched arms toward the metropolis. He was still there!

Then my mind journeyed again to the Christ-rejecting lands, and an inward voice of triumph said – *The mist is rolling away!* The Shinto *mist* has disappeared; the Nazi *mist* is gone. We know that in the darkest of lands the *mist* will roll away and Christ the Eternal One shall reappear above the down-trodden lives of men to lift them, to bless them, to save them!

2

GOSPEL STRATEGY IN JAVA

Java is a tropical island-paradise six hundred and sixty-six miles long and from forty-five to one hundred and twenty miles in breadth, situated almost on the equator in the East Indian Archipelago, in the Dutch West Indies. On one side of this equatorial Eden the great Indian Ocean laves its shores, on the other the Java and Flores Seas. This lovely island is known as the most densely populated spot on the globe-having a population of approximately forty-five million.

One terrifically torrid day of almost suffocating humidity, we were traversing Java by train. As was the usual thing in the Orient, the train was packed to over-capacity with human beings, as well as with their suitcases, garden produce, and poultry, which were piled in the seats and in the aisles. The natives were exceptionally interesting to me as I had just arrived on my first visit to the Orient. Many men and women of the poorer classes were chewing a kind of native tobacco which turned their mouths red and looked as if they were spitting blood. A number of men of the higher class who were on the train wore skirts similar to those worn by the women of other countries. They were of flaming colors and reached to their ankles. From the glassless window of the train I could see the natives working in their paddy (rice) fields. To the eyes of a stranger, most of them were models of terraces, beautifully symmetrical, located on the sides of volcanic mountains of which Java has about fifty. We watched the water buffalo walking so slowly that their movement was scarcely perceptible, as they plowed the paddy fields, while the plowmen either rode on the animals' broad backs or walked behind to guide the primitive wooden plows.

Slaves of Witchcraft

On the seat beside me rode Mr. Howard Carter, with whom I was traveling, and our interpreter, a Dutch minister who was working among the Javanese. While the little train moved joltingly through

the tropical scenery, stopping at every village to pick up new passengers and to allow others to get off, the minister asked whether we had heard the story of Christianity's first triumph in Java; of the first penetration of the golden light of the Gospel into the total spiritual darkness of the Javanese, and of the real conversions made among them. Since we had not heard it, he related the following story:

"Java, a Dutch colony granted religious freedom by its Protestant government, was one of the first oriental lands to receive the Bible in the vernacular or common language of the people. However, ministers who desired to convert the Javanese to Christianity discovered, to their sorrow and anguish of heart, that it was simpler for the Dutch militia to conquer these interesting islanders than it was to break the evil powers of paganistic witchcraft and Buddhism which had shackled their souls and the souls of their forefathers for centuries. The oriental philosophies, crude superstitions, and the marvels of the cunning witchdoctor were greater attractions to these beautiful copper-colored folk than the new religion offered by the white men.

"The history of religion teaches and assures us with an abundance of examples that *God raises up a man for the occasion* in every dark period of time and in every difficult place: A Moses, a Paul, Wesley, a Hudson Taylor, a Livingstone! For the natives of Java, God used a man of Russian descent to introduce this message to the masses. The missionary possessed ardent zeal, traveling tirelessly from *kampoong* to *kampoong* (village to village) teaching the scriptures to the people. A few listened, most did not, and none accepted his words as truth. He seemed, along with many of his predecessors and contemporaries, to be sentenced to utter failure in the mission to which he had dedicated his heart and which his soul loved. These meek island folk of the burning equatorial regions would not harm the white man or even speak harsh words to him. They simply exhibited complete aloofness; a total disinterest in the new faith.

Javanese Shadow Play

"As the Russian missionary traveled and lived among the people, he became intimately acquainted with their customs and traditions. Among all the fascinating practices of the natives, nothing so charmed him as the Javanese Shadow Play. Almost every evening in some part of town he would find a *Dalang* (one who recites in the Shadow Play) sitting on the sidewalk with his *wajang*, or leather doll-puppet with which he features the grotesque shadow show. The Russian missionary observed that the shadows of the actors were thrown upon a white sheet by a lamp which was situated behind the *Dalang*. He was assisted by musicians who played the *gamelon*, Java's most popular musical instrument that sends forth a melody which seems harmoniously weird to Western ears. The *Dalang*, seated before his white sheet with the lamp behind and the musicians playing furiously, recites fantastic stories of demigods and legendary heroes from Javanese mythology. Moving the puppets upon the screen he depicts thrilling war stories, Gulliver-like adventure stories, incredible deeds of love and valor, which are regarded as the traditional history of the Javanese people from centuries long past. This thoroughly native drama always attracts enormous crowds. The people never tire of hearing of the exploits of these legendary heroes and heroines; dramatization possesses the perennial attraction which a cleverly presented Punch and Judy show has for the English.

Gospel Drama

"One night as the Russian missionary stood watching the *Dalang*, a thrilling thought came to him: Why not tell the Gospel story in the form of a shadow drama? He concluded that since he had completely failed in every other effort to reach their hearts, one more failure could not injure

his reputation! The following day he ventured into the open market and purchased an assortment of leather wajangs, a lamp, and a sheet to be used for a screen. After a bit of private practicing, the missionary chose a prominent street-corner and began his act for the first time. He was thrilled with his new venture! Since the Javanese are experts in drama he knew that he must be a truly dramatic artist- he must recite his stories with great fervor and enthusiasm as he moved the puppets upon the screen.

“The dramatization began with the story of David and Goliath for which he used a small and large wajang. In an intonated voice, quite similar to that of the Dalang, he told of a Good People in the long ago who were persecuted by a warlike and aggressive neighbor. He named his wajang Goliath, and related to them the defiant attitude of the evil giant toward the Good People, which caused them to fear greatly. Then he showed them a small wajang and named it David. He pictured before them the brave youth of the Good People as he stepped forth to fight the boastful champion that he might thus liberate his beloved nation.

“The result was electrical. The foreigner’s story was similar to their own. The Javanese crowded around the missionary as he slowly unfolded the story. They soon took side with David and begged that he might win. When he finally triumphed by cutting off the head of the giant, the people applauded. Since this story had won approval, the missionary continued. He related the experiences of Esther, a poor orphan girl who rose to be queen and saved the people of her nation from execution by risking her own life. This story also received hearty praise. He then spoke to them of Moses, a slave-child who was adopted by a princess and became a great prince, but left the palace to deliver his enslaved people from a wicked tyrant. These stories captivated the Javanese. They were amazed to hear a foreigner telling stories as exciting as their own. Finally the missionary began his best story. He told them of a Prince, much greater than all the heroes, who left His palace in heaven and came down to earth on an errand of mercy to save the people from a wicked and terrible dragon. The noble Prince was obligated to give His own life to save the people. The missionary dramatized the Passion, telling of the ill treatment of the Prince by the people and of His supreme sacrifice as He was finally nailed to a tree for them. The Javanese listeners became a swelling crowd as they listened to these wonderful stories, and as they listened, the truth of God entered their hearts. Having enacted the stories, the missionary tactfully introduced them in book form, thus taking advantage of the opportunity to bring the sacred scriptures into the homes of the Javanese.

“As he continued this novel presentation of sacred drama, the Javanese listened eagerly to his exciting Shadow Plays wherever he went. He became the instrument of God to lead hundreds of copper-colored natives into the realm of eternal light.”

At the conclusion of this most thrilling story, we realized that we had been thoroughly enthralled by the tale of the unique manner in which the Gospel had come to the Javanese. Today Christianity is a potential force among them, since nearly every town has a Christian church of some denomination.

Victory for Victors

This wonderful victory, pervading the gross darkness of paganism with the saving light of the Gospel, is a challenge to every worker for Christ throughout the world. There is no opposition too great! There is no darkness too thick!

A few years ago, I attempted to preach in Dublin, Eire, and found the country closed to me; the Roman Catholic Church would not permit proprietors to rent their halls to Protestants. The Y.M.C.A. asked me to speak there once. That night as I walked out of the building after speaking, the Catholic Action accosted me. One of the hooligans beat me while counting his rosary. When I reached my room

I knelt and prayed. After prayer I opened the flyleaf of my Bible and wrote: *When all the possibilities are against me, I still have all the impossibilities for me!* Every minister and every missionary can claim the same. The strength of God commences where the strength of man terminates.

Therefore, we must learn that the most effective means of winning the nationals of any land to Christ is to present Him in such a manner that their minds may perceive and appreciate Him in all His glory. After all, missionaries are not sent to the “uttermost parts of the earth” to *Americanize*, *Anglicize*, or even *Protestantize* the people--but to *Christianize* them.

3

CHEN LEE THE SLAVE GIRL

Chen Lee was one of China’s unfortunate girls who, while still a small child and not yet old enough to remember parental care, was sold to a foul slave market for a pittance. Chen Lee was now seemingly destined to live the terrible life of one of China’s women slaves - hated, despised and beaten until death might rescue her from the clutches of a merciless master. The slave market to which she was sold is located in a horrible prison with high mud walls and earthen floor. This exceedingly filthy hovel in which she was obliged to sleep with the other slave girls would defy any prose description. While awaiting a buyer in the wretched slave market, these pitiful inmates scarcely received sufficient food to keep them alive. They also suffered from the brutal action of fellow prisoners and the slave-master.

One day some white people, who spoke a strange language which the slave girls had never before heard, came into the slave market. Chen Lee saw the foreigners look at her and heard them ask her price. She was badly frightened, as she did not know what might be done with her; it was bad enough to be salve to her own people. To her alarm the mean price was paid and she was delivered to their home.

Although Chen Lee could not realize it, this was the dawning of a bright new day for her; for while she thought that she was being led into a life of misery and cruel slavery, in reality she was leaving the dirty prison dungeon to enter a wonderful freedom and life-long happiness.

Chen Lee’s New Life

When the waif whose hair was matted and whose body was filthy and covered with sores arrived at the missionary compound, she was washed, oiled, deloused, fed nutritious food and given clean clothes by the missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Wood of England. This kindness amazed and even startled the little slave-girl who had never known a tender touch in her life and who had expected to receive terrible lashings and be put to heavy labor. Slowly Chen Lee emerged from the chrysalis of slavery and discovered that, of a truth, she was no longer enslaved. The missionaries with great patience taught her to eat in a refined Chinese manner, to keep her skin clean and to dress properly. She learned to read and write, to sew and embroider, to cook food, to clean the house, and to take much pride in the fine art of living. Chen Lee was fascinated by all these things, and especially the Christian songs she learned. In these songs were the words of a great Teacher whose name was Jesus. The missionary told her that He was the Savior of all mankind.

Life became a bright sun, a blossoming lily, a fragrant rose; she, a former slave, was actually free! The greatest surprise of all came to her when Chen Lee realized that she was known as the daughter of the missionary and his wife and not as their property. She came to know that they loved her deeply and cared for her needs because she was their child and not because she was a purchased possession.

Chen Lee Goes to England

Some later time the Woods were to go home on furlough. The problem then arose as to what should be done about little Chen Lee. She had listened to them as they spoke of a great world of tall buildings, of broad smooth streets, and fine stores in which things of great beauty could be purchased, but she had never imagined that she might be allowed to look upon such wonders. The missionaries discussed the matter of taking her with them, and then wrote to their home mission board; after which they consulted with the British Consul and representatives of the Chinese government. Finally, the ultimate decision was made known to ecstasies! An oriental slave-girl was to see the great western world and travel in a world of fabulous story. Her black eyes danced with delight as she watched while her foster-mother prepared a wardrobe of gorgeously colored kimonos for the voyage. At last all preparations were completed and she boarded the train with her foster-parents, as all of them waved goodbye to missionaries and Chinese in Kuming. The mountain train took them down the dazzling heights through Yunnan Province to French Indo-China. In Haiphong they boarded a small steamer to cross the boisterous Gulf of Tonkin to Hong Kong. It was Chen Lee's first voyage and she was enthralled by the sparkling sea. In the great metropolis of Hong Kong she saw large buildings, broad streets; nothing resembled the ugly adobe walls of the dark prison in which the missionaries had found her a few years earlier. However, everything that had gone before was totally eclipsed by the moment in which they boarded the great oceanliner bound for England. The state rooms, the dining saloon, the decks, the ship's officers all set her mind whirling and her nerves tingling. It was unbelievable that she should be allowed to enjoy this modern luxury! In a few days she saw the great city of Singapore with its bustling traffic and multi-colored life. From here the vessel sailed to India, and after many weeks arrived at their destination in England.

Chen Lee was greeted by a host of friendly Christians whose fondest wish was to make her happy in her first visit to England. Young and old were greatly interested in the lovely Chinese girl. The long colorful kimonos only served to enhance her natural beauty; and Chen Lee was friendly and enjoyed discussing China, the land of her birth. Every day she grew in grace and faith in the Christianity which was unfolding before her; and yet, amid these happy surroundings she remembered that once she had been an abandoned slave, friendless and lonely.

The end of the furlough came, but not too soon for the missionaries who were eager to return to their field of labor. By this time Chen Lee spoke English with a lovely accent; now she spoke fluently in two languages and had developed into an attractive, dark-eyed Chinese damsel who was dearly beloved by all who knew her. As Mr. and Mrs. Wood with Chen Lee turned toward China for another term on the field, the three looked forward with fond anticipation to winning many souls for Christ. China would now seem to be an entirely different country to Chen Lee. Since she had attended many missionary meetings and conventions in England and now understood the true reason why white missionaries came to China, she, too, was returning to help bring Jesus to her own people. She realized that the doctrines of Christ must be accepted in order to eliminate slave markets where innocent, unwanted girls are bought and sold. Womanhood must be exalted, must be lifted up from a life of darkness and filth. She realized, too, that the only hope for the women of China was through the Lord Jesus Christ. Chen Lee's message to the womanhood of Asia is this:

Women of the Orient-
Bleeding hearts and weary hands,
Backs with heavy burdens bent,
Heathendom has forged your bands.
Women of the Orient-
Slaves to commerce, passion, pride,

Know ye not that Christ was sent
And for you was crucified?
Know ye not, dejected ones,
That He was rejected too;
That His crown was made of thorns,
That He bore it all for you?
Know ye not that Jesus died
That from sin you might be free,
That from out His riven side
Flowed a cleansing stream for thee?

Women of the Orient-
Bound by centuries of sin;
Open now your bleeding hearts,
Let the blessed Savior in.
E.I.D.

I Met Chen Lee

When Mr. Howard Carter of London, England and I were journeying throughout Southwest China, we were entertained in the Woods' home. There we met Chen Lee. We also visited the slave market where Chen Lee was purchased and we saw two dozen girls for sale that day. In all my life I had never seen such pitiful humans as these slave girls. They were offered to us for a price ranging from 75 cents to \$7.50, American currency. The poor little creatures knew the pangs of hunger, and malnutrition was evident. They had been beaten and kicked about by vile persons until some of their bodies were badly deformed; their hair was matted with filth; their bodies were caked with dirt which had been on them for some time; the filthy den in which they lived was exceedingly rich--entomologically!

As we looked at Chen Lee, a lovely refined young lady, and thought of the horrible slave market, it was almost impossible to realize that she had once been living in that very prison. However, we saw in her one of the most beautiful and most striking comparisons to *conversion* we ever beheld. At one time every one of us who is now a Christian was in the slave-market of the Devil; he was our task-master, driving us into sorrow, tears and despair. He mistreated us and mocked at our misfortune. One day Jesus came to the slave-market of sin and offered to pay the price of our redemption, the price was high--*very high*--but Christ was willing to pay it to the last farthing. While angels in heaven stood by in holy awe, the Royal Prince purchased the emancipation of the human race.

“Not by corruptible things as silver and gold, but by His own blood . . .”

After paying the supreme price for the salvation of the world, Christ left His liberated possessions in the care of the Holy Spirit. From the evil slave-market of sin to the abode of the Holy Spirit is a remarkable change of address! Christ requested the Holy Spirit to clothe us in *Robes of Righteousness and Garments of Salvation*, to feed us on the *sincere Milk of the Word, the Bread of Life, and the Fruit of the Spirit*. He said that all additional dues would be paid upon His return, and His final injunction was that the best of care be given the former slaves.

“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

My joy can hardly be contained when I consider our glorious Savior who paid the ransom for us, bringing us forth from the bondage of sin! How wonderful to be truly converted! How amazing to be now a son of the King of the Universe! (1 John 3:2)

A Slave Sought in Marriage

This is by no means the end of the story. While Mr. Carter and I were in Woods' home, we were told that a wealthy businessman in the city had asked if his son might have Chen Lee for his bride. Could it be possible that a businessman had asked that a former slave-girl become the bride of his son? How could such a thing be in China? The new relationship brought about by her adoption has made all the difference--she is now the daughter of a missionary!

Does this also remind you that soon there is to be a divine marriage in heaven? Who is to be married? The Crown Prince of Jehovah, God's only begotten Son, Heir to all the unsearchable riches of heaven. How incredulous! Yet it is true; the Prince Charming of heaven has chosen a former slave to be His bride. His chosen one, purchased by His own blood, is soon to be called; there is to be a royal wedding, such a wedding as the universe has never witnessed. Ten thousand times ten thousand angels (one hundred million) will witness that dazzling scene and shout for joy until the heavens ring because their noble Master has brought His bride to be forever with Him:

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him:
for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife
hath made herself ready. And to her was granted
that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and
white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.
And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they
which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb . . . “

Rev. 19:7,8,9

My foreparents, who were plantation owners in the deep south, were obliged to announce one day that the Federal Government of America had issued a decree liberating all slaves and that they were free to leave the plantation to live as they pleased. However, some of the slaves refused to accept the liberation, and continued to dwell in slavery until death.

Christ has purchased your release from Satan's slave-market of sin; you are enfranchised, emancipated. Do not remain a slave another day--accept His salvation *NOW!*

4

RUE DE TROISROIS

When visiting the scenic country of Switzerland, situated in the perpetually snow-crested Alps of Europe, we were in the lovely city of Lausanne for speaking engagements. One day our host obligingly conducted on a tour of interesting sights within the city. We visited the historic Gothic Cathedral, a structure which dated back to the thirteenth century. We walked through the narrow quaint streets of old Lausanne. One of them was named *Rue de Trois Rois* or Street of the Three Kings. Our host stopped before an unpretentious old building and pointed to a bronze plaque on the wall. “That building is famous,” he commented. With a smile almost of mockery he continued, “The brothers of Napoleon lived here at one time.”

I approached the plaque and copied the inscription in my notebook. The following is a translation from the French: “In the year 1814 after Joseph Bonaparte, King of Spain, Luis Bonaparte, King of

Holland, Jerome Bonaparte, King of Westphalia, the three brothers of Napoleon I, had lost their thrones they retreated here to reside and to remember their humanity.”

Remember Humanity

The inscription struck me forcibly and I reread it many times. The words, “retreated here to reside and to remember their humanity,” provided a source of thought. The dictators of the nineteenth century were finally compelled to retreat from the resplendent thrones of despotic power and accept complete exile and isolation *to remember their humanity*. Men who deigned to consider themselves supermen, demigods, men of destiny--men who boasted of being indispensable--had to take the time to stop and realize at long last that they were mere creatures of time, speeding into an endless eternity.

We think of the famous Bonapartes as being arrogant toward God and man, yet there are thousands today who are living presumptuous and arbitrary lives toward God. Eventually, God will, by His divine providence, dethrone them from their bigoted positions and force them to retreat to some sane place of remembrance that Jehovah created the heavens and the earth, and Jehovah created man!

The hospital, the prison house, the front lines of battle are oftentimes the places in which men come to a realization of their humanity, and in all sincerity and soberness confess their fallibility before the throne of an infallible God!

David prayed: “Lord, save me from presumptuous sins.”

5

THE DARK CROSS

It was a typical southeastern Alaskan morning. The drizzling rain glided down our oilskins as we trekked through the dark streets on our way to the boat for a day’s fishing. We met Skipper George as he stood at the gate of his home.

“Hello! Ready for the day?” he asked cheerfully.

“Sure, all set for the sea,” we replied with novitiate enthusiasm.

“Here comes Bob now; let’s get going,” George said as he led off toward the fishing docks.

Bob, George’s assistant, swung the oars across his husky shoulders and we were ready to proceed once more. Dressed in fisherman garb we walked through the early morning darkness to Number Two Float. It was necessary for George to bail out a few gallons of seepage before he said, in true fisherman language, “You guys get in.” Art and I, therefore, took our places in the skiff, after which Bob rowed us to Number Three Float, where the diesel-engined vessel “The Shrimp” was secured.

It was seven in the morning and still dark in the Alaskan midwinter. We scrambled aboard “The Shrimp” from the skiff and took refuge in the spacious cabin, which offered a welcome relief from the chilly December rain.

George touched the starter, and the new Diesel engine hummed away. As Bob loosed the hawsers from the dock, the vessel moved slowly from the wharf. Her prow was turned into Edolin Bay, and soon the speedometer indicated nine and a half knots per hour, as the seaworthy smack took to the swelling whitecaps.

When we were well out in the harbor, George surrendered the wheel to Bob and went below to make coffee. A few minutes later, I noticed that Bob was disturbed. As he sipped hot coffee he watched the compass eagerly, glanced out of the rear of the cabin; then looked into the windshield of the helms room. At last, with an air of despair, he said, “It’s dark.”

His word puzzled me. “What is dark?” I asked.

Bob laughed off his serious expression and said, “On yonder church there is a large neon cross. During the dark winter mornings I steer the vessel out to the shrimping grounds by its reflection on this window. But it fooled me this time; it is dark!”

THE DARK CROSS! The thought gripped me so forcibly that I turned to Art and said, “Isn’t it amazing how many lights have been darkened in these terrible times?”

“Yes,” Art replied grimly, “this age will be remembered as one of the blackouts of all time.”

Dark Crosses

As Bob sipped his coffee, the cabin was silent. As I sat on the edge of the bunk, and gazed into the misty darkness, I mused, “That cross in which complete trust had been placed could have caused our ship to crash on the treacherous rocks and reefs of the Inland Passage. We had placed our trust in an unstable light. Through my mind’s eye I saw before me other *dark crosses* of the world--churches, societies of various types and intention, personalities who at one time were spiritual light rays guiding mariners across the stormy Sea of Life; but alas! Alas! The seafarers of today look and seek in a vain search for a friendly light to guide them to the harbor of safety. I believe with the deepest sincerity that many unfortunate mariners on Life’s Sea are drifting on the rocks of a dark eternity, far from their desired course, vainly searching for a ray of light to guild them--but *the crosses are dark!*

There will be societies and personalities rebuked and judged by God at the final tribunal for permitting their spiritual light to go out, causing others to walk in darkness.

Fellow mariner, on the Sea of Life, in these darkening days when lights are being extinguished universally, I beg you to place your trust in the *one Inextinguishable Light!* The will-o-the-wisp lights of man’s creation will ultimately leave you bewildered and wrecked at the consummation of your natural life. But there is an eternally lighted Cross which stands on Calvary’s bleak peak. Its celestial light sheds forth incessant guiding rays for the darkened world. Therefore, trust not in earthly lights for guidance to the Harbor of Heaven, but keep your gaze on the Luminary of Golgotha, Christ, the Light of the World!

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

6

THE SMILING QUEEN

Near the celebrated city of Paris, France is the magnificent, world-renowned *Chateau de Versailles*, or palace of Versailles. This regal edifice is the creation of King Louis XIV, who, because of his extreme extravagance and intense indulgence, was known as the “King of the Sun.”

On one occasion a friend took me to see the royal messuage, which is now a museum. We entered the imperial estate through great forbidding iron gates and walked through its lovely botanical gardens, which are some of the most beautiful I have ever seen--truly designed for a king. As I beheld the elaborate fountains, magnificent shrubbery and pathways, I attempted to visualize gay occasions when kings, queens, lords and ladies reveled here. As we entered the palace we witnessed such glories as beg description. The ceilings of many rooms were overlaid with gold; walls were covered with gorgeous tapestries; rare art treasures were hanging upon the walls. I was overcome with awe as I witnessed these stately settings of splendor and grandeur. In its present state as a museum it still bears indelible marks of the pompous King of the Sun. In the *Salle de Glass*, Room of Mirrors, where the historic Versaile Treaty was signed by the Allied Powers of Word War I, we saw the table where the diplomatic moguls signed the forty-nine articles to right wrong and bring a millennium of peace to the world. As I sat in the chair which Woodrow Wilson had occupied, the efforts of man to bring permanent peace seemed a mockery, for the impending doom of the ages still overshadows modern society.

A Queen in Marble

Among the furnishings of one of the bedrooms there was an exquisite marble bust of Marie Antoinette, the beautiful queen of Louis XIV. Our guide passed before it and asked that special observation be given the superb white marble bust, as it was a French masterpiece in sculpture. As he led us to one side of the room to view it, the face of the queen was stern and austere. Then he directed us to another angle in the room, and to our amazement there was a remarkable change of expression--now the queen's countenance bore an amiable smile, displaying royal charm.

This curious paradox so interested me that I again crossed the room to gaze upon the rigid expression and returned to view the affectionate and benign face. It was true--the two views gave two different facial expressions!

As we resumed our tour through the palace, I felt that I had learned a valuable lesson in relationship to my fellowman; if one aspect of his nature is but negative or irritative, I must not discount him among my friends but rather look for the *positive side* of his personality. Everyone would be much happier if each of us looked for the smiling side of the other. There is a smiling side to every person--look for it.

7

THE LEPER'S SQUINT

During medieval times in Britain there were lepers throughout the land. When I visited Selby Abbey, Selby, Yorkshire the custodian explained the very novel method employed to permit the lepers of those times to hear and to see the religious services. He directed us to a certain point in the abbey. There a hole had been cut through the nine foot thickness of the wall. The opening had been cut diagonally and served as a hagioscope. One could obtain a clear view of the church altar and pulpit through this hole in the wall which became known as "Leper's Squint," because the lepers were permitted to come to this aperture and observe the service, though they were not permitted to mingle with the people. This cleft has long been closed, but it brought a vivid message to my heart.

Leprosy is a type of sin; sin separates from God as the wall separated the lepers from the place of fellowship and repentance. Before Christ came man witnessed the fellowship of God in salvation from afar through the prophets and priests. However, "God so loved the world," that is, poor mankind diseased with spiritual leprosy, "that He gave His only begotten son": Christ the great Physician, and the only One who can heal the soul disease of sin-leprosy. Christ knew that only by the divine alchemy of His own efficacious blood could man be healed of his sins. Therefore, Christ gave to the world the eternal antidote for sin: by His atoning blood He heals the sinner. Now all mankind may enter through the door which is Christ, into the congregation of the righteous: the aperture has been closed -- the Door stands open. Christ invites the sinner graciously: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

Fellowman, there is no further need for you to witness God's blessing from afar, to be outside the wall. Enter in by the Door into the sheepfold, for we are "brought nigh by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . and made partakers of His divine nature."

8

LEST WE FORGET

In Peking, the historic imperial city of North China, we were riding in a rickshaw drawn by a Chinese coolie when one of the missionaries instructed his rickshaw runner to pull over close to mine and pointed ahead saying, "We are approaching the British Legation. Take special notice of the wall to your right." As our runner slackened his pace, we saw a white wall upon which was inscribed in large black letters three never-to-be forgotten words, *LEST WE FORGET*. Upon closer observation we could see perforations caused by many bullets. This made us even more curious to learn the history of the wall. It was behind this wall, the missionary informed us, that a number of missionaries had taken refuge during the horrible Boxer Uprising in nineteen hundred, when the Dowager Empress seized the civil government and demanded the death of all foreigners in China (many of the foreigners residing in China at the time were missionaries and their families). With murderous hearts, the Boxers hunted down the "white faces" and slew them without mercy. One hundred and eighty-nine Protestant missionaries and missionaries' children were killed before an armistice could be reached. One day the Boxers found this group of missionaries behind the wall and fired upon them. When it seemed that the wall would collapse and they must surely perish, some British marines, who had marched from Tientsen, arrived and valiantly drove the Chinese soldiers back to affect the rescue of the missionaries. I have met marines who fought the bloody battles of the Boxer Rebellion, and they confirmed the furiousness of the struggle.

Aids to Remember

When the war was over and hostilities had ceased, the new Chinese government kindly suggested to the British government that the horrible-looking, bullet-riveted wall be torn down in order to help abolish remembrance of the bloody war. After due consideration, the British government decided to preserve the wall rather than destroy it. To bring due notice to it, they had had the old wall painted sparkling white, inscribing in large black letters *LEST WE FORGET* for passers-by to look upon and *remember* the terrible consequence of war.

The Legation wall should prove to be a lesson to all of us. Human nature, like the Chinese government, wishes to brush aside quite casually the catastrophes and calamities which come into the lives of men. Memory is composed of fictional qualities, which can take the *blood, toil, and tears* of years gone by and through some strange alchemy of time change them into deeds of valor and dreams of delight. The mass of humanity is quick to clothe the past in dream dresses and romanticism, to forget the sorrows, pains and woes experienced in those dreadful yesterdays. Within our lives eternal flames should be erected that we might not be permitted to obliterate the past and efface the tragedies of time. They should serve as landmarks of remembrance to effect within our lives a realization of past errors, an appreciation of the present, and hope for the future.

LEST WE FORGET!

9 THE MAD CAPTAIN

One morning at about seven o'clock as I was pacing the upper deck enjoying a constitutional, I approached a fellow passenger who greeted me in a friendly manner as he said, "Hello, there. A quiet voyage isn't it?"

"Indeed it is," I responded to the traveler who appeared to be a mariner of quite some year's standing.

“If all runs well, we shall reach the Canary Islands tomorrow,” he continued, directing my attention to a large map of sea-lanes which was posted on the bulletin board.

“I notice your arm is bandaged; is it serious?” I asked sympathetically, as I glanced at his lame arm.

“Well,” he said, “I’m an old salt; I’ve been going to sea since I was a lad and never have had a serious mishap until a few weeks past on this last trip enroute to Brazil, when I fell down some greasy steps which led to the engine room and smashed this arm. At present my company is sending me home to recuperate.”

As we walked along the deck together, I learned that the mariner had led an exciting life. He had begun his career while still a youth by joining His Majesty’s Royal Marines. After his term of service expired he had done some whaling, and later had joined the herring fleet. For the past few years his work had been in the Mercantile Marines.

The Ghost Ship

“Any very exciting episodes ever come your way?” I inquired.

“Well, about the most exciting one occurred when I was in the Royal Marines,” he recalled. “We were on patrol off the west coast of Africa when one day we sighted a small vessel as it passed us in full sail. Of course, this was an ordinary sight; but a few days later, strange to say, we saw the same vessel. This time an SOS signal was raised. Our Commanding Officer immediately ordered a lifeboat to be lowered.

“As we clambered aboard the small craft, we found it to be a ghost ship! There was not a living soul on board. With revolvers in hand we searched it from stem to stern. There was a tense, uncanny feeling in the air. We found it to be in order, yet totally deserted. Our Commander ordered that the fishing smack be put in tow; therefore, we secured it to the man-o-war and proceeded with our patrol duty.

A few days later we sighted a raft upon which there was a lone man who waved frantically at us. We took him aboard and soon discovered that he claimed to be the captain of the fishing schooner which we had in tow. His story was that some weeks past a sailor had accidentally fallen overboard and, before they could rescue him, a giant squid, species of octopus, with his horrible tentacles, had sucked him into his dreadful pouch. The enraged squid now thirsted for more human blood so that he pursued the vessel and threw his tentacles over the stern from time to time. The captain said that in order to quiet the raging monster of the deep, he would throw a man overboard to him in the secret darkness of the night. At last there was no one left but him, so he escaped the monster by constructing a raft and deserting the vessel. The British officers considered the man’s story weird and possibly fictitious. Since the old captain was in need of medical attention, he was placed under the care of the ship’s physician.

The Mad Captain

In a few days a sailor mysteriously disappeared from the man-o-war; a few days later another sailor was missing; a day later a third. The Commander was greatly alarmed concerning the sudden disappearance of his men from the ship and ordered the strange captain to be placed under strict surveillance. That evening the guard saw him slip up stealthily behind a sentry on duty, foul him, and throw him into the abysmal depths of the sea, then let out an insane, ludicrous laugh. Now the ship officer realized that the captain was a demoniacal madman. He was put in irons until he could be taken to a mental hospital.”

The story almost took my breath away; a lunatic captain had destroyed his crew. I have heard many sea mysteries, but this one was the strangest of them all. As I meditated upon the story of the mad captain there came to my mind the realization that there is another diabolic personality whose influence is universal; his untiring efforts are directed toward the destruction of all those whom he can persuade to come aboard his “ghost ship.” Satan is that mad captain. He uses many enticing and cunning means to attract unwary folk to his ship of destruction. He can paint charming pictures of pleasure and self-expression; exciting ones of glamour, popularity and adventure, if you will only sail with him. Yet his eyes blaze with deceit, his superb sycophancy of “ye are gods” is a beguiling lie. The ultimate destiny of all who sail the seas of wickedness in the ship of sin is certain death, preceded by sickness, heartaches, mental depression and regretful tears.

Sinner, forsake the treacherous ship of sin--flee the terrible presence of the *Mad Captain* and find refuge on the good ship *Salvation*, with Jesus as your Captain. Christ came into the world to save sinners, to rescue the lost, to recapture sin-shackled humanity from Ghost Ships of depravity, dissolutions and sinful pleasure. Unless you are willing, He is powerless to save you. God needs your permission. If you have not already done so, give that permission to Him today.

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

10

THE LOST MASTERPIECE

The day before departing Rotterdam, Holland for the United States of America I visited the famous Boyman’s Museum. Among the many works of art displayed here, there was a masterpiece which had an interesting and novel history.

When a young Dutch girl married a certain Frenchman, a beautiful painting had been given to them as a family heirloom. The couple left Holland to live in France and the picture had been taken along, but as neither of them cared for paintings, they threw it behind an old cupboard. As long as they lived it remained there, hidden from sight. After their death auctioneers came to dispose of their household goods, and the painting was found there, covered with the dust of many years.

The old painting did not bring a very high price at the local auction sale, but once it entered the world of art its true value was determined. Eventually, it was taken to London for exhibition, where it was recognized as a painting by Johannes Vermeer, one of the great Dutch Masters of the seventeenth century. The art authorities had had no idea of its whereabouts and considered it lost. A Dutch society, whose aim is the preservation of Dutch paintings, paid around three hundred thousand dollars for it, and today it is on exhibition at the magnificent, ultra-modern Boyman’s museum in Rotterdam, where it is given its rightful place of high honor.

When I saw the masterpiece which had been hidden in obscurity for so long, it occupied an entire room set apart as a special attraction for visitors. A stone-gray plush curtain forms an impressive background for this exquisite work of art, which is lighted by a huge high-powered lamp so that each minute detail of the master’s brush may be seen. There is arranged before it a luxurious velour-covered divan upon which the visitor may sit in comfort to gaze upon the masterpiece.

The Veiled Guest

I studied the picture with utmost admiration. The perspective of space effected by the gradations of color gave the painting a life-like appearance. The blending of the pigment was soft and delicate, yet vivid. I was deeply impressed by the three figures in the picture. Christ was sitting at a table with the two disciples whom He had met on the Emmaus road. The disciples had believed that they would never see their Lord again, for He had been crucified and laid in a tomb. But now He stood in their

presence, alone and unknown. They did not recognize Him until, with eyes closed, they hearkened to the voice of the “Stranger” as he blessed their bread. Suddenly, the eyes of their understanding were opened and they knew Him as their Lord!

As I stood beholding the great astonishment depicted in the faces of the two disciples, and the noble, immaculate expression the face of the resurrected Savior, an English-speaking attendant approached me and unfolded the history of the painting, of its seeming death and eventual resurrection. My entire being tingled with excitement. How appropriate it seemed that this particular painting should have had such a history; that this gift which had come to the couple at their wedding should have received such commonplace treatment through their lack of understanding and failure to discern its true worth, just as His two disciples had failed to recognize the Savior in all His beauty.

Oh, what a parallel we have of this in life all about us. The eyes of thousands are blinded to the beauty and the immeasurable worth of Jesus. He is God’s Masterpiece, the perfect Sacrifice and the only Savior.

Reader, do not repeat the mistake made by the foolish couple who tossed the masterpiece behind a cupboard. Open the door of your heart and pray to God for the release which comes through Christ, that you may be cleansed from your sins through His shed blood. He is as near to you as He was to those sorrowing disciples on the Emmaus road. He speaks to you now, saying,

“Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” (Rev. 3:20)

11 DEVILS AND DEAD MEN

The ancient religions of China have imposed dark superstitions upon the spiritually darkened people. The Chinese adhere to the ethics of Confucius, worship Buddhist deities, and subscribe to Taoist demonology. Birth, marriage and funeral functions often embrace teachings of the three. These illusions are grievous to one who realizes that they are demon-inspired. The heathen priests burn counterfeit paper money in the streets before a funeral procession declaring that this helps the dead pay their way through the spirit world. They place food before a corpse in a coffin for the dead to eat; the rats devour it at night and the priests explain that the spirit has taken the food. The deluded people are afraid of a certain tree because an evil spirit supposedly lives therein. They kneel before idols, one of which holds the sun in its hand, another the moon, another a great drawn sword, and another which possesses about fifty hands which extend from all parts of the body. To these they give glory.

The Murdered Baby

The extent of this demonology is seen in the following story: The Kehr missionary family was present in a town when a very wicked man died; he was so wicked the inhabitants rejoiced over his death. The same night, in a nearby mud hut, a Chinese mother gave birth to a child. When the mother of the newly born babe heard that the wicked old man had died, she declared that she had seen his evil spirit enter into her babe, and rather than have her offspring grow up to be so wicked, she caused her child to be destroyed the night it was born. Thus a nameless visitor to this planet departed into eternity without ever seeing the light of day.

Heathen religions *kill* spiritually!
Heathen religions *kill* morally!
Heathen religions *kill* materially!

Heathen religions kill physically!
Heathen religions *kill* eternally!

The religion of Christ is the direct opposite. Christianity gives *life* spiritually, morally and physically, with material blessings and eternal hope!

Although we cannot hope to bring the whole world to Christ, we are obliged by His Great Commission (Matt. 28:19) to bring Christ to the whole world!

The foregoing story of ignorance caused by spiritual darkness is an example of paganism which presents a tremendous challenge to Christians to “Send the Light” of the gospel to all the world.

“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil”
(John 3:19)

12

THE DUCKING STOOL

This story takes us to another museum. Museums are always interesting places since in them we are enabled to turn back the musty pages of history and see our fore parents as they lived and reacted to surrounding circumstances.

At the time, as I was conducting a series of meetings in the harbor city of Scarborough, Yorkshire, England, the pastor took me to the local museum for a visit. Among the interesting antiques and relics which attracted my attention was a chair named “The Ducking Stool.” The information card attached to it said that in times past when a woman of the vicinity quarreled continually with her family or her neighbors and was an “arrogant, scolding woman, making herself obnoxious,” the town authorities apprehended her and took her down to the wharf. There they strapped her into the Ducking Stool and immersed her a few times while the citizens looked on and laughed.

The card of information stated that this public humiliation proved a successful means of ending quarrels and creating social tranquility!

How many of us must suffer at the hands of the Lord before we learn patience, humility and meekness toward God and our fellow man.

13

KILLED BY A SILVER CUP

In Vevey, Switzerland there lived a young man who, from early childhood, had been a master of the art of skiing and, when the winter tournaments convened, was always one of the leading contestants.

When I was visiting Vevey, a personal friend with whom I was staying told me the following story about this Swiss youth.

Recently, on her birthday, which occurred on Sunday that year, his mother had asked him to stay at home and go to church with her. He declined on the grounds that there was an important skiing tournament high in the Alps in which the winner was to receive a bright new silver cup. With youthful hilarity he said, “Mother, I’m going to win that cup and bring it home to you!” His godly mother again urged him to stay at home that day as a birthday gift. However, she was unable to persuade him and the young man strapped on his knapsack, in which he had a lunch of delicious sandwiches made by his mother, took his long graceful skis and gleefully departed.

Winning a Silver Cup

The cable car carried him and the other contestants high up the mountainside to the take-off point. Here he quickly forgot about his silver-haired mother going to church alone on her birthday; his heart was set on winning the beautiful silver loving cup.

The tournament began. The nimble, agile skiers were eager for the take-off; even the judges remarked smilingly that the contestants were in fine form that day.

At a given signal, each youthful competitor took his long, eagle-like flight from the side of the snowy mountain. When the measurements were carefully noted by the referee, this young man had out-distanced all the other entrants. He accepted the silver cup amid the praise of his friends and the congratulations of the judge. His heart was almost bursting with excitement, and his face was aglow with delight. His ambitions were realized; he was now a hero.

A Cup of Death

The young man placed the prized cup in his knapsack, strapped it to his back, and with a merry heart started skiing home, never realizing that this was the last day of his life. As he neared his home, he started to jump a narrow ditch when one of his skis slipped. He was thrown backwards to the ground and the silver cup struck him in the middle of his back with the full force of his weight. Later he was found lying cold in the snow. The coroner's verdict: his spinal cord had snapped as he struck the silver cup. The youth had won a silver cup, but the same cup which brought him earthly glory also caused his eternal death; and all in the same day! The long jump brought him honor, but the small jump caused his death. Had he considered the things of obedience and spiritual righteousness he would not have been killed that day.

How often dazzling ambitions and stellar achievements of the world separate souls from the church and from God. This is not an isolated case. The very thing which lures mankind from God is ultimately the cause of eternal death. How necessary it is for all to remember that divine worship must come before pleasure or work, that the things of God bring far greater reward than earthly applause or temporal recognition.

14

THE LAND LIGHTS FAILED

Alaska is no longer the land of long-bearded sourdoughs with a lust for gold in their aging eyes; neither is it a howling arctic wilderness of frigid desolation. Modern Alaska has superseded frontier Alaska and today is vigorous, aggressive, challenging. Only six states in the United States have as many commercial airfields. Fairbanks, the metropolis of the interior of Alaska is the nerve center of aviation. From here, pilots known as the *Northern Eagles* fly over some of the most difficult and dangerous terrain in the world. Monoplanes are flown west to Nome, north to Point Barrow, east over the Yukon to Juneau, and south to the Aleutians with the nonchalance of a ten-minute pleasure jaunt over the city. In the winter they replace the wheels of their planes with skis and use the far northern rivers for landing fields.

Death of an Eagle

When I was in Fairbanks, a friend told me of a Northern Eagle by the name of Norris Johnson. His fellow aviators considered him to be one of their finest pilots who knew flying there at the top of the world as only a veteran airman can know it. He had carried freight and passengers in all kinds of

treacherous weather. Johnson had delivered passengers to villages, mining camps and isolated settlements in the wilds. He considered the delivery of a caterpillar tractor to a miner, a cow to some northern home, or a corpse from the hospital to some remote village to be simply the duty of a Northern Eagle.

It was Thanksgiving evening and a snowstorm blanketed Fairbanks; the lights of the town flickered dimly in the storm, while in cozy homes its families gathered around their tables to enjoy the holiday dinner. Visibility was almost zero at the airport, and the radio operator was directing Norris Johnson as he was coming in with his plane from a trip. They had been in constant contact in flight and now as Johnson flew over the airfield, he heard him ask for the field lights. The ground men tried to turn on the lights but found them to be out of commission; one look at each other and the story was told-- Johnson would never be able to land that plane without lights.

The snow was blinding and freezing on the wings of the plane. Johnson could not see the ground as there were no boundary lights to outline the field and no flood lights to gauge his landing. His gas was running low; therefore he decided to attempt a landing. He estimated his altitude and nosed his plane downward, but his altitude was less than he thought. Within a matter of seconds his screaming motor struck the cold snow-covered earth with a terrific crash. Another great eagle of the north had paid the supreme sacrifice. The city of Fairbanks was in mourning for one of her flying sons.

Keep the Lower Lights Burning

Had the ground lights been burning, Johnson could have made a safe landing. Through the neglect of some one person these lights were out of commission and the valuable life of a fine pilot was the final cost. Satan may befog the atmosphere and cause visibility to become zero, but Christians must keep the Land Lights Burning, at all times.

The Bible says: "Ye are the light of the world."

What a multitude of tragedies are strewn throughout the world today because the "Lower Lights" are not burning!

"Let the lower lights be burning!
Send a gleam across the wave!
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman
You may rescue, you may save."

15

WHERE ARE THE MASTERPIECES?

One day while in London, England, as I walked through the world-famous National Art Gallery, I asked one of the attendants, "Would you please direct me to your greatest masterpieces, as I have but a short time to visit here?"

The attendant lifted his shoulders about two inches higher than normal and fixed his eyes upon me with a mixture of pride and disgust, then with the swing of his arm remonstrated, "*Everywhere!* This museum contains nothing but masterpieces."

I was rather embarrassed, yet the incident brought a gleam of truth into my life which has been a great blessing to me. Critics of Christianity have accosted Christians with a barrage of vituperate nonsense and with a contemptible and presumptuous air have demanded, "Where is God? If there is a Deistic Personality who is the supreme Creator of the universe and Sovereign of the nations, where can He be found? If He is the Master Architect, where are His masterpieces?"

The answer is, "*Everywhere!* God's creation contains nothing but masterpieces."

If the critic will study the “human machine” with a fluoroscope he can only exclaim, “Perfection--a masterpiece of creation!” Or if he takes a telescope and sweeps the heavens and observes the fiery constellations as they move in their ordained courses, he cannot but exclaim, “A masterpiece of creation!” If he takes a microscope and gazes intently at the most minute detail of a flower, he must confess, “Symetry, intricate beauty, perfection--a masterpiece.” There are masterpieces *EVERYWHERE!*

However, there is one absolute principle to which the critic must adhere in order to appreciate the excellency of God’s creation. A lawyer is obliged to use the telescope if he understands astronomy--his law books will not suffice; a doctor is as obliged to use the microscope to see the intricate detail and precision of structure of the flowers as the botanist--his scalpel will not work in this case. Therefore, it is only reasonable to assert that before a critic can understand God and His designs in the universe, he must first come to God and receive conversion and through the new birth receive insight into His mysteries. God is knowable through certain laws and inscrutable otherwise.

16

AN INDIAN WOMAN AND HER BABY

There is an Indian woman in South America, who, like many of her race, lives in a small, dirty hut constructed of adobe (mud) bricks. The floor of her home is earthen and her stove is made of baked mud. The chickens, dogs and pigs walk about in the dwelling. The Indian woman is very poor and must work hard to earn the bare necessities of life.

One day this primitive Indian woman happened to wander into a small hall where a missionary friend of mine was conducting Gospel meetings. She looked at the foreigner and noticed that he had a kind face and was speaking to the Indians in a friendly manner. She sat down and listened while the missionary spoke of the love of Christ for all peoples; then she heard the congregation sing of Christ’s love for mankind. This poor, distressed Indian woman was deeply interested.

Upon her back, wrapped in a long shawl, she carried her youngest child. He was at the weaning age and from now on would need more food. Since the altitude was high and cold, warm clothing would be essential. This meant more hardships for the mother.

Giving the Baby Away

After the service the Indian woman approached the missionary and asked in a timid vice, “Would you take my baby and raise him, if I promise not to return and ask for him?”

The missionary, surprised that this stranger wished to dispose of her small baby, inquired, “Why? Don’t you love your baby? I see he is beautiful and looks healthy. Why would you wish to give him to me?”

With her gaze cast downward the Indian woman replied, “Yes, I love my baby very much; I know he is beautiful and healthy, but I have no money. Proof of my love for him is that am willing to give him to you, for you will care for him and give him the food and clothes which I cannot buy.”

As the missionary told this pathetic story, I saw once again the remarkable blind devotion of mother love. The Indian mother loved so passionately that she would part with the object of that love in order to provide comfort and happiness for him!

Musing upon spiritual values I concluded, “How wonderful it would be if parents gave their children to Christ, even as Hannah gave Samuel to God, realizing that they cannot spiritually nourish and clothe them. This would, as with the Indian woman, demonstrate a *true, strong* love for their spiritual welfare throughout life.

Bring you child to Christ today!

THE SENSITIVE PLANET

In El Salvador Central America, I was shown the Sensitive Plant, the *Mimosa Pudica* (*mimosa* is Greek for “mimic”, alluding to its sensitiveness; *pudica* is Latin, meaning “modest” or “bashful”). When the leaves of the Sensitive Plant receive the slightest touch the petiole falls and the leaves recoil as though wilted. Science does not, as yet, understand the cause of this strange phenomenon in nature.

Sensitive Folk

There are many people whose actions are similar to the Sensitive Plant. They are referred to as being “touchy.” The smallest irritation wilts them; the least trouble causes them to droop; the most trivial inconvenience is a touch that causes them to languish. Everyone around them has to be careful for they cannot bear teasing or disagreement on any topic. They are society’s *Sensitive Plants*.

If you are a human *Mimosa Pudica*, Christ can transform your delicate disposition into a strong character with power and courage to face the vicissitudes of modern life bravely.

THE RELIGION OF OUR FOREFATHERS

In Cardiff, Wales I was shown the Gorsydd Gardens, also known as the Garden of the Druids. The Druids were a judicial-priestly order in Gaelic Britain before Christianity was introduced to our forefathers. Druidism was a belief in the cyclical reincarnation of the soul and also taught its followers to sacrifice humans before the altars of their gods. Our forefathers were barbarians and pagans before the civilizing power of Christianity was brought to the shores of Angleland.

Human Sacrifices

In the Druid Gardens of Cardiff I was shown twelve large stones, in the midst of which was a much larger stone where sacrifices were offered by the Druid highpriest some two thousand years ago. It is said that humans, probably slaves, were tied in bundles and presented as burnt offerings to the immortal gods.

As I looked upon the stones, I forgot, for the moment, the story of the Pilgrim Fathers as our ancestors and wandered farther back to the time when our forefathers offered human sacrifices to unknown gods.

One can believe and have reason to fear that if we in this twentieth century should abandon Christianity, the ancient spirit of our forefathers will again become predominant and human society would become subservient to pagan instincts.

THE KETJOEBOENG-FLOWER OF DEATH IN JAVA

Some Dutch friends showed me a tree in the Javanese jungles which the natives call Ketjoeboeng. It is a luxuriant tropical plant that flourishes in the torrid heart. It is beautiful, flowering into a large blossom with long white petals and a red heart. My Dutch friends informed me that the natives call it

the Flower of Death because of its narcotic potents. The Javanese explain, “The essence of one leaf will intoxicate; the essence of many leaves kills.”

The narcotic is invariably used by the witch doctor in the practice of black magic which flourished in Java more than in any other country in which I have visited. It is also used by robbers who claim that it has a sleeping effect upon humans. They purportedly blow the fluid through the open window of their victim’s house, which causes all who inhale it to fall into a deep sleep, and then proceed to rob the house. If they administer an overdose, the victim or victims never awaken.

Sin is very similar to the Ketjoeboeng, Flower of Death. Sin is a narcotic that eventually kills physically and eternally. The devil uses sin, which is rebellion against the laws of God, to rob the individual of his heaven-given virtues and companionship with God. Evil can be as the Ketjoeboeng flower, wonderfully attractive, yet the very essence of death.

There is but one means of breaking the spell of sin, and that is by the absolute irradiation of the Old Nature and a resurrected life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

20

THE KLONDIKE SOURDOUGH

Aboard a modern “greyhound” of the briny trails en route to New Zealand, as I traveled along the Lone Wolf Trail from San Francisco to Tahiti to Rarotonga and on to Wellington, I met a most remarkable man. He had a long white beard, reminiscent of the days of Rip Van Winkle. His snowy hair reached to his shoulders and curled in a roll, but back of the heavily beaded face there was a winning smile and bright blue eyes. His clothing appeared to have been styled at least forty years before, although it did not look overly threadbare. His woolen shirts and heavy weight trousers looked uncomfortable in the Tahitian heat.

His storybook appearance and interesting personality were such that I could not resist the temptation to engage him in conversation at various times. The old gentleman was just as exciting as he appeared to be, and since he had lived an isolated life for many years, was more than willing to converse with a stranger. He told me he had been a Klondike gold miner who, having heard the “call of gold” from the Antipodes, rushed from his home in New Zealand to the great frozen gold fields of northern Canada. While his young heart beat furiously, and his nimble fingers dug for the precious yellow metal, he envisioned himself as a wealthy man returning home to retire in ease and luxury.

After hearing this, I ventured to ask him if he had “struck it rich” in the gold field. His sharp blue eyes narrowed as he looked upon the beautiful blue waters of the Pacific, and he shook his head retrospectively as if remembering.

“I lived in hope many years; each year I thought I would ‘strike it rich,’ but I never did. Finally, I came to the realization that I was an old man broken by the bleak Arctic winters and too weak to continue the hard work of gold digging. Therefore, I relinquished my claim and am now returning home.”

The old man told me of seeing men spend fifteen hundred dollars in gold dust for a few cigars, and three thousand dollars in one night for alcoholic drinks, but those days were past. The old man was returning home third class!

As I watched the Klondiker sitting alone, gazing at the tranquil, motionless waters of the Pacific Ocean, I could almost read these words upon his face:

“I have wasted my life. I sought the choice treasure of the earth, but never found it. When it seemed nearest to me, it was the farthest away. Now I must return empty-handed, an old man, broken in spirit and body.”

I can still see him through the windows of my mind as he disembarked in Wellington, New Zealand. His fellow countrymen gazed curiously at his long hair, outmoded clothes, and canvas knapsack which was his only suitcase. There was no one there to welcome him home.

Young person, how often we meet the counterpart of this gold-miner. Men and women have spent their lives in the selfish pursuit of earthly gain only to come to the end of life confused and defeated with no one to greet them on the other side. To live with others, for others, and in the service of others is the happiest life earth affords and it pays the greatest dividends. There are conflicting “voices” in the world calling youth to seek gold, pursue pleasure, attain position, but Christ is calling youth to live resourcefully, happily, and eternally by hearing *His* voice.

21

THE FEATHERED TAXI

Have you ever heard of the Feathered Taxi? For years ornithologists were puzzled as to how the delicate, diminutive humming birds were able to migrate from the far north to the far south; a distance equal to that between Canada and South America. They knew that the humming bird had not been built for long flights or to combat fierce winds and torrential rains. Then, a most interesting oddity was discovered.

It happened that oftentimes when hunters shot the great Canadian geese as they migrated south, they would see something flit away from the big bird as it fell to the ground; other hunters reported shooting the great geese through the wing and finding dead humming birds nestled under the wing. Piecing various stories together, authorities concluded that one of the smallest of the feathered family, when migrating, stows away under the powerful wings, in the downy warm feathers of its giant cousin. The goose does not mind being a taxi for the transfer of its distant relative to warmer climes!

The Bible teaches that the *strong* should bear the infirmities of the weak; it teaches Christians to bear one another’s burdens; to seek everyone his brother’s good.

The happiest Christian is the strongest one who carries the burdens of the needful about him.

22

I WISH JESUS WERE BLIND

In the town of Puno, Peru, on the border of famous Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world (which has an altitude of 12,500 feet and an area of 4,500 square miles), I was in the home of Mr. Reid, a Baptist missionary. While there he related an incident to me regarding his small son, Oliver, who had startled the family by coming into the house from play and inquiring, “Daddy, can Jesus see from heaven all the way down here to Puno?”

“Yes, Son,” he had replied, “Jesus can see us here in Puno.”

“Daddy,” Oliver then said, “Can Jesus see inside my heart?”

“Sure, Oliver,” his father answered, “Jesus can see everywhere--even in your heart.”

The youngster’s problem had not yet been divulged. He looked eagerly into his father’s face as he continued, “Daddy, can Jesus see me when I am under the house?”

The missionary patted his son on the head and said, “Yes Jesus can see you under the house.”

Then with an unexpected burst of excitement, Oliver cried, “Well, I wish Jesus were blind!”

That was all Oliver cared to disclose, but we surmised that something had occurred under the house that Oliver did not want Christ to see, and that it was disturbing him considerably.

How utterly foolish for folk to be as young Oliver; how useless to try to hide secret deeds from Christ. The Lord is the Omniscient One who understands all things; He is the Omnipresent One who is everywhere; He is the Omnipotent One who is able to save or destroy.

But, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

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LOST IN ALASKAN WILDS

Have you ever been lost? Have you been lost in a foreign country where you could not speak the language of the people to enquire directions? Have you been lost in a jungle?

I have really been lost! I have been lost in a foreign land in which I could not converse with the people! I have been lost in a jungle among seemingly interminable vines, trees and serpentine trails! But the strangest place in which I have ever been lost was *THE SKY!* It is disturbing to be lost -- but to be lost in the heavens is simply terrible.

Filming Reindeer

It was during the month of February. I had visited the town of Nome, Alaska on the Seward Peninsula. Nome is the most westerly city of America, geographically five hundred miles west of Honolulu. It was frozen in for the winter, as the Bering Sea was iced over for one hundred and twenty-five miles at its front door. The only means of outside communication was by airplane. As I boarded a plane bound for Fairbanks, the pilot seated me in the cockpit so that I might take pictures.

Soon after the monoplane roared over the silent arctic village and turned toward the vast treeless tundra land, the pilot sighted a fine herd of reindeer, possibly five or six hundred, to the north of us. Since I had never seen a herd of reindeer from the sky, I asked that we fly over them so that I might film them. Alaskan pilots realized the danger of lost minutes in midwinter when darkness is a great enemy, but since the pilot was a personal friend, he turned the plane and we went sweeping over the heads of hundreds of reindeer. It was a rare thrill to film them in their natural state. After circling them, we started for home. During our trip the pilot related exciting instances when he had shot wolves as they attacked deer.

After some time, he looked at me and solemnly said, "We forgot to get back on our airline after taking those pictures!" Since flying in that section is done by observation only, and it was getting dark, I could easily understand the pilot's concern. Below us stretched a bleak frozen grave where deep below the surface lay many prehistoric bones. The undulating mounds of ice looked forbidding and cruel from our few hundred feet altitude.

Landing on the Ice

"Les, we are lost!" the pilot finally said.

I did not answer but gazed out into the semi-darkness and mused, "Lost in the air and a safe landing seemingly impossible!"

After some time the aviator remarked, "If we could locate the Kuyakuk River we might possibly find a small Indian village and land on the river."

It seemed a long time before we sighted the winding curve of ice below us. The pilot recognized the river, turned the plane south flying low as he looked for the twinkling lights of some fishing village. At long last we sighted a few lights reflecting on the snow around some snow-covered log huts. The villagers heard the roaring plane and since they rushed out with lanterns and stood along the

edge of the river to light us in our attempt to land on the icy river. As the plane, which was equipped with skis rather than wheels, was nosed down, the pilot commented that he could not determine our altitude. When our plane hit the ice it must have bounced fifty feet into the air. Only our safety belts kept us from going through the top of the plane. Another attempt was made and though we bounced terrifically, we straightened out and finally came to a halt. We taxied back to the village; secured the plane; covered the engine with a tarpaulin; put a small gas stove under the engine to keep it from freezing and bunked with the local storekeeper for the night.

As I knelt by my bunk there was a different prayer in my heart than ever before. God had reached out His Omnipotent arm when the odds were mightily against us. To land safely in the dark was almost a miracle. To find an isolated village at night in midwinter was, also, a miracle. I gave grateful thanks to God who watches over His children.

Sinner, every person away from God is lost -- really lost. A sinner must first understand before God can assist him. When one knows he is lost and seeks God he has this assurance:

“If . . . thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Deut. 4:29).

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PUMPKIN SEED vs. TOMATO SEED

A missionary friend of mine laboring in the Gran Chaco Boreal in the hinterland of Paraguay among the Lengua-Moscoy Indians, told me that he had brought some vegetable seeds with him from England in order to teach the Indians how to garden. He gave an old Indian some pumpkin and tomato seeds to plant, and instructed him in their cultivation after assuring him that the vegetables were most healthful. Since the Indian had never before seen pumpkins or tomatoes, he was deeply interested in the white man's food. He watched the green tendrils push through the ground and grow. It was exciting to see the tomatoes turn a red color and the pumpkins take on their yellow hue, but he took special notice of the difference in the sizes.

The primitive man ate both with little comment, but when the next planting season arrived and the missionary offered him more seed, the Indian said, “Only want big seed, work just as hard for little things; only want big thing.”

Had the Indian only realized it the tomatoes, though small in size, were just as necessary to his diet as were the pumpkins.

There are many civilized people who remind me of the Chaco native. Their only interests are in the big things of life. We must each learn that it takes the small things of life rightly accomplished to create the big things. Those who refuse to cultivate small things seldom are allowed to care for the more important tasks of life and service.

“Our little tasks may not seem great
but of them strength is made
The path that leads to heaven's gate
Is on His greatness laid.”

Christ blessed little children, inspired and saved a dejected fallen woman, and took time to preach to one man, Nicodemus, that night. His Way is the way of service by His abounding grace.

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Christ, the Servant of mankind; Christ, the compassionate and kind; Christ, the Savior of the world was never too busy to attend to the smallest service; never too busy to suffer heartache, toil and pain for both small and great, rich and poor, unheralded and acclaimed.

I WANT TO BE A BULL-FIGHTER

During my many trips I often question boys in various parts of the world regarding their choice of vocation. The answers are informative and meaningful. Invariably, they wish to follow the profession that is receiving the greatest ovation of *praise* from the public. They do not covet wealth or responsible position, but glamour and approbation from the masses.

Let us first observe American trends. There was a time in American history when most boys wanted to become railroad engineers; they dreamed of swanky overalls and a long bill cap. They wanted to sit behind the throttle and make the heavens ring with the whistle as the shining rails trembled beneath the weight of the locomotive. Then the American scene changed. Motion pictures glorified the wild west and boys wanted to be cowboys and ride the great western range. They purchased clothing typical of cowhands, took a rope and cap pistol and lassoed everything from the gatepost to the leg of the kitchen table. Today the scene has changed again. Glamour has shifted from the cowboy to the “G” man, the pilot, the commando. The youth of every land dreams of being wherever there is public ovation.

A Toreador

In Mexico, where there are hordes of shoeshine boys begging to be of service. I would sit on one of the customary plaza seats as the bronze-skinned lad shined away on my shoes and often inquire of him what he wanted to be when he became a man. The conversation would be something like this:

“Son, do you want to shine shoes when you become a man!” would be my first enquiry.

“No,” would be the hasty reply from the midget, as he swung his brush across my shoe.

“Would you care to be a banker and make a lot of money?” I would continue

No, I would never understand that business anyway,” my grinning little friend would remonstrate.

“Perhaps you would like to be a lawyer, a doctor or maybe the president?” I would say encouragingly.

“No, I want to be a bull-fighter!” would come the boastful reply.

When you ask a boy why he wants to become a bull-fighter, he seldom knows. But he will probably pull a picture of a favorite *toreador* from his pocket and explain that he wishes to be just like him!

When the Mexican boys see the bull-fighter ride through the streets in a big deluxe car (as I have seen them), dressed in shining, silvered clothes, and hear the people cheer him in the bull ring, and see his picture on the front page of the newspaper, the youthful heart decides then and there that life holds no greater honor.

Parents of the United States, such yearning for applause reveals the potential power of *public opinion* upon youthful minds. Adults must realize that those whom they allow to be placed before the eyes of the youth of America are the ones they will emulate.

If we do not want our American children to engage in the immoralities of Hollywood, we should not glorify the gods and goddesses of the celluloid Babylon! If we want them to be Christians, we must praise Christ and lift Him up before them.

THE MATA PALO OR KILLER TREE

There is a plant in Central America which is often shown to the visitor. It is known as the Mata Palo or Killer Tree and is a botanical “boa constrictor.” This parasitical growth often begins its life by being blown into the fork of a tree by the wind and takes root by clinging to the bark. It lives on the lifeblood of the tree as it starts its growth and soon sprouts tiny tendrils which grow slowly toward the ground. When it comes to live on a tree, it appears to be quite harmless but the fact is the moment it arrives, death begins for its victim.

The Mata Palo drops its roots to the ground and secures a permanent foundation; then begins to encircle the healthy tree and imbibes its life from hundreds of points. After a few months the parasite is flourishing with life and growing rapidly (through it is an ugly growth) and the once healthy tree begins to show signs of disease and decay. The great tree loses its leaves, its strong limbs droop from lack of life, and, ultimately, it perishes while wrapped around it from the base of the trunk to its top is a hideous, serpentine vine. It looks so pitiful that a stranger can scarcely realize that it was once a giant of strength and a specimen of grace and beauty. It amazes the visitor to learn that the great tree was defeated by a small, insignificant seed which chanced to fall on its bough.

In the lives of humans there are *little things* which, by growing in our lives, become *big things*. Frequently they appear to be entirely innocent but become deadly to our moral or spiritual life. They choke the fruit-bearing strength of character and virtue, and become the very tentacles of Satan which entwine our souls, despoiling the once choice life. We must deal with these tiny seeds before they become strong and capable of utter destruction.

THE DAWSON IGLOO

When gold was discovered in the great Yukon Territory, a fever for the precious yellow metal spread throughout the civilized world. Those craving gold and adventure arrived in the Yukon to prospect for the alluring element that the Bible describes as “answereth all things:” and the love of which is the “root of all evil.” God speaks all languages; gold finds a place in the hearts of all people; gold is at home in all societies. Primitive people tie nuggets of gold around their necks and ankles, while the elite adorn themselves with its glory.

The Collapsed Igloo

Gold is still a popular topic in Alaska. While visiting Fairbanks, I met a family who told me a remarkable story of the exciting days of the gold rush in the Yukon, when they lived in the mining town of Dawson.

The local miners found a vein of gold which ran under part of the town. My friends knew that gold-digging was proceeding in the vicinity of their home and that their house was in danger of caving into the mine. Home is home and they did not want to move, but at last the neighbors became alarmed and begged them to abandon the house as it was sure to collapse soon. One afternoon a neighbor called to tell them that a room was now ready for them in her home, which they could use until an new igloo (igloo is the Eskimo word for any dwelling, and does not necessarily mean an ice house) could be erected. Therefore, they moved that afternoon, though quite reluctantly.

To the great amazement of the neighborhood, the mine caved in and the ill-fated igloo collapsed that same night. That had been their last opportunity to escape! Had they remained in their house one more night they would have been carried down into the mine and probably fastened beneath the debris.

As my friends told me of their miraculous escape, simply because the voice of a neighbor had been so urgent, I thought how necessary it is for us to be “our brother’s keeper.” Then, too, how wonderful that they obeyed the voice of a concerned neighbor and moved that day.

You do not know what day your body, your house of clay, is going to collapse and eternity will begin for you. It may be tonight! Are you ready to meet the King of Eternity in peace? This might be the last day of salvation for you. Therefore, if you do not know Christ personally, accept Him as your Savior this moment!

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A GUATEMALTECO GIVES JESUS A PENNY

In a Guatemalan town I was speaking from a text which involved entire consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ. I admonished the people to give their *all* into the care of the Lord, and thereby receive His best blessing in return.

After the service had been dismissed, an elderly lady rather poorly dressed and of reticent demeanor, handed me a penny, saying, “This is all that I possess, but here it is for Jesus.” I was surprised by her deed, as money was not mentioned at all in the message, I had pleaded for souls to be wholly yielded to Christ. However in her own mind this was her full consecration -- Christ must have her last penny!

We all need the simple, straightforward faith of the Guatemalteco for only through faith shall we be able to consecrate our all to the Lord.

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THE RUBBER TREE

In Singapore, Malay States, we visited a large rubber plantation and observed with interest the intricate process of extracting the latex from the rubber tree (named *Hevea Brasiliensis* because the rubber plant was originally found in Brazil). This rich milky juice was named “rubber” by Dr. Joseph Priestly of England in 1770 when a friend in America sent him a ball of crude rubber as a gift. He discovered that it would remove pencil marks, therefore broke off small pieces and called them rubbers! Today rubber serves modern man in over fifty thousand ways – from surgical gloves to automobile tires.

The tapping was most interesting, as it is a very delicate and important work. The knife which makes the incision in the bark must be very sharp. If the worker cuts too deep and cuts the wood of the tree, or if the tender inner covering which protects the wood is punctured, the tree dies. All tapping must be done in the early morning before the heat of the day, as the latex oozes out where the tree is wounded. The older the tree grows the more it yields. Normally there is a good yield for about forty-five years. Since the wound heals rapidly it has to be re-tapped each time. The second yield is greater than the first; this increase is known as “wound response.” The best trees produce from twenty to thirty pounds annually.

Although the rubber tree cannot realize it, by this delicate operation blessing flows forth to the world -- seventy-five per cent of its yield is used for tires and tubes to run the world on wheels! Much of its lifeblood flows into the operating room and into places of comfort and aid to the physically ill of this world.

Nowhere have I seen a truer example of the blessings which may flow from the life of a consecrated Christian. To bless others one must suffer and give. Madame Currie struggled for a decade and a half to discover radium, only to offer it to the world of science without charge, but she paid the

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price. Her hands were disfigured by the potent element which was the product of years of selfless service. Finally, her life itself became a sacrifice to that same element which has, scientifically speaking, saved lives, prevented and cured numberless pernicious diseases of the body of mankind. Though its discovery cost many years of toil and even life itself, the fruit of this labor of love has multiplied and shall continue to do so throughout the history of the nations.

The world's greatest souls are those lacerated hearts bleeding and burdened, which bring comfort and blessing to others.

Christ spent His life that others might live eternally. His hands were disfigured by the giving of Himself that the disease of the sin-sick souls of the world might be cured forever. Christ brought His offering as a *free* gift that all might have access to the tree of life, flowing with His own life's blood, efficacious for comfort, for redeeming from the cancerous ingrowth of sin, for permanent cure.

His life has blessed because He gave unstintingly all that He had to give for you.

30

SEEING THE SEA

A poor Peruvian peasant girl from a primitive mountain village accepted Christ as her Savior. Later, because of her integrity, she was offered employment as a domestic to a missionary family in Lima, the capital city of her country. The rurally-reared maid was delighted as she had never seen a big city with its tall buildings and rushing traffic, nor had she seen the great ocean where expanse of water extends far beyond sight. As a kindness to the peasant girl these missionaries drove her to the sandy beaches of the Southern Pacific Ocean that she might gaze upon the boundless blue waters and watch the white crested waves as they broke upon the sands and receded into the mysterious depths. To the surprise of the missionaries, the girl gave one disinterested look at the mighty father of waters and said, "My, but that is a lot of water."

The missionaries had expected ecstasies of pleasure as she looked upon the sea for the first time in her life, but no word of praise passed her lips.

A few days later the missionary asked her if she would care to go with the family to the beach and again see the great ocean. She responded without emotion, "No, thank you, I would rather stay at the house. I saw it the other day."

The missionary was greatly astonished, since his own family greatly enjoyed the fresh air of the ocean, the cooling waters, and the ever-inspiring beauty of it. He asked the girl if she did not like the ocean and she replied that she did but she had already seen it.

We often find a corresponding conundrum in the church world. There are those who profess to know the Lord Jesus Christ, and to love Him, yet they remind me of the Peruvian girl. They have seen the beauty and glory of God *once* and yet they never return to receive more of Him. In some strange way, they seem satisfied with having beheld Him just that once and never seek to be refreshed by further knowledge of Him. I have heard hundreds of men and women testify that they beheld Christ twenty years ago. Many are quick to tell you that Christianity is not what it used to be! Certainly it is, my friend. Return for another glimpse of our Majestic Savior, to witness His glory and beauty.

31

SCATTERING FLOWERS

As I was walking around the town of Terrace, British Columbia with a friend, we passed through a residential section in which yellow flowers were growing in the yards and my friend laughingly said, "The story of these yellow flowers is very interesting."

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Some time ago a man purchased some flower seeds and planted them in his front yard. They grew and flowered into beautiful yellow blossoms. His next door neighbor thought they were lovely and spoke admiringly of them. Throughout the spring and summer both the owner and neighbor enjoyed the new flowers.

Autumn came and the flowers disappeared; winter covered the lands with ice and snow, and the bright yellow flowers were forgotten. Then spring returned and, to the amazement of all who saw them, not only he but his neighbor, also, had gay yellow flowers in the front yards. The wind had gently wafted the seeds from his yard into the yard of his neighbor, and after a period of death came a resurrection -- new life, new beauty -- which had come from his neighbor's store.

Every Christian's life should be as the man's yellow flowers, unconsciously giving to others, generously, humbly, dividing and sharing. It may take a period of blasting winds and even death before your efforts will reach maturity, but in due time they will spring up and grow to the enrichment of other lives.

32 NEW EARS

In the great pottery-manufacturing city of Stoke-on-Trent, England, a baby boy was born who had no ears. His mother was sad because of the deformity, but thought he was a darling child. However, when he went to school his playmates were not as considerate as his mother; they tormented him with jeers and laughter. Gradually, his disfigured head created a feeling of inferiority, and he feared to meet people. His mother suffered terribly because she saw how miserable he was.

One day, after the earless boy had become a young man, he disappeared from the streets. No one knew where he had gone. The day he returned to public view, I happened to be in town and heard the rare news. The youth had been in the hospital and there the doctor had grafted two fine ears onto the sides of his head.

But alas! When his mother appeared on the streets her acquaintances saw a strange sight -- her ears were gone! Then the whole truth became known; - a loving and devoted mother had been willing to become an object of scorn so that her own dear son might, thereby, be saved from derision.

A mother's love is the nearest approximation to the divine love of Calvary. There, our Savior was willing to pay the supreme sacrifice that men's deformed souls might be regenerated and refashioned into new men in Him.

33 I WOULD RATHER BE BLIND

Mr. Willard was an Alaskan Indian, a member of the strong Thlinket tribe. He was a devoted Christian and, for a number of years, a minister of the Presbyterian Mission. The Indians and the whites of Juneau told me that he was an intrepid pioneer who suffered nobly for the Gospel of Christ in the primitive Indian villages of Alaska. In the latter part of his life he went blind, and some thought this would terminate his preaching career. However, handicapped as he was, the ministry of His Word continued. His patient wife guided him to appointments and memory served him well to bring fresh truths from the Word of God to the Indians.

One day as the blind pastor was felling a tree to keep his congregation warm, the tree unexpectedly broke and fell on him. His faithful wife dragged him to the house a corpse; a pioneer was gone; a disciple at rest.

Deep Consecration

Before his death a friend approached Mr. Willard and asked him if he believed Christ could restore his eyesight. The preacher answered in the affirmative. His interrogator then asked him why he did not pray that his sight be restored. The humble preacher smiled and said, "Why, the Lord has blessed me with blindness! Why would I pray for the curse of sight? I do not want to see sin anymore; it is sufficient to hear the sin around me. I do not want to look upon it again. I would rather be blind!"

There is coming a glorious day when all Christians will not only be saved from sin, but will be saved from the presence of sin. We will not have to look upon the human wreckage in the gutters of iniquity. For the length of eternity we shall never hear God's holy Name blasphemed; we shall never look upon devastated lives spiced by sin. That will be a happy time!

34

FINISHING THE CHATHEDRAL FOR FATHER

At San Paulo, Brazil, in 1937 I saw a cathedral being constructed in the center of the city. The local residents told me that it had been in the process of construction for many years. Recently, when I returned to Sao Paulo I observed that the building of the cathedral had progressed very little. As Mr. Theodore Stohr and I were walking about inside the structure and were speaking to some of the stonemasons, we approached a strong young fellow who was hewing a stone into a pattern of intricate beauty. While we watched him we asked where it would fit into the building. He pointed to a high arch which was to support the dome of the cathedral, and said that it would be part of that arch. As we talked with him he informed us that his father had spent his entire manhood working on the cathedral, but had died before its completion. As he grew toward maturity his father had taught him the art of stone-craft, and now he was continuing the work which his father had begun. He said with a smile that he hoped to see it finished in his lifetime.

Cathedral of Christianity

The young man spoke to us in an inspiring manner so that we could easily discern his desire to carry out the ambitions of his father. We knew by his manner that he would rejoice in completing the work begun by him who had so taught him that he might become a fit instrument for the task.

The Cathedral of Christianity was begun over 1900 years ago; Jesus Christ, Himself being the Chief Corner-Stone and the apostles the foundation stones. Throughout the centuries many *lively* stones have been added to His structure. In the quarry of the world everlasting, stones are being hewn. We, today, are continuing the work of evangelizing the world; our spiritual forefathers laid the foundation, we build thereon.

May our Christian youth realize the importance of carrying on the work of our Fathers. May they be willing to bear the burden for this tremendous responsibility. Shall we not continue to hew immortal stones for our Master-Builder?

35

"THOSE STARS ARE MY GODS"

I was sailing up the Inland Passage from Seattle, Washington to Alaska. This Marine Corridor to America's Last Frontier is one of the most beautiful voyages of the world; the vessel is never out of sight of land, and gorgeous heavily wooded isles form a chain to keep back the boisterous waves of the sea.

One evening the Captain of the S.S. Princess Norah and I were pacing the aft deck of his vessel. He was an Irishman born in Northern Ireland; short, and rather corpulent, with round, rosy cheeks and

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beaming eyes. As he puffed on his big pipe I broached the subject of Christianity by inquiring, “Sir, what do you think of Christ? Who was He?”

An Old Salt

He removed his pipe from his mouth and dramatically pointed with it toward the myriads of scintillating constellations in the heavens as he spoke in a firm voice, “Those stars are my gods. They have done more for me than anything of which I know. Since I was a small boy I have lived on the high seas, and night after night those wonderful stars have guided my boat. They have never led me astray. To me they are the most beautiful things in the world. I admire them deeply, and perhaps, even worship them.”

The Skipper stood gazing into the milky way until I broke the silence, “Well, Captain, every rational creature has the right to think as he pleases; it is his prerogative to choose whatever he likes for his god, and as a gentleman I respect your thoughts about religion. However, there is one question I wish to ask you and that is, who made your sparkling gods up there? Who organized and superintends their functions to guarantee that they remain in their orbits, and are even faithful to you, a hard working mariner, sailing the high seas?”

The Skipper walked toward the aft deck and shook his head as he declared, “I do not know, and am not sure that everyone else knows”

My friends, it is only reasonable to believe that all movement, organization, and systematic operation must have rational intelligence at the controls. Therefore, the incalculable dimension, resplendent galaxies, fiery constellations, gigantic star groups, blazing suns and flying planets must have a ***DIVINE INTELLIGENCE*** to guide and control them.

As the Skipper leaned over the rail of the ship and watched the wake ripple behind the vessel, I said “Captain, my God made your gods!”

36

DYING UNDER A WOODEN CROSS

Very often in the interior of Latin American countries, Passion Week is taken quite literally. In the cities there are long street processions which display life-sized images in gorgeous pageantry. In the more primitive areas where the people are normally more fanatical, they even carry heavy crosses upon their shoulders, believing that by this they are made holy. There have been instances in which the one who carried a heavy cross had died under the burden. For this reason the government in Chichicastinango, Guatemala has forbidden the Indians to carry these crosses.

Christless Crosses

Throughout Latin America the *material* cross is given dominance. Oftentimes they are called *miraculous crosses*. For example, there is a sign attached to the cross overlooking Cuzco, Peru, stating that those who kiss the cross shall have their sins forgiven. The local archeologist, who is an American, said that the priests lower the cross and take it over to the church once a year to bless it. Latin America is perishing under the burden of a wooden cross!

It is not the natural cross, the material cross, the weather beaten wooden cross that saves mankind, *but the Christ of the Cross!*

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”

BEATEN WITH ROPES AT EASTER

After traveling in fifty-five countries and witnessing numerous religions of the world, I maintain that *religion is* the strangest aspect of human behavior.

Bloody Backs

There is a weird and paganistic custom which is practiced in the jungles of Mexico among the Otomi Indians. Each year at Easter a group of their men gather in the Roman Catholic churchyard. These Indians remove their shirts, baring their backs to the waist. They are, then, given pieces of wet manila rope and, at a given signal, proceeding from the altar of the church, they beat each other on the back with them. To keep the test from becoming a brawl, the rules forbid each to hit the one who first hits them. If one should lash back at that Indian who had ripped his back open, he is placed in prison. My Christian Otomi friends have watched the horrible scene of infuriated and suffering Indians as they run around the churchyard like wild men, lashing each other until the blows can be heard far away. The wails and screams pierce the heavens as the volume of violence rises to a crashing crescendo. Many religious observers stand outside the churchyard and look on. Sometimes they yell at the one who strikes a relative or friend.

In the meantime, the priest is at the altar chanting prayers for those who are being purged from their sins in the courtyard. Finally, he finishes his prayer and rings a bell, thus ending the horrible scourge.

The poor creatures are lacerated almost beyond recognition and must now have someone wash their backs as they hope that the horrible wounds will, eventually heal. They are taught by church authorities, that by enduring this back-cutting, their sins are forgiven. They are also told that by reason of the agony of the purge they become holy.

It is heart-rending to realize that these, with countless other millions in the world, do not know that Christ by His vicarious suffering at the whipping-post of Calvary has borne their sins. Man cannot save himself by self-inflicted suffering: *God saved man by suffering in his place!*

THE BIBLE IN A LETTER BOX

We who, fortunately, are born in Protestant countries cannot possibly realize the unwarranted religious delusion inflicted upon the uninformed masses of other lands. Erroneous religionists seem to feel obliged to connect occult powers with their rituals, statues, crosses, or even trees, stones and caves. The purpose seems to be to maintain intense fanaticism among the devotees.

One night in a Belgium city, a woman who was a stranger to Protestantism and to the way of salvation came into one of our missions. She was greatly attracted by the happy singing of the Gospel; the convincing testimonies opened before her a new revelation of religious thought; the sermon from the Bible convicted her. She purchased a Bible at the conclusion of the service, since the minister had said that the Book should be read every day.

When the woman returned to the mission for the next service, the pastor noticed that she was not carrying the newly-purchased Bible and inquired where it was. "Oh, I left it at home," the woman said evidently quite embarrassed.

"But it is a book to bring to church," the pastor remonstrated.

The surprised Belgian woman replied, “You said that it was the Book of God, and powerful; therefore, I put it in my letter box at the front gate of my home to keep the evil spirits from my home.” The pastor kindly but firmly told the woman that these false absurdities must now vanish. He explained that the Bible is not a fetish, but the Book of the laws of God; that the power of Jesus Christ defeats evil spirits and that every believer is safe in Him!

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JUDAS THE RAM

At the large packing plant of Swift and Company in La Plata, Argentina they have a great black ram of notorious reputation. He answers to the name of *Judas*, which seems very fitting for a creature in his dreadful business.

Judas, the ram, has the responsibility of leading thousands of innocent lambs and sheep to the slaughter. Employees at the Swift Company believe that Judas realizes the deceptive work in which he is engaged and agree that he does it diabolically well. One worker told me that the way Judas goes sporting among the sheep of the corral with black wool glistening, and his head high, seems almost rational. He assumes a place of leadership and protectorship over the flock almost immediately. After walking among them and fully attracting their attention he turns and walks straight for the slaughter pen. With one backward glance Judas is satisfied -- the sheep are following ignorantly. He jumps through the *gate of death* and is unharmed, but the unwary sheep are murdered one by one as they enter. Judas is rewarded with food for his cunning deception and is again sent on his mission to beguile another flock!

One wonders whether the sheep are able to think as they enter the gate of death, never to return, “Judas has beguiled us.”

Judas the Great

There is a great deceiver in the world, who graphically reminds us of Judas the Ram. The Bible warns that he can appear as an *angel of light* to deceive the unwary; he is an instructor of the simple to make them haughty toward God. He leads thousands of millions into a *gate of death* from whence they never return.

The first recorded words of the first-deceived person were:

“Satan has beguiled me . . . “

And I am sure the last words spoken by thousands of humans are:

“Satan has beguiled me . . . “

Take care who you follow, and *know* “in whom you have believed.”

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JAVA’S DEATH VALLEY

Mr. Howard Carter and I were visiting the home of a Dutch banker in Temonngoon, Java. Having exhausted the immediate places of interest, such as his cacao plantation and the local native market, he inquired whether we would care to make the journey quite some distance away to see the live crater of a volcano which had erupted violently a few years previously. We had witnessed a number of Java’s volcanoes at a distance, smoking like furnaces, but as yet had never seen the horrible abyss of fire and sulphur which caused the smoke. There, we assured our host that we would like to make the journey. Without delay he told the servants to have breakfast ready the very next morning at four o’clock. He then informed us with a smile that we would see this phenomenon of nature on the morrow.

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The Top Of Java

A few minutes before four o'clock the next morning we heard a persistent rap on our door, and a Dutch voice meticulously enunciating English words called us to a hot breakfast. Soon, we were in our host's auto driving out of the sleepy town toward Dieng, Java's great central mountain range. Within an hour and a half the road ended and we were obliged to park the car to climb the mountain on horseback. At a nearby highway terminal we found a group of native boys who had spirited mountain ponies for hire. We talked price with them for about five minutes, then chose the pony of our liking and started to climb the dizzy tropical heights. Our powerful little ponies climbed the serpentine trail rapidly; by noon we arrived at the crest of the mountain which offered a magnificent panorama of luxuriant verdure. From this vantage point on a clear day one can look into the Indian Ocean on one side of Java and into the Java Sea on the other.

The mountain was broken and disheveled by the convulsive eruptions it had suffered; thus making it difficult to explore. The ground upon which we walked was "alive" so that it almost cooked our shoes. If we put our hands to the ground, the sulphuric earth nearly peeled the skin off. The crater itself was a sight I shall never forget. The lava bubbled and gurgled, leaping up and falling back as if it only awaited another inward urge to erupt. As we observed the crater from various positions, I had a strange sense of realizing anew the truth of the Bible in its description of the lake of fire, the final abode of those who refuse to accept and serve Christ.

Road to Death Valley

After looking into the inferno and walking about the mountain, we settled down for a rest and lunch. While we were enjoying delicious sandwiches and a refreshing drink, our host said, "Would you be interested in seeing Java's famous Death Valley?" I knew of various places designated as Death Valley, which usually turned out to be a desert valley or an inaccessible ravine. But our friend assured us, "This is a real Death Valley -- there is death in the valley!" This sounded almost as interesting as seeing the crater of a live volcano; thus we responded in the affirmative. So we finished our lunch hastily, mounted our ponies and proceeded on our way to view a real valley of death. As our host had offered no further explanation, my mind was busily conjuring up all kinds of weird conceptions of our destination, though I still believed that it was merely a name for some very undesirable spot. After about two hours of riding along the ridge of the Dieng, our friend pulled his horse close to mine and said, "We are now nearing Death Valley!" During the next few minutes my mind continued to draw mental pictures.

Skull and Cross Bones

Suddenly we rounded a curve in the pathway and a bloodcurdling signboard met my eyes. The sign depicted an arrow pointing up a path, beneath which was drawn a horrible-looking skull and cross bones. Across the sign in large black letters was written – DEATH VALLEY!

This sign alone had a tremendous effect on me for I was convinced that this was real! At the sign we dismounted and walked up the path. Within ten minutes we reached a larger marker which resembled a tombstone, bearing an inscription upon it. I asked our Dutch friend why a tombstone would be raised in this jungle wilderness, and he deciphered the epitaph which I shall pass on to you. Some years before, while a German scientist was exploring this part of the tropics, the natives had told him of a strange valley. They told him that if any living creature descended into it, it never returned. Whereupon, the scientist asked to be directed to this fabulous spot. Upon viewing the deep valley

which lay between two precipitous slopes which were covered with verdant tropical foliage, he laughed at the natives and told them that it was simply one more of their foolish superstitions. To prove to them that they were wrong, he tied a rope about his waist, leaving one end in the hand of a native guild, and leaving instruction with him to pull him back up if there were a sudden tug or if he were gone too long. As the copper-colored boy watched the distinguished white foreigner descend slowly into the shadowed depths of Death Valley, he hoped that soon they would know the cause of the death of all who dared venture into the valley. After the scientist had been gone a long time there seemed to be few pulls on the rope. Therefore, the guide decided to pull him back up. There was no response at the other end of the rope as he tugged and pulled, until at last the limp body of the German was brought up – *dead*. Now, even scientists knew that there was real death in the valley!

The scientist's mother in Germany requested that the body of her son be buried by Death Valley, and that the story be engraved on the stone, so that everyone coming there might see his tomb and know that there indeed was real danger.

Other scientists sought to discover the death-dealing element in the valley. Soon they discovered by their tests that the bottom of Death Valley had been a volcanic crater, and though it was now extinct, poison gases still exuded from the earth. If a respiratory creature ventured deeply enough into the valley he contacted the deadly gases before they could become rarified in the atmosphere; thus being rendered helpless, he died.

This story was getting more exciting to me. I wanted to look into this mysterious valley of death which had killed animals, birds and men. We climbed a very steep incline from the tomb and upon arriving at the top of the elevation were confronted with another signboard which had two piercing words: Danger! Stop! I looked below and there was a most beautiful valley resembling a tropical gorge burdened with a riot of luxuriant growth. I mused: "This does not look like a valley of death; it is so lovely." Yet I was compelled to believe because of the testimony of the tomb. *Here was beautiful Death Valley!*

Valleys of Death

Reader, have you come to realize that there are *real Death Valleys* near you also? Some valleys of death are beautiful, fascinating, glamorous; others are cultured, learned and fashionable – yet the very dregs of death are there. However, greatly to your advantage, there are tombstones strewn along the way to warn the wise of the Death Valleys of *sin*.

The dancing pavilion has been a valley of moral and spiritual death for thousands of youth. Gambling has become a dark Valley of Death for multiplied millions of unwary souls. Alcohol, beer, ale and whiskey have killed a myriad of rational creatures. The motion picture theatre is a darkened Valley of Death bringing disaster and death to modern society. Every aspect of sin is a valley of certain death.

Youth, notice the tombs along the way of life. Hearken to the admonitions of the signboards which warn of the dangers of sin.

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