



Chapter Six Seasonal Messages

Armistice Day Speech

Manuscript found in the library of the school for Officer training, Suffern, NY. No indication of date or location of delivery.

Hearts have their memories as well as head — unnumbered millions of hearts moved into a silence that is more eloquent than any speech, the silence of sacrificial sorrow, too deep for expression in words, a sorrow enabled by divine consolation and mercifully glorified by the healing tenderness of time.

The silence embrace of his friend into one brotherhood of reconciliation, surpassing frontiers of race and religion, and breathing everywhere a prayer to the Father of all, "Give peace in our time, O Lord, give peace. Bind up the bleeding wounds of cruel conflict, the dry tears that strain terror-stricken faces, restore shattered homes, feed the victims of famine that shadow the battlefield. Give peace, O Lord, give peace."

Never in the long annals of human history has there been so passionate, so universal a will to peace as there is today. Nobody wants war. Everyone is horrified by the apocalyptic vision of what war means — the senseless devastation of cities, the strain and stress of finance, the deplorable loss of trade, the hideous wrong inflicted on mothers and their children. Nobody wants war.

There is no conceivable objection that justifies war. When the millions or billions are spent, when the revolutions that accompany war have run their dreadful course, who has benefited?

The answer is, nobody!

We talk of war-profiters. There are none. Everyone is impoverished when war sweeps civilization like a locust-like scythe that rips all harvest with poison-laden flame.



The world is moving rapidly along the highroad of progress. Manners and customs are changing. Communications — land, sea, air — are developing. We have to make a choice. Are we to understand one another better? Are we to be embittered by misunderstanding?

Understanding solves every problem. Know others as you know yourself and you cannot hate. Every blow to another becomes a bruise on your own countenance. God grant us understanding.

I speak today not for The Salvation Army alone. Every church — Protestant, Catholic, Jewish — is united behind my appeal for more understanding, less fault-finding, a deeply instructed sympathy.

Every church has learned by experience the secret of understanding, and it is a simple secret. Render service unto others, and you will soon be established in justice and mercy. There will be no war, world without end.

Amen and Amen.

A Mountain Mother's Easter Morning

From The War Cry (New York), April 19, 1919.

Somewhere amid the pine-clad Rockies of the far northwest the sun lights burning cheek up on the snowy pillow of mountains. The shades of night already shadowed the little town, which clung like a child to the bosom of one of those quiet hills. A wayward child it was, much given to wild laughter, irresponsible indulgences and passions primitive and fierce, yet always at evening time it seemed a tired child, weary of his ways and self, upon whom the overhanging mountains appeared to brood in maternal care in solicitude. The toils and soils of the day were over, and it was still too early for the recklessness and debauchery which defamed the majesty of the mountain night. Here one did not wonder at the audacity of him who called the twilight "God's hour."



Yet just as this hour the battle was raging — nonetheless terrible and grim because the battlefield was a human breast. Jim Carter had many battles with his hands, battles which had left their scores — usually, in Jim's case end up on the other fellow. But now he met an adversary who is more than his match; an adversary whom no tricks of the pugilist's art could catch off guard. Jim was caught, for the first time in his life, defenseless before the battering blows of his own conscience, whose existence he had never given even a passing thought.

No not yet twenty-five, Jim Carter was the acknowledged "bad man" of the mountain town. In a community infamous for its crime and lawlessness he was the hardest drinker, the most inveterate gambler, the wildest liver of them all. What impulse had brought him into the little shanty, half-store, half-dwelling, which served the local Salvationists for a meeting-house, he could never afterward remember. Perhaps curiosity; more likely the temptation to create a disturbance. But once inside a spell had fallen upon him against which he struggled in vain.

It was not the eloquence of the appeal, nor the melody of the song, nor yet the fervency of the prayer which reached and smote Jim's long-hidden, hardened heart. The power of it, the pain of it, the plea of it all was that here spoke mother's faith, mother's Bible, mother's teachings. For fifteen years he had put a gulf between himself and his mother and her God, for he was one of the many prodigals to whom the seeker's names are synonymous. He had deserted his mother, he had spurned her God, he had given himself over, body and soul, through all that was worst in himself. Yet here he was, writhing in impotent anguish against the force of God, just as if his foot, on entering the meeting, he touched of a hidden mine of violent explosives.

For two hours the struggle lasted, and when the climax came the strong man was weak. In sobering jerks he poured forth his confession, revealing staggering depths and deeds to which the black years had been given. If the Lord's story told by one so young, was a shock to the man of God kneeling by his side, his face bore no trace of such feeling, but rather the deep became the great compassion of his eyes and the more tender and passionate his voice, reiterating the promise: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

So the storms swept until the strength of both was far spent. Then came the moment when,



utterly at an end of himself, the penitent soul threw his blackened life and blistered heart upon the mercy of God, and with a moment of surrender came the dawn of divine revelation. Things which before seemed far off and mystic were now the only realities, and when he flung out his two long arms in the attitude of appeal, he felt the touch of the cross upon which hung his mother's eternal hope.

Trembling and shaking, but with the Sun of Righteousness changing his countenance, the man staggered to his feet.

"Thank you," he murmured, brokenly. "God was as good as your word and mother's. And now, Captain," his voice gathering firmness, "I've got to get back to her. I don't belong here anymore."

Nor did he. Miracle that it was, the man already looked estranged from the bacchanalia of which he had been both boon companion and king.

With divine instinct, feeling that his work here was not yet finished, the captain decided to stay by his stalwart convert and accompany him on his journey. The mother lived but a few miles away — by the railroad a two hours journey — yet not a letter had the boy spared her in all those fifteen years.

As if to register in the heavens, Jim's first new day, the Easter sun crowned with gold the snow peaks of the great hills and showed to all men who looked up that whiteness and crowning go together.

The one train of the twenty-four hours stopped at the wayside station. Jim and the Captain were the only passengers to alight. The little depot was locked, and the two stood for a moment irresolute beside the trunk which Jim had insisted on bringing with him. He knew his own nature and was anxious to burn all his bridges — to leave no hostages in this city of destruction. "I don't belong there," he repeated, "and nothing belonging to me belongs there neither!"

The Captain volunteered to keep vigil till the expressman came, but this did not suit Jim.



"Captain, I feel, somehow I'll need you. Stay by me, won't you, and see me through?"

"Then we'll carry the trunk between us," said the Captain, whose strong muscles were just as ready to lift a poor fellow's load as was his big, strong heart.

The two men and their burden made a pathetic picture, passing down the narrow street, which was a little more than a mountain trail, each holding a handle of the trunk — the young man, whose handsome face and shabby clothes showed clearly the rapid travel of the misspent years; the other an erect figure, and smart Salvation Army uniform, of an older man, whose whole being bespoke whiteness and correctness of sterling character, the connecting-link, the trunk which told the story of the change road.

Jim was visibly affected as they traverse the silent streets of his old home, empty now but thronged by his thoughts with a thousand memories of days gone by. There was the school-house, from which he had so often played truant; there was the church, where he had stood, holding mother's soft hand, while she joined in the singing. (He always said his mother's voice was the sweetest in the church, and he remembered well how he nearly pulled Sammy Steven's ear off because he said it wasn't so.)

He had not passed that door since childhood, and he saw again the gray-haired pastor he had insulted and spurned; there also was the Village Inn, at which he had in bravado drank the first glass of his curse; but here at last was the best of all, the old home street, the street which if he had traversed every street in the whole world, would be the only street dear to him! All the other thoughts emerged into the thought of mother.

Oh, how cruel he had been to her! How she had loved him! Did she still love him? Could she after fifteen years of his wicked neglect? Jim Slough had come over to sell the pig that wouldn't sell, and had told him his mother was very poor — in fact, that she was in want — but that she was always listening, and waiting for him. Could she forgive him? He could never forgive himself. What an awful thing saying was to make a fellow do what he had made him do! Father long dead, too! O Mother!



Every cobblestone his feet stepped upon spoke some fond thing of her to the boys penitent heart. The few forest trees left standing on the roadside, holding out their fresh, leafy arms, reminded him of how when a little fellow he used to run into her arms, stretched out that way on returning from school. The early breezes made the tree branches to wave becomingly, as though they would hasten him, in the morning of the wind, coming over the mountain, seem to call: "Come, hurry; you may be too late!"

As they had advanced, the window panes of the cottages reflected the glory of the Easter morning, and the village awakened to a lovely Sabbath. As they came in sight of the plain little house frame, which had been the lone-star of their night's journey, a miner on his way to work stopped and stared in such a sudden surprise that his dinner pail fell clattering to the ground.

"My God, if it ain't young Jim! Oh, thank heavens for this Easter morning! Boy, you're just in time! Your mothers took awful bad! My missus is with her. She says..."

But Jim heard no more. Dropping his hands of the trunk he sprinted up the street, burst open the door of the little home, took the narrow, creaking stairs three at a time, calling with a note of agony in his voice:

"Mother, mother, it's Jim, come home! It's your wayward boy, Jim, come home!"

The little woman upon the bed was fast slipping out of the struggle called life, but the boy's voice would have called her back from the deepest grief; and so, with a tide of vitality which came alone from her heart, she open wide her two arms, so long empty and hungry, and called back: "I am waiting for thee, as I have waited for fifteen years with my arms open!"

Then as she laid her pale cheek, called with the chill of death, against the face of her son, she prayed:



"Oh God, I thank Thee that the pain and hunger of fifteen years has not been suffered all in vain! My prayers are answered and I may die while he is near!"

"God," called the loud voice of the returned prodigal, "by the love by which Thou hast blotted out my sins, Thou wilt spare her. She shall not die!"

When the captain, who had followed with all haste possible, looked into the room the weary mother's heart was beating against the heart of her boy, and both were looking into the other's face, with eyes full of tears, with smiles shining through, which spanned a rainbow of promise from mother to son.

And in the street without a man still stood staring helplessly at a forgotten trunk and a spilled dinner pail, exclaiming over and over again:

"Just in time, by gosh! The Salvation Army to beat everything!"

Outside a rose covered cottage one can see, every sunny afternoon, a sweet little form, slightly bent, with silver-gray hair and two large soul-windows for eyes. She walks slowly around the small perennial garden, leaning up on the arm of a strong young man. On this particular day, when the heavens appeared to have forsaken every duty to caress the earth, if the one who saw had possessed as keen a capacity for history as the honey-suckle, he would have caught the words from the little mother's lips:

"I really do like her, Jim, for her own sweet self, and then all the more because she is a Salvationist. I confess that I was a little timid in case you fell in love with Ella Brooks, which would have meant you're leaving the Salvation Army. "

"Mother mine, never fear!" broke in the boy. The silver voice went on: "You know, Jim, I shall



go into heaven thanking God for the Salvation Army, for it was these self-sacrificing people who gave me back my life and you!"

The Highest Compliment to Our Sex

A message from the General to Home League members, on Home League Sunday.

Found in the Library of the School for Officers Training, Suffern, New York. No information on date of publication.

From time to time we catch the echo of an unworthy and cynical sneer at church is crowded with women. Religion, they say, is good enough for women.

I have always thanked the skeptic for that tone. I welcome it as the highest compliment ever paid to my sex.

It IS the women who go to church. It IS mothers who pray for their husbands, sons and daughters.

For a woman deals with the innermost secrets of life itself. She handles the infant limbs of her child. She tends to sick father in his pain and we are in us. She feeds the hungry. She soothes the sorrowful. In all ages, in all countries, she has fostered and safeguarded a faith in God. Women are times have believed too much. But at least they have avoided the worst evil of believing in too little. The women do go to church and beyond! They can tread the Via Dolorosa of faith that nothing in Heaven, nothing in Hell itself can shake from its foundations.

On the first Good Friday, when all the apostles had forsaken the crucified Christ and fled from the scene of His redeeming agony, it was the women who were last seen at the cross, watching Him there; and on the morning of Resurrection, when the night was still unlit by the first hint of the brightest dawn in history, the women were not afraid to risk the perils of those riotous streets and make their way, loyally and modestly and reverently, to the silent tomb.



Remembering the striking truths, I give thanks for the vast host of women who come to worship at the Army's Home League meetings. I know the great power that is in their hands to mold the lives of those around them, and I pray earnestly that they will more and more fulfill their high calling of prayer and faith and vision, looking well into the ways of their household by revealing to all therein the beauty of lives surrendered to Christ.

The Passover of Gladness

From The War Cry (New York), April 11, 1914.

I found the thought, or perhaps I should say the thought found me, in the pages of an old hymn book, whose fashion and phraseology both proclaimed it as belonging to the worship of other days. Such volumes always seem to be fraught with a sacredness second only to the Word of God, for on their leaves are inscribed lines which have upheld and inspired the saints of God in every variety of circumstance, crisis and calamity. Here is the language of penitence, the outpouring of praise, the assurance of present help in trial, the song of triumph in death, and the most resonant note — the promise of Resurrection. Such verses have weakened harmonies in the heart which all time cannot steal, and have endeared themselves to every child of God and heir to the Kingdom.

But the hymn which suggested the words of my title was wholly unfamiliar to me, nor did I read it through. So deep and satisfying seeing this one line, that I looked no further, but lifted my heart and gratitude to God for the radiant message with which he had illumined my day—a message which although the first buds of spring had not yet pushed their way up through the snow, wafted around me a fragrant breath of the new life of an Easter morning.

With the tragedy and peril which surrounded the first Passover we are all familiar. Secret history as depicted for us that darkest of all Egyptian nights when the death Angel brooded over the city, and only the blood-stained lintel save the first-born of the home. In fancy we have seen the family gathered around the solemn feast, the children feeling, though not understanding, the momentous awe of the occasion, looking from the white, anxious face of the mother to the set, stern features of the father as in silence he leaned upon his staff. We have imagined their scarcely



trusted joy in the hour of deliverance, their trembling hopes and fears as they remembered the sea which yet barred their way, their mingled uncertainty and confidence as they thought of the prospect of the Promised Land. It was a solemn, a reverent, and awe-inspiring feast, but even in its happiest aspect it could scarcely be said that there was anything so bright or so clear or so transforming as gladness about it.

But when we turn from the Passover under the Law to the Passover under Grace, there is no note of uncertainty, no feeling of apprehension, no tincture of fear to alloy the pure essence of hope. Easter is essentially the season of happiness; it is the joy-center of the Christian year.

In our Passover there is gladness for those who mourn. We come back from the open grave to face the empty chair, but the bitterest drop is taken from the cup, and a light shines in the blackness of breathing gloom, radiating such words as, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," or, "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept."

In our Passover there is gladness for those who toil. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Not forever will nerves wrack, muscle strain, blood throb and limbs ache. The weariness of earth will one day be forgotten in the restoration and complete recuperation of heaven, of which I like to think not as a passive inertia but the tireless buoyancy of an immortal vitality.

In our Passover there is gladness for those who love their Lord, those who have learned to love Him here, have followed His love through the dimness and depression of mortal miasma, and look to see Him face to face in the perfection of Eternity's climate.

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
I am the Resurrection and the Life.

And as we read the radiant assurances, like a cloak there falls from us the pall of winter doubts and dreariness. The time of the singing of birds has come; the warmth and light of an eternal summer is wafted to us across the tide through which our Lord has gloriously passed, and through which He waits to bear us in like triumph. The sepulchre and the seal are broken, death's



sting is eradicated, another and a better life is begun, and in its light and love and beauty all horror and hate and heaviness are lost to the sight of forever and ever, for this is: THE PASSOVER OF GLADNESS.

The Stable Door

A Christmas message.

From The War Cry (Toronto), Christmas issue 1897.

The first stars of that Eastern night shown out diamond-like midst the blackness of the firmament, as the two weary travelers hosted at a wayside inn and made humble request for a night shelter.

The city to which the journeyed wasn't last reached, but had it not been so it is doubtful whether another step could've been taken by the footsore ass or its anxious leader, who glance continually at the pale, sweet face of his young wife, and she uncomplainingly endured the fatigue and suffering of that exceedingly trying and uneven journey. "No room in the Inn" was the gruff and impatient reply, for it was not the first refusal given that night; the little town of Bethlehem being over-crowded by strangers pouring into its quiet precincts to pay the registration dues. Whether it was a sense of compassion awakened by the patient face of the tired woman, or whether it was anxiety about the small fee which the stable-shelter could exact, which permitted Mary and Joseph to house with the oxen.

I am not prepared to say, but I fancy I see her alight from the saddled ass, and with an expression of anxious wonderment enter "the stable door."

A stable, contemptible in its meanness, degrading in its associations, forlorn in its appearance! By its rudeness of structure and separation from human inhabitants suggesting a significance of birthplace for One who was to become an outcast "despised and rejected of men."

How prophetic its rude interior! What symbols of momentous and eternal happenings are its misshapen fittings!



The gnarled and knitted beams supporting the uneven roof throw, in their distorted shadows, emblems that upon their like rugged forms was to be stretched this night's gift in the agonizing throes of the death of Jesus and the birth of a world's Redeemer. The unkempt shepherds hastening from the great flocks upon Bethlehem hills are His first worshipers, significant of how the first place was ever given in the God-nature of Christ and the compassion of Jesus to the most lovely, the most poor and the most needy.

Dare we not discover in the flinty composition of floors and walls (the stable being part partially a cave cut out of rock) the distant clatter of falling flints with which in manhood years they stone Him? And is it not the whole of His first dark, inhospitable abode but a preliminary declaration of the whole life that is to follow, missioning the darker and poorer homes of sin and sorrow?

As I look up on this roof structure fain would I direct the whole world not to the star that guided the wisemen from the East, not to the orchestra of angelic throng who caroled "good-will on earth," not to the vacant place in the Kingdom of Light, but to the stable. In this dark, unimportant byway shelter I find a hidden treasures lessons of vastest import, which it must ever repay our being at some trouble, if needs be, to discover amid the unpretentiousness of their disguise.

First, I find from the stable scene that one can never tell what great events are in small beginnings — how that often those things which are at their starting may appear the most insignificant hold issues of the greatest possibility either for good or evil.

The amazed shepherds needed all the help that vision and voicing of angelic choir singing His birth could render, to enable them to believe that the tiny infant of the maiden-mother, wrapped in course linen, pillowed in an uncouth manger between ox and ass, was any other than an ordinary child, of ordinary parentage, born in unfortunate circumstances, to begin and conclude life in unrenowned obscurity.

It would have been just as difficult to imagine that the babe, under sentence of death, taken from the bulrush cot by the daughter of Pharaoh, was destined to lead a nation from bondage



and establish the law for the ages. Just as impossible a task for a people of another and later age to believe that in a small back room of a low German saloon was born Martin Luther, the mightiest of the world's reformers, whose voice of thunder was to rock a world foundation of unbelief, and lay low the bulk works of a universal delusion.

So it is just as impossible to know what lies in our cots!

Mother, as you rock your babe to and fro, soothing it with gentle murmur, or hushing it by lullaby, in your arms of love you clasp infinite possibilities, everlasting consequences, eternities of blessings or well. So watch your treasures as the Holy Mother watched her first-born. It is not of so much account whether the swaddling clothes be composed of coarse linen or fine cambric, the pillow of straw or down, but eternal importance is encased in the early aspirations and inspirations infused into infant hearts lending color and light for lifelong and eternal reflections, as the sun gives the violet its hue and the butter cup its gold even before its budding.

Give one-half to the virtuous endeavor and holy care to the cradles, nurseries and schoolrooms of the world which today is thrown out in ministerial effort for deliverance from sin and from crime in all their grown and monstrous proportions, and coming generations will show three parts of the evil of the universe thrown overboard, and the tramp of the advancing good will make the teeth of remaining iniquity to chatter.

Don't wait until your child is of years before you introduce it to virtue. As soon as the natural eye can detect the shining of a star in the midnight sky, speak to it as to what is beyond. The stars will serve well to show the weakening intelligence how virtue and truth will shine all the brighter because of the black darkness of the world's sorrow and sin.

Then there are our cradle opportunities often coming to us so marked with poverty, and so closely surrounded by disadvantages, that in their infinitesimal proportions it is easy to treat them with indifference, lose sight of or abuse them. Yet it is but the crowd of these beginnings which go to make up life, and tiny as the scene, in reality they are great infinities, characterizing the life, death and eternity of a soul. Surely nothing can be less than a magnitude that is a tribute to a soul's eternal gain or eternal loss!



If virtue, no matter how small at its outset, or humble its birthplace, can grow so rapidly and travel fast; then the value set upon its smallest and earliest, expressions must be infinite.

Your opportunities for upholding the truth may not give you a bigger chance than that of a village street corner, or of pointing a soul to Heaven by a word at the kitchen back door, or of telling the children of Jesus before you kiss them all around for the night, or a prayer for God's blessing on a comrade whose burden is heavy to bear.

All small, and even if will use scarcely worthy of mention, yet not smaller than the look which brought Peter to repentance, transforming the conquered to the conqueror. Not more simple than the faltering words of the little servant lass leading to the healing of Naaman the leper.

Not more insignificant to a world's be dimmed high then that humble nurse-girl's endeavors to bless the little boy of eight who, when in his future a nation crowned him with honor and blessing, he crowned her before the nation as the instrument of his salvation. What a returning of "the bread upon the waters" — how more than worth the waiting "of many days!" 'Twas Lord Shaftesbury's nurse-girls first chance of serving God. It was about a cradle opportunity, but she used it so faithfully that God made her "a mother in Israel" and blessed her name among the women.

Secondly, I learned from the uncouth cot which forms earth's first resting place for our Lord and King, that unfitting and even unseemly circumstances can be made to render eternal profit to ourselves, and blessing and uplifting to others. You only want to put Jesus into them.

Could there be more ungainsayable proof that adversity has no power to hinder the purposes which God has hidden in the different happenings of our lives? What potency had poverty or degradation, shame or ignominy, to detract from the future of the Christ-heart whose first breaths were drawn without the presence of a luxury and hardly the forthcoming of a necessity. All that could best has been done without was a present; all that the occasion claimed was absent.



The clattering of tongues without, the lowing of oxen within, the irregular and ill-sheltered walls through which the chill damp of the Eastern night had no difficulty in penetrating the crackling, shifting, prickly straw, so unsuitable to be the resting place of any but the beasts of the field; the garish publicity of the unlocked door; not one inconvenience was wanting, nor discomfort lacking around the most sensitive and delicate of maiden dispositions.

The stable was but the forerunner of the crowd of adverse circumstances which thronged around His life. Depressed again upon Him in His infant days, in the hurried midnight flight into Egypt from an intent murderer; they centered in the constant privation and monotonous occupation of the carpenters daily toil; they fastened the continual discomfort and sorrow of homelessness upon one who had not where to lay His head; they clambered loudly after Him in the starvation of the wilderness, in the grief in agony of His last days upon Earth.

But all these forces of evil held no power to impede the progress of a world's benefactor. The darkness, pain and sorrow of all these happenings attempting to eclipse the first rays of light define only intensified its brightness, until its radiance was recognized by the whole world millions as Love, Light and Life.

I see by this that adverse circumstances can never be blamed for an unsatisfactory state of the soul. They can only hinder in so far as you will let them do so, for God purposes that our seasons of adversity should be of eternal blessing. The grace of Jesus carried into trial makes it to school in which all must master before they can attain their heavenly degree; lessons which alone can fit us to stand where angels praise and martyrs sing.

How we love to think about them — those gone on before. How patiently they endured the pain, how lovingly they treated those that hated them, how earnestly they prayed for those that murdered them, how they shone when the darkest fell. Now none stand near the master than this triumphant throng. Their reward glistens in crown, in robe, in song.

Maybe your mother is among them. It was the fire of loss of children, a husband, or of all, which purified the gold, or it was the slow, cruel process of hard daily toil and momentary cross-bearing



that trimmed the lamp, or the life-long effort to do something for Jesus despite a weak, crippled body that fit in the saint.

It has always been so. As there are some crops only ripened through the seemingly destructive processes of frost and rain, so there are many graces which can only be brought to maturity by the stern nurturers of hardship and affliction, or the fires of sorrow and persecution.

But the God of the saints who have gone on before is your God, and will see you through all the trials and tribulations. Do not be discouraged. Look up, and press on. Then, if things should go hardly with you, if trials should come in like a flood, if the burden is heavy to carry in the sky dark over your head, do not look for an easier path; do not say, as I have known so many, that you are not where God wants you, and seek for another to carry your cross.

Remember all that the road from the manger to Calvary brought to Jesus into a poor, lost world, making forever circumstances, suffering, hardness and privation, death, and even the grave, but a golden staircase lifting to the highest development of character-the best experience of soul and that last to the bosom of God. Trial cannot hurt you, it can only bless you. So follow hard after Jesus, for there is laid up for the cross-bearers a crown in Glory.

Thirdly, I find that no words could express or mind well imagine the difference there was made in the stable by Jesus being there.

No comparison could be drawn between the manger holding the scanty allowance of food, for the over-tax an exhausted ox, and that means your cradling it's heavenly burden overshadowed by the light of a mother's first love and enhanced by halo, telling of glory for seeking for a greater glory yet to come.

Had not the door of the world of light opened to let pass out that which though an open stable door to the woe of earth passed in? Did not angelic host crowding battlements of glory and thronging shining portals find more of heaven housed within that rude cattle shed than was to be found amidst all the grandeur of Jewish temple, that stupendous pile of pomp and magnificence, the pride of Jerusalem?



Yes, I see the stable grander than the temple; its cramped space further-reaching than the corridors, it's manger higher than the throne.

All the light come—
All the glory brought—
All the difference made—
By Jesus being there!

Jesus on straw-taking out all the stiffness for saints who have no better bed to lie on. Jesus wrapped in course linen — making it of no matter of what poor stuff your coat is but only of importance how rich in grace you are. Jesus in the dark-lighting a candle to brighten every shadow across the road from stable, store, carpenter's shop, fisherman's hut, widow's cottage, toiling loom and earth's saddest places, to heaven.

Jesus in a stable — making it happy and bright, and filling it with blessing for tired shepherds and seeking worshipers, so that he could come into your house and transform the groom, and take out the cold, and light up the dark and dry the tears, and save from wrong.

It was Jesus made all the difference!

Here is a home. I know its carpets or threadbare, and its table maybe scantily spread, but it is not that which makes the trouble. The father has a bad temper; he professes to be a Christian, but it's not converted; he keeps a good appearance and talks pleasantly to people with whom he transact business at the office, but at home he is full of impatient complete. He storms because his slippers are lost, the meat is either cooked too much or too little; he declares the place is a bedlam for the noise of the children.

The mother always says her head aches. She means her heart does, because something goes wrong in every day. All life is a weary drag. There is competing with the neighbors, getting the children to school, soothing the sickly baby; and so with the tedious round of purposeless life time rebounds into eternity.



One night the father gets converted. His face is brighter than it has ever been. The children are told of the change, the Bible is dusted and brought out, the mother breaks down in prayer as she says: "O Lord, forgive my sins, and save me too!"

The children cry, and the father, with unusual hoarseness, pronounces the benediction, husband and wife kiss each other, children throw their arms around their parents' necks, and though there are many tears, it is "Peace on earth, good-will toward men."

Jesus has come in! Tradesmen, office hands, neighbors and schoolmates all know well the difference and say, "Salvation has come to that home," throwing sunbeams from within as from the stable, lifting first prayers as with the shepherds, offering incense and myrrh of holy living as with the wisemen. Have Jesus in your home.

Lastly, and perhaps that which the most strongly appeals to my heart as I look on the sacred hostelry of Bethlehem, is the open door; open in the darkness of an Eastern night to a very traveler; open to the hungry keys of crowding and eager spectators; open, awaiting the coming of worshipers from the East, the North, the South in the West - for since that hour of heavenly carol and birth of peace, pilgrims from all parts of the universe has made their way in spirit and truth to the open "stable door."

No arm soldiers guarded the entrance, no double-barred gateway protected his gentleness, no silken-fringed curtain hid the countenance. It was just across an outer courtyard through a flung-open door, two paces over a rude, uncarpeted floor, and one was close beside Him, could kneel before and look upon Him, could place the offering of gold or precious stone up on the infant lap. I see the coming Redeemer of the world easy to find, easy to behold, easy to reach.

Pass the tidings through all the nations of the earth, an "open door" to Jesus.

I knew a gentleman who tried to get an interview with the late Queen of England. The columns of this paper would not hold the names of all the magnets who had to be approached, the lengthy letters that were written, the persistent and elaborate explanation of the character of the



business that was dispatched, the knots of red tape that were tied and retired, and the whole army of endeavors ending in the gentleman being introduced to a noble nobody!

But here is Jesus, the King of all kingdoms, the Prince of all nations, the Lord of all honor, and the song which first proclaimed His Royal presence in the "Unto you is born," carols a world-wide invitation to all who will to pass straight in, straight in.

Do you need not wait to change your apparel, you need not be anxious as to the obeisance with which you approach Him, you need not strive to assume the attitude of any better person than the one you are, you can pass just as you are, straight into Jesus — Jesus the Christ.

Do the troubles of earths sorrowing paths no the door is open? Oh, what a dreary time the past has been carrying your bereavement all alone! God meant the taking of the bread-winner to do for you what it did to the widow of Nain — bring you in touch with Jesus. The promise made at the grave was in answer to His Spirit, when you said with God's help you would make straight for the port into which the treasured love one had gone. But love of the world and sin pressed you further from heaven, putting a bitterness into every teardrop since that grave was opened; just the bitterness with Jesus and His salvation would have taken out.

Now the best of your days are gone. It looks dark behind and darker before. You wish you were a Christian. You see how much better it would have been to love and to serve God! You feel so helpless. You are hedged in by evil influences, worldly associations and cruel circumstances. Yet does not this very hour, a guiding star shining in the darkness of your sky throw its rays around an open door to Jesus?

I persuade you to do at once with the shepherds did and go straight in, tell him all the wrongs of your past, all the sorrow of your heart, all the feelings and defeats which crowd your experience. His love will receive you! His body will cleanse you! His grace will be all-sufficient for you!



I persuade you to do at once what the shepherds did — go straight in, tell him all the wrong of your past, all the sorrow of your heart, all the feelings and defeats which crowd your experience. His love will receive you! His body will cleanse you! His grace will be all-sufficient for you!

No tears that He will not wipe, no burdens that He will not carry, no sorrow that He will not share, no weariness that He will not relieve.

Oh, Blessed be God! And blessed be heaven! And how much more blessed is earth for an open door to Jesus!

Open to the blasphemer whose lips are filled with vile utterances!

Open to the back slider, whose feet are torn with sad wanderings! Open to the young and open to the old, open to the rich and open to the poor. No need to go hungry, no need to go sad, none need parish! Goodwill toward men, peace on earth enjoy in heaven.

Let every angel sing it! Let every bell peal it! Let the ransomed shout it! Let all the hosts of all worlds prove it!

Keep the Bible to the Front

The General asks for a continuation of the Bible Week spirit.

From The War Cry (London), April 27, 1937.

The institution of an annual Bible Week cannot but bring great blessing and spiritual enlightenment, and I am delighted to hear of the way in which in very many corps special efforts were last week made to call attention to God's word.

I sincerely trust that this interest will not be allowed to die. One of the dangers of a special "week" devoted to any particular aspect of our work and life is the possibility of our feeling that



with the close of the week we can legitimately turn our attention to other things, having done our duty toward the special claim.

In order to guard against this possibility and to make Bible Week of great value, I am asking officers and soldiers to keep the Bible where it ought to be in their personal lives and their activities on behalf of others.

The Bible is the Book of all books. Its enemies have searched high and low for every argument that might be used to refute its statements, to destroy its teaching and deny its miracles. Infidel scientists have marshalled against the Bible, the astronomer's telescope, the explorer's fathoming-rod and geologist's hammer. But against the assaults of cynics, of critics, or skeptics, the Bible stands unaltered, immovable and unshaken.

Despotism has thundered forth edicts against the Bible. Fires have consumed it. The blood of countless martyrs has stained its pages. But despite all persecution, all suppression, all destruction, the Bible triumphs, a perpetual and ever more victorious resurrection from the tombs built around its living words by the unbelief and sin of man. The Book is God's and He guards it.

No power can tear down in the heart of countless millions that altar to which they bring their griefs, their sins and their perplexities, and find inscribed thereon the assurance of a Savior's love, pardon and consolation.

The Bible is everywhere. It is found within the prophet's mantle, the fisherman's coat, the shepherd's smock, the housewife's apron. It has its place on the judge's bench, in the soldier's knapsack, on the merchant's desk, in the salesman's suitcase, the sailor's bunk and the schoolgirl's satchel.

When I see that there is no spot, or condition, or circumstance, or individual for which the Bible is not suited, I am convinced that only God could have written a book so marvelous.



The Salvation Army is a mission of the poor to the poor; to the desolated and forgotten masses, and amid the indescribable miseries of the underworld, the teaching of this Book has been the one undimmed lamp. Multitudinous have been the hands of the poor who have taken the Bible as their sword of defense against the hardships of life, and who have clasped it to their hearts as the one help for the helpless at the hour of death.

The Bible is indispensable to the equipment of the Salvationist. It provides the Christian soldier with the daily ration on which depend his faith, his courage, his character. It is the armory wherein he finds the weapons of attack and defense, by which he wages his holy war against whatever destroys the happiness and degrades the life of others.

A Salvation Army, deprived of the Scriptures, would be an Army demobilized by the enemy of souls and held helpless within the entanglement of a secular and selfish world.

For myself, you may take from me all that life holds dear, but you shall not take away my Bible. I pray that this shall be the sincere conviction of all my comrades in The Salvation Army.

Time

A New Years Message.

*From the Library of the School for Officers' Training, Suffern, New York, dated December 1938.
No further information on date of publication.*

The Old Year is dying; a New Year is coming to birth; and in squares and boulevards crowds gather and wait the twelve slow and resonant strokes of the inexorable hammer the commands a farewell as the present surrenders to the calm of the past. Millions singing the Auld Lang Syne of momentary remembrance, in salute, too often with thoughtless cheers, the future which is so full of grief, its significance, is hidden from human vision and known only to the providence of God.



Let the troublous time that passes — past, present and future — be merged into eternity, which is the same yesterday, today and forever, wherein the plan of life is visualized, not in broken parts but as a whole, and wherein too is witness the gradual victory of the King of kings and Lord of lords over all that dispute his authority or set aside His Gospel as of no account.

For the Salvationist this midnight hour is one of dedication to further acceptance of responsibility. It is to be spent within the impregnable watchtower of faith, where God commands the garrison of witness to His love and mercy and righteousness — that witness which is kindled as a beacon of peace and justice among nations and among classes within nations.

In the varied and far-reaching realms of industry, commerce and finance this season of the year is observed with a special sense of what is due to the individual firm and to society as a whole. The New Year is a festival of accountancy, when profits and losses are accurately ascertained, and assets and liabilities are set forth plainly in a balance sheet that determines whether there is solvency or insolvency, progress or retrogression.

The auditor of the Christian's accounts is Omniscience and a false balance is abomination unto the Lord, whose desire is truth in the inward parts. Let us begin the year of grace of the Throne of Grace, giving glad glory to God for many outstanding triumphs of His love and power, and being thereby encouraged to confess wherein we have failed to claim a full measure of his all-conquering might. Let us seek forgiveness from Him who is faithful and just to forgive, and rise up stronger in that all-sufficiency which is ours by promise and inheritance in Christ.

It is over one hundred years since the author Bulwer-Lytton added a proverb to our language. "Time," he said, "is money." We spend time and we save time, and we give time and we use time and we waste time, as we spend and save and give and use and waste money. It is of time that I had this midnight hour between two years, we have to give an account.

The employer is under no illusions as to the value of time. Countless millions of workers are called upon daily to punch the clock, and they lose pay if they are late. Efficiency in management means the full use of the worker's full-time.



The service of Christ is not compulsion. It is perfect freedom. But how much more of a secret obligation is the time that he bought by His precious blood shed on Calvary, then the time for which the employer pays at so much an hour! The time of a follower of Christ is the most valuable time in the world.

The airplane wars through the air with the speed of an eagle. Trains are streamlined in order that they may add a few miles an hour to their record. Ocean liners are built to cross the Atlantic in four days. What invention, what expenditure, what heroism and effort is devoted to save a few hours and even minutes of a passenger's time! Yet too often people rush through clouds and tunnels and over oceans in order to be dull and listless in a hotel, where they do not know from minute to minute how to pass the time which in their mad hurry they have saved. How careful should be the use of the time of a child of God! How vital it may become with duty accomplished and ends that are written in the eternal records, and how disastrous if wasted!

Jesus impresses on us the infinite value of the time for which He paid so high price at Calvary. He warns us against frittering away those opportunities of essential service which belong to Him as Redeemer by right of redemption, reminding us that, "The night cometh, when no man can work." For every idle word, he says, we must give an account. Let us observe, then, this season of accounting as in his sight, remembering that at this point of life's journey God has no greater gift for us than a year ahead, and that this gift is conferred but one day at a time; there is no signpost to note where the road for you or for me will end.

The Apostle Paul bade both the Ephesians and the Colossian Christians to be careful of "redeeming the time." This is what we have to watch for especially in this new age.

Psychologists tell us that as a rule we only use one intent of our brains. During the World War it was amazing to observe what courage, initiative and intelligence developed, under the stress and strain of the trenches, in the most unlikely men, whose lives had formally been lethargic, ignorant, frivolous. They became what they might have been in earlier years if similar demands had been made upon them, the nearer to death, the more abundant life.



The Wangeli North Collection

On the battlefield of God the whole hearted Christian soldier mobilize those of his faculties which have often-times lain fallow. Herein is discovered one of the secrets of The Salvation Army's power in the world: uneducated, untrained men have become mighty servants of God because they not only consecrated all their strengths and talents to be divinely quickened, but exercise them at full stretch for the kingdom. Unsuspected reserves of ability and character have been let loose.

The soldier of Christ is never too young and never too old to volunteer for service under the flag of the Gospel. His youth and his experience are alike needed in the elaborate and powerfully equipped corps to which he is assigned.

God said, "I will magnify Joshua." It is true to this day that the man who is wholly given to God becomes magnified; he grows into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, who, being Son of God, dwelt among us a Son of Man.

Children of God should watch most carefully and pray most earnestly that they do not waste time or throw it away. Time is lost by the careless; time is lost by the selfish; time is lost by the vicious. It is not to be wondered at that sometimes we are awakened to the thought that the world is behind the times, that in this age of enlightenment and education and Christian teaching evils continue which long ago were exposed to the public abhorrence, that systems are enforced which earlier were declared by public opinion to be obsolete.

It is time lost by others as well as by himself that the Christian is called upon to redeem. The harvest is plenteous, the laborers are few, and for those laborers time has to be overtime, any work has to be overwork, and in grace has to be beyond all human reckoning, insufficiency for every need and strength made perfect in every weakness.