

Weekly Devotional Column

By JAMES MACKENZIE

Arnold Toynbee, probably the world's greatest living historian, tells us that every civilization passes through four distinct stages during the course of its lifetime. (1) It is founded upon some kind of a moral or religious principle; (2) Because its people adhere to that principle they become powerful; (3) When they become powerful they tend to place their hope for survival in their power rather than in the moral or religious principle upon which their civilization was founded; (4) When a civilization forgets its God, it soon perishes at the hands of another civilization which is just arising.

Surely history bears this out! At one time Egypt was the most powerful nation in the world. Egypt was a godly nation (Genesis 41-50), and therein lay the source of her power. But when Egypt became powerful, she forgot God (Exodus 1), and today Egypt's glory is a thing of the past.

The next nation to dominate the world scene was Babylon. The story is the same. Babylon was a godly nation (Daniel 4). Babylon became the most powerful nation in the world. But Babylon forgot God (Daniel 5), and Babylon fell before the armies of Medo-Persia. Today the once great city of Babylon is naught but a deserted pile of rubble.

Medo-Persia, ruled by godly men (Daniel 6:26) then became the most powerful nation in the world. But Medo-Persia forgot God, and was conquered by Greece. And so, with ominous repetition, the deadly cycle is repeated throughout history: Greece, Rome, Spain, France, Germany, Poland, all bear mute testimony that "there is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength" (Psalm 33: 6).

Some sixty years ago, in 1887, the British Empire celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria. Britain was then the most powerful nation in the world. Historians of that day actually said there would never be another war, since no nation would ever dare attack the British Empire. The boast was made that the sun never sets on the British Empire; Englishmen sang, "Rule, Britannia, Britannia rule the waves." The song "Land of Hope and Glory" was written to celebrate the occasion. Britain was sitting on top of the world—just where we are now. Only one voice was raised in warning, that of Kipling, who wrote:

God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line;
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine;
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget.

The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart:
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget.

Far-called our navies melt away,
On dune and headland sinks the fire;
Lo, allour pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre.
Judge of the nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget.

If drunk with sight of power, we
loose
wild tongues that have not thee in
awe

Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the law;
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget.

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard;
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding, calls not thee to guard;
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Try mercy on thy people, Lord.

About the close of the last century a wave of infidelity swept over Britain; and America, then enjoying the fruits of revival, took over as the greatest power in the world. Today Great Britain is a third-rate power—has been for years—drifting along on its former reputation.

The parallel is only too obvious—and only too ominous. America is now in step three of the cycle—step four is just around the corner. History has left us a few examples to follow. Several times in the history of Israel (see, especially, the book of Judges) the cycle runs its course with the ex-

ception that, just before the ax falls, the children of Israel return to God and are spared. The same is true of eighteenth century England, which, historians tell us, was a godless nation, and fast becoming impotent; but the revival under Whitefield and Wesley caused its people to turn once again to the God of their fathers, and England was spared. There is only one way of salvation open for America—our people must return to God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Toynbee himself has said that the only hope for western civilization is a return by its people to active, vital Christianity.

Let us face it, we dare not trust in our material resources. According to Time Magazine (for June 15, 1953) we can muster only 58 western divisions, as opposed to 245 available to the Russians at present (our maximum strength is 700,000 men; their minimum strength is 2,550,000 men). We and our allies can count on 4,000 planes; Russia and her allies can count on 20,000 planes. Time Magazine has also said that Russia has more and better tanks than the rest of the world combined—and "the rest of the world" includes all of the Soviet satellites. While our industrial strength is greater than theirs, the war would be over before we could catch up with them. Further, our industry is centralized, as are our railroads. A few well-placed Russian atomic bombs (don't forget, they have them, too), could very well cripple our industrial and transportation systems.

America stands at the crossroads—it must be revival, or ruin; Christ or chaos. God spared Ninevah—He did not spare Babylon. It is high time for us to repent, confess our sins, and cost ourselves at the feet of Christ, who is ready and willing to save us. If history teaches us anything, it teaches us that within the next decade or so, we in America will live to see one of two things (if the Lord doesn't return in the meantime): (1) A deep, Holy Spirit caused consciousness of sin by our civilization, and a return to Christ, or (2) the destruction of our western civilization, our standard of living, our national identity.

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom He hath chosen for His inheritance" (Psalm 33: 12).

STORY OF A GIRL WHO MARRIED HER ENEMY

Heart-warming romance of a girl who fell in love with an escaped German prisoner of war, wanted by the FBI for seven years. Look for this and other features in the July 19th issue of

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60 - SECOND SERMONS

—By—
FRED DODGE

Text: "How little do they really see, who frames their judgment upon that which seems." — Southey.

The story is told of two G. I.'s from the mid-west who had never seen a body of water greater than a small creek. Shipping from a west coast port on a troop transport at night, they came on deck the next morning out of sight of land. The broad Pacific stretched endlessly in all directions. One G. I. turned to the other and said, "Bill, I ain't never seen so much water before in all my life!" Bill looked out to the horizon and scratched his head a moment. "I'll tell you what, Joe," he replied, "You know you and me ain't seein' no water at all. We're just seein' the top of it."

CHRISTIAN CHURCH SERVICES

Services at the First Christian Church have been announced as follows by the pastor, the Rev. E. C. Alexander:

Bible School, Sunday morning at 10 o'clock; morning service at 11 o'clock; evening service at 7:30 o'clock. Wednesday Evening Bible Class meets at 7:30 o'clock. Everyone is welcome to young people's meeting at 6:30 P. M.; all services.

TRY A HERALD CLASSIFIED AD

It is easy to judge by scanning the surface. Often, underneath, are shoals and depths that should be known and understood. The men and Women we admire do not accept surface appearances only. They do not accept another's opinion until they have looked beneath the surface. There they find real motives and backgrounds that help them understand and appreciate that which they see on the surface. And we admire them for it. It is our right and duty as free men and women to look beneath the surface and form our own opinions. It is a privilege men have died to obtain.

God reveals Himself to us when we listen to His guidance; God reveals Himself through us when we share our guidance with others.

—Emily Vanderbilt Hammond.

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Vets' Question Box

Q—I've just been separated from service. I haven't yet applied for the GI term insurance available to Korean veterans. How long will I be covered by the free indemnity that protected me while I was in uniform?

A—The free indemnity protects you for 120 days after your separation from service. If you want the GI term insurance, you must apply to VA for it and pay your first premium within that 120-day period.

Q—I'm taking on-the-job training under the Korean GI Bill. What does VA consider as full-time training?

A—Full-time training for job trainees consists of the number of hours which make up the standard work week of your establishment. The minimum, however, is 36 hours a week, except in cases where bona fide collective bargaining between employers and employees has established a standard work week of fewer hours.

Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much; Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

—Cowper.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. and Mrs. Holly Columbo announce the birth of a 7-pound, 12-ounce daughter, Angelo Marie, born Wednesday morning of last week in Chowan Hospital.

Nothing is generous, if it is not at the same time just. —Cicero.

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