

CHRISTMAS

Comes again the glad memory of the Babe of Bethlehem. Heaven's token to earth's peoples that God loved the whole of them.

Twenty Years Ago

From the Issue of the Free Press of Thursday, December 21, 1924

The school pupils have been enjoying many a sleigh ride the past week. Mr. and Mrs. Will Kingsbury of Oxbow, Sask. are visiting with friends in Nasagawaya.

At a meeting on Tuesday evening officers were elected for the Acton Hockey Club: President, G. T. Boardman; Vice-President, J. M. MacDonald; Secretary-Treasurer, H. Bricker.

Last Wednesday evening some forty members of Ebenezer Methodist Church visited at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Akins in Acton who were for many years active workers in the church.

MARRIED

SOMERVILLE-ARMSTRONG—At the Methodist Parsonage, Acton, on Saturday, December 20, 1924, by the Rev. J. Culp, Olla Blanche Armstrong, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Armstrong, of Brussels, to George Ray, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Somerville, Acton.

DEED

BLAIR—Suddenly, at Guelph on Monday, December 22nd, 1924, Annie Hastings, widow of the late Rev. Arch. Blair, D.D. of Nasagawaya.

BLANKETS FOR THE PRISONERS OF WAR

Canadian prisoners of war in Germany are entitled to two blankets in winter and one in summer, as well as one or more private blankets, according to a clarification of regulations received from the International Red Cross, Geneva.

"With the winter here there has been a great deal of anxiety on the part of the next-of-kin of our troops detained in Germany as to living conditions in internment camps, so we sought this clarification from the International Committee of the Red Cross," Mr. Urquhart said.

In an order passed in 1943 the German government authorized where the camp officials find it impossible to supply two blankets to prisoners they are authorized to issue only one, but in such cases the dormitories must be heated night and day, the Chairman said.

"The German authorities have assured the International Red Cross that they recognized a prisoner of war's right of ownership over two next-of-kin blankets and that the prisoners may take their personal blankets with them when they are transferred to another camp."

In the past, Mr. Urquhart said, the Canadian Red Cross has provided next-of-kin with a blanket for parcels where they have not been in a position to supply one themselves. In view of the assurance of the German Government, the Society has decided to continue this practice.

Falling Birthrate Debate By Women

Maternity Conference Delegates Urge Better Housing and Nurseries

LONDON (CP)—Representatives of 3,000,000 British women, debating the falling birthrate at a national conference on Maternity and Child Welfare, said what the potential mothers of Britain want are nursery schools, houses and domestic help.

Miss Elizabeth Denby, a Yorkshire expert on "crazy homes," urged local councils to concentrate on four-bedroom houses for large families and not on flats. She urged seven cupboards and draught-proof windows.

Miss Elsie Hall of the College of Midwives said: "Women should have their babies in their own homes, surrounded by their own possessions and with their husbands by them," she added.

"We need what in 1919 I called 'ladies in waiting'—women who will run the home while the mother is confined."

Local authorities must get down to the question of providing domestic help in the homes of expectant mothers."

And Miss Florence Hawtrey spoke up for nursery schools: "I believe that a generous provision of nursery schools is essential if parents are to meet the growing demands of civilized society, and if all children are to have a fair start in life."

Weekly War Commentary

By H. L. JONES Canadian Press Staff Writer

Two major fronts upon which the United Nations have been fighting, the Italian and the Hungarian—have hitherto been theatres of entirely separate campaigns; but in the near future, as the German over-all defence perimeter shrinks, they will have a strong interlocking influence upon each other.

The Germans and their shaky Nazi satellites of the "Arrow Cross" Hungarian government for many weeks offered an efficient defence of the sprawling, Danube-straddling capital of Budapest. But the Red legions drove about the ancient city on three sides, by-passed it on either flank, and at the week-end were smashing at defences guarding the roads to the next great prize—Vienna—115 miles distant from their forward units.

Meantime the British 8th and Allied 5th Armies in Italy fighting perhaps the most discouraging war in which the Allies are engaged—between mountains and swamps, in vile weather, on a front which must sometimes seem to be a cul-de-sac—kept doggedly slugging forward.

The steady pressure on the Germans—together with the ever-present threat of a sudden spectacular advance such as the Canadian Corps made last week when it broke through the vaunted Lamone River defences and rolled beyond the Naviglio canal—forced the Germans to employ a large number of their dwindling divisions south of the Alps.

Similarly many German divisions are engaged in Hungary, but on this front they are materially aided by the Hungarian Nazis.

With the end of the Hungarian campaign in sight—with Budapest tottering, western Slovaks already invaded and the defenders manoeuvred into a position where they must soon choose between large-scale withdrawal or mass annihilation—one outcome could clearly be seen.

That was that when the tide of battle rolled across the Austrian border, the Hungarians in its wake would cease to fight on the side of the Axis. Meanwhile, in the Pacific, Allied forces are slugging their way ever closer to the heart of Japan, United States forces have landed on another island in the Philippines—Mindora, only 150 miles south of Manila the capital of the archipelago.

The Mindora landing seemingly a stunning surprise for the Japs who were uncertain where the big convoy would strike as it wound its tortuous way through 600 miles of twisting inland seas past scores of enemy-held islands harboring ports and airfields.

On the western front the Allied drive is slowly forcing its way into Germany against fierce resistance on all sectors.

From a Canadian viewpoint, most exciting news of the week was the announcement of the part played in the cracking of the Germans' vaunted West Wall by a group of young French-Canadian officers. The officers were dropped by parachute into occupied France before D-Day to organize and lead bands of French Maquis in special tasks which had to be done before the main blow was struck. The men were veterans of the Sicily and Italy campaigns, and all volunteered for the hazardous task.

Many were drawn from the 2nd and 3rd Regiments of Montreal, and a number now are back in Canada, wearing the Croix de Guerre with palms given them by the French government.

In troubled Greece, fighting has slackened off a trifle in Athens where British authorities are continuing negotiations with the leftist E.A.M. forces in an attempt to solve the knotty problem of establishing a representative government in the recently liberated country.

The Polish problem came to the forefront again as Prime Minister Churchill in a historic address before the British House of Commons warned that if the United States, Russia, and Britain could not reach an agreement in this and other matters it would destroy all hopes "for the future structure of world government."

THE GOOD NEW DAYS

Some people talk about what they call the "good old days," when there were not so many taxes, and when people were supposed to behave better. There were many respects in which those old days, according to all accounts were not so good. Anyway, even if they were better, it does little good to look back to the past with regret. It is more helpful to think about the good new days that can come in the future after the war, if people show the right spirit and exercise good judgement and co-operate for the benefit of the whole country.

Our people have the best scientific and industrial equipment in the world, and the most highly developed educational system. The average of intelligence is higher in Canada than anywhere else. With these advantages, our people should be able to solve all problems and produce good new days.

The Sunday School Lesson

SUNDAY DECEMBER 24, 1944

THE GROUND OF UNIVERSAL JOY

Golden Text.—Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people. Luke 2: 10.

Lesson Text.—Luke 2: 8-12; Heb. 1: 1-4, Read also 1 Jno. 1: 1-4.

EXPOSITION I.—The First Coming of Christ, Luke 2: 8-12.

The announcement of the advent of the King was made to shepherds. The shepherds proved their fitness to receive the announcement (v. 15). They were men of faith, with a deep appreciation of spiritual truth, in spite of their lowly position. They seem to have been waiting, longing, looking, for the coming of Christ (v. 16). They were faithfully attending to their lowly duties when the revelation came. It was not pleasant work, but it was their work, and while at it the angels met them (cf. Ex. 3: 1, 2; Jud. 6: 11, 12; Kl. 19: 19). The glory that shone around them was the ancient Shekinah that betokened God's presence. The shepherds were "sore afraid" when they beheld this glory. The supernatural by bringing God near, always fills the heart of sinful man with fear (Rev. 1: 17; Luke 5: 8; Isa. 6: 5). But the angelic message at once dispelled all fear. They came to announce salvation, not judgment. They began with one of God's most frequent messages to men, "fear not." It is evident that God longs for a fearless people. But the angels not only bade them "fear not" but brought forward the only real cure for fear, the Gospel. They brought "good tidings of great joy," the coming of Jesus, the Saviour, Christ and Lord, is the best news this old sin-cursed and Satan-governed world ever heard. But many, even to this day, do not receive it as "good tidings of great joy." Do you?

The Gospel the angel proclaimed was a Saviour BORN, but that Gospel has for us been developed into a Saviour not only born but crucified for our sins, dead, buried, risen and coming again (1 Cor. 15: 1-4; Ac. 1: 11). It was a strange place to be sent to see a king, a barn. And it was a strange sign to mark a "Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord"—"a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." The world receives this wonderful proclamation to this day with indifference, but the heavenly army received it with exultant shouts of praise to God. Well they might! The words "suddenly" shows that they could hardly restrain themselves until the message was fully delivered. They all but interrupted their spokesman's proclamation with their glad chorus. There was to be a twofold result of the Saviour's birth—"glory to God in the highest," "on earth peace among men of his good pleasure." Study out from the Bible who the men in whom God is well pleased are, and in what senses Jesus brings them peace (Jno. 6: 29; Eph. 1: 6, 7; Rom. 5: 1; Jno. 14: 27; Phil. 4: 6, 7).

II. God Speaking Through His Son, 1: 1-4.

Hobbes is the only book of the Bible to begin with the name of Deity. The Holy Spirit fills the writer with divine conviction that God has spoken. There is no such thing as "the silent heavens." God has spoken. How wonderful the providence that what He has spoken He caused to be written for our learning (Rom. 15: 4). God's revelation has come to us at "undry times" and in "divers manners." This means that it was distributed, therefore, in different portions. To Abraham was revealed the nation through which the Redeemer was to come (Gen. 15: 1-6); to Jacob the voy tribe (Gen. 49: 10); to David the family of the Eternal King (2 Sam. 7: 14, 15); to Isaiah the power and the glory of the coming King (Isa. 9: 7-9); to Micah the very place where He should be born; to Daniel the march of history to the climax of the kingdom (Dan. 2: 44, 45; 12: 2, 3). This Word also was given in "divers manners." This has to do with the method of inspiration. God is not bound to one form of conveyance for His truth. He talked audibly with Abraham. He was seen in one form by Moses and another by Joshua. Jeremiah was commanded to write, Ezekiel was ordered to preach, Daniel received God's revelation through dreams. The variety of the forms indicates the supernatural origin of the Scriptures.

It is all consummated in the final expression of God speaking through His Son. Abraham becomes a reality (Jno. 8: 56-58). Balaam's prophecy (Num. 24: 16, 17) attains fulfillment. Moses' expectation becomes realization (Jno. 5: 45-47). Isaiah's vision becomes corporeal (Isa. 7: 14-16; Matt. 1: 22, 23). Daniel's figure of the Ancient of Days walks the earth as the Son of Man. How carefully we should learn and ponder His words. God, who spoke the Ten Commandments of Sinai (Ex. 20: 1-17), was speaking in Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and at all other times (Jno. 12: 48). The authority of God, therefore, is in all the words of Jesus.

Our Lord is next declared to be the divinely authorized heir of all things. This assures us that Jesus is the ultimate of all history. All of our lives, talents, possessions in this world rightfully belong to Him (Matt. 28: 18). If He is heir of "all things" nothing is left out. Certainly, the "all things" include each of us and all collectively. The root of our troubles lies in man's constant effort to be sovereign of his own life and affairs. He is slow to learn and often unwilling to learn that Christ is his Sovereign Lord. The Son is further described as the Maker of the worlds, meaning the ages. This declaration is in harmony with other New Testament teachings (Jno. 1: 1-3; Col. 1: 16; Rev. 4: 11). The word "brightness" means an "off-flash" and signifies that through Jesus' deity was veiled in His humanity. He was manifestly God as was revealed by various signs and wonders (Matt. 17: 1-8). And now comes the declaration that Jesus is the "express image" of God's Person. Note the fact that God is a Person. He is no nebulous mist such as modernistic rationalism presents us, neither is He an impersonal force, or ideal, or principle such as pagan philosophers invent. He is a thinking feeling, volitional being with all the integrity of a personality. Then observe that the personality of God is expressed in Jesus Christ.

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It is predicted that many servicemen when they return from the war, will want to acquire farms and settle in rural locations. It is a life of real labor to which they look forward. Settling in the country does not mean the lonely life that many such people used to experience in former years. They will probably have automobiles, which will take them to meetings and entertainments, and to social life in the nearest town. Their radios will bring the voices of singers and the performances of fine orchestras into their homes, and plenty of entertainment and instruction. Their telephones will put them in close touch with their neighbors. Labor saving devices will receive many burdens of home and farm work. So it is not the life of loneliness and hardship that it once was in many cases.

SETTLING IN THE COUNTRY

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SMALLEST SOLDIER

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. (CP) —standing just four feet, 1 inch in his stocking feet, Pte. Verno A. Gregoire, 19, of Niagara Falls, is reported to be the smallest man in the Canadian Army. Attached to the R.C.A. M.C. he is stationed at Camp Borden.

NEW ZEALAND SEEKS BRITISH IMMIGRANTS

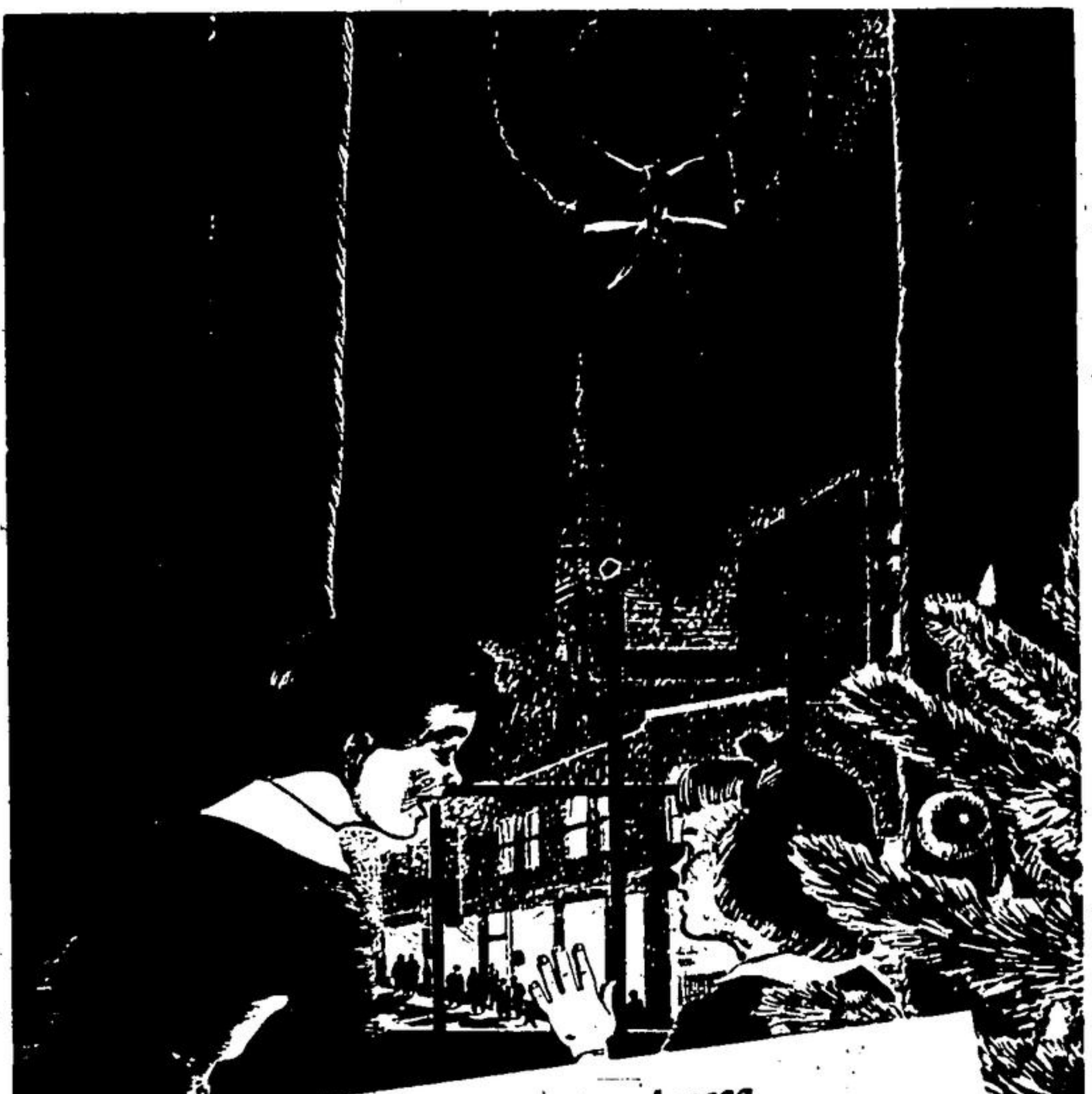
BELFAST (CP)—G. A. Holmes, one of three New Zealand agricultural experts touring Northern Ireland, says that he believes there should be room in New Zealand for at least 3,500,000 settlers. While immigration was a matter of government policy, he said he is "sure" that after initial difficulties of the post-war period are overcome, the policy will veer toward emigrants from the British Isles.

Picobac THE PICK OF TOBACCO It DOES taste good in a pipe



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