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RICHMOND HILL, ONTARIO THURSDAY, MAY 20th, 1943.

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The Richmond Hill Tatler

A column of chat with an occasional item of "the news behind the news" written especially for The Liberal.

We have all heard Chronic Grumbler insist at one time or another that foreign mission work on the part of the churches is a mistake, and that the inhabitants of far off lands would be far happier if we permitted them to continue in Idolatry and Heathenism than they would be worshipping the Christian God and regulating their human relationships by Christian standards of ethics.

Indeed, now probably more than in the past is this view being voiced. "What has Christianity done for China?" is a question not infrequently asked. "The patience and fortitude of the Chinese under trial and suffering is an outcome of natural heritage not the result of absorption of the Nazarene doctrine," is a contention often advanced, and the contender will often add: "Do you want proof, Here it is. Only a part of the Chinese people have been Christianized, and yet the whole nation, the un-Christianized perhaps more than the Christianized, are bearing up under the load of grief and persecution."

Church adherents of Richmond Hill and, indeed, of all Christian communities have now an irrefutable answer to such talk, one that must have a compelling effect on those who refuse to give credence to the Divine injunction that Christ's word must be carried to all parts of the world.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek, wife of the Chinese generalissimo, is acknowledged to be one of the greatest women of this age. True, she enjoyed the advantages of a liberal foreign education, but neither at home nor abroad was she obliged to adopt Christianity. She and her husband, scholars both in their own ancient religion, espoused Christianity, however, of their own free will as the truly Divine channel of grace. And now we have Madame Chiang, native, if you please, of that land in which we have so long occupied the role of Scriptural instructor to the benighted native, unfolding to us a point of view that testifies to her enjoyment of a richer interior life than many of us, so called Christians of many generations, have allowed ourselves to cultivate.

Says Madame Chiang: "I am practical minded. With me religion is a very simple thing. It means to try with all my heart and soul and strength to do the will of God.... Despondency and despair are not mine today. I look to Him who is able to do all things, even more than we ask or think."

Of prayer, the great communion of man with his Maker, this gracious Chinese convert says:—"God speaks to me in prayer. Prayer is not self hypnotism. It is more than meditation. In meditation, the source of strength is in one's self. But when one prays he goes to a source of strength greater than his own.

"In feudal times," she continues, "an old general named Ts'ao Ts'ao, on a long march, saw his soldiers weary, thirsty and discouraged. He said to them, "From my horse I can see a beautiful garden full of luscious plums." Their mouths watered, new strength and courage came. But for how long? The plum garden did not materialize and the soldiers were more weary than before.

"That to me is like meditation," declares Madame Chiang. "There is buoyancy of spirit for a time. It may help when there is no oasis in sight. But when I am spiritually thirsty I do not think of plum gardens — I go to the Fountain of living waters."

Then proceeds this gifted woman who with her husband shares the burden of keeping the light of hope burning in the hearts of the millions of her countrymen despite the trials of long continuing war: "Our finite minds beside His infinite mind seem to me like this: In walking I see the hills, range upon range, and cannot see where one ends and another begins. But from an airplane everything has a distinct contour. When I walk with Him he lifts me up where I can see clearly."

"I do not think," she adds, "that one can understand this who has not tried it. To explain to one who has no experience of getting guidance would be like trying to make a stone deaf person understand the beauty of a Chopin sonata. Whether we get guidance or not it is there. It is like tuning in on the radio. There is music in the air whether we tune in or not. By learning to tune in one can understand."

Richmond Hill and the churches in adjoining communities have been always responsive to the appeal of foreign missions, and from the news of these localities, it is quite evident that the missionary movement did not die with the war, although of economic necessity it is now somewhat circumscribed. It was always an active part of the spiritual life of North York. The Liberal files of 50 years ago tell of it, and on down through the years countless sums of money have been donated to the foreign mission cause, and all denominations have participated.

The flowering spiritual life of Madame Chiang testifies abundantly to the fact that the work has not been in vain, and is rebuttal aplenty to the sophistry that the foreign mission field should be abandoned.

"The Institute Guidance" by Madame Chiang Kai-Shek is from the U.S. News as reported by the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church of the United States.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

Richmond Hill, Ont.,

Sunday, May 2nd, 1943.

"Watchman, what of the night." Who does not feel the burden of this hour? Who does not feel the urge to plant and produce? The need in this direction probably was never greater. Many months ago I wrote a letter to The Liberal, which was published, in which I quoted that homely old saying, "You can't eat money". The timeliness of that quotation is being proved to an increasing degree every day as step by step our essential food stuff is being restricted and rationed. What we need is individual effort with a required amount of co-operation else we might find ourselves in the position of the women spoken of in the Bible, who having failed to provide for their lamps, were unable to borrow from the wiser ones who had made such provision. No need to hold up because you are unable to dig and plant your garden all at once. Do a little now and more later on. Even if you have to pause after every several shovels full, remember, every little helps. If unable to dig at all perhaps you could co-operate with someone who would do the digging while you do the lighter work. Let us endeavour to prove the many statements in the Bible which tell us that our strength and power is in God. Surely it would be wise for those engaged in work of lesser importance to spend more time in some form of agriculture. "The harvest truly is great but the laborers are few," becomes more and more evident as people leave the soil for less essential work, perhaps for bigger money which however is steadily losing its value unless backed up by honesty and noble effort.

It would be a good move to close the schools or to operate them on part time in order to release teachers and pupils for work which at present is more urgent, even if the teachers were paid their usual salaries, less than they might earn otherwise. These of course are respectful suggestions only as I do not wish to transgress upon the rights of others but wish to sound a warning that might well save us considerable inconvenience or worse, later on.

Let us all work, watch and pray and make the best of the many silver linings which accompany the war clouds.

FRED SLOAN.

The Canadian-made Catalina coastal patrol bomber has nine miles of wiring and generates enough electricity to meet the needs of a small block of dwellings. Victory Bonds make them possible.

HOPE AND TESTON

Teston Young People held their meeting Wednesday evening, May 12 with the president E. James presiding. The meeting opened with a hymn followed by the Lord's Prayer. After the secretary's report was read and business discussed the meeting was turned over to the convenor Miss Jean Maginn. After the singing of the first hymn Miss Evelyn Hare led in prayer. Scott Clarkson read the scripture and a poem "You Have To Believe" was read by Louise Cooper. Miss Mary Moore then took the topic on "Music" which was very interesting and was much enjoyed. Jean Maginn then read a poem and the meeting closed with the Mizpah Benediction.

Mr. Glen Murray has joined the Air Force and is stationed in Toronto at present.

Don't forget the "Plunkett Dinner" to be held in Teston United Church May 31st at 6.30 p.m. to be followed with lantern slides. Admission 35c.

Don't forget the Young People's meeting Wednesday, May 26. Everyone welcome. Come and help the Young People in their work.

Red Cross Unit No. 6 will hold their monthly meeting in Teston United Church basement Wednesday, May 26th. Any who can are asked to come in the morning.

Mr. and Mrs. E. Orr attended the funeral of Mrs. Barrie, Toronto, on Monday of this week.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Coulson Malloy on the birth of their daughter Eileen Ann.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Orr visited Miss L. Thomas of Etobicoke on Sunday.

Sunday visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Thomas were Mr. and Mrs. L. Auckland and baby Ronald and Mrs. Maynard, Toronto.

Hope United Church Sunday School Anniversary will be held Sunday, June 6th with just one service at 11 a.m. Dr. Archer Wallace will be the guest speaker and special music by Hope Public School choir under the leadership of their teacher Mr. Bruce McDonald.

It will be the end of the line for Hitler if you transfer your idle funds into interest-bearing Victory Bonds.

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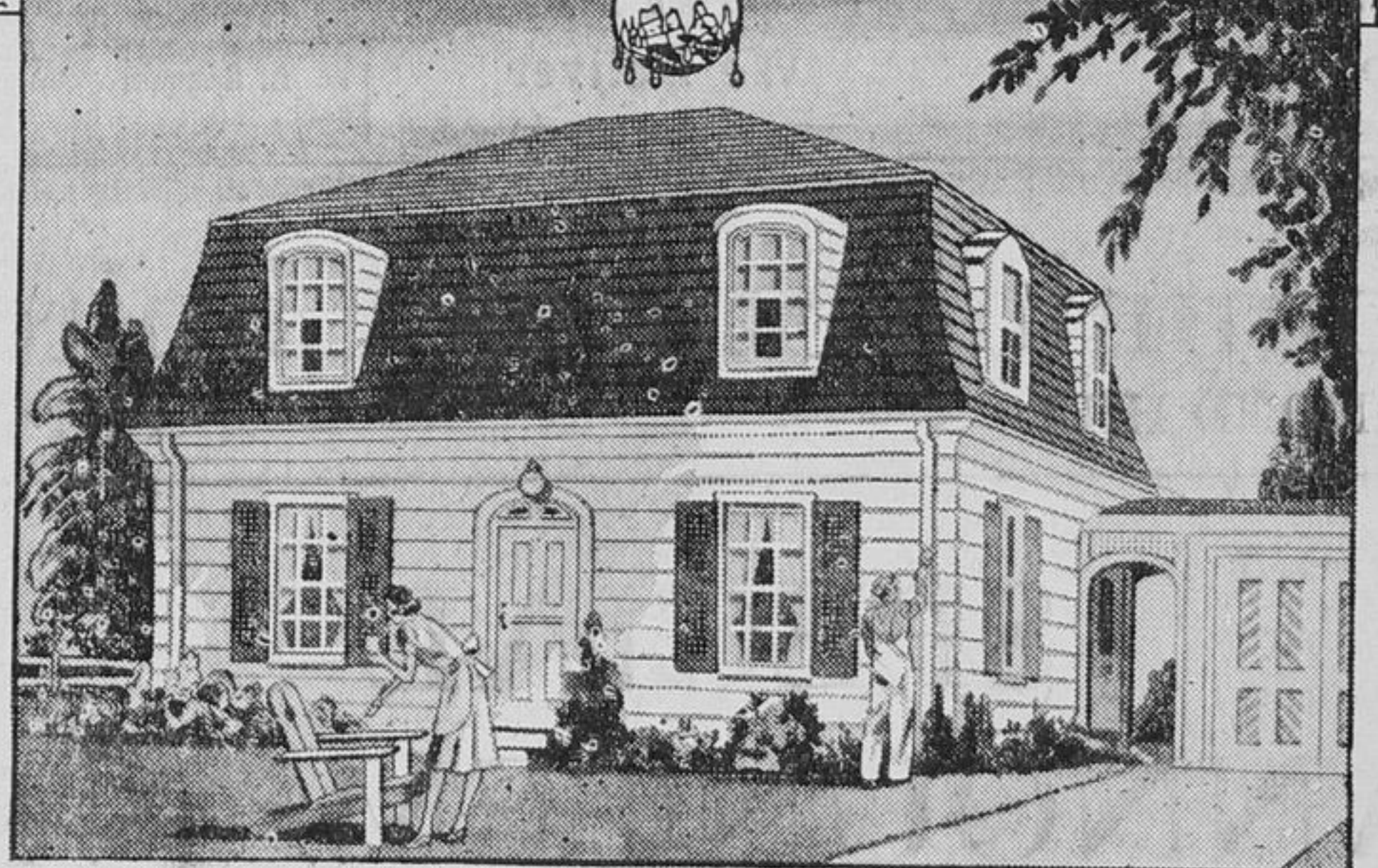
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