

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

LESSON XI — December 13

John's Vision on Patmos. — Revelation 1:1-3:22.
Printed Text — Revelation 1:4-18
Golden Text — "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. Revelation 1-17, 18.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING
TIME — Toward the close of the life of the apostle John, probably about 96 A.D.

PLACE — The island of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea, twenty four miles southwest of Asia Minor.

"John to the seven churches that are in Asia." Asia refers to the provincial province of that name, in Asia Minor, consisting of Phrygia, Mysia, Caria, and Lydia, at the western edge of Asia Minor fronting on the Aegean Sea. The seven churches are those enumerated in chapters, 2 and 3.

S. f. ETA ETAO ETAO ETAOOA
"Grace to you and peace, from him who is and who was and who is to come." Grace issues in peace. The name of God and Father here given was one revealed to Moses (Ex. 3:14 6:3). It is God's memorial name, even to generations yet unborn. "And from the seven Spirits that are before his throne." Here we have reference to the energies of the Holy Spirit. "The seven Spirits betoken the completeness and universality of working of God's Holy Spirit, as the seven churches typify and indicate the whole church.

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness." (See John 18:37) Christ was faithful in that he never adulterated or weakened or hid any part of the truth which God sent him to proclaim, being faithful unto his mission even to death. "The first-born of the dead." (See Col. 1:18) He is first of all those who will rise from the dead, especially as regards rank. "And the ruler of the kings of the earth." (See Psalm 89:27, Rev. 19:16) Christ has the right to sovereignty over all the kingdoms of the earth; some day he will exercise that right and take all the kingdoms unto himself to rule forever "Unto him that loveth us." Notice the present tense here: the love of Christ for you and me is just as great and deep today as the day when he died for us on the cross. "And loosed us from our sins by his blood." The love of a parent for a child, the love of a wife for a husband, would undertake to do every thing for the loved one's happiness and welfare, but it can never emancipate from sin. This only Christ can do in his redeeming sacrifice for us.

"And he made us to be a kingdom, and to be priests unto his God and Father and to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever." Christians reign in conquering their spiritual enemies and then in possession of the victory that overcometh the world. "Amen." This is a Hebrew word that literally means "to lean upon," and from it comes the word "to believe." By saying "Amen" in prayer, we do mean that the prayer offered by another is our prayer also.

"Behold, he cometh with the clouds. What a contrast between the humiliation and obscurity and poverty that attended his First Advent, and the glory and universal visibility that will characterize his Second Advent! "And every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him." (See John 19:37; Zech. 12:10) The persons intended in this expression are, beyond doubt, those who were his murderers. "And all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen." (Cf. Matt. 24:30) There will then be two kinds of mourning, the one due to the terror of an enemy, the other to the terror of the penitent.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God." These two words "Alpha" and "Omega" are the names of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, as though we should say the A and the Z. Christ is the beginning and the end.

"Who is and who is to come, the Almighty." He is almighty in sustaining his people, yet equally almighty in judgment on his enemies.

"John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom, and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos." Patmos was a little island in the Aegean Sea twenty-four miles south west of the coast of Asia Minor, and about ten miles long and six broad, barren, and for the most part very rocky. "For the word of God and the testimony of Jesus." This phrase probably indicates that John was banished to the island of Patmos because of preaching of the gospel of Christ.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." This is the only time in the New Testament that we have the phrase, "the Lord's day," and we may easily believe that it refers to the day we now call Sunday. And I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. (See also, 4:1). Possibly this was not the actual voice of the

Lord, but of some messenger of the Lord.

"Saying, what thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." These seven churches were all located in the provincial province of Asia, and are named here by John in a geographical circuit beginning with his own home city Ephesus, then going north to Smyrna and Pergamum, then southeast to Thyatira, and then south to Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Christ himself in verse 20 tells us that these lampstands are the seven churches. They are light-bearers to the world (Matt. 5:14), especially to a world that itself is darkness.

"And in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man." The title here given to Christ is one frequently occurring in Ezekiel and Daniel and is used more than eighty times in the Gospels, always, with two exceptions, by Christ himself. It is a title which sets forth the human element of our Savior's character. "Clothed with a garment down to the foot." The garment to the feet suggests the right to govern and to judge and it is the robing of judicial authority, not the robing of the priest. Christ is here seen having sole right to pronounce verdict and sentence on all the services that the church renders.

"And girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle." (See Isa. 11:5; Dan. 10:5) Girt loins tell of readiness for action, but girt breasts of the repose of sovereignty and of intense affection.

"And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow." (See Dan. 7:9; Isa. 40:28) His is the age that is not aged, and the beauty of holiness which are eternal. "And his eyes were as a flame of fire." The

fire is symbolic of God's presence, of God's glory, of judgment on the wicked, of penetration and knowledge. And nothing can be hid from that gaze.

"And his feet unto burnished brass as if it had been refined in a furnace. Brass is invariably the type of the strength and the furnace of fire is a symbol of purity.

"And his voice was as the voice of many waters." The noise of the sea is as the noise of irresistible strength and powerful, deep and majestic.

"And he had in his right hand seven stars." In verse 20 Christ tells us these stars are the angels of the seven churches, i.e., they are Christ's messengers set for witnessing in the respective assemblies by his appointing. "And out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword." The word of God has power to penetrate through every shield and device behind which man attempts to hide from God's scrutiny and judgment. "And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." This same dazzling glory was noticed when our Lord was transfigured in the days of his earthly ministry (Matt. 17:2); a spectacle that John, the author of this book, would well remember.

"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead." So other great servants of God have been similarly affected by a revelation of divine glory, as Isaiah (6:5), Ezekiel (1:28) Daniel (8:17). "And he laid his right hand upon me saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last." What infinite mercy there is revealed here! Christ does not want his own to be afraid in his presence, but to worship and adore him, and to wait for his commands.

"And the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore." Every man could at one time say, I was living and alive, but this one had lived and had died and was alive again. And not only again, but he was alive for evermore. He was the eternal and everlasting one. "And I have the keys of death and of Hades and if the keys of all the world — supernal and infernal, swing at the girdle of the Son of God, then we do know and know for certain that all those kingdoms will be administered in accordance with the most immaculate justice and the most perfect love.



The Book Shelf

BY MAIR M. MORGAN

"Reasons For Anger," by Robert Briffault (The Musson Book Company, Ltd., Toronto) \$3.00. Fourteen essays by the author of "Europa" — one of the best-selling novels of last year. It seems this book owes its title to Harold Nicholson, who in reviewing one of Mr. Briffault's books, complained, "There is no reason why Mr. Briffault should get so angry."

To which Mr. Briffault replies, "Social progress has invariably been the outcome of anger called forth by abuse." Whether or not Mr. Briffault felt abused by Mr. Nicholson's remark and "Reasons For Anger" is the result, we are not certain. But we certainly do appreciate the fact that he has written these fourteen essays discussing the stupidity of man, caused, Mr. Briffault argues, by the primitive vested interests, especially superstition, evolutionized into a formal religion.

Those who have read his classic works, *The Mothers*, and *Rational Evolution*, know him as one of the great living anthropologists to whom the proper study of mankind is man.

Only the first half of this book presents the case against the human race—for instance we read: "While rational intelligence has gone on increasing at compound interest, primitive stupidity has remained to all intents and purposes as stupid in 1936 as it was at the dawn of time . . ."

The venerable institution which constitute the firm of Man, Inc., preserve the virginal bloom of primitive stupidity, while intelligence goes on accumulating in individual men and women."

This is one side of the question, then he gives us hope by declaring— "Today a great nation which has made momentous contributions to civilization, has sunk into sheer, unmitigated barbarism—if it be not an insult to the barbarian to compare him to Nazi Germany. But it is unlikely that mankind as a whole will have to pass through such an ordeal."

Mr. Briffault gives his reason for this hope by stating—"It is unlikely because human intelligence is unmeasurably better equipped more widely diffused, more secure and more resourceful than it was when the first European civilization fell."

One may not agree — on first reading — with many statements

made by Mr. Briffault — but a second and third reading convinces the reader that there is more intelligence prevalent today—but it takes an individual as vital as Mr. Briffault to point this out. A book strongly recommended for those who like reading matter which causes a certain amount of cerebration.

"The Foundation of Civilization" by Will Durant (The Musson Book Company, Ltd., Toronto) \$1.29, offers some interesting reading for such a low price. Ever since the first volume of Will Durant's *Story of Civilization*, was published a year ago, the publishers have been asked to reprint the first section of it which was entitled *The Establishment of Civilization*. It is in response to this widespread demand that the present volume is issued.

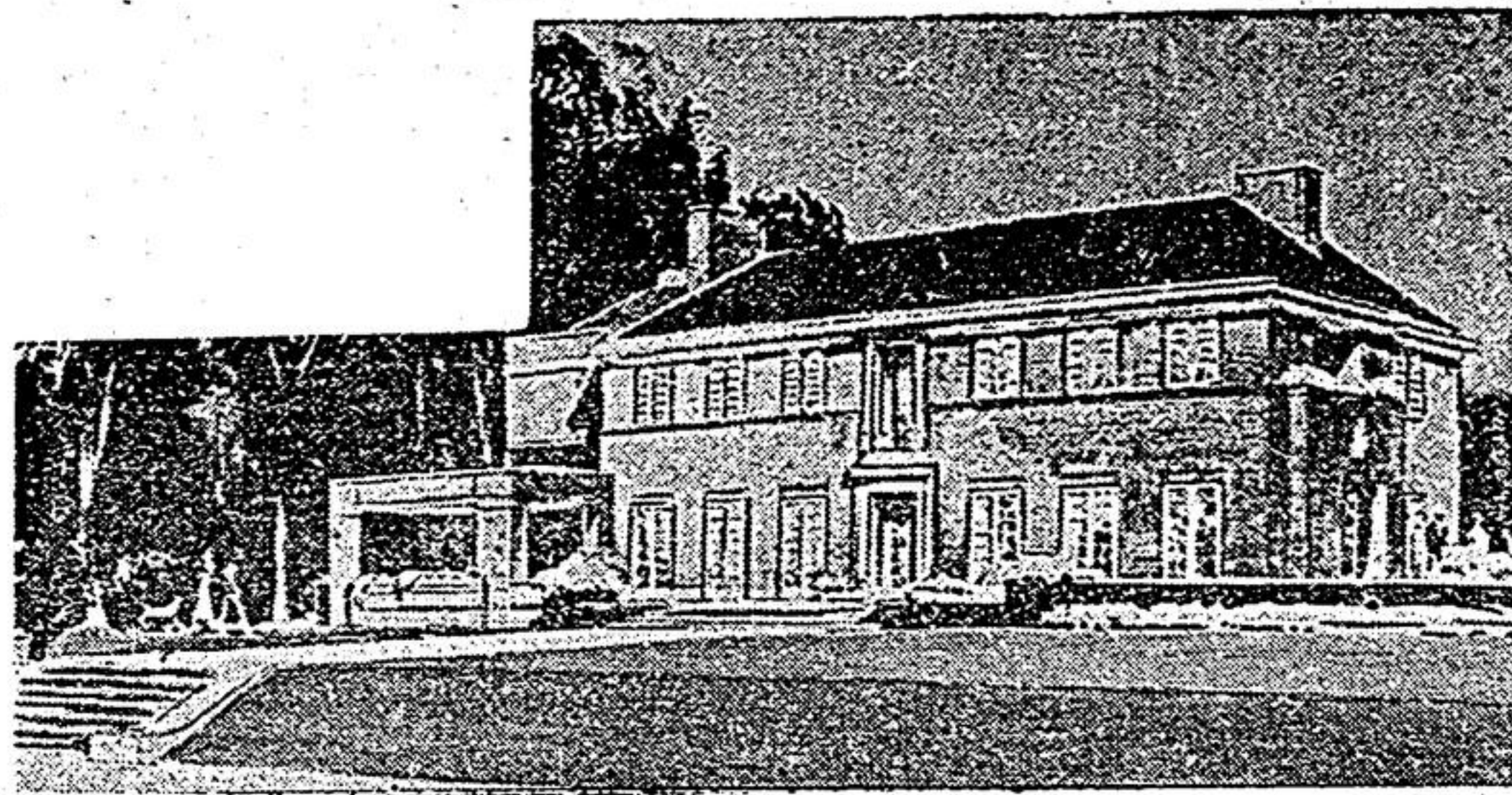
About twenty years ago, Will Durant planned to write a history of civilization in the nineteenth century. He discovered, as he proceeded, that his subject could be understood only in terms of what had come before. His researches gradually led him into the formation of a plan for writing a history of all civilization, ancient and modern, occidental and oriental. The present volume is a preface to the complete work which will be issued within the next fifteen years.

High praise is due Mr. Durant, as he has used a clear, lucid, simple style—an excellent handbook for school libraries.

"Compromise" by Ruby M. Ayres (The Musson Book Company, Ltd., Toronto) is the latest offering from this author's prolific pen, and her readers will not be disappointed in this tale of a very modern girl and her battle for happiness.

"Saint Overboard" by Leslie Charteris (The Musson Book Co., Limited, Toronto) recounts the latest adventure of that reformed character known as "The Saint." We fear that there was a tendency to slip from the paths of righteousness in this latest escapade, but he stands by the law, at the end. Quick, alive narrative, carries you along to a smashing climax, and you can't lay the book down until you have finished this latest "Saint" adventure.

Occupant Of Gift Mansion Selected



Admiral Sir Reginald Tupper, retired, has been named by King Edward to occupy "The King's House", presented by the Royal Warrant Holders' Association to the late King George as a silver Jubilee gift.

A Leviathan Hobby



The four years spent between laying her keel and her launching are considered well spent by Frank Swetnick, Los Angeles mechanic, as he toils with his model of the Leviathan which he built to scale. It has everything the original has, even the 984 portholes. It is seven feet long.

Habit Isn't Hidden Behind Smoke Screen



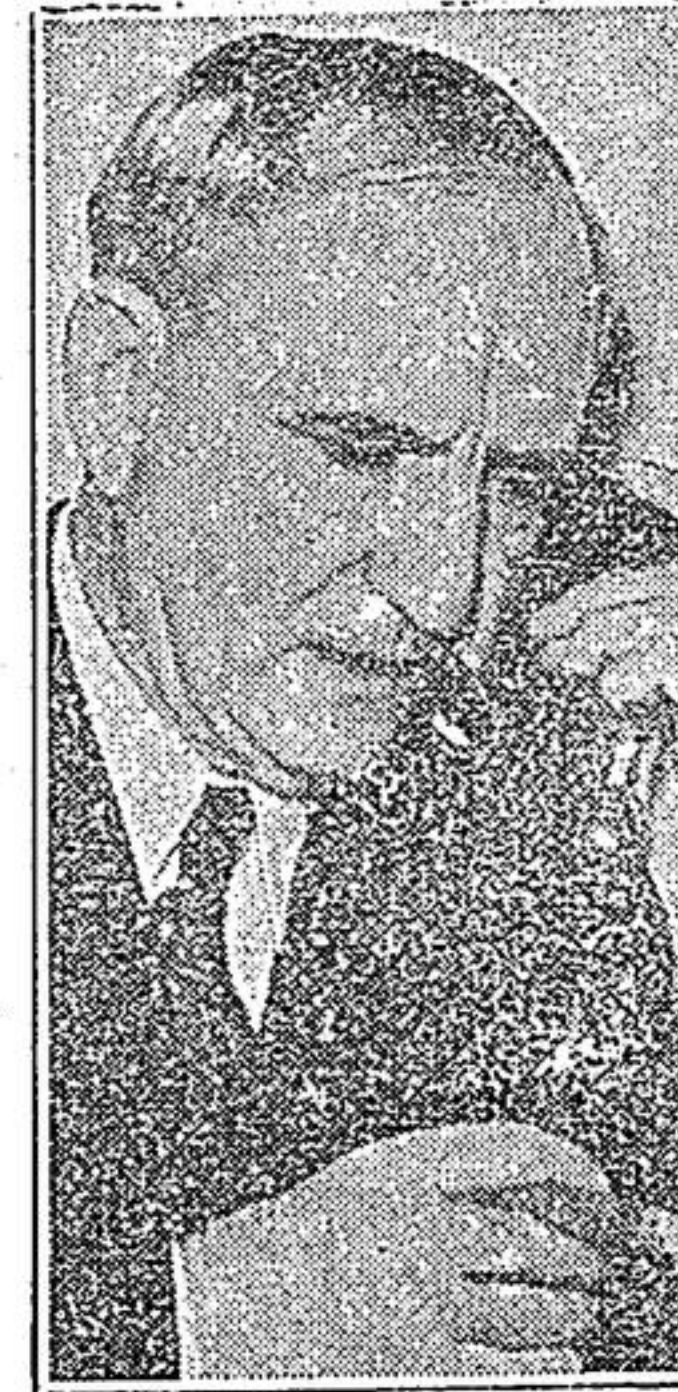
It's just one of those things, is the philosophical attitude of Mrs. Joseph Francis Noon, 2nd, of Fairview, N.J., as she lights pipe for Joe, her 2-year-old son who is an inveterate smoker. He must have his pipe or parents can't do a thing with him. He started by imitating daddy.

Patently Interested In the Conversation



Secretary of Commerce Daniel Roper (left) listens intently to Dr. C. F. Kettering, toastmaster at dinner held in Washington D.C., to celebrate the centennial of the American patent system.

Pleads For Alaskans



Col. O. P. Ohlson, Alaska railroad manager, pictured in San Francisco as he sought ships to transport food to Alaska, which has been badly hit by maritime strike. Government may transport needed foodstuffs.

Fashionable In Silk



Pictured above is an afternoon dress of black silk duvetine with a crepe scarf, that ties in the back. Note horizontal silk satin bands at bottom of jumper.

The Statistical "Average" Man

A writer in the Ottawa Journal has drawn a picture of an Average Canadian, observes the Winnipeg Tribune. It is a cheerful picture of a very likeable cuss who works fairly hard, plays the game decently, and does not take life too seriously.

It is evident the writer did not gather his information from the census returns of the Dominion bureau of Statistics. Had he done so he would have been overcome with despair. It is such a minently practical document. It is also impersonal. Nevertheless it seems to breathe a wholesome contempt on the part of its compilers for all of us. "God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man"; this seems to be the spirit with which they have recorded our physical existence in the columns headed "male" and "female" as the case may be.

What sort of creature is "the average man" depicted by the census bureau and the insurance actuary? He is a strange, elusive creature. Yet the statisticians claim to know all about him. They will tell how much he weighed at birth, how tall he was at 15, at what age he marries, how many years he has to live. They can even tell us within certain limits of what he will die. They can tell us for any given year how many of us are living, how many die, and how many are in the Senate. Yet we never seem to meet the average man.

Neither are we the average man ourselves. We know instinctively that we are not merely something different, but something also greatly superior. "What a piece of work is a man," wrote Shakespeare. "How noble in reason; how infinite in faculty; in action, how like an angel; in apprehension, how like a god; the beauty of the world; the paragon of animals!" That's us.

But the statisticians engaged in their nefarious craft are too busy to read Shakespeare. So they continue chugging us to our average; and so submerge us. However, it is useless for the statistician to argue:

"Why should a man desire in any way, To vary from the general race of men?"

This is precisely the desire that all men and women cherish. But until the statisticians wake up to the fact that the mind's standard of the man, we must bear the quinquennial slight of being recorded merely as male and female persons.

Roosevelts Are Normal Family

Members Typically American In Desire to Lead Own Lives

WASHINGTON.—The romance of Franklin Roosevelt, Jr., and Miss Ethel du Pont of the anti-New Deal du Ponts provides another argument for those who hold that America's "first family" is also America's typical family, write an observer.

That the President's third son should become engaged to a niece of men who spent thousands of dollars trying to elect Governor Landon emphasizes the Roosevelt's practice of applying a typically American tenet—"Live your own life."

The "normality" of the first family is mirrored at Hyde Park, where father carves the Christmas turkey, in the boys' occasional brushes with traffic officers, in the christening of a new grand-daughter, in a couple of trips, to the divorce courts, in picnics with hot dogs and mustard, in the family pew at church.

Nearly four years as the first family has not been removed the naturalness of a natural family, one in which each had a mind of his own and knew how he wanted to live. Each of the Roosevelts—observing, of course, demands of his high station—has managed to preserve his individuality.

Typical instances: John parks a battered automobile at the White House door and wears old clothes when he feels like it.

Elliott buys a Texas ranch, fusses with Texas young Democrats, gets a new job and a new wife and comes home to family dinners.

James mingles with crowds, sells insurance, makes speeches goes fishing; enjoys being his father's pal.

Mrs. Roosevelt scrambles eggs in a chafing dish goes down into a coal mine to look things over, builds furniture and makes a speech.

The president goes fishing, eats a hamburger and runs a nation. It's an American family. They lead their own lives.

Banks in Egypt will encourage new industries by acting as promoter and financier, participating in the management, and rendering technical assistance in the building and equipping of factories.

Egypt is promoting the production of beeswax.