

WHAT PEACE CONFERENCE NEEDS

By William T. Ellis.

*This International Sunday School Lesson for April 20 is an Easter Lesson, "Our Risen Lord."—Matt. 28:1-10.

After weeks with the Peace Conference in Paris, and intense days in old Rome, I am waiting by the Mediterranean, down by the heel of Italy's boot, for a ship to Greece and writing about the Resurrection. This lesson has been more in my mind, for weeks past, than any I have treated for years. For it holds the master word for the Peace Conference and for the League of Nations.

All genuine men have a horror of "pious talk," the more stereotyped phraseology of religion. It is in no conventional or perfunctory sense that I set down the solemn conviction that is being formulated in Paris needs to make it vitally and permanently successful is nothing less than the resurrection message of a new life. It is well-nigh submerged by plans and projects, and by the contending claims of rival powers, whereas its one supreme lack is for an overwhelming common purpose of good will, unselfishness and spirituality.

One is shocked to find that the Continent of Europe, which bears the worst scars of the world war, and has suffered as never before in its war-torn history, is still animated by the old national ambitions and schemes of aggrandizement. It has not learned the first lesson of this catastrophe, that pride and power and material might lead only to bitter war; and that unselfish fraternity alone can bring to pass a better manner of life. The mud is not dry in the bloody trenches, and the debris of battle has not been gathered up (I have seen) before the nations are preparing for and talking of future wars.

After all, militarism does not kill militarism. For the moment, it is true, America and Great Britain are imposing upon the Conference the principles enunciated by President Wilson; but all who know aught of the inner life of the Peace Conference understand full well that the League of Nations idea, and all that it connotes, is winning only by virtue of the fact that the English-speaking delegates, supported by some of the little nations, wield the most power.

Archaeology's Oldest Man. All of which means something religious that is tremendous. It strikes at the root of life. We have been for four and a half years testing society to its foundations. Everything has been in the crucible. Now we take the results of our investigations and philosophy to Paris, and we find that there is no new solution of our old riddles. The word has not pointed a way out of the wilderness. We have broken the power of Germany for the present, but we have

not conquered the state of mind which made Germany what she was. In passing, let us not overlook the significance of the bearing of this upon the favorite highbrow theory that humanity will gradually learn the big lessons, and so grow up into an advanced state of development, both personal and social. In Paris we found leaders freshly graduated from the red school of war who are pinning their faith for to-morrow upon military prowess. It is vain to expect mankind to lift itself by its own bootstraps.

One of my Paris friends is an archaeologist who has the distinction of having discovered the old archaeological man—that is, the human remains representing the remotest known period within which the race had progressed to the stage of having personal possessions. "I was much disappointed to find," said he, "that we have not advanced a particle upon this oldest civilized man. In brain power and in physical structure he was quite the equal of man to-day. I had to abandon all beliefs in human evolution as a means of social progress. We have not got anywhere essentially by physiological processes of development in all these thousands of years."

Of all the futile words with which bookishness deludes the race, the most fatuous is the teaching that human society will evolve by natural growth into a better and finally into the perfect state. We have to look elsewhere than to the scientist for the message that will save the world.

As the President Said in Rome. More than five thousand books were taken to Paris by the American commissioners. Only one, though, is needed to speak the word of words, which is that power for the new life, for man individually and in the mass, comes from without and is divinely imparted. It is the truth of the resurrection: the old power of death defeated by the risen Christ, who gives to all who will share it his own resurrection power to conquer evil nature and to win to a resurrection life of strength and love and ministry.

When President Wilson was in Rome he asked the Protestant pastors to meet with him in conference; and an informal little gathering was held in the vestry of the Scotch Presbyterian Church. It lasted longer than the President's interview with the pope, his fellow believer, the President told these ministers that he could not have done the work that has been given him to do without divine aid, and without the prayers of Christian people.

Slowly the Christian world has wakened up to a realization of the truth that the Wilson ideals, which now hold mankind everywhere in discipleship, are nothing more nor less than the application to present conditions of the Gospel of the risen Christ. What he is now saying, in a language new to statecraft, is real

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What the Church Misses. In the presence of the great hour that overshadows the world, with problems modern and ancient concentrated in one momentous meeting in Paris, the human heart instinctively longs for an enlightenment and an assistance more than human. Baffled by our thronging perplexities, we turn to religion, and, lo, we find the ecclesiastical leaders of the organized church pattering and putting about money-raising projects, and the other conventionalities of the old routine, as if humanity had not been afresh in a Garden of Sorrows, and as if the penniless Christ and his equally poor apostles had never founded a Church upon something more worth while than silver and gold. "Church work" has become almost a synonym for raising funds. It would be a brave thing if the Christian Church would dare to try to get along for at least a year without any money—the army of salaried workers turning aside to some sort of tent-making. Perhaps such an ascetic experience would enable ecclesiastical leaders to discern how real is the danger that we may enshrine a golden calf upon our holiest altars. A few days ago the greatest of our chaplains, as he is of English speaking religious leaders, declared to me that organizations like the Y.M.C.A. must divorce themselves from depen-

dence upon money, and men of wealth.

Heart-breakingly, the Church so often misses her opportunity, as do also we who are her members. She has a spiritual gift. The resurrection message is here, and the resurrection power. In a time that is dying for lack of life—pining for spiritual satisfaction we are as dumb as the deaf concerning the sublime reality. Why do we not press pre-eminently the truth of a living, risen, sufficient Christ? It is not a new religion that we need, but more of the Son of God who lived our life and died our death that he might enable us to share his resurrection, now and forever.

A Reminder From Rome. Rome is a city of ruins that remain to remind us of Imperial Caesars. What toppled over that unparalleled dominion? The simple news of a crucified, risen Saviour. One of the characteristic sights of Rome, which is somewhat grotesque from an artistic standpoint, is yet full of symbolism; the pre-Christian obelisk and pillars that have been surrounded by bronze crosses. Paul in the Mamertine prison, a dark and terrible dungeon which the visitors to-day may see, had more power than Nero in his golden palace; and he is to-day held in great honor. For he spoke a living message, whereas Nero merely wielded material force.

What all the world needs to-day above everything else is to know the truth of the Gospel that transforms life into newness and love and power and peace; which is the resurrection message. Our times do not call for a new religion, but only for a new expression of the old reality that Christ, who rose from the dead, can take those poor, grave-bound lives and give them the very glory of immortality. The resurrection message—"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above"—can do more for the world than the Paris Conference or the League of Nations.

MAKES PLAYS FROM BOOKS. Edward E. Rose Another Successful Canadian. The production of "Cappy Ricks" in New York recently added one more to the long list of novels, stories or groups of stories which have been dramatized by Edward E. Rose, although he has written also an un-ubiquitous number of original plays, mostly of a minor nature, is probably the readiest and most prolific dramatizer of the word may be coined among contemporaneous playwrights. For years he was officially attached to Charles Frohman's staff in this capacity after a successful period of several seasons he is now again coming to the front in his old specialty. "Penrod," made from Booth Tarkington's stories was his; there is "Cappy Ricks," based upon Peter B. Kyne's stories, "Fish," built around Mary Roberts Rinehart's, "The Carberry stories," has been written by Rose and May Robson, and his dramatization of Mrs. Rinehart's "The Amazing Adventure" may yet see the footlights, despite the fact that it is a war play. As for the total number of his dramatic writings, it is literally beyond computation.

It is not generally known that Edward E. Rose is a Canadian by birth, although he has become a naturalized American citizen. He was born in Stanstead, Quebec, and spent his youth in that town and upon the farms of our most primitive province. Then when he took it into his head that he would like to become connected with the theatre, he went to the United States and arrived in Boston in the early eighties, fresh from a Canadian farm. For four years he acted for a few dollars a week (never more than twelve) in the Boston Mutual Stock Company. Here he wrote a pair of plays which found production in traveling repertory companies, and also had the honor of supporting Richard Mansfield who came to the theatre as visiting star in the first production on any stage of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Still an actor, he made his way in 1889 to New York, and while playing eight times a week in a melodrama called "My Jack," at the People's Theatre on the Bowery, New York, he acted four afternoons in the original production of "Little Lord Fauntleroy," which was being played at the Madison Square Theatre. In the scant idle hours between these appearances he managed to write a series of boys' stories for a juvenile publication, and a play called "The Westerner" as well. It was this play which reached the stage under the title "Jim, the Westerner," that finally introduced Rose to the stage as a dramatist. For a number of years he made a comfortable income writing melodramas in the popular vein, in which John Milner was wont to speak in the so-called palmy days. He broke into more dignified company when he dramatized a novel by Dumas and called it "Captain Paul." Since that time Rose has worked as a dramatizer of novels, and he must hold something of a record in this line. Here are the well-known books that he has put into stage form: "The Gadfly," "David Harum," "Richard Carvel," "Janice Meredith," "Eben Holden," "Alice of Old Vincennes," "A Gentleman from Indiana," "John Henry" and "The Bonary," besides a host of other best sellers that have since been forgotten. Dramatized novels ceased to be popular for a number of seasons, but evidently Mr. Rose is finding it profitable to return to his workshop once again.

Lighthouse-keepers. Miss C. Dixon, of Rousseau, Ont., and Mrs. Lee Melancon, a widow, have been appointed keepers respectively of the Lighthouse at Rousseau Point and Church Point, N.S., Miss Dixon, who is in her twenty-second year, succeeding her late father. The Civil Service Commission found that the salaries paid were "not large enough to attract men applicants in the present time of labor shortage."

The military are stopping every one at the outskirts of Limerick, where barriers have been erected. The streets of the city are crowded, but so far no disorder has taken place.

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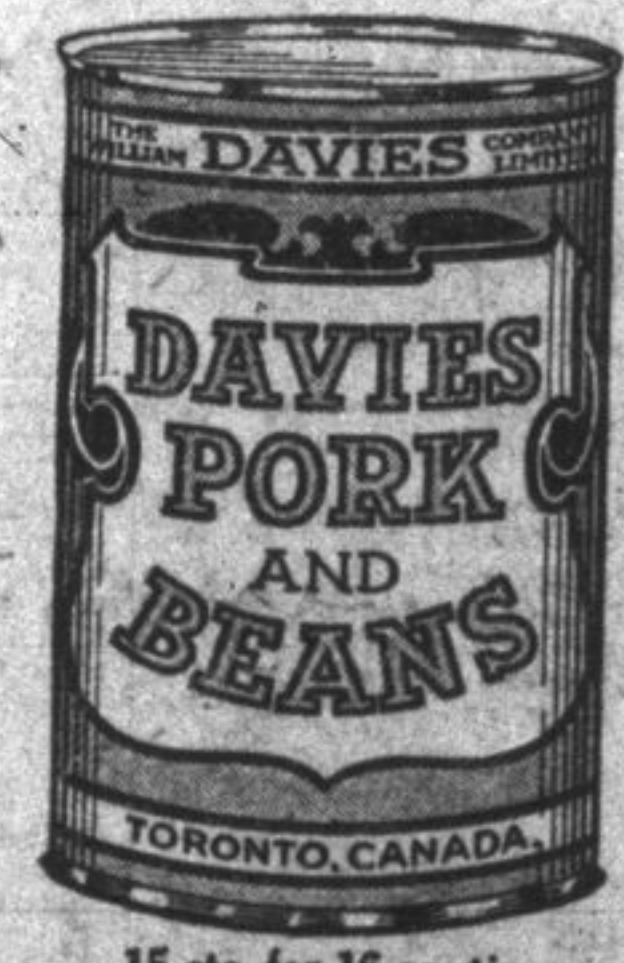
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