

# ONE MAN'S OPINION

By THOMAS A. DAVIS

YI 1953

**C**RITICALLY Jerry Willoughby examined the patch on the sock he had just finished darning. "I can't say that it looks exactly professional, but at least it's better than the hole."

He turned to replace in his desk lamp the light bulb he had been using as a darning "egg," when the door burst open and his roommate, Max Barclay, strode in. "Well, that's that for another week," he exclaimed, throwing on the bed the books he had been carrying.

"My, you sound peculiarly pleased for one so entranced with schoolwork," Jerry said banteringly.

"Oh, how can anyone study with weather like this? Why, just look at it," Max exclaimed. He went to the window and looked out. "Look at the trees and the grass and the sky. A fellow ought to get out and enjoy nature on such a wonderful spring day as this; that's what he ought to do."

"Well, well, listen to our young friend wax poetically eloquent." These words came from their bosom friend, Peter Roy, who had entered the room just in time to hear Max's speech. "But I agree with you," he went on, "especially when you have to sit in on dry old classes like Bible doctrines for forty-five minutes."

"Yes, and look at the long reading assignment Pastor Sewell gave us from Mrs. White's writings. My, that stuff is dry. How can anyone get interested in it?"

"But, fellows," exclaimed Jerry, sounding somewhat shocked, "Mrs. White's books are inspired."

Max sobered down somewhat. "Yes, I guess they are, but I still say they're dry, and I just can't get interested in them."

There was silence for

a moment, then Jerry spoke slowly, "I have often thought the same thing myself. I can't help it, but it does seem to be pretty heavy stuff, even if it is inspired—heavy, at least, for young people like us."

"I guess you have to be a preacher or something to find the Spirit of prophecy writings interesting. Maybe we will when we get older," said Peter. And the others nodded a thoughtful assent.

The next spring found the three boys no longer at college. Max and Peter wore the uniforms of the Canadian Army, and Jerry that of the Royal Canadian Air Force. More than two years were to pass, and not a few adventures were to be the lot of each of them, before they should be together again.

Jerry joined the medical branch of the R.C.A.F., and shortly after his hospital training was given the opportunity of going overseas, which he accepted.

In a few short weeks he was aboard a troop carrier, bound for the shores of war-scarred England.

Meanwhile, his Christian experience had suffered. Association with dance-loving,

movie-going Air Force men had undermined his standards, and soon he himself was attending places of worldly pleasure.

After spending three weeks at the delightful, if bomb-pocked and barbed-wired, seaside resort of Bournemouth, he was sent to north England, where he was connected with a hospital on an Air Force bomber station.

Here he found that the only entertainment was movies, dances, and the "pubs," as the saloons are called in Britain.

Under these circumstances his background of Christian training asserted itself, and he decided that at least he was not going to attend the dances and the pubs, so, as a pastime, he turned to an old love, books. As he began to read, God placed in his heart a desire for something better than novels. Finding the address of the Book and Bible House at Watford, he wrote asking for two or three books. One of the books he ordered was *Messages to Young People*, by Ellen G. White.

With his newly recovered desire for

To page 18



Canadian Army Photo

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something better, as well as a certain amount of curiosity, Jerry began to read *Messages to Young People*. And as he read, the Spirit of God impressed its message upon his heart. He found its pages packed with absorbing and striking sentences that gripped his soul and gradually but surely changed his thinking and his whole outlook.

His Air Force friends soon began to notice a difference, and as time went on they learned to respect the lad who would do only certain duties on Saturday, and was generally so different from everybody else.

Today as Jerry leafs over his *Messages to Young People*, he can almost trace through its pages the course of his new conversion. Underlined sentences here and there tell of how God spoke to him particularly in their words.

"If the youth will seek Christ, He will make their efforts effectual."—Page 18.

"You are to refuse to be in subjection to the power of evil."—Page 30.

"Satan knows better than God's people the power that they can have over him, when their strength is in Christ."—Page 51.

And on page 95 are the words that meant so much to him in that experience, and still do: "Yes, tell it in words full of cheer, that no one who perseveringly climbs the ladder will fail of gaining an entrance into the heavenly city."

Jerry's ideas of the writings of the Spirit of prophecy are vastly different now from what they were when he sat in that college room and called them dry. No, he is not old. Far from it. But he found through reading them that God spoke to his heart and led him to a new experience.

And so Jerry would like to say to all young people who read these words: "If you think that Mrs. White's writings are dry and uninteresting, take up *Messages to Young People* and read. Read with a sincere desire to receive a blessing and a lift in your experience. If that is your prayerful desire, God will answer your prayer, and you will find that the Spirit of prophecy is interesting after all. That is my opinion."