

**IMPROVED
UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL
SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON**

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D.
Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago
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Lesson for May 25

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WHY NATIONS PERISH

LESSON TEXT—II Kings 17:5-12, 22, 23; Isaiah 28:14.
MEMORY SELECTION—For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish.—Psalm 1:6.

Nations as well as people come to crossroads in their history, and taking the wrong road then means future disaster. Solomon had built up great national prosperity, but at the expense of heavy taxes. He had forgotten God, and was succeeded by a son who followed in his footsteps.

Offered an opportunity to ease the burden of the people (I Kings 12:14), Rehoboam in his folly made it greater, and the nation was divided. The ten northern tribes, which were henceforth to be known as Israel, followed Jeroboam, and the two southern tribes under Rehoboam became the kingdom of Judah.

Jeroboam started with God's favor, and might have led his people aright, but instead he became the king whose name stood for wickedness (see II Kings 15:18). The story of that downfall is a sad picture of unbelief and failure.

Through varied experiences and under different kings, Israel had gone down, down, down in its history of sin and departure from God.

I. Doomed by Sin (II Kings 17:5-12, 22, 23).

The hour had struck when God's heavy hand of judgment had to fall on them. Verse 6 relates their carrying away into captivity to Assyria, and verses 7-9 tell us the reason for that judgment.

Ingratitude for God's blessing (v. 7) led to the worship of other gods (v. 8). They knew God's hatred for the sin of idolatry, and his judgment upon those who walked in that way, but they went right on.

Note in verse 9 that these things were done "secretly." "The same thing is true today of many who profess to be the people of God. The line of demarcation between the church and the world is not clearly drawn. We do well to note carefully the outcome of this course of procedure on Israel's part (vv. 6, 18). The fact that Israel did these things secretly did not hide them from the eyes of Jehovah (Ps. 139:1, 2; Heb. 4:13)" (John W. Bradbury).

The statement in verse 23 is a striking one. The prophets had repeatedly spoken of the impending destruction of the nation. Now the time had come that the Lord could no longer stand to look upon their sin, and in a sense put them "out of his sight." That does not mean that they had been forgotten or that God was not watching over them in mercy and love, but that he had to judge them for their sins, and for a time bring them into judgment leading to repentance.

There is always a reason for a nation's deterioration, and with Israel there were many reasons. Outstanding among them is the one for which they were rebuked by Isaiah in the verses of our lesson, namely, drunkenness.

II. Deceived by Drink (Isa. 28:1-4).

The picture here is a graphic one. The leaders of Israel (here called Ephraim) lingered long over their bowls of wine, and in their drunken stupor gloried in the fact that Samaria, their capital city, was so situated at the head of a valley that it was not only beautiful but practically safe from attack by the enemy.

The drunkards spoke with pride of their nation and of Samaria its "crown." The description was apt, for it was beautifully situated on a hill surrounded by a fertile terraced hillside. But their boasting was vain, for after a bitter three years' siege, the city eventually fell to Sargon II of Assyria.

All this has a familiar sound. We think of the nations that have gone down to oblivion even while the people engaged in foolish levity, and in the awful stupefying and degrading use of alcohol.

Remember the fall of France in the recent World War when its own leaders said that the defeat could be largely attributed to the tremendous increase in the use of alcoholic liquor.

What about our own United States? With an annual liquor bill of about eight billion dollars, saloons on almost every corner, liquor flowing freely in hotels and restaurants, bottles and cases of it being brought into the home, booze the common medium of not only social but business relations, our insane asylums so crowded with alcoholics that the poor inmates have no real care—but why go on? It is a picture so appalling and so utterly distressing that every sensible person is shocked by it.

Do we think that God can long withhold his judgment upon a people blessed by all his many bounties, and yet using them for destruction of body and soul? Can a people continue to be strong which is determined to undermine itself by the use of alcohol?

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The Scourge of Fire

Fire, which is indispensable to man's well-being, is also one of his most cruel and deadly enemies when uncontrolled. Each year about 10,000 men, women and children lose their lives by fire in the United States.

Every year more than four times as many children are killed by fire as fall victims to infantile paralysis, and for every child burned to death three more are scarred and maimed.

The nation is shocked by such disasters as the recent explosion and fire at Texas City, which took 500 or more lives; the Wine-coff hotel tragedy in Atlanta, with 119 killed; the La Salle hotel fire in Chicago, with 61 victims, and others with less heavy tolls of death. But appalling as such disasters are, they account for only a small fraction of the total deaths by fire, most of which occur in the homes of the nation.

In addition to the loss in human lives, fire takes a heavy toll in property destruction, reaching nearly \$600,000,000 last year, one of the highest in our history. President Truman warned recently that property losses by fire may reach an even greater total this year.

Responsibility for the terrible destruction of lives and property by fire rests upon every citizen, and most of us are guilty of carelessness at times. Many laws passed for the protection of the public are not obeyed. A check-up in Washington, D. C., some time ago revealed that 1,633 of 3,500 buildings inspected were violating the fire laws.

Only the utmost vigilance in the homes and business places by all can serve to reduce the ever present fire hazards.

Two Years Ago

This month marks the second anniversary of Germany's unconditional surrender on which final terms were signed in Berlin.

News of the surrender was hailed with joy throughout the Allied countries, and high hopes were entertained for a lasting peace in Europe. The long diplomatic struggle between Russia and the Western Allies—the settlement of which is still far away—was not foreseen at that time.

In the two years which have elapsed since V-E Day, relations between the Soviet Union and its former war allies have become progressively more strained, until now it appears doubtful that any agreement of a permanent nature can be reached among them.

At the end of the war, Russia stood high in the esteem of the other Allied nations, because of the valiant fight the Red Army had made against the common enemy, and the terrible losses she had suffered were fully appreciated. There was a disposition to show every consideration to Russia's claims in all respects.

It soon became evident, however, that Stalin and Molotov would not be satisfied with reasonable settlements of the various problems that arose. It also became plain that they did not intend to carry out important pledges made at Yalta and Potsdam.

Representatives of the United States and Britain labored with great patience to obtain the co-operation of Russia, even to the extent of appeasement in certain matters, particularly with respect to reparations. When these efforts failed to change the hostile Soviet attitude, a firmer policy was adopted, and at the recent

Moscow conference Secretary Marshall stood out against further exorbitant demands, and the conference ended in another deadlock.

Thus the bright hopes of two years ago have all but vanished, and none can tell what the future holds for Europe and the world.

Sidelights

Like buttons, people keep popping off at the wrong time—and how we know from experience.

Even the old jingles change, now it is: "Mary had a little wolf, she fleeced him white as snow."

The hot dog is the noblest of all dogs, some wag has pointed out, because it feeds the hand that bites it.

One of the most valuable pieces of information we have picked up lately is that it is estimated that each locomotive toot costs the operating company one-third of a cent.

The older a man grows the more he gives thought to his own position and begins to doubt the wisdom of killing himself with overwork in order that his children may have an easy time of it after he has cashed in his chips.

Happy with receipt of an application for a position as maid, a housewife, according to the Christian Herald, took time out to interview the prospective employee. After the usual questions as to ability and a statement of what would be expected of her, the lady asked the applicant if she had any religious views. "No," she said, "but I have some good pictures of the Great Lakes and Niagara Falls."

Canned Pickled Crab Apples for Your Winter Meals

Just the thing to serve with a rich roast of meat or fowl are Crab Apple Pickles. Several jars should be canned for use with winter meals, when heavy foods are needed. This recipe comes from the universally used Ball Blue Book on home canning:

- 1 gallon crab apples
 - 6 to 8 cups sugar
 - 3 cups water
 - 4 cups vinegar
 - 1 stick cinnamon
 - 1 tablespoon crushed ginger
 - 1 tablespoon whole allspice
 - ½ tablespoon whole cloves
- Wash apples and pierce each with a needle. Heat sugar, liquids and spices (tied in bag) until sugar dissolves. Cool. Add apples and simmer until tender. Let stand several hours or overnight. Pack cold apples into hot jars. Boil the sirup to the desired thickness and pour over apples. Process five minutes in hot water bath. The amount of sugar may vary depending upon whether a fairly sweet or moderately sour pickle is desired, and from one-half to one-third of it may be corn sirup.

Corn Relish—Recipe for a Popular Hostess

Corn relish is one of those appetizing dishes we rarely enjoy unless we know someone who does home canning and invites us over for a meal. Popular hostesses find that it pays to include corn relish in their home canning plans. The Ball Blue Book recipe for this taste treat is as follows:

- 2 quarts corn
 - 1 quart chopped cabbage
 - 1 cup green sweet pepper
 - 1 cup sweet red pepper
 - 2 large onions
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 2 tablespoons ground mustard
 - 1 tablespoon mustard seed
 - 1 tablespoon salt
 - 1 tablespoon celery seed
 - 1 quart vinegar
 - 1 cup water
- Boil corn five minutes. Cold dip. Cut from cob. Measure. Chop and measure cabbage and peppers. Chop onions. Combine ingredients and simmer 20 minutes. (More salt and sugar may be added if needed.) Pack into hot jars. Seal at once.

Dear Contributor—When you have any news items for this paper, we kindly ask that you make our Wednesday noon deadline, if possible.

Villa Grove to Have Parade and Dance Memorial Day

There will be a Memorial Day parade and free dance at Villa Grove on Friday, May 30.

Fifty troops are coming from Chanute Field for the parade and will be guests of the people that day and night. The parade will start at 2 p. m. down main

street, and formal retreat will be held at the cemetery.

The free dance will be from 9 to 12 at the community building, with music by Bud Roderick and orchestra.

The event is planned and directed by Corporal C. W. Howard of the U. S. Army Recruiting Station, Champaign, and is sponsored by the merchants of Villa Grove.

Time Table
C. & E. I.

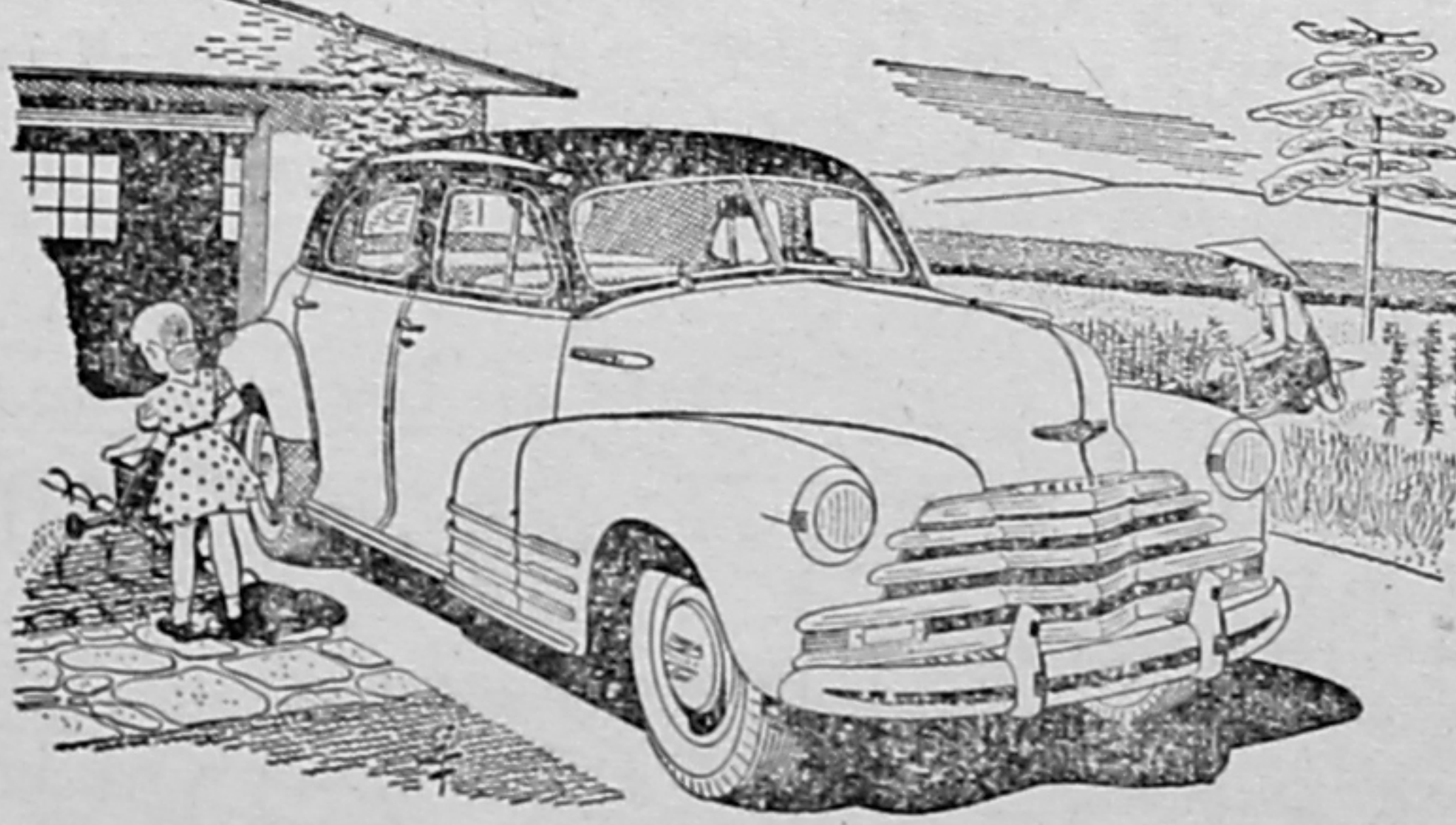
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3 MINUTE FICTION
LOVE WANTED
By E. Sheppard

WNU Features.
NAN KENNEDY peaked through the muslin curtains, looking anxiously down the street. There wasn't a sign of Lester coming yet, and she didn't know whether she was relieved or sorry.

After all, she was doing something very unorthodox, asking Professor Lester Thompson to call. What would he think? Regularly twice a month for two years, he had asked her to the movies, and those were red letter days highlighting the dullness of these past lonely years—10 of them—of school teaching.

She had merely said, when she had passed him in the hall of their school, that she had a peculiar problem, and could he—would he—that is, did he think he could call around this evening at about 8 o'clock, and give her some advice?

From her window Nan caught sight of Lester walking, with his usual dignified stride, through the gateway, and flew downstairs to intercept him, before her fellow lodgers came out of their rooms to peer at him, and, later, behind their closed doors, conjecture. She nervously conveyed him upstairs.

"Lester," she said determinedly, "Do you ever read the personal columns of the paper?"

"Sometimes. Why, Nan?"

"Well, I came across an advertisement I thought I would answer. But I wanted your advice, first."

"Advertisement? Are you a long-lost relative? By all means, an-

swer; you might come into a fortune. Frankly, I envy you—you don't know what it's like to be poor all the time."

She thrust a newspaper under his nose. He took it, rustled it into proper folds and read aloud: "Middle-aged man of means would like to meet respectable lady, 30-40, for companionship and ultimately marriage, if suitable. No triflers."

Lester jumped to his feet. "Nan!" he exclaimed. "Do look out; don't do it; he might be anything. You never know. It might be a racket."

"But, Lester, he might be sincere. It probably isn't a dignified way to get married—"

"I don't know what to say," Lester said, running his fingers through his hair. "Maybe you'd better take the chance."

Nan said nothing. Lester looked up suddenly. "How about Parker? That widower who is always taking you out? I thought you two, well, maybe—"

"Mr. Parker," said Nan firmly, "is a catch. There is also a catch to his proposal. Yes, he's an eligible widower, Lester, but he has four children. He likes me all right, but a wife is a lot less expensive than hiring a housekeeper. I've been too busy earning my own and my family's living for years, and now when I find time to have beaux, there just aren't any. What do I do?"

"That's almost like my predicament," Lester said thoughtfully. "Only I suppose it is different for a man, socially, that is. But I have supported and still do, quite a few elderly relatives. If I didn't, and if they didn't live with me, their old age pensions wouldn't be enough—you get the idea?"

She nodded in sympathy. "I'm telling you all this," he said, glaring at her, "so you'll know why I can't propose."

LOOKING AHEAD
BY GEORGE S. BENSON
President—Harding College
Searcy, Arkansas

Behind the Curtain
Too much misinformation has been circulated about Russia. A lot of this has been put into circulation by Russia. Some of it has come from fellow-travelers and other admirers of the Soviet experiment. There have been honest mistakes of American writers who have been unable to penetrate the mysteries behind the iron curtain. Prominent Americans who have "toured" Russia have too often become dupes of propaganda shows cleverly contrived for visiting eyes.

Gradually, however, facts are coming to light. Documented and unbiased studies are greatly needed, for they will dispose of many fallacies about the Soviets. Straight facts will set folks right who have accepted such boners as this one: There's no unemployment in Russia. It's quite true, but slave laborers have been estimated at 14,000,000. You see, unemployment insurance is not even necessary.

Facts Talk Loud
Such a factual study is the 141-page book, *Communism in Action*, prepared under direction of Congressman Dirksen of Illinois. Printed as a house document by the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress, the book may be obtained from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., for 25 cents. Copies are also distributed free by the American Wage Earners Foundation, Suite 605, 30 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, Ill.

Written in a simple, factual style, without the customary slanted or biased approach, the book should interest all Americans who have been confronted with the idea that "the State does the job better." The facts set forth therein do not call for elaboration or editorial bias. They talk loud enough to make a mighty good advertisement for the American way of life.

Special Privileges
Russian Communism theoretically envisions a classless society. On the basis of pay, the difference between the status of the wage earner and the manager is much greater there than in America. The many "special privileges and bonuses" that are distributed to the Soviet managers make this inequality more striking. The average wage of workers was reported in a pre-war year as approximately \$10 to \$12.50 a month.

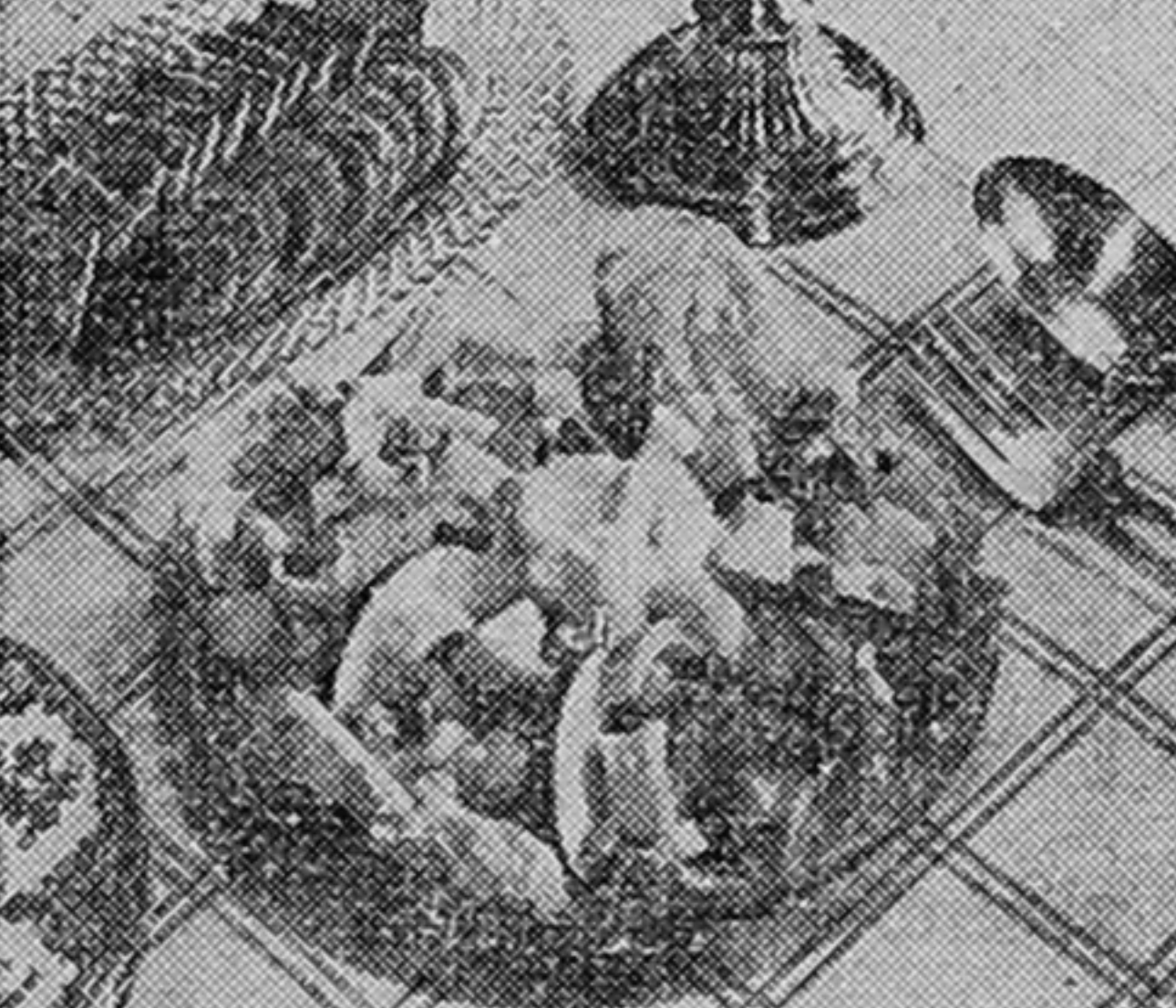
What about labor? Yes, in Russia labor is active and organized. Joining unions there is a political and economic necessity. Labor leaders are appointed by the ruling group, and their duties are to speed up production, to keep labor disciplined. Wages are not a subject for discussion or negotiation. There is no collective bargaining. Most Russian labor laws, rulings, and practices would be called "anti-labor" by American unions.

There are no minorities; there is no deviation from the "party line." The final decision of the people, in elections, must conform to the "party" decision. In the party, religion is equivalent to "superstitions and unscientific processes." Profits are a capitalistic phenomenon, and therefore go to the state alone. The vast profits of the Soviet do not go to the workers whose property they are said to be, but to further the expansion of "the Soviet of the future." Little wonder this study terms Communism a "theoretical failure."

Here's Bright Salad For Dreary Days

A bright salad for dreary days is this combination of crispy apples and crunchy peanuts, writes Marjorie Griffin, Rural Home editor of nationally-circulated *Copper's Farmer*.

"The family will enjoy helping themselves to the vitamin-packed treat served from a large bowl," she tells homemakers. "Or use in-



dividual salads for a pleasant change. For an appetizing touch garnish with peanuts and unpeeled slices of apples."

PEANUT WALDORF SALAD
1 c. apples, diced
1 c. celery, chopped
3/4 c. peanuts, chopped
2 tsp. salad oil
1/2 tsp. tarragon vinegar
1/2 tsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. paprika
1/8 tsp. pepper

Combine the apples, celery and peanuts. Mix remaining ingredients together thoroughly by beating with rotary beater. Blend this with first mixture. Let stand in the refrigerator until chilled. Serve on lettuce or other salad green. Mayonnaise may be added if desired. Serves 4.

Smile Awhile

If a buttercup is yellow, what color is a hiccup?
Burple.

Uncle Henpeck—You boys of today want too much money. Do you know what I was getting when I married your aunt?
Nephew—No and I'll bet you didn't either.

A crowd of admiring friends had gathered around the owner of a horse who had come in first at Santa Anita, Belmont, and Jamaica race tracks.

Will you race him in a derby?
asked one.

No, was the reply. He'll run bareheaded like the rest of them.

A woman testified in behalf of her son and stated that he had worked on the home farm ever since he was born. The opposing lawyer, who was desperately trying to break down her testimony, recalled this statement and demanded:

What did he do the first year?
He milked, was the reply.

A young lady, telephoning a music store, was connected by mistake with a garage.

Do you have "Two Red Lips and Seven Kisses?" she asked.

No, answered the garage, but we have two tom cats and seven kittens.

Is that a record? she asked.
Well, said the garage, we think it is.

A nurse in a mental hospital noticed a patient with his ear close to the wall, listening intently. The patient held up a finger as a warning to be quiet, then beckoned the nurse over and said, "Listen here?"

The nurse listened for some time then said, "I can't hear anything."

"No," said the patient, "and it's been like that all day."

A man rushed into a drug store and asked what to do to stop hiccups. His answer was a slap in the face.

Shocked and angry, the stranger demanded the reason for such action.

Well, replied the pharmacist grinning, you haven't any hiccups now, have you?

No, but my wife still has them out in the car.

What Is Light?

Light is an energy radiation caused by a disturbance of the electrons revolving about the nucleus of an atom, says Better Vision institute. A light ray is not continuous, but consists of an ack-ack of energy bullets, called photons. These bullets, so small as to be almost beyond belief, can move in space without losing energy. When they strike an object and are not reflected, they are converted into heat. The photons in blue and violet light rays have more energy than those making up the red rays.

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From where I sit ... by Joe Marsh
When Ed's Crops Failed
Three years ago Ed Smith's luck went bad. His crops failed, and it wasn't long before Ed's home and furnishings were up for auction. Half the town turned out, and Ed must have thought his neighbors were a bunch of hungry vultures—buying up all his precious possessions for a song. When it was over, and the auctioneer had left, Sam Abernathy turns to the crowd and says: "All right, folks, let's take time out for a glass of beer, and then put this stuff back where it belongs!"
Two hours later, Ed was in possession of his home and furnishings; and the folks who'd paid for them were sitting around Ed's fire enjoying a neighborly glass of beer—to show their friendship and their confidence in Ed. Today, Ed's back on his feet—another constructive member of the community. And from where I sit, we've all been well repaid—a good investment in a good man.
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