



SCOTLAND MEETS THE CHALLENGE

by John Henderson D.L., J.P., M.P.



WE live in fantastic times. We live in the age of nuclear fission, the age of world conflict, of fear, hatred, bitterness and division. Indeed, it is a wonder to me that we live at all! The world is in a ferment of intellectual confusion: men run hither and thither, seeking some magic formula for world unity, from which they hope to draw everlasting peace. In the end, the results are the same as they have always been: more confusion, more bitterness, more misunderstanding, and more division.

As Dr. Billy Graham has put it, men and women are engaged in a great quest—the quest for peace, for assurance, and in the last analysis for salvation. As he declared at his initial Press Conference in Glasgow: "I believe that a great spiritual revival will do more to cleanse the world of its doubts and fears than any Big Three Conference, and it may be that Scotland will set the world afame."

In Glasgow we have seen the bright beams of this torch that has been kindled by the Holy Spirit in the minds and hearts of men and women. Here, despite the common assertion that the Scots are dour and intellectually immobile, we have witnessed great things; things that to the natural creature are foolishness, but to the spiritually discerning are the first hint that the Lord is walking through Scotland and saying as He said to Adam in the Garden of Eden, "*Where art thou?*" And in my native city the answer was forthcoming day after day . . . "*Here, Lord . . . here in this great Kelvin Hall, here in this humble home, here in this office, in this shop, in this factory . . . here, here, here!*"

I have seen many missions and I have watched great movements of men and women and youngsters as well. But never have I witnessed such mighty scenes as those that have been enacted in Glasgow during the All-Scotland Crusade. The theologian may seek to dismiss it with college orthodoxy; the rationalist may scoff, the psychologist try to explain it away. But the evidence cannot be denied. Facts are chiefl that winnae ding!

*John Henderson talking to Mrs. Graham
photo by courtesy of the Scottish Daily Mail*



Tynecastle Stadium, Edinburgh. The appeal at a single meeting attracting 20,000 met with an overwhelming response.



The garage at Redfern Barracks, Edinburgh.



The T.V. Overflow Room, Kelvin Hall.



I, for one, am not easily moved. I can sit and listen to the most skilfully reasoned oration, and at the end of it all dispassionately say: "That was brilliant; but it has left me quite unmoved." But when a man is seated on a platform in front of fifteen thousand people, people from all backgrounds, people of all classes, and witnesses the first movement towards the rostrum of one, two, three, ten, twenty, fifty—yes, hundreds of enquirers—then I admit that this is the work of the God in whom I believe, that this is the Christ who meets man in his most deep and dire need. And, let me add, the impact on me is more cataclysmic still because these folk who have accepted Dr. Graham's invitation are my own people!

It will go on and on! Nothing can stop this upward reach towards God. Not all the criticisms that one hears and reads can destroy what has burgeoned in Glasgow under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

As, night after night, I have seen hundreds and hundreds come forward to make their decision, I have realised that all this must seem bewildering to the academic—God bless them—but that it is the undoubted evidence of the wind and fire of God cleansing a nation, to which Dr. Graham referred at the Dedication Service in Glasgow Cathedral. I realised in the Kelvin Hall that here were the first answers to the prayers that are being continually offered in this country, in America, and through all the world. I knew that these people, my fellow Scots, were experiencing the saving power of Christ. No man

will ever convince me that men and women rush forward just because of an innate desire for exhibitionism, or because they are neurotic, emotionally disturbed, or as one newspaper writer suggested, because they are ignorant.

There I sat and watched. And as a vice-chairman of the All-Scotland Crusade Executive Committee, I humbly gave thanks for the thousands upon thousands of prayer-partners, for the full-time and voluntary workers, and for all who shared in this great Crusade. And I gave thanks that Billy Graham should once again reveal how God still moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.

I firmly believe that the conflict now raging in the hearts of men and women in Scotland, however submerged it may have been in the past, will come out into the open; that it will spread like a vast cloud to other nations, until all those who have an ear to hear will gladly accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Moreover, I am convinced that atomic weapons are not the monopoly of mankind. God has His own, which we may see in the power and devastating results that issue from His Word, which is now, at this very time, erupting over Scotland. There are no great mushroom clouds; only tears from the conviction of sin and radiance from the acceptance of assured salvation. There are no terrifying detonations; only the glad cries of people released from bondage of self and sin. There are no five-hundred-foot towers, with the awesome spectacle of a



murderous weapon suspended in mid-air; only the Cross with my Lord hanging there, saying, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." There are no troops armed to the teeth; only Christian brothers and sisters with Bibles in their hands. There are no jet aircraft shattering the silence of the skies with their screaming of death; only the Heavenly host rejoicing, singing of Life eternal, praising His Name.

Glasgow has been set aflame. Scotland has been lifted up from its religious morass onto the table-lands of God's purpose and plan. My native city's motto is: "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the Word and the praising of His Name," and that is happening to-day. The Kelvin Hall is a mere speck in the landscape of my nation, but it has become the dynamo from which flows power for the remaking of a people. The transforming influence of that power—the outpouring of the Holy Spirit—has been the most dynamic ever experienced at any Crusade, be it Harringay, Nashville, or Syracuse.

It is not the churches of Glasgow alone that will be touched by the miracles of Kelvin Hall. Through these meetings I see happier homes; I see more positive Christian action in business; I see relationships in which there will be reconciliation; I see a Scotland transformed, a Scotland that, having once forgotten its historic place in the battle for religious liberty, is now reaching out again to a future that will influence millions scattered throughout the world. I see also a basis for unity in the worship of the only true God through Jesus Christ His Son. Furthermore, there will be from this Crusade a deep

Below: Cliff Barrows

Right: George Beverly Shea



and lasting influence upon local and national policies in social, economic and political life. There will be, too, a mightier effort for the things of God in practical everyday affairs.

But all this is dependent upon the carrying out of the responsibilities we have accepted as sponsors, advisors, counsellors—as members of the Body of Christ. It is our sacred duty to ensure that all who have accepted Christ as their personal Saviour are nurtured and sustained. If we do not do this, there will arise the old cries: "Where are the converts? Where is any lasting fruit from your Crusade?" This is all God's doing but it is not sufficient to leave everything to God; that has always been one of the weaknesses of our attitude when faced with opposition. We must pray, we must be obedient, and we must offer ourselves as instruments for God's purposes.

For me it has been one of my greatest privileges to have been allowed to play a part in the All-Scotland Crusade. It is most certainly the greatest opportunity I have ever had. I am confident that this Crusade will be found to bring unbounded blessings to my own country, and at the same time to have a great spiritual influence in other lands. Our eyes have seen the Living God, and we must continue to look to Him, marching onwards as Christian soldiers, His Word hidden in our hearts. Let us know for certain that, come what may, He is the answer to every problem—from peace between nations and world survival to the needs of each individual trusting heart.