

FAITH NOT SHAKEN

By J. C. PENNEY

Recent events have not shaken my faith in the ultimate triumph of Freedom and Justice, for I was reared by parents whose faith in God and belief that *right* will triumph eventually is too deeply ingrained in me to doubt its final victory.

I do emphasize the words "ultimate" and "final," for I am not at all sure we may not have to pass through a period of great trial. I am of the opinion we are in prophetic days, when for a time Evil is to hold sway and apparently to override the Good. (A minister once said if we knew our Bible we would not need to read newspapers.)

We have been told plainly that such a state would exist and I believe we must accept these conditions and possibly greater tribulations as part of the world's destiny without losing faith that in due time Right will triumph over Might. As long as we believe in the existence, in the justice, and in the Holiness of God, we cannot believe otherwise.

A manager recently wrote me that the times tend to fill everyone with pessimism. That should not be so. We should recognize them for what they are — times of tribulation, but not as an occasion for pessimism. Such experiences should cause us to examine our faiths and reestablish our convictions more firmly, resolving to acquit ourselves like men who have a deep and abiding faith that cannot be shaken by outward events.

As long as we have faith at all in God, we must know that He is All-Powerful, that His Will for the world is Justice and Right and that eventually His Purpose will be established here on earth. Good emerges slowly, but we must not doubt its final victory.

These are my convictions as to the world aspect in its relation to an Overruling Providence.

As to our country, my faith in our America, in its people and in the "American Way of Life," is unwavering. America is the greatest country on earth — not because it is our country, but by comparison with other countries. Its founding I believe to have been Divinely ordained and that God has a mighty mission for this country among the Nations of the world.

America was founded by our forefathers in prayer, in faith, and in the heroic spirit of sacrifice. Lives of comparative ease in their

own country might have been theirs had they been willing to surrender their convictions. They chose the *hard right* rather than the *easy wrong* and were ready to lay down their lives for freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences. They underwent grievous hardships; many did lay down their lives; and throughout the nation's history when the occasion has made necessary, their descendants have paid the supreme sacrifice upon its battle field to preserve these principles of freedom.

In the immortal words of Lincoln: "It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task before us . . . that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that the Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Yes, our country is great. It could have been mightier than it is had not some throughout every period of its history retarded its growth by greed, corruption in high places, petty partisanship in crucial periods and by individual selfishness. Selfishness, of course, is the festered spot in every evil situation whether world, nation or individual.

As a Nation, and as individuals, our fate will be determined by our choice of the *hard right* or the *easy wrong*. Softened by comfortable living in easy-going periods, our spiritual and our physical muscles tend to become flabby. We need reversions to difficulties to toughen us up. Periods such as the present are testing times. The harder they become, the more determined we should be not to be swept aside by the fears and doubts that bedevil the world. We must return to the right principles in our thinking, in our beliefs and in our practices, putting aside negativeness and self indulgence. No matter what lies ahead, we must carry on to the best of our ability, doing our utmost from day to day, each in our own niche. In such times those who are too soft, who lack the courage and stamina to strive, slacken effort. Real men tighten their belts, throw full weight into the harness of their daily activities and pull with all their might and main.

Let us choose for ourselves the *hard right*. If individuals in sufficient number will gird themselves and play their part as men, our America will be made safe for its own people and will stand as a beacon light of Hope to this war-torn and war-weary world.