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A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE.

Within a few days we shall once again celebrate the wonderful festival whereby the birth of Christ is commemorated throughout the Christian world.

Tradition and faith have made it an occasion for rejoicing and an opportunity for all of us to draw closer together, to forget or at least to lay aside for a while our cares and preoccupations, and to attune our minds to the spirit of goodwill and human kindness without which our lives would be a dreary and unrewarding business.

The call to rejoice, so prominent at Christmas time, will find an echo in all our hearts. It will be readily answered by those who are young and carefree and whose lives have not been saddened or embittered by any harassing experiences. But a joyful response will be less easy to those who have gone through great tribulation, particularly those who mourn the loss of a beloved friend or member of their family. There are, alas, many of us who in the course of the year have suffered the sorrow of grievous bereavement and to whom Christmas will be a painful and poignant reminder of happier days, spent in the presence of their loved-ones. To them goes out our heartfelt sympathy and our wish that Time, the great healer, may bring them solace and may soften their distress.

Whatever our circumstances, Christmas will afford us a pause in our every-day concerns and bring with it contentment of mind as far as is possible. For, in a wider sense, we have a great deal to be

thankful for. The ray of hope in international affairs which we spoke of in our last year's Christmas message has not disappeared. True, the outlook is still uncertain and there are ominous signs that all is not well. The world remains in an unsettled state and much of the daily news makes grim and dismal reading. Yet there is reason to hope for further improvement in human affairs. There is no slackening in the endeavours on the part of all Christian countries to bring about a spirit of conciliation. Their constant appeals for moderation, compromise and understanding may yet be heard and acted upon. It is gratifying to observe that the Swiss people stand firmly in the ranks of those whose efforts for peace and goodwill among all nations are constant and sincere. May the coming year see these efforts crowned with success.

So let us celebrate this Christmas by calling a halt to the often hectic and feverish pace of our daily lives, to remember that in contrast to all our afflictions and sorrows there is no lack of compensating blessings and that we possess a great many privileges entirely due to the fact that Christ is born. Let us therefore rejoice and enter into the Christmas spirit which finds expression in "Hark the Herald Angels Sing".

This, dear readers, is our Christmas message, inadequately expressed perhaps, but sincerely meant. To you all, the Editor extends his personal greetings and his very best wishes for a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

THE EDITOR.



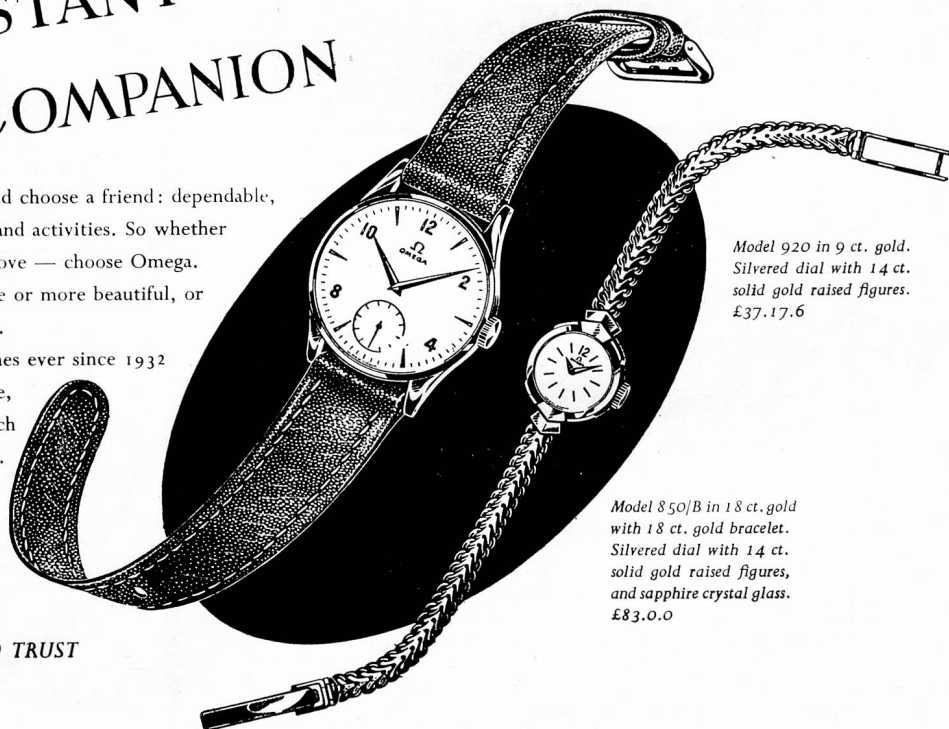
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