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"Horrida Bella."

HORRIDA bella! Yes, horrid, indeed, Are the wars that break out in this Christian age,

Beggaring cruelty, cunning and greed;
Heartbreaking, hateful to simple and sage.
Why cannot men live together in peace,
Each helping each to the best good of life?
What will make hell 'mong the nations to cease?
What will avail for the ending of strife?
Why? because men become brutish at times,
Selfishness sweeping like storms in the trees;
What save the touch of God lessens such crimes?
What but His love can make selfishness cease?
w. o. c.



Hiding His Sword.

DR. J. D. JONES, in a recent sermon at Bourne-mouth, related a delightful little story which, he said, Silvester Horne used to tell during the last year of his life. A little boy one Christmas Day had a toy sword given him, and, after playing with it all day and killing numbers of imaginary soldiers, he grew tired, and towards evening he put it on one side, and his mother spoke to him quietly of the meaning of the day they were celebrating. She told him of Christ, and how He came to bring peace on earth; of His love and tenderness and His life of sacrifice, until at last the little face became serious and thoughtful, and he looked up to his mother and said, "Mother, I think I will hide my sword. I wouldn't like Jesus to see it."

Dr. Jones urged that the Church must never glorify war; it could admire the courage and sacrifice that it brought out, but it must ever bear its witness against war itself.



What War Means.

A TALE OF TWO SOLDIERS.

(Continued from page 186.)

"WHAT did you say, grandfather?"

"Oh, I was thinking out loud. . . . One of the shells from the Russian guns dropped just in front of my father; a splinter flew up and cut away his left cheek and ear. . . . But he rode on, right up to the mouth of the cannon, and drove his sabre to the hilt in the body of the Russian gunner. . . . my uncle!" . . .

"But he didn't know, grandfather," sobbed the lad.

"No, sonny; he didn't know—till it was too late. As he drew out his sword from the body of the soldier, the soldier's cap fell off, and my father saw his face. . . . It was the face of his own wife—my mother! . . ."

For several minutes neither spoke.

The poor boy was weeping bitterly.

The old man was suppressing his own feelings by inward and silent curses. He dare not trust himself to speak for some time.

At last he said:

"Don't cry, sonny. Be brave. I have just a little more to tell you. Then you will understand the devilment of war. . . . My father rode back as best he could, and was taken to the rear of the forces to have his wounds dressed. For three weeks he was raving mad—so the doctors said—and was all the while calling for his wife and her brother. When he had recovered sufficiently to be moved he was invalided home. . . . My mother and I went and met him. . . . She had read in the Russian papers that her brother was dead. . . ."

And now her husband was given to her a mutilated wreck. . . . And he had killed her brother, and her brother had maimed her husband for life. . . . But she did not know this at the time. For two years he kept this fearful secret locked in his own breast. It was wearing him away. His life was a wretched mockery. His sleep was absolutely destroyed. His waking hours were one incessant worry—he dared not trust himself to talk. One fear haunted every moment of his life—the fear lest his wife should learn that her own husband had killed her brother.

“At last the end came. His emaciated physical condition produced a complication of disorders, and his mutilated face broke out into a discharge. He took to his bed—never to leave it again, alive.

“My mother nursed him through his illness—watching by his bed night and day. She was herself scarcely fit to be about, but she kept up bravely.

“I shall never forget those agonising days. . . . One day my mother called me to say—good-bye—to—my father. . . . He was dying. . . . And as I stood beside his bed . . .

he put his hand on my head, and said: ‘My boy—never be a soldier—always think of your poor father. . . . Listen while I tell you mother something I have not told her before. . . . Forgive me, dear; it is a horrid thing. . . . It has haunted me night and day . . . ever since . . . ever since that fearful fight . . . the charge . . . I . . . your brother was killed . . . I . . . I killed him’

“He sat up in bed, and literally screamed with agony. My mother was so distressed at the horrid confession that she fainted away.

“I sat there, and did not know what to do.

“Presently my mother recovered, and then she turned to my father, and said:

“‘Robert . . . it was not you who killed my brother . . . it was . . . it was . . . Oh, God, forgive me . . . it was the British Army.’

“My father looked at us, smiled, and beckoned us close to him. He kissed me fervently on my forehead, and then he drew my mother towards him, kissed her, smiled again, lay back on his pillow, and passed away. My mother died within a month.”

H. W. HOBART.



A Chinese St. Francis.

IN a book published in New York, called “A Chinese St. Francis,” the story is told of a little Chinese shoemaker, who became a beautiful Christian. Brother Mao, as he was called, even tackled some of the Chinese scholars in the interest of his faith. One of these scholars gave him a cool reception, disputed what he said, and declined to accept Bible quotations as of any value in the discussion. Mao went away disheartened, but the next day he called again. Nettled by this second visit, the scholar attacked the Christian teaching uncompromisingly, growing so angry at

last that he blew into a flame the smouldering hemp-stalk which he held in his hand, and scorching Mao’s chin with it, said: “If you come here again I will beat you.” Next day Mao paid another visit, and the teacher broke into a storm of bad language and struck him with his tobacco pipe. In spite of this insult, which according to the Chinese code no educated man may condone, Mao, after a night of prayer, invaded the enemy for the fourth time with a friendly face as if nothing had happened. “I submit,” said the scholar, after overcoming his confusion on seeing this man on whom ill-usage had no effect. “You indeed are worthy to be my mentor,” he added, handing Mao some tea.



THE CHASE.

"Confucius teaches us to avenge our injuries ;
your Master teaches you to overcome your
enemies with kindness."



Sandie's Trophy.

(SCENE—An English Hospital: A Highlander
with a German Helmet.)

"So you've brought back his helmet, Sandie, my
man?

And you killed him I
guess? It's a trophy
you've won?"

"Na-a, na-a," replied
Sandie, "that wasna
the plan ;

The man was a freend, gin
ye'll wait till I'm done,
I dresséd his wound, an'
he sorted mine.

No' a word could we speak,
the ane tae the ither ;
But I lookit at him, an' I
kent him a brither ;

An' I gied him my bonnet,
in token, ye ken.

He lauched, an' he grippit
my han'—and then

He gied me his helmet ;
an' it cam' tae my
mind,

Here's a trophy, thocht I,
of a new-fangled kind.

I dresséd his wound, an'
he dressit mine ;

No' a word could we speak,
the ane tae the ither ;

But tho' he was German, I
kent him a brither."

H. J. DAWTREY.



**What Have You
Done ?**

You are going to do
great things, you say—

But what have you done ?

You are going to win in a splendid way,
As others have won ;

You have plans that when they are put in force
Will make you sublime ;

You have mapped out a glorious upward course—
But why don't you climb ?

You're not quite ready to start, you say ;
If you hope to win,

The time to be starting is now—to-day—
Don't dally, begin !

No man has ever been ready as yet,
Nor ever will be ;
You may fall ere you reach where your hopes
are set—

But try it and see.

You are going to do great things, you say,
You have splendid plans ;
Your dreams are of heights that are far away ;
They're a hopeful man's—

But the world, when it
judges the case for you,
At the end, my son,
Will think not of what you
were going to do,
But of what you've
done.

S. E. KISER.



Wanted !

WANTED — eyes that are
bright and clear,
That smile through the
rain and sleet,
That falter not in the light
serene

When other eyes they
meet ;
That fill, sometimes, with
tender tears
In sympathy rare and
sweet.

Wanted—hands that are
young and strong,
That work in a willing
way ;
That clasp other hands,
grown tired, perhaps,
In the toil and heat of
the day ;

And ease their burden, and
give besides,
A strength no words can
say.

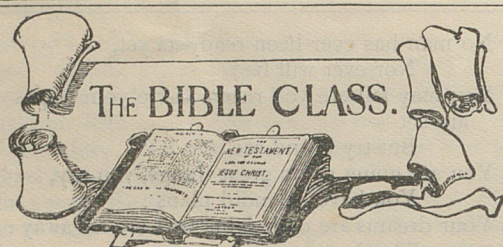
Wanted — lips that are
sweet and true,

That sing when the night is near ;
That can whisper a word of courage and hope
To hearts that are full of fear ;
That can tell of a Love that passeth words
That waiteth to bless and cheer.

Wanted—hearts at peace and pure ;
That can pray through the noise and strife ;
That bear, endure, and hope always,
And believe, though doubt is rife,
That see the good in other hearts
And love to the end of life.



THE SWING.



A NEW BEGINNING.
Genesis vii.—ix.

THE earth had been cleansed of its corruption and cruelty by the Flood. The Lord had said unto Noah, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark" (vii. 1); "and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark" (ver. 23). So there had to be a fresh start, a new beginning.

The failure had come by fighting. *Military* and *militarism* are modern words. But it is quite correct to describe the ancient occurrence in the terms of to-day, and, therefore, to say that it was the militarism of the ancient world which brought about the Flood. "*Military*," according to the dictionary, means "pertaining to soldiers or to war, becoming a soldier, engaged in the profession of arms; derived from service as a soldier"; and "*militarism*" means "an excess of the military spirit." Militarism, therefore, grows out of soldiering, and that necessarily and surely. The military man is the fighting man, one who has become a soldier, and the soldier is the legalised killing man. Always when the soldier comes the killing begins. The soldier is there for that purpose. Now let us read again (chap. vi. 11), "AND THE EARTH WAS CORRUPT BEFORE GOD, AND THE EARTH WAS FILLED WITH VIOLENCE," and (ver. 13) "God said unto Noah, THE END OF ALL FLESH IS COME BEFORE ME; FOR THE EARTH IS FILLED WITH VIOLENCE THROUGH THEM." That is explicit enough, isn't it?

Let us read further. When the Flood had done its cleansing work, as the present world-wide deluge of war is doing; and God said to Noah and his family, "Go forth of the ark," and begin again, the first thing of all was an act of worship: "And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord," etc. (chap. viii. 15, 20). CORRUPTION, VIOLENCE, DESTRUCTION: that was the natural order; that is the natural order, for it is fixed by immutable law, and is as true to-day, and always, as when Noah lived and escaped the destruction; but, WORSHIP and the NEW AGE; that is fixed by the unchanging laws, too, for man must submit to God; and not only pray that God's will may be done, but do it; otherwise by flood or fire, or other natural sequence, as we call it, his world will be swept away.

Do you ask, whether we really mean that? We do, and all history from the beginning, from Eden to Flanders, from Cain to Cæsar and Kaiser, proves that it is so. Do you ask, whether we really mean that religion and soldiering are opposed to each other? That is what we do mean: that is what the old history means—it is particularly the lesson of the Deluge; that is what the Bible throughout means. War and Religion, killing and saving, hating and loving, destroying and helping, are opposites and cannot be blended any more than oil and water can be. All the religions declare and illustrate that fact. Most of all is it true of the Religion of Jesus Christ, which is the religion of most of the nations now at war. A TRUE CHRISTIAN CANNOT BE A SOLDIER; a theoretical Christian can be anything. The Kingdom of God, said St. Paul, is not

eating and drinking, but RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE AND JOY. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," said Jesus; where surely the emphasis should rest upon *His*. Righteousness is rightness and God's rightness does not mean right with German politics or British; it certainly cannot be *right* with both. But, again, Religion is spirit, life, love of men, and it is therefore impossible of blending with war. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." And if any nation compels all its citizens to be soldiers, that is, men-slayers, it discards the Will of God, puts itself into opposition with His benign reign, and courts certain destruction. There is no escaping these conclusions: a fact that our people need to realise, especially at the present time when we are in danger of conscription.

Human society then, in that region of the world, at any rate, which from the Bible standpoint is the type of the whole, had to begin afresh, and the point to be specially noted is, that it was based upon the sanctity of human life, which is incompatible with all war. It is only when human life is held cheaply that war is either ferocious or even possible. A singular prohibition, preparing the way for the legislative injunction, "Thou shalt not kill," given by Moses at a later period, throws light on the morals and social polity of the new society. "Surely your blood, the blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man" (chap. ix. 5, 6). This is not the law of a perpetual and universal vendetta, as it is too often interpreted, but the attachment of the highest conceivable penalty to the taking of human life. While the animals could be killed at man's will, human blood was not to be shed, either by man or beast, without a penalty. God, says Dr. Geikie, had already proclaimed the sacredness of human life by the sign given to Cain, to preserve him, and by the prohibition of the use of blood as food; but this additional law now made it specially sacred and inviolable. For the life that is taken He declares He will demand that of the beast or man who has taken it. Life is to be paid for life. Society is possible only when the person is safe, and hence in this fundamental law the corner-stone of human progress and social life was firmly laid at the very hour of the new birth of the world. To confirm these provisions God enters into a covenant with man. It is the condition of all true and trustworthy relations between them. There are two sides to religion. Faith and love, trust and obedience, on the human side are make-believes if there be nothing real corresponding to them on the Divine. There must be two parties to an agreement. This first recorded covenant between God and man was confirmed by a sign worthy of a transaction so unique. The rainbow had glittered on the clouds for uncounted ages before man's creation—it has its origin in the fixed order and relations of the Universe; but it was now to be adopted as a Divine pledge of goodwill to our race, and the simplicity of the language which sets this forth is equalled only by its beauty.

But let us also remember that war is a violation of every possible covenant between God and His offspring, and the rainbow, of natural origin though it be, becomes a standing testimony against war and a reminder that war is the crime of crimes, because it is the deliberate, organised violation of brotherhood and the destruction by man of those created in God's image.