


THE OLIVE LEAF

A · MONTHLY · JOURNAL · FOR · THE · YOUNG. 

No. 106. VOL. IV.

JUNE, 1915.

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Who Should Fight.

O, if I were Queen of France,
Or, still better, Pope of Rome,
I'd have no fighting men abroad
No weeping maids at home ;
All the world should be at peace :
But if kings must try their might,
Then let them that make the quarrels
Be the only men to fight.

OLD FRENCH BALLAD.



Why We Went to War.

WHY did we go to war ? is a question that you young people have been discussing with your elders for months now. We had to, we are told ; we were compelled. But you can never be compelled to do what is foolish or wrong. You never *have to* do such things. You do them because under persuasion or pressure, or for some other reason, you decide to do them ; but the decision is your own all the same. The nation went to war because its leaders, that is its rulers, decided to. But does not that compel each of us to support the war ? By no means. For we owe allegiance to a higher Sovereign, and in the great matters of life to *Him only*. And when His Prime Minister in the Kingdom of the soul, that is Conscience, God's voice within, says No, we dare not. The law we must obey is not what other people do, but what is right for us to do. And the plain truth is we went to war because the law of "follow my leader" was obeyed instead of the law of

wisdom and of right. Surely, you may say, we went to war because Germany invaded Belgium and we were pledged to protect that country, and because the German Chancellor called the Treaty by which we had pledged ourselves "a scrap of paper." Yes, that is what we were told ; it made it all so simple and so conclusive. But was it so ? It is impossible to forget so much that happened which contradicts that simple statement. We cannot forget that we, too, when it suited us, have sometimes looked upon Treaties as mere scraps of paper, and that the Foreign Minister in Parliament, before ever a word was said about Belgium, announced that we were pledged to support France if she were attacked by Germany. So far from going to war because of the scrap of paper, in 1906, and again in 1911, our war authorities discussed with the Belgians in Brussels the very plan that should be adopted if Germany did invade Belgium. The Germans found the notes of these discussions in the archives at Brussels, and said, to a very large extent, falsely, that they were agreements between the two. They were not "agreements" but understandings—a mere matter of words, some people would say.

There is no need to recall all that happened immediately before the outbreak of war with a view to fix the blame on anyone. It is not very profitable to try to fix blame on one for what all have been engaged in.

The fact is we went to war because we had been all the while living for war and preparing for it, and so couldn't help ourselves when the time came. The surest way to bring anything about is to prepare for it, and to live for it ; that is what this conflict has taught us once more with terrible emphasis. In the autumn of 1913, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer made a speech in Parliament on the subject of this preparation for war ; and, after saying that every country was being "lured into it," and

that the Great Powers were "scaring each other into it," he announced that the only thing to do was to keep on at it harder than ever. "They all do it," he said, "and we must do what the others do." They were all trying to rush over the precipice, and because the others were doing it so eagerly, we must keep at the head of the race. It was a curious argument, and really won't bear thinking about, but Mr. Lloyd George was a great Pacifist, and therefore his words were taken as final, and folks failed to see how false and foolish and wicked they were. Perhaps the war may teach us that in time.

The difficulty is increased by this, that it has gradually transpired beyond doubt that Germany was not only anxious to be first in the race on sea and land, but that she was racing for a purpose, and as her writers and leaders have stated, meant all the while to crush and conquer the rest of the world, so that all the wild and wicked things said about her have turned out to be true. What is to be said in face of these facts?

One thing is clear, that it will be folly and madness to return to the old path, for like causes will produce like results, and bigger causes bigger results. Another thing that is very clear is that it is no use to try and put God outside His world, because we can't do it, and the very efforts men make in that direction only recoil naturally in disaster on themselves. So that the true wisdom—and it is very practical wisdom—is while we pray to Him, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," to fulfil the prayer ourselves and try to get others to do it, too, then the rest will follow; we shall have universal Peace, and not till then.



Inclination and Duty.

"STAY at home," said Inclination,
 "Let the errand wait."
 "Go at once," said Duty, sternly,
 "Or you'll be too late."



"But it rains," said Inclination,
 "And the wind is keen."
 "Never mind all that," said Duty;
 "Go and brave it, Jean."

Jean stepped out into the garden,
 Looked up at the sky—
 Clouded, shrouded, dreary, sunless,
 Rain unceasingly.

"Stay," again said Inclination.
 "Go," said Duty, "go."
 Forth went Jean with no more waiting,
 Or a selfish "No."

You will smile if now I tell you
 That this quiet strife,
 Duty conquering Inclination,
 Strengthened all her life.



"I'll Try."

Two birdies, in their pretty nest,
 Had little birdies three;
 The mother bird sat still at home,
 Her mate sang merrily.
 And all the little birdies said,
 "Wee, wee, wee, wee,
 wee, wee."

One day the sun was warm and bright,
 All shining in the sky;
 The mother said, "My little ones,
 'Tis time you learn to fly";
 And every little birdie said,

"I'll try, I'll try, I'll try."

I know some little children dear
 (And oft it makes me sigh),
 Who, when they're told, "Do this" or "that,"
 Will say, "What for?" or "Why?"
 Oh, how much better, if they'd say,
 "I'll try, I'll try, I'll try."

For all the great things ever done,
 As great lives testify,
 And all the truest honours won
 By men, or low or high,
 Were done or won by those who tried
 Their utmost to outvie,
 Who said, when great things seem denied,
 "I'll try, I'll try, I'll try."

Princess Wilful.

THERE are a great number of anecdotes relating to the early days of the Princess Charlotte, daughter of George the Fourth. She was, according to Lord William Lennox, who knew her well in his boyhood, a lovable child, and everyone's pet. As an illustration of her merry, light-hearted nature the following little incident is told:—

Like all children, the Princess had a great dislike to medicine. It was only natural, therefore, that the one person she most avoided should be the doctor, or, as he was known in those times, the apothecary. This gentleman used to visit the Royal household every day. "There's old Thompson!" the Princess would cry, at his approach. "He's always coming here to dose us. I do wish he would stop away."

Her governess, shocked at such irreverence, again and again pointed out to her Royal Highness how improper it was to speak of the apothecary as "Thompson," and this having no effect on the wilful lady, at last told her that the next time she dropped the "Mr." she would be sent to bed.

One morning the Princess was at the window when she caught sight of the doctor's powdered head as he came up the drive, in all the glory of black coat, knee breeches, and silk stockings. Down she jumped, to the horror of the governess, who saw her fly through the hall, shouting:

"Here's old Thompson again! Thompson! Thompson! Thompson! And now I am ready to go to bed!"

Very probably she was sent off to bed, but as everyone knew well enough that her naughtiness only sprang from love of fun, we may rest assured that the Princess was speedily forgiven.

"My Country Wants Me."

"FATHER," said Tom, "won't you let me go out To stay for a week in the camp on the shore? 'Tis so jolly to play just at being a scout, That I want to be in it a bit, more and more; For the old boys came back, now and then, to the school, From the fight at the front, in their dress of khaki, And talk to us finely; I feel just like a fool To be tied up in class when my country wants me."

"My boy," said his father, "I want you to know

'Tis a horrible business, this killing of men;

And that those who are actively eager to show

'Tis your duty, are lying with tongue or with pen.

Men go to the battle to kill, not be killed—

Though they are, it's a risk they are ready to take,

But a certain result that not one of them willed;

'Tis the taking of life that war's passion must slake.

Your country wants you, but you living, not dead—

What good are you then, or the man you have slain?

And yourself *at your best*, and the noblest you can Achieve for her good; but this fighting is vain, It is wicked; no part of the Governor's plan, But a cruel device for enslaving their kind, Conceived by the war-makers' cunning or greed; And the scouting and drilling are only a blind Devised by these folk for the victims they need. Neither boys nor their sisters are wanted to fight, But to learn to submit to their lords and obey. So, sonny, go strive to live nobly and right, Let the makers of battlefields kill men and slay!"

W. O. C.



The Bible Class.

THE VERY BEGINNING.

HEBREW books were written on long strips of skin or parchment, and were rolled up, not bound together. They were so arranged that the beginning of the book or section came at the opening of the roll, and the first word, which, of course, was the one to come in sight on opening the roll, gave its name to the book or section. The very first word in the Hebrew Bible is "Bereshith," which means "In beginning"; this was rendered "Genesis" in the Greek translation—the "Septuagint," as it is called—and was adopted also in the English translation, hence our name "Genesis," which is peculiarly appropriate, because it is the Book of Beginnings.

It may seem a long way back to go in the study of the question of war, but if we want to find out what the Bible has to say bearing on the subject, we must go back to the beginning—to the very first chapter—to the very first word. It is this, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And God said, . . . and it was so. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." At first sight it may seem that this, which is really the summary of the "chapter of beginnings," has nothing to do with the hateful, hoary human habit of war; we are accustomed to take things for granted, to read without thinking, to hear without reflecting; but a moment's thought would show us that it means everything. One God who created all things, one race of men created by the one God; one type of origin, the image of God. Why, these cover everything, and in the course of time must make war impossible in men's intercourse, and Peace the natural rule of man's life. Some good and thoughtful men, who have studied long and worked hard for international Peace, have cherished the idea that this will be accomplished by the establishment of international law throughout the whole world, when, as Tennyson sang:

The common sense of most [i.e., of the majority]
shall hold the fretful realm in awe,

And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in
universal law.

But Dr. Symonds says rightly that treaties, alliances, temporary arrangements between nations, are all based on expediency; whereas a true international law must be based upon some kind of theory of the true relationship of man to man. It implies that there is some relationship between all men, out of which relationship obligations spring. If men are not related to each other by any tie more inclusive than the national, then they can have no obligations to each other, and there can be no such thing as international law.

This, he points out, was the condition of things in the earliest Bible times, and we shall find later in Bible history illustrations of its working. Let us take a typical group of nations inhabiting Asia Minor, and as far East as the river Euphrates—Assyrians, Babylonians, Syrians, Moabites, Hebrews, and others—the Bible nations as we may call them. These had a good many ideas in common, for they belonged to a common stock—the Semitic stock. But the common notions, which concern us now, are these: Every nation has its own god, who is the god of the land in which they live; thus Jehovah is the God of the Hebrews, Chemosh of the Ammonites, Moloch of the Moabites, Asshur of

the Assyrians, and so on. This idea bound together the members of each nation into a close unity, for common religion is of all bonds the most powerful, but you can see, at once, how it separated them from those of every other nation. In those ages there was not, as to some extent with us, any conception corresponding to what we mean by humanity or by the human race. The god of each land was thought of as intensely interested in his own people; he was correspondingly the enemy of the gods of the other nations. Instances may be found in the 17th chapter of the Second Book of Kings, the 36th chapter of Isaiah, and in the charming story of Naaman, the great Syrian general, in the 5th chapter of Second Kings. A singular corroboration of Bible history, in almost Bible words, and belonging to the same period is to be found in the British Museum. It is an inscription on what is called the "Moabite Stone," by Meshah, the Ammonite King of Moab, in which his god Chemosh is set against Jehovah, and the inscription refers to Chemosh as the Bible does to Jehovah. "Omri," says Meshah, "oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his land. . . . Omri took the land of Medebah, and Israel dwelt in it forty years. But there dwelt in it Chemosh in my days. . . . And Chemosh said unto me: Go, seize Nebo upon Israel; and I went in the night, and fought against it from the break of day till noon; and I took it, and slew all therein, 7,000 men [boys], women [girls], and female slaves, and devoted them to Ashtor. Chemosh. . . . And Chemosh said unto me: Go down, make war upon Horonaim. I went down [and made war and took the city]; and Chemosh dwelt in it in my days. . . . And I—" There abruptly the record ends on the broken stone. There was fighting then as now by the votaries of different gods, as to-day when Boers and Britons pray to their God, and the Kaiser rejoices in his Great Ally, while the British children—at East Ham, for instance—are taught to thank God and the British fleet for their daily bread. A lady at The Hague once told the writer how she had been brought up as a girl to believe in the "Orange God"—the God of the House of Orange; while in Ulster still the Orange God is worshipped as the Protestant God—the Catholic God being on the other side.

Now contrast with all that the beautiful, stately, lofty monotheism of the "Beginning" of the Bible, and imagine what difference there would be if nations actually believed in and worshipped one God, who made them all, and especially if they realised that they are the common offspring of the one God—children of the one Father, made, as children are, in the image of their Father; that Adam, the first typical man, was, as the New Testament says, "the son of God." For they who come from a common origin, and are possessors of a common nature and a common relationship, are "members one of another" and the madness of war ought to be impossible to them. It is because the facts of the beginning have no place in the life of the present that we have this terrible war. And yet, and yet, nearly all the nations at war believe in the Great Allah, who made heaven and earth—the God who created men in His own image—and constantly they repeat the common creed, "I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH." It is difficult to believe that if that true creed were truly uttered, with a true meaning, war would not stop instantly, and be for ever impossible.