

hour of need." "Thrice armed is he who hath his quarrel just," has made its way from the classic pages of the Bard of Avon into the very bone and sinew of the nation's life. This is the message of the pulpit to the people of England at this time, whether of the Established or Nonconformist Church. It forms the undercurrent and spiritual tone of the public services which are largely and earnestly attended on both week-day and Sunday. The teachers and preachers of morals and religion are making the hour of the nation's stress and strain an opportunity for a rebaptism of faith in and dependence upon the living God.

One evening a few weeks ago, an American met upon the streets of London a British soldier who had just returned from the battle line. Taking him by the hand, the American said to

Tommy Atkins that it was a brave part which he was playing and that issues so important as to involve the whole cause of civilization were involved in the struggle; that personally he (the American) felt a debt of gratitude for the service rendered to the cause of liberty and progress by the defence of honor and of right. The soldier disclaimed any so important for the sacrifice made of his hardships of life in the trenches, but simply replied, "It does seem, in view of the interests at stake, that every man of stuff should offer himself gladly for his country's welfare, doesn't it?" And Britain's men of stuff are enlisting with a rising tide of enthusiasm for the protection of the nation's flag, the security of the empire and the advance of civilization.

The Bible and Universal Peace

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NOTE.—In the current number of *The Christian Union Quarterly*, published by the Christian Board of Publication, St. Louis, Mo., the following illuminating article appears. Because it will be of great benefit to our young people, we reprint the paper, and advise a careful perusal of it by our readers generally, and a more complete analysis and exposition of it for League study as a supplementary topic on some convenient evening.—Ed.

THERE are four main positions set forth in the Scriptures on world peace. These positions, however, are fundamental. Granting them, one may be safely left to his own conjectures as to dates, eras and dispensations, and may indulge into excursions into the realms of unfulfilled prophecy without great peril to his own soul or disaster to the interests of Christian civilization.

1. The first and outstanding position of the Bible on universal peace is that it is *boldly predicted and claimed*. The language is unmistakable, and the references so frequent as to leave no doubt.

"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sundry; he burneth the chariot in the fire."—Psalms 46: 9.

"He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall we learn war any more."—Isaiah 2: 4.

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."—Isaiah 65: 25.

"And I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them lie down safely."—Hosea 2: 18.

"His name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."—Isaiah 9: 6.

These are a few of the many passages in which the Bible proclaims to men God's dream of world peace. It is a bold dream. At the time, nothing could have seemed more presumptuous or ridiculous. The world was steeped in war. Its gods were all war gods. Its glories were military glories. Its heroes were not diplomats and pacificators, but fighters. The story of Israel as a nation is a war story. They were always fighting. Their very altars flamed with the wreck and ruin of heaped-up strife. And what was true of Israel was true on a larger scale of the other nations of the world. From the birth of Romulus to the days of Augustus Caesar, a period of some seven hundred years, the Romans had, but six years free of war. Men had come to re-

gard it as inevitable. Successive generations knew nothing else.

Into this pandemonium of world strife the Bible sang a peace song, and among the war-cursed peoples of the earth came Jesus, saying: "Blessed are the peacemakers." The Bible stands for world peace. It boldly proclaims it. It is absolutely against war. It sings to the race a day that is coming when wars shall be forever past. It stakes its claims as a divine religion on this issue. If war is a necessity, if it is a good thing in itself, then the Bible is a silly book.

Let us pause to pay a tribute to the boldness of a religion that does not trim with the crowd. Men talk about the evolution of religion. In the name of common sense, how can the evolution of war spirit that still soaks the earth in rivers of blood and flames the world with race-hatred, could the Bible have gotten its dream of universal peace as an evolution? It came as a revelation from the God who sits above the war clouds and sees beyond the centuries of human strife. Standing firmly on His word, we may possess our souls in patience, and boldly champion the programme of world peace.

2. The second position of the Bible on this subject is that universal peace is to come as the result of the influence of Christ on the life of the world.

This is not saying that statesmanship and diplomacy, that invention and discovery, that trade and transportation, that education and journalism may not lend themselves powerfully to peace movements, and be found useful tools in ending war. The Bible, however, has no hope of a permanent era of peace as the product of these things. That the Bible is not mistaken is conspicuously evident from the present world situation. If the invention of death-dealing weapons, if the erection of peace palaces and the holding of peace conferences, if the maintenance of great standing armies and formidable navies, if the interests of commerce, if the skill of diplomats, if the sanctities of home and the rights of women and children and a sense of the value of human life could unseat the war god, this carnival of brutality in Europe would never have disgraced civilization. The brighter influence must project itself into the problem. A bigger force must lay hold of the brute instincts which sway nations no less than individuals. If men are to learn to go to war no more, they must sit at His feet Whose advent on earth was announced by angels singing: "Peace on earth and good will to men."

Christ is the Prince of Peace. He will

some day rule the earth, and there will be no revolt against His sway. When He does, when He has His way with the world, when the government of the earth is administered in harmony with His teachings, we shall have universal peace; but not until then.

This is not to admit that the coming of world peace is problematical. It is to proclaim it as an absolute certainty. For the day will come when the shall rule the earth, and those right it is. The war gods are all usurpers, and their crowns are tinsel. The real King of the world is coming to His own, and when He takes His seat, the slaughter house of the nations shall be behind us.

3. The third position of the Bible on world peace is that it will come as fast, and only as fast, as peace relations are established between God and the individual, as a result of Christ's atoning work on the Cross.

The Bible knows nothing of a civilization that comes wholesale. It has no faith in changes which affect only the outside of life. It lends no support to schemes for social redemption which begin by denying or discrediting individual regeneration. Society can never be saved any faster or any higher than the social units which compose society are saved. The Bible is not against the changing of the outside of the platter clean. It merely says: "You cannot have a sanitary world so long as the sources of life are foul." If men are ever to get on peace relations toward each other, they must first get on peace relations with God. If they are to discover that they are brothers, they must first discover that they have a common Father.

Since man is essentially a spirit, his life movements originate in the spiritual realm.

And so the cross is fundamental to world peace. The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world is the peace offering of God. The mission of Christ as Saviour is not to reconcile God to men, for He has never been alienated; but to reconcile men to God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." When a man lays down his arms against his Father, the faith of the Bible is that it will not be long until he thrusts into its scabbard the sword he has drawn against his brother. And so the way to world peace is not a short road. It is steep and long, for it winds to the heights of Calvary.

And so, the promoters of world peace are not merely the orators in peace councils or the diplomats of nations or the Premiers and Presidents and Kings. He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way has made a contribution to world peace; and he that saves a soul from death has lifted civilization, by that humble act, to a higher level, and has helped to hasten the day when war shall be outlawed.

4. The fourth position of the Bible on universal peace is that there will be war. It sings its song of peace and boldly predicts war. There is a divine audacity in the teachings of the Bible on this subject. It seems to admit the unreality of its own predication. If peace is so good, why write of war? Because the Bible never glosses the facts. It does not hide the price which must be paid.

It is significant that the most frightful picture and prophecy of war come to us over the lips of the Prince of Peace. It is Jesus Himself who, in the Garden near the Cross on which He is to pay the price for world peace, lifts the curtain and bids us look at the frightful spectacle of world wars which must still be fought.

And so, the Bible does not explain war; it proclaims it. Therefore, when the war kings of the earth reel in their

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