
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

In the Study.

Benhadad.

'And Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and there were thirty and two kings with him, and horses and chariots: and he went up and besieged Samaria, and fought against it.'—1 Kings 20[1].

In the Septuagint and in Josephus the events narrated in the twentieth chapter of the Book of Kings are placed after the meeting of Elijah with Ahab at the door of Naboth's vineyard. This order of events seems the more probable, but no chronological data are given us in the long but fragmentary details of Ahab's reign. They are, in fact, composed of different sets of records, partly historical, and partly prophetic.

Some most important details have been altogether omitted. These we learn (1) from the inscription of King Mesha on the Moabite Stone, and (2) from the clay tablets of Assyria. King Mesha's inscription gives us some details of a series of bloody wars about which the Scripture narrative is almost entirely silent, though in 2 K 3[4-27] it narrates Mesha's desperate resistance of Israel, Judah, and Edom (896 B.C.).

From the annals of Assyria we learn that in the year 854 B.C., Ahab of Israel was acting as one of the allies, or more probably as one of the vassals, of Syria in the great battle fought at Karkar, 854 B.C., against Shalmanezer II., by Hittites, Hamathites, and Syrians. Whether this was before the invasion of Benhadad, or after his defeat, is uncertain.

I.

1. The twentieth chapter of the First Book of Kings tells us that the Aramæan king 'gathered all his hosts together: and there were thirty and two kings with him, and horses and chariots: and he went up and besieged Samaria, and fought against it.' The object of the expedition was clearly to humble and to plunder the kingdom of Samaria. It would almost appear, from the *animus* of the Syrian king and the studied offensiveness of his messages, as if Ahab or Israel must at this special time have given him dire offence. But Benhadad was clearly a vain and overbearing and tyrannical prince, and the only crime of Israel may have been that it was independent of him, or had refused to do him homage.

In any case the policy of attacking Israel was suicidal. If the kings had possessed the prescient glance of the prophets they could not have failed to see on the northern horizon the cloud of Assyrian power, which menaced them all with cruel extinction at the hands of that atrocious people. Their true policy would have been to form an offensive and defensive league, instead of coveting one another's dominions. Although Assyria had not yet risen to the zenith of her empire, she was already formidable enough to convince the king of Damascus that he would never be able single-handed to prevent Syria from being crushed before her. Instead of inflicting ruinous losses and humiliations on the tribes of Israel, the dynasty of Rezon, if it had been wise in its day, would have ensured their friendly aid against the horrible common enemy of the nations.

2. Unable to meet this vast army Ahab had shut himself up in Samaria. When at last he was reduced to hopeless straits, a herald was sent by Benhadad to demand the admission of ambassadors. But it is not clear that they entered the city. They may have delivered their message to the king, or to his representatives at the gates, or to the people on the walls (2 K 18[26]).

Their ultimatum was couched in language of the deadliest insult. Benhadad laid insolent claim to everything which Ahab possessed—his silver, his gold, his wives, and the fairest of his children. When we consider how jealously the seraglio of an Eastern prince is guarded, and how the surrender of the harem is a virtual surrender of the throne, and certainly a surrender of all manhood and self-respect, we see that his aim was to wound Ahab in his tenderest point, to humble him to the lowest depths of degradation, and possibly to *force* a quarrel upon him.

If we go back to the time of the Greeks, and ask what to the Greek mind was the greatest sin, we find that it was insolence. To them insolence meant the failure of a man to realize what was his true attitude to life, to understand that he was bound, if he would be a true man, to face life boldly and fearlessly with all its issues, to think through its problems, to recognize the limits under which his life had to be lived.[1]

3. But at this time Ahab seems to have sunk to the nadir of his degradation. Immediately the

[1] *Life and Letters of Mandell Creighton*, ii. 26.

craven message was sent back, 'My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have.' Encouraged by this abject demeanour into yet more outrageous insolence, Benhadad sent back his ambassadors with the further menace that he would himself send his messengers next day into Samaria, who would search and rifle not only the palace of Ahab, but the houses of all his servants, from which they should take away everything that was pleasant in their eyes.

Ahab consulted now with his elders and his people, and the result of the consultation was a just, temperate, yet firm message of resistance: 'Tell my lord, the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do.'

A man who uses force of arms, or wealth, or commanding cunning to force the wills of a whole people into his own is the enemy of Humanity, and when a nation is so cowardly or so vile as to yield itself to his craft, or his force, or his wealth, it does not recover the effects of its sin for many years.[1]

4. Ahab's answer provoked a further bit of blustering bravado from Benhadad. He sent back a message, 'The gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me.' Ahab answered him firmly in a happy proverb, 'Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast himself as he that putteth it off.'

What is a bounder? Just a man without sufficient sense of proportion to know that he is not so important in the scheme of things as he thinks he is![2]

II.

1. The warning proverb was reported to the Aramæan king while, in the insolent confidence of victory, he was drinking himself drunk in his war-booths. Neither he, nor any of those about him, was in a condition to give coherent commands. Meanwhile, a prophet, with a courage worthy of his order, true to the national spirit, and faithful to God, encouraged Ahab by assuring him that Benhadad would be defeated. By his directions the servants of the country chieftains who had fled into Samaria, and the men-at-arms then in the city—in all only about 7000 combatants—were mustered, and sent out in a vigorous sally at noon, when they would be least expected.

[1] S. A. Brooke, *Sunshine and Shadow*, 118.
[2] J. Galsworthy, *A Sheaf*, 19.

A messenger announced to the band of royal drunkards that 'men' were come out of Samaria. They were too few to call them 'an army,' and the notion of an attack from that poor handful seemed ridiculous. Benhadad thought they were coming to sue for peace, but whether peace or war were their object he gave the contemptuous order to 'take them alive.'

It was easier said than done. Led by the king at the head of his valorous youths the little host clashed into the midst of the unwieldy, unprepared, ill-handled Syrian host, and by their first slaughter created one of those fearful panics which have often been the destruction of Eastern hosts. The Syrians, whose army was made up of heterogeneous forces, and which could not be managed by thirty-four half-intoxicated feudatories of differing interests and insecure allegiance, was doubtless afraid that internal treachery must have been at work. Disconcerted by the vigour of the Israelites, the force detailed to storm the city turned and fled. Benhadad himself had a most narrow escape. He could not even wait for his war chariot. He had to flee with a few of his horsemen, and apparently, so the words may imply, on an inferior horse.

On July 27 General Clary, commanding 20,000 Bourbon troops at Messina, wrote the King's Secretary: 'Now Mr. Garibaldi wishes to amuse himself with me. Let him come. He will find me more than ready. I assure you that he will dance well!' The next day Garibaldi's vanguard drove Clary's outposts from the environs of Messina into the citadel. On the 26th the main body of Garibaldians, under Medici, entered the city. On the 28th Clary signed a convention agreeing to withdraw his army from Sicily, but stipulating that until this could be carried out, his garrison should remain in the citadel, under bonds to keep the peace. This was Clary's war dance.[3]

2. Such a power as that of Damascus was not likely, however, to submit to a humiliating defeat. It was due, said the courtiers, to the God of Israel being a mountain God; had the battle been fought on the lowlands, the result would have been different. Further, the vassal kings were only an element of dissension and weakness. They prevented the handling of the army as one strong machine worked by a single supreme will. Let Benhadad depose from command these incapable weaklings, and put in their place dependent civil officers who would have no thought but to obey orders. And so, with good heart, let the king

[3] ayer, *The Life and Times of Cavour*, ii. 333.

collect a fresh army with horses and chariots as powerful as the last. The issue would be certain conquest and dear revenge.

Benhadad followed this advice. A new army exactly like that which had been dispersed was raised, and marched into the great plain of Esdraelon in the opening of the fighting season, next year. In its rear lay the walled town of Aphek, in the Mishor or pastoral uplands, east of the Jordan, apparently the modern village 'Fik,' east of the Sea of Galilee, on the highway to Damascus, the wide array filling all the eastern end of the plain. But Ahab had been forewarned by a prophet that this new invasion would take place, and was prepared for it. Dividing his force in two, he kept them for seven days on the heights near at hand, waiting a favourable moment for attack. Compared with their assailants, they seemed, on the mountain sides, like 'two little flocks of kids,' while the invaders appeared to cover the country. But they were strong in the remembrance of their last year's victory, and, watching the right moment, swooped down on the Syrians with such vehemence as drove all before them. The slaughter was once more terrible, and Benhadad had again to flee. This time, however, he could get no farther than Aphek, which Ahab at once attacked. A vast number perished in the defence of the wall, which was at last carried and levelled with the ground; if, indeed, it did not fall through an earthquake or by undermining.

Benhadad himself fled from chamber to chamber to hide from the victors. According to Josephus he 'fled away with certain others of his most faithful servants, and hid himself in a cellar underground.' But it was impossible that he should not be discovered, and therefore his servants persuaded him to throw himself on the mercy of his conqueror. 'Behold now,' they said, 'we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings; let us, we pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel: peradventure he will save thy life.' So they went; and then Ahab heard from the ambassadors of the king who had once dictated terms to him with such infinite contempt, the message: 'Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live.'

A king that is used to nothing but flattery from his courtiers, whose lives he can take at any moment if they do anything other than flatter him, is no ordinary individual to speak plainly to. One needs a smooth tongue when speaking to him.[1]

3. 'And Ahab said, Is he yet alive? he is my brother. Now the men observed diligently, and hasted to catch whether it were his mind; and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad.'

There has been much discussion of the meaning here, and some proposals of slight emendations of the reading. But the general sense seems accurately rendered by our version. 'The men watched' ('as for augury,' says the LXX), 'and hasted, and caught up' (so as to make it sure) 'what fell from him.' What follows may be a question, 'Is Benhadad thy brother?' but probably the simple acceptance of the title is better. The whole description is graphic. The Syrians speak of 'thy servant Ben-hadad.' Ahab, in compassion or show of magnanimity, says, 'my brother.' Eagerly the ambassadors catch up the word, which, according to Eastern custom, implied a pledge of amity not to be recalled; and Ahab accepts their inference, and seals it publicly by taking the conquered king into his chariot.

Weak monarch that he was, Ahab accepted the easy terms of peace proposed by Benhadad. The Syrians were not required to pay any indemnity for the immense expenditure and unutterable misery which their wanton invasions had inflicted upon Israel. Benhadad simply proposed to restore the cities which his father had taken from Omri, and to allow the Israelites to have certain quarters in Damascus for residence or trade, as the Syrians had in Samaria.

Ahab's conduct, besides being foolish, was guilty. It showed a frivolous non-recognition of his duties as a theocratic king. It flung away the national advantages, and even the national security, which had not been vouchsafed to any power or worth of his, but only to Jehovah's direct interposition to save the destinies of His people from premature extinction.[2]

4. Benhadad was not likely to throw away the chance which gave him such an easy-going and improvident adversary. It is certain that he did not keep the covenant. He probably never intended to keep it. If he condescended to any excuse for breaking it, he would probably have affected to regard it as extorted by violence, and therefore invalid, as Francis I. defended the forfeiture of his

[1] *Mackay of Uganda*, 102.

[2] F. W. Farrar, *The First Book of Kings*, 467.

parole after the battle of Pavia. The carelessness with which Ahab had reposed in Benhadad a confidence, not only undeserved, but rendered reckless by all the antecedents of the Syrian king, cost him very dear. He had to pay the penalty three years later in a new and disastrous war, in the loss of his life, and the overthrow of his dynasty. The fact that, after so many exertions, and so much success in war, in commerce, and in worldly policy, he and his house fell unpitied, and no one raised a finger in his defence, was doubtless due in part to the alienation of his army by a carelessness which flung away in a moment all the fruits of their hard-won victories.

Bismarck has written a circular in which he announces that, owing to some alleged infringement of neutrality on the part of Luxembourg, he no longer considers himself bound by the Treaty of 1867, which, when Prussia's susceptibilities were aroused by France's attempt to buy that Duchy from the King of Holland, was entered into by all the Powers to secure its neutrality. This most unprovoked breach of good faith puts an end to my sympathies with him.[1]

III.

1. If the Benhadad king of Syria who undertook the expedition of conquest against Samaria, of which we gather some definite knowledge from the cycle of narratives about Elisha, was the same Benhadad whom Ahab had treated with such impolitic confidence, his hatred of Israel must have been intense.

On one occasion he invested Samaria so closely, and pressed it so severely, by cutting off all its supplies, that it was told in after days as an instance of the rigour of the siege that the head of an animal so objectionable for consumption as the ass was sold for eighty shekels, and the smallest measure of dove's dung for five shekels.

Elisha was in the city and had done more than any one else to inflame the courage of all to resistance. Yet although he had rendered such important services both to Jehoram and to his people on critical occasions, and, unlike Elijah, had such evident pleasure in human companionship, a good understanding could not be permanently established between the prophet and the king. Although not personally devoted to heathenism, Jehoram still permitted its existence in his kingdom, and his mother Jezebel certainly possessed great influence over the government. But a growing want of harmony between the two was fraught with dangers, which grew with the increase, on the one hand, of the importance of Elisha both among the prophets of Jahveh and in the eyes of the whole nation, and, on the other, of the weight with which the general condition of the age threw on the son the whole burden of the memory of the crimes of such parents as Ahab and Jezebel.

2. It was probably one of the foremost consequences of this disunion that Elisha voluntarily withdrew for some time to Damascus. In what high respect he was there held, and how his seer's power was proved on the most important occasions, was related in after days as follows. King Benhadad, whose reputation had fallen very low, fell ill, and had despatched his general Hazael with the most costly presents to bear a friendly greeting to Elisha, and at the same time to obtain from him an oracle of Jahveh about his recovery.

There is a serious difficulty about Elisha's answer to the embassage. It was as though he had said, 'Take back what message you choose, but Ben-hadad will certainly die.' But this was not all; he looked at him long and strangely with unchanged countenance and wept. At length Hazael asked why the man of God was weeping, and the prophet declared that he knew beforehand how much evil Hazael would hereafter do in war to the people of Israel; nay, he even concluded, as the other modestly declined all future military glory, by saying that Jahveh had revealed to him that Hazael would hereafter be king of the Aramæans.

So Hazael went back to Benhadad, and in answer to the eager inquiry, 'What said Elisha to thee?' he gave the answer which Elisha had foreseen that he meant to give, and which was in any case a falsehood, for it suppressed half of what Elisha had really said. 'He told me,' said Hazael, 'that thou shouldest surely recover.'

3. Was the sequel of the interview the murder of Benhadad by Hazael?

The story has usually been so read, but Elisha had neither prophesied this nor suggested it. The sequel is thus described. 'And it came to pass on the morrow, that *he* took the coverlet, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.' The repetition of the name Hazael in the last clause is superfluous if he was the subject of the

[1] *The Journals of Lady Knightley of Fawsley*, 210.

previous clause, and it has been consequently conjectured that 'he took' is merely the impersonal idiom 'one took.' Some suppose that, as Benhadad was in the bath, his servant took the bath-cloth, wetted it, and laid its thick folds over the mouth of the helpless king; others, that he soaked the thick quilt, which the king was too weak to lift away. In either case it is hardly likely that a great officer like Hazael would have been in the bathroom or the bedroom of the dying king. Yet we must remember that the Prætorian Præfect Macro is said to have suffocated Tiberius with his bedclothes. Josephus says that Hazael strangled his master with a net; and, indeed, he has generally been held guilty of the perpetration of the murder. But it is fair to give him the benefit of the doubt. Be that as it may, he seems to have reigned for some forty-six years (886–840 B.C.), and to have bequeathed the sceptre to a son on whom he had bestowed the old dynastic name of Benhadad.

A steady indifference to every interest but their own, a disregard of every obligation of justice or honour, if they could secure the crown of Scotland to their lineage, had given a consistency to the conduct of the Hamiltons beyond what was to be found in any other Scottish family. No scruples of religion had disturbed them, no loyalty to their sovereign, no care or thought for the public interests of their country. Through good and evil, through truth and lies, through intrigues and bloodshed, they worked their way towards the one object of a base ambition.[1]

LITERATURE.

Blair, H., *Sermons*, ii. (1815) 300.
Ewald, H., *The History of Israel*, iv. (1878) 71.
Farrar, F. W., *The First Book of Kings* (Expositor's Bible) (1893), 451.
,, ,, *The Second Book of Kings* (Expositor's Bible) (1894), 89.
Geikie, C., *Hours with the Bible*: Rehoboam to Hezekiah, 87.
Hall, H. R., *The Ancient History of the Near East* (1913), 448.
Jerdan, C., *Pastures of Tender Grass* (1909), 70.
Keary, A., *The Nations around Israel* (1893), 174.
Maclaren, A., *Expositions*: II. Samuel–II. Kings (1906), 268.
,, ,, *The Victors' Crowns*, 146.
Raleigh, A., *From Dawn to the Perfect Day* (1883), 98.
Spurgeon, C. H., *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, xlix. (1903) 493.
Christian Age, xlii. (1892) 130 (J. E. Rankin).

[1] Froude, *History of England*, ch. liii.

Virginibus Puerisque.

I.

1918.

'Move On.'

'We spend our years as a tale that is told.'—Ps 90[9].

You all love to hear a story told. If it is a good story it sends you into a world of make-believe, so that things generally disagreeable to you seem for the time being quite pleasant and even interesting. I heard of a boy who imagined that he did not like porridge. But he was told he had to take it. What do you think he did? He made believe that his plate of porridge was an island threatened by the rising tide (that was the milk), and the excitement of seeing the dry land disappear was so interesting that the porridge was eaten up before the magic of make-believe came to an end.

1. What is it that makes a story fascinating? It is constant movement. The characters keep changing, and we are all ears to hear what they become in the end. It was the gradual disappearance of the *land* in the porridge plate that created the land of magic in which the porridge was eaten.

No wonder we feel there must be movement in a story; there could be no real picture of life without it. Movement is what is called a law of life. We have to move in spite of ourselves.

2. There was once a poor boy called Jo. Jo is far from being an uncommon name, but we have come to know about this special Jo from a great writer of stories. One day he stood beside a constable wiping away his grimy tears with his arm. 'I've always been a-moving and a-moving on ever since I was born,' he said. 'Where can I possibly move to, sir, more than I do move?' 'My instructions don't go to that,' replied the constable. 'My instructions are, that you are to move on. I have told you so five hundred times.'

'But where?' cried poor Jo.

'Well! Really, constable,' said a little man who wanted to be kind to Jo, 'really that does seem a question. Where, you know?'

It was just a common London policeman who insisted on Jo moving on. We—by 'we' I mean fathers and mothers, and boys and girls—are constantly kept on the move by something, let us rather say some *one*, we cannot see.

With you boys and girls moving on does not

merely mean being sent to school and then to the university, or into an office; your parents do the most of that for you. But you come to church and Sunday school to hear about the big journey of life upon which you have all started. If you look back to last New Year's Day, you can remember yourself different from what you are to-day. I know it is so: nobody can keep stationary. Your life has been a case of moving on ever since you were a little baby.

3. If the London policeman had only thought for a moment, Jo's question was a 'poser.' 'Where?' In that grand old book called the *Pilgrim's Progress* we get an answer.

Long ago Sunday-school scholars used to read the *Pilgrim's Progress*. I wish they did now. It is the story of a man called Christian moving on through this world to the next. The desire to set out had come through thinking of Jo's little word 'where?' There were other people on the road: they all wanted to reach the very place Christian had in his eye. But although they moved on as far as he did some of them never reached the Celestial City.

Robert Louis Stevenson, whose *Treasure Island* every boy loves, said in another of his books that he had made many efforts to keep himself on the right road. But he added that a change came which turned him from one who shirked his work into one whose business was to strive and persevere. 'It seems,' he goes on to tell us, 'as if all that had been done by some one else. . . . I was never conscious of a struggle, nor registered a vow, nor seemingly had anything personal to do with the matter. It came about like a well-handled ship. There stood at the wheel that unknown steersman whom we call God.'

Now, the words in the text, 'like a tale that is told,' means that life is like something that is very brief—as brief as a 'sound or a sigh.' We listen round the fireside when one tells a story—there is breathless silence—the crisis comes, the end—the tale is told. It is all too short. What a wonderful story is being acted in the world just now. We are being moved on to tremendous changes. One day you boys and girls may be able to look back on these years; then they will seem to you like a tale that is told.

4. But back again to the little tale of your own life—your own moving on. Once a poet wrote:

I remember, I remember,
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heav'n
Than when I was a boy.

'Where?' was only a puzzle to him.

We want you all to have a very happy New Year. The best way to get this is to pray earnestly that the 'steersman called God' would settle the question 'where' for you. If you do this you will get nearer and nearer to heaven as you grow older; and you will be able to look back on 1918 as the stage in your life-story when you realized that the 'steersman called God' was your friend and guide.

II.

What is the Time?

'Knowing the time.'—Ro 13^{11} (A.V.).

I met a small boy the other day who wanted—not to know the time, but to be asked the time! What do you think was the reason? Well, he had just had a birthday, and his grandmother had presented him with a watch, not one of those imitation toy ones that never move out of the bit unless you turn a screw, but a real live one that ticked and had hands that moved round of their own accord. And so my small friend wanted to be asked the time. He wanted to use his watch and to show it off, just as you might want to play cricket if you had received a new bat, or as you might long for rain if you had got a new waterproof.

Now, if I were to ask you the question I had to ask that boy, I wonder if you could answer correctly. Do you know the time? Thousands of years ago men saw that it was a very important thing to know, and so they invented clocks. But of course the first clocks weren't at all like ours. In fact *you* might not call them clocks at all. Would you like to know how they are made? A vessel having a tiny hole or set of holes was filled with water. From this vessel the water dripped into another vessel in which certain distances were marked off. People were able roughly to tell the hour from the time the water, or some object floating in it, took to reach these marks.

Later, other means were invented to mark the passage of time. Sun-dials were made, and sand-glasses, very much like the egg-boiler you may see on the kitchen mantelpiece, only on a much larger scale, and King Alfred the Great marked his time by burning candles. Each candle was about twelve inches long and burned four hours. But, besides that, every candle was marked with notches at regular intervals, so that shorter periods of time could be noted. The natives of Korea still measure time in a similar way, by burning knotted ropes.

It was not till the thirteenth century that clocks something like those we know came to be used in Europe. So far as we know the first clock that was brought to England was put up in the tower of Westminster Hall in the year 1288. But it was hundreds of years later before clocks and watches came to be at all cheap or plentiful.

Nowadays we have a great number of clocks and watches, and yet there are many people who don't know the time. I wonder if you know it. I don't mean, can you read the clock face and tell exactly what hour and minute it is—I expect most of you can do that—but do you *know* the time? Because, you see, there is a big difference between *telling* the time and *knowing* the time. There is a right time and a wrong time to do most things, and unless you know which is which you don't really know the time, though you may be able to read all the queer clocks in the world.

1. Some boys and girls don't know the time *to get up*. The time to rise in the morning is when you are knocked, not ten minutes or half an hour after. Of course it's not nice to jump out of bed, especially on a cold, winter morning. But the longer we stay there the more difficult it grows to leave it. And the half-hour we lose then we can never quite make up. Do you know the sad history of little Mary Geraldine?

Little Mary Geraldine
  (The clock was striking eight),
Had lost a very precious thing.
  It made her breakfast late;
It made her hurry off to school
  Without a piece of cake;
It made her give dear little Ned
  A really truly shake
Because the wind blew off his hat;
  It made her cheeks feel hot,
And tears kept coming as she ran,
  And quite a lumpy spot
Came in her throat. 'Twas not her hat,
  'Twas not her furry muff,
'Twas not her bag that she had lost;
  'Twas really not enough,
She thought, to trouble her so much,
  She lost it in her bed;
'Twas just one little short half-hour
  Made all that fuss, she said.[1]

Don't lose your half-hours. A little determination will soon save them.

2. Some boys and girls don't know the time *to stop nonsense*. Now please don't run away with the idea that I want you to be gloomy and to pull long faces. I believe the glad people in the world do ten times as much good as the sad ones, and the jollier you are the more likely you are to cheer and help others. But, for all that, there is a time when fun is out of place. It is time to stop fun when we ought to be working hard. It is time to stop it when our fun is hurting somebody else. A little teasing is good for every one, but there is a kind of teasing (you all know it) which is a form of cruelty. Never let fun go that length; never, if you can help it, let any one be the worse for your fun. For remember that when we hurt other people in this way we are hurting ourselves too. We are making our natures cruel, and coarse, and hard.

3. Some boys and girls don't know the time *to learn*. They trifle away the precious hours of boyhood and girlhood when their minds are easily impressed and knowledge is easily gained. So they grow up ignorant and lose their chances of success in the world.

If the right time to learn lessons were thirty or forty you would be kept at home now and sent to school then. But by the time you are thirty or forty you will have to be doing other things—making a home, or building up a business; healing the sick, or building houses, or bridges, or ships; tilling the ground, or sailing the seas, or working in the colonies. Use your schooltime well and you will be ready for the other things.

4. Some people don't know the best time *to begin following Jesus*. They let all the beautiful fresh days of their youth go past, and then perhaps, when they are old and sad, and their heart is

[1] Elizabeth L. Gould, in *A Garland of Verse*, 31.

soiled and bruised, they bring the remnants of their life to Him. And although Jesus never sends anybody away, although He can take even the tattered remnants of a life and make them into something pure and beautiful, yet these people have for ever lost the joy and the privilege of serving Him with their youth and their strength. Jesus has done so much for us. He has given us everything He possessed. Do you think it is quite fair to spend the best of our life on our own ends and offer Him the fragments? You have the splendid chance of offering Him all your life to be spent in pure and noble service. Will you give Him that gift?

Point and Illustration.

A Dictionary of Similes.

Mr. Frank J. Wilstack, who has compiled *A Dictionary of Similes* (Harrap; 10s. 6d. net) is an American author. But he is free from that 'respect of persons' which would set Longfellow beside Shakespeare, and Oliver Wendell Holmes beside Percy Bysshe Shelley. What does he mean by a Dictionary of Similes? Let him answer himself. Here is a complete word, and an important one, as we find it in its alphabetical place:

HOPE.

Our hopes, like towering falcons, aim at objects in an airy height:
The little pleasure of the game is afar off to view the flight.—ANON.

It is equally precarious to moor a ship by an insufficient anchor, and to ground hope on a capricious temper.—DEMOPHILUS.

A woman's hopes are woven as sunbeams: a shadow annihilates them.—GEORGE ELIOT.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light
Adorns and cheers the way;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.
GOLDSMITH.

Our hopes, like withered leaves, fall fast.
LONGFELLOW.

As froth on the face of the deep,
As foam on the crest of the sea,
As dreams at the waking of sleep,
As gourd of a day and a night,
As harvest that no man shall reap,
As vintage that shall never be,
Is hope if it cling not aright,
O my God unto Thee.
C. G. ROSSETTI.

Hope is like a harebell trembling from its birth.
IBID.

Who builds his hope in air of your fair looks,
Lives like a drunken sailor on a mast;
Ready, with every nod, to tumble down
Into the fatal bowels of the deep.
SHAKESPEARE.

Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey towards it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us.—SAMUEL SMILES.

Hope has left you like a painted dream.—
JOSEPH STANSBURY.

As some adventurous flower, on savage craig-side grown,
Seems nourished hour by hour from its wild self alone,
So lives inveterate Hope, on her own hardihood.
WILLIAM WATSON.

The Prayer Book.

In a very able and reasonable volume entitled *Primitive Worship and the Prayer Book* (Longmans; 12s. 6d. net), the Rev. Walker Gwynne, D.D., has brought the Book of Common Prayer into comparison with the belief and worship of the Early Church, in order to show that in all essentials, if rightly interpreted, the Prayer Book and Primitive Worship are in agreement. He has done his work thoroughly, so thoroughly, so fairly and so well, that it will not have to be done again for some time. This fine volume is likely to become the text-book of its subject in theological colleges. It may well become also the working pastor's ever-present guide and instructor.

The Prayer Book has to be rightly interpreted. That does not mean that Dr. Gwynne reckons his interpretation the right one. His book is largely historical. He produces his authorities for all his affirmations; often he does not affirm, but lets his

authorities speak directly to us, and leaves us to think and settle.

Here, for example, is a quotation from his book, on the subject of Ministerial Priesthood. Although it is a note, it gives a good idea of his attitude as well as of his method.

'Liddon speaks of "sacerdotalism" as "a formidable word, harmless in itself, but surrounded with very invidious associations" (*Univ. Ser.*, 2nd series, p. 191). "The chief ideas commonly associated with sacerdotalism, which it is important to repudiate," writes Bishop Gore, "is that of a *vicarious* priesthood. . . . It is an abuse of the sacerdotal conception, if it is supposed that the priesthood exists to celebrate sacrifices or acts of worship *in the place of* the body of the people, or as their *substitute*. This conception had, no doubt, attached itself to the 'massing priests' of the Middle Ages. What is the truth, then? It is that the Church is one body. The free approach to God in the Sonship and Priesthood of Christ belongs to men as members of 'one body,' and this one body has different organs through which the functions of its life find expression, as it was differentiated by the act and appointment of Him who created it" (*The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 84–86). "If Christian laymen would only believe with all their hearts that they are really priests," writes Liddon, "we should very soon escape from some of the difficulties which vex the Church of Christ. Spiritual endowments are given to the Christian layman with one purpose, to the Christian minister with another: the object of the first is personal, that of the second is corporate" (*Univ. Ser.*, 2nd series, p. 198). Each is a real priest in his own sphere, and so, in all the worship of the Church, it is never "*I* offer, *I* beseech, *I* intercede," but "*We* offer, *we* beseech, *we* intercede," and that not only for ourselves, but for "Thy whole Church, and for all men."'

Great Issues.

Certain articles and essays which have already been published are now gathered by John Beattie Crozier, LL.D., into a single volume, to which he gives the title of *Last Words on Great Issues* (Chapman & Hall; 10s. 6d. net).

The subjects are mostly religious; but politics, literature, and spiritualism have all some attention given them. One title is 'The Problem of Religious Conversion.' Now Dr. Crozier is a liberal theologian; this hymn of praise is therefore remarkable.

'What, then, is this Religious experience known as "Conversion" or "change of heart"?—an experience which alike from the spiritual illumination and exultation which attend it, the peace, resignation, and joy with which it suffuses the heart, and the profound effects it has on the character and life, is the most entire *transformation* which in this world the mind of man can know; and of all others is the one which to those who have been the subjects of it, most convincingly demonstrates the direct and immediate *presence* of God, or the spirit of God, to the soul. Although sudden in its onset, it is always definite in its characteristics, which are in essence the same in every age and time, under every sky and every religion—Christian, Hindoo, or Mahommedan;—in Paul, Augustine, Buddha, St. Francis, Boehmen, Fox, Wesley, and the Mystics of the Mahommedan sects. It is a clear *human* experience transacted in the full sunlight of consciousness, and on the open arena of the soul; and is a transfiguration as real and surprising to the man himself who experiences it, as was that vision of Jesus on the Mount to His wondering and adoring disciples. From all the accounts we have of it, it would seem to follow usually on a period of deep inward dissatisfaction, unrest, disillusionment, or sorrow; bursting on the mind in a flood of light, and bathing it and all the world in a glory so intense that the very senses are affected by it; the grey old dreary world tingling under its transforming radiance with life and love, as on its first morning; the very landscape even, the trees, cattle and streams, being Eden-tipped by it; and on tiptoe with inner exultation and joy. In this experience the soul feels itself to be in the very presence of God Himself, wrapped around with His enfolding Spirit; and is so spellbound and entranced by the rapture of the vision, that it melts and swoons under it in a kind of speechless ecstasy of gratitude and prayer. It would seem to be the quintessence of all that is rarest and most excellent in life, raised to the transcendental pitch; no words can adequately describe it; and to those who are still "unconverted" it can be but faintly shadowed forth in such casual and intermittent experiences as when in some propitious hour, especially in love's young morning dream, strains

of music come to us which give us, if but for moments, glimpses of eternal melodies; and speak to us of such things as in all this endless life, as Richter says, we have not found and shall not find. In this rapturous experience the *conviction* that it is the very Spirit of God that is present to the soul seems self-evident; an axiom needing no demonstration to confirm it; a thing *above* proof; and which, like all fundamentals, must in every attempt at proof be itself assumed.'

That quotation is enough. The liberal theologian who can write in that way is worth reading.

Loyalty.

By the Rev. J. G. James, D.Litt., M.A., Southsea.

Of all the noble personal qualities that have been brought into prominence by the Great War there are none more important than loyalty, which had not only fallen into the background of life, but has been generally employed in what we consider to be a secondary sense in the days of peace. It is not identical with patriotism, because it is finer in quality and more generic; it is, in fact, an essential of all true religion; and wherein religion has lacked loyalty it has become to that extent ineffective, formal, and unreal. Patriotism is frequently dealt with in Scripture, and it has received therein ample support; so also is loyalty, although it is difficult to find a single word in the Old Testament or in the New which distinctly denotes that characteristic. It is implicit throughout the prophetic and the apostolic writings and above all in the teachings of our Lord, but it needs to be sought for and brought out distinctly into the light.

First of all, we must consider what is precisely meant by the term. Its etymology connects it with law, the base being *loi*, which is derived from the Latin, *lex*; but it has long since parted company with any mere sense of legality or allegiance to law in the abstract, or legislation, or even law-abiding conduct. It has come to be almost correlative with royalty, the king as the over-lord, with all the authority that sovereignty denotes, requiring and having the right to demand on the part of the subject loyalty to his person, his government, and his commands. In primitive times and also under the feudal system the lord made a distinct appeal for loyalty in the full sense. Inseparable from this was the quality of fealty, the personal sense of honour which bound a man to his vows and made him true to his *foi*, and thus he became faithful and trustworthy. Loyalty during the course of modern days has lost in a measure its personal character, and we talk freely and in a somewhat self-conscious spirit of loyalty to our convictions, our principles, and our party. The discovery and closer investigation of the qualities and properties of the conception of personality have brought out recently into prominence the personal equation in life, and religion is coming to bear more distinctively the attitude of personal submission and surrender, allegiance and obedience to our Sovereign Lord, our beloved δεσπότης. This characteristic, illustrated and enforced by the response to the call of King and Country in the present appalling crisis, is thus gaining a significance which is of the highest value and importance for religion, and which brings us back to a clearer conception of the obligation of believers as set forth by our Lord and in the Pauline and Petrine Epistles.

If we take loyalty to denote personal attachment and submission to a definite authority, vested in a person who has the right to our allegiance and obedience, or as it has been put, 'the quality of commanding disinterested service and uncalculating devotion,' we can find it everywhere in Scripture. Its advance may be clearly traced from the naïve ideas of submission to God as the Supreme Authority, the Covenant-keeping Jehovah, through the period of loyalty to the Divine law, then degenerating later into mere legalism, and finally to the teaching of personal surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Covenant-keeping God of the patriarchs demanded both fealty and loyalty, faithfulness on the part of the Deity calling for and evoking loyalty and faithfulness on the part of His servants. The full idea of individual personality had not, of course, completely emerged; it was household loyalty that was involved, as conveyed in the