

ADDITIONS, INTEGRATIONS, CORRECTIONS AND SUPPLEMENTS TO THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ARNOLD JOSEPH TOYNBEE*

by Teodoro Tagliaferri (University of Naples Federico II)

No. 175
(January 15th, 2023)

Additions to Part I, Works by Arnold J. Toynbee

1936

Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Abyssinians' Fate. Dying with Honour*, in «The Times», April 22, 1936, p. 15. Letter to the Editor, dated Ganthorpe House, Terrington, York, April 20.

THE ABYSSINIANS' FATE

* *A Bibliography of Arnold J. Toynbee*, compiled by S. Fiona Morton, with a Foreword by Veronica M. Toynbee, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1980.

DYING WITH HONOUR

by Arnold J. Toynbee

Sir,

Which would we rather be? The Abyssinians or our European selves?

The Abyssinians to-day are dying painfully because they have the courage to fight to the death against an aggressor who is overwhelmingly stronger than they are, and who is using a devilish weapon which he has sworn to renounce. We Europeans (as Mr. Baldwin told one European audience last Saturday) are perhaps going to die the same painful death tomorrow because some of us have not scrupled to commit a double breach of faith and morality by making an aggressive war and waging it with poison gas, while the rest of us have not dared to carry out more than a fragment of our covenant, for fear of the immediate risks to which we might expose ourselves by keeping faith completely.

The penalty for these interwoven sins of commission and omission surely stares us in the face. If we Europeans persist in our present course, we are going to turn our arms against one another and then die in droves, like sheep penned in slaughter-houses, from the poison which European airmen will spray over European cities.

If our death is to be a premature and painful one anyway, which matters more? To make sure of dying it to-morrow instead of to-day? Or to make sure of dying it with honour instead of with dishonour? This question, which forces itself upon all parties concerned in the present international issue, has been answered by the Abyssinians already. They have chosen to die a painful but honourable death to-day. Have we Europeans quite made up our minds to take the other option ?

I venture to enclose some Greek verses in which I have tried to picture the two choices as they may perhaps appear hereafter in the longer perspective of history.

ΑΙΘΙΟΠΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΙΩΝ ΕΠΙΤΑΦΙΟΣ

κείνοι μὲν, γυμνοὶ καὶ βάρβαροι ἄνδρες ἔοντες,
ὄργανα φρικώδους οὐκ ἐφοβαῦντ' ἄρεως,
ἀλλ' αὐτοσχεδίη, ἔτ' ἐλεύθεροι, οὐ τι τρέσαντες,
εἰς Ἄϊδην καλῶς μαρνάμενοι κάτεβαν.
ἡμεῖς δ' οἱ μεγάλοι καὶ κάρτεροι, οἱ σοφοί; ἡμῖν
τῶν αὐτῶν ὀδυνῶν γευσάμενοισι θανεῖν
μοῖρ', ἀλλ' οὐ θάνατον τὸν Ἀρήϊον οὐποτε τοῖον
τοῖς ἐπιπορκουῖσιν δῶρον ἔδωκε Θεός.
