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War: Its Causes, Consequences, Lawfulness, etc.: An Essay

Jonathan Dymond

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WAR.

DYMOND.

INTRODUCTORY WORDS BY

JOHN BRIGHT

WAR:

ITS CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, LAWFULNESS, ETC.

AN ESSAY

BY

JONATHAN DYMOND.

WITH

INTRODUCTORY WORDS

BY

THE RT. HON. JOHN BRIGHT.

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REVISERS' NOTE.

IN reprinting this Essay, the Editors desire to remind its readers that it is only one of a series of Essays on Christian Morality by the same gifted writer, and that the others are characterized by the same clear and cogent reasoning so noteworthy in the one now published. In preparing the Essay on War for the press, they have thought it best here and there to alter a word or sentence, or to omit a passage or note, with a view to either modern usage, clearness, brevity, or changed conditions; but they have in no case interfered with the author's argument, either in its arrangement or development. They desire earnestly to commend the Essay to the careful and unprejudiced consideration of all thoughtful people.

The *Essay on War* can be obtained in the following different styles:—

Paper Covers, Bronze Letters	...	Sixpence.
Cloth, Gilt Letters	One Shilling.

THE ORPHANS' PRINTING PRESS, LEOMINSTER.

INTRODUCTORY WORDS
BY THE
RIGHT HON. JOHN BRIGHT;
WITH PASSAGES FROM
HIS SPEECHES,
REVISED BY HIMSELF FOR THIS EDITION.

I KNOW of no better book dealing with morals as applied to nations than Dymond's Essays. As the world becomes more Christian, this book will be more widely read, and the name of its author more revered.

I have been asked on several occasions, "What do you think about the doctrine of the Peace Society, or of your own Religious Body, in their opposition to all War however necessary or however just it may seem to be, or however much you are provoked and injured?" I think every man must make up his own mind on that abstract principle; and I would recommend him, if he wants to know a book that says a good deal upon it, to study the New Testament, and make up his mind from that source.

It will be time enough perhaps to discuss that question

when we have abandoned everything that can be called unjust and unnecessary in the way of War. Now, I believe, that with wise counsels, great statesmen, large knowledge of affairs combined with Christian principle, there is probably not a single war in which we have been engaged from the time of William III. that might not have been without difficulty avoided ; and our military system might have been kept in great moderation, our National Debt would never have accumulated, our population would have been a great deal less barbarous and less ignorant than they are, and everything that tends to the true grandeur and prosperity and happiness of the people would have been infinitely advanced beyond or above what we see now in our own time.

I think we ought to begin to ask ourselves how it is that Christian nations—that this Christian nation—should be involved in so many wars. If we may presume to ask ourselves, what, in the eye of the Supreme Ruler, is the greatest crime which His creatures commit, I think we may almost with certainty conclude that it is the crime of War. Somebody has described it as “the sum of all villainies” ; and it has been the cause of sufferings, misery, and slaughter, which neither tongue nor pen can ever describe. And all this has been going on for eighteen

hundred years after men have adopted the religion whose Founder and whose Head is denominated the Prince of Peace. It was announced as a religion which was intended to bring "Peace on earth, and good will towards men"; and yet, after all these years, the peace on earth has not come, and the goodwill among men is only partially and occasionally exhibited; and amongst nations we find almost no trace of it century after century.

Now in this country we have a great institution called the Established Church. I suppose that great institution numbers twenty thousand or more places of worship in various parts of the kingdom. I think this does not include what there are in Scotland, and what there are in Ireland. With these twenty thousand churches there are at least twenty thousand men, educated and for the most part Christian men, anxious to do their duty as teachers of the religion of peace; and besides these, there are twenty thousand other churches which are not connected with the Established institution, but have been built, and are maintained, by that large portion of the people who go generally under the name of Dissenters or Nonconformists: and they have their twenty thousand ministers; also men, many of them, as well educated, as truly Christian and devoted men, as the others; and they

are at work continually from day to day, and they preach from Sabbath to Sabbath what they believe to be the doctrines of the Prince of Peace ; and yet, notwithstanding all that, we have more than £30,000,000 a year spent by this country in sustaining armies and navies, in view of wars which, it is assumed, may suddenly and soon take place. Now, why is this, I should like to ask : for all these teachers and preachers profess to be the servants of the Most High God, and teachers of the doctrines of His Divine Son ; and being such, may I not appeal to them and say—What have you, forty or fifty thousand men, with such vast influence, what have you been doing with this great question during all the years that you have ministered, and called yourselves the ministers of the Prince of Peace ?

And I would not confine my appeal to the ministers only, but to the devout men of every church and every chapel, who surround the minister and uphold his hands ; who do in many things his bidding, and who join him heartily and conscientiously in his work,—I say, what are they doing ? Why is it that there has never been a combination of all religious and Christian teachers of the country, with a view of teaching the people what is true, what is Christian, upon the subject ?

I believe it lies within the power of the churches to do far more than statesmen can do in matters of this kind. I believe they might so bring this question home to the hearts and consciences of the Christian and good men and women of their congregations, that a great combination of public opinion might be created, which would wholly change the aspect of this question in this country and before the world, and would bring to the minds of statesmen that they are not the rulers of the people of Greece, or of the marauding hordes of ancient Rome, but that they are, or ought to be, the Christian rulers of a Christian people.

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WAR :

AN INQUIRY INTO ITS CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, LAWFULNESS, ETC.

IT is one amongst the numerous moral phenomena of the present times, that the inquiry is silently yet not slowly spreading in the world—*Is War compatible with the Christian religion?* There was a period when the question was seldom asked, and when War was regarded almost by every man both as inevitable and right. That period has certainly passed away; and not only individuals but public societies, and societies in distant nations, are urging the question upon the attention of mankind. The simple circumstance that it is thus urged contains no irrational motive to investigation: for why should men ask the question if they did not doubt; and how, after these long ages of prescription, could they begin to doubt, without a reason?

It is not unworthy of remark that, whilst disquisitions are frequently issuing from the press, of which the tendency is to show that War is not compatible with Christianity, few serious attempts are made to show that it is. Whether this results from the circumstance that no particular individual is interested in the proof,—or that there is a secret consciousness that proof cannot be brought,—or that those who may be desirous of defending the

custom rest in security that the impotence of its assailants will be of no avail against a custom so established and so supported,—I do not know : but the fact is remarkable, that scarcely a defender is to be found. It cannot be doubted that the question is one of the utmost interest and importance to man. Whether the custom be defensible or not, every man should *inquire* into its consistency with the Moral Law. If it is defensible, he may, by inquiry, dismiss the scruples which it is certain subsist in the minds of multitudes, and thus exempt himself from the offence of participating in that which, though pure, he “esteemeth to be unclean.” If it is not defensible, the propriety of investigation is increased in a tenfold degree.

It may be a subject therefore of reasonable regret to the friends and the lovers of truth, that the question of the Moral Lawfulness of War is not brought *fairly* before the public. I say fairly ; because though many of the publications which impugn its lawfulness advert to the ordinary arguments in its favour, yet it is not to be assumed that they give to those arguments all that vigour and force which would be imparted by a stated and an able advocate. Few books, it is probable, would tend more powerfully to promote the discovery and spread of truth, than one which should frankly and fully and ably advocate, upon sound moral principles, the practice of War. The public would then see the whole of what can be urged in its favour without being obliged to seek for arguments, as they now must, in incidental, or imperfect, or scattered, disquisitions : and possessing in a distinct form the evidence of both parties

they would be enabled to judge justly between them. Perhaps if, invited as the public are to the discussion, no man is hereafter willing to adventure in the cause, the conclusion will not be unreasonable, that no man is destitute of a consciousness that the cause is not a good one.

Meantime it is the business of him whose inquiries have conducted him to the conclusion that the cause is not good, to exhibit the evidence upon which the conclusion is founded. It happens that upon the subject of War, more than upon almost any other subject of human inquiry, the individual finds it difficult to contemplate its merits with an unbiassed mind. He finds it difficult to examine it as it would be examined by a philosopher to whom the subject was new. He is familiar with its details; he is habituated to the idea of its miseries; he has perhaps never doubted, because he has never questioned, its rectitude; nay, he has associated with it ideas not of splendour only but of honour and of merit. That such an inquirer will not, without some effort of abstraction, examine the question with impartiality and justice, is plain; and therefore the first business of him who would satisfy his mind respecting the lawfulness of War, is to divest himself of all those habits of thought and feeling which have been the result not of reflection and judgment, but of the ordinary associations of life. And perhaps he may derive some assistance in this necessary but not easy dismissal of previous opinions, by referring first to some of the ordinary Causes and Consequences of War. The reference will enable us also more satisfactorily to estimate the moral character of the practice itself; for it is no unimportant auxiliary in forming

such an estimate of human actions or opinions, to know how they have been produced and what are their effects.

CAUSES OF WAR.

WANT OF INQUIRY.

Of these Causes one undoubtedly consists in the want of inquiry. We have been accustomed from earliest life to a familiarity with its "pomp and circumstance;" soldiers have passed us at every step, and battles and victories have been the topic of every one around us. It therefore becomes familiarized to all our thoughts and interwoven with all our associations. We have never inquired whether these things should be: the question does not even suggest itself. We acquiesce in it, as we acquiesce in the rising of the sun, without any other idea than that it is a part of the ordinary processes of the world. And how are we to feel disapprobation of a system that we do not examine, and of the nature of which we do not think? Want of inquiry has been the means by which long-continued practices, whatever has been their enormity, have obtained the general concurrence of the world, and by which they have continued to pollute or degrade it, long after the few who inquire into their nature have discovered them to be bad. It was by these means that the Slave Trade was so long tolerated by this land of humanity. Men did not *think* of its iniquity. We were induced to think, and we soon abhorred, and then abolished it. Of the effects of this want of inquiry we have indeed frequent examples in connection with the subject before us. Many who have all their lives concluded that War is lawful and right, have

found, when they began to examine the question, that their conclusions were founded upon no evidence; that they had believed in its rectitude, not because they had possessed themselves of proof, but because they had never inquired whether it was capable of proof or not. In the present moral state of the world, one of the first concerns of him who would discover pure morality should be to question the purity of that which now obtains.

INDIFFERENCE TO HUMAN MISERY.

Another cause of our complacency with War, and therefore another cause of War itself, consists in that callousness to human misery which the custom induces. They who are shocked at a single murder on the highway, hear with indifference of the slaughter of a thousand on the field. They whom the idea of a single corpse would thrill with terror, contemplate that of heaps of human carcasses mangled by human hands, with frigid indifference. If a murder is committed, the narrative is given in the public newspaper, with many adjectives of horror, with many expressions of commiseration, and many hopes that the perpetrator will be detected. In the next paragraph, the editor, perhaps, tells us that he has hurried a second edition to the press, in order that he may be the first to gladden the public with the intelligence, that in an engagement which has just taken place, *eight hundred and fifty of the enemy were killed*. Now, is not this latter intelligence eight hundred and fifty times as deplorable as the first? Yet the first is the subject of our sorrow, and this—of our joy! The inconsistency and want of proportion which have been

occasioned in our sentiments of benevolence, offer a curious moral phenomenon.

The immolations of the Hindoos fill us with compassion or horror; the sacrifices of life by our own criminal executions are the subject of our anxious commiseration. We feel that the life of a Hindoo, or of a malefactor, is a serious thing, and that nothing but imperious necessity should induce us to destroy the one, or to permit the destruction of the other. Yet what are these sacrifices of life in comparison with the sacrifices of War? In Napoleon's campaign in Russia, there fell, during one hundred and seventy-three days in succession, an average of two thousand nine hundred men per day; more than five hundred thousand human beings in less than six months! And most of these victims expired with peculiar intensity of suffering. We are carrying our benevolence to the Indies, but what becomes of it in Russia, or at Leipsic? We labour to save a few lives from the gallows, but where is our solicitude to save them on the field? Life is life wheresoever it be sacrificed, and has everywhere equal claims to our regard. I am not now saying that War is wrong, but that we regard *its* miseries with an indifference with which we regard no others; that if our sympathy were *reasonably* excited respecting them, we should be powerfully prompted to avoid War; and that the want of this reasonable and virtuous sympathy is one cause of its prevalence in the world.

NATIONAL IRRITABILITY.

And *another* consists in national irritability. It is often assumed (not indeed upon the most rational grounds) that

the best way of supporting the dignity and maintaining the security of a nation is, when occasions of disagreement arise, to assume a high attitude and a combative tone. We keep ourselves in a state of irritability which is continually alive to occasions of offence; and he that is prepared to be offended readily finds offences. A jealous sensibility sees insults and injuries where sober eyes see nothing; and nations thus surround themselves with a sort of artificial tentacula, which they throw wide in quest of irritation, and by which they are stimulated to revenge, by every touch of accident or inadvertency. They who are easily offended will also easily offend. What is the experience of private life? The man who is always on the alert to discover trespasses on his honour or his rights, never fails to quarrel with his neighbours. Such a person may be dreaded as a torpedo. We may fear, but we shall not love him; and fear, without love, easily lapses into enmity. There are, therefore, many feuds and litigations in the life of such a man, that would never have disturbed its quiet if he had not captiously snarled at the trespasses of accident, and savagely retaliated insignificant injuries. The viper that we chance to molest, we suffer to live if he continues to be quiet; but if he raise himself in menaces of destruction we knock him on the head.

It is with nations as with men. If on every offence we fly to arms, we shall of necessity provoke exasperation; and if we exasperate a people as petulant as ourselves, we may probably continue to butcher one another, until we cease only from emptiness of exchequers or weariness of slaughter. To threaten war is, therefore, often equivalent

to beginning it. In the present state of men's principles, it is not probable that one nation will observe another levying men, and building ships, and founding cannon, without providing men, and ships, and cannon themselves; and when both are thus threatening and defying, what is the hope that there will not be a war?

If nations fought only when they could not be at peace, there would be very little fighting in the world. The wars that are waged for "insults to flags," and an endless train of similar motives, are perhaps generally attributable to the irritability of our pride. We are at no pains to appear pacific towards the offender; our remonstrance is a threat; and the nation, which would give satisfaction to an *inquiry*, will give no other answer to a menace than a menace in return. At length we begin to fight, not because we are aggrieved, but because we are angry. One example may be offered: "In 1789, a small Spanish vessel committed some violence in Nootka Sound, under the pretence that the country belonged to Spain. This appears to have been the principal ground of offence: and with this both the Government and the people of England were very angry. The irritability and haughtiness which they manifested were unaccountable to the Spaniards, and the peremptory tone was imputed by Spain, not to the feelings of offended dignity and violated justice, but to some lurking enmity, and some secret designs which we did not choose to avow."*

If the tone had been less peremptory and more rational, no such suspicion would have been excited, and the hostility which was consequent upon the suspicion would, of course,

* Smollett's England.

have been avoided. Happily the English were not so passionate but that before they proceeded to fight they negotiated, and settled the affair amicably. The *preparations* for this foolish threatened war cost, however, three millions one hundred and thirty-three thousand pounds !

So well indeed is national irritability known to be an efficient cause of War, that they who from any motive wish to promote it, endeavour to rouse the temper of a people by stimulating their passions, just as the boys in our streets stimulate two dogs to fight. These persons talk of the insults, or the encroachments, or the contempts, of the destined enemy, with every artifice of aggravation ; they tell us of foreigners who want to trample upon our rights, of rivals who ridicule our power, of foes who will crush, and of tyrants who will enslave us. They pursue their object, certainly, by efficacious means : they desire a war, and therefore irritate our passions ; and when men are angry they are easily persuaded to fight.

That this cause of War is morally bad, that petulance and irritability are wholly incompatible with Christianity, will be universally admitted.

SELF-INTEREST.

Wars are often promoted from considerations of interest, as well as from passion. The love of gain adds its influence to our other motives to support them ; and without other motives we know that this love is sufficient to give great obliquity to the moral judgment, and to tempt us to many crimes. During a war of ten years there will always be *many* whose income depends on its continu-

ance ; and a countless host of commissaries, and purveyors, and agents, and mechanics, commend a war because it fills their pockets. And unhappily, if money is in prospect, the desolation of a kingdom is often of little concern : destruction and slaughter are not to be put in competition with definite personal gain. In truth, it seems sometimes to be the system of the conductors of a war to give to the sources of gain endless ramifications. The more there are who profit by it, the more numerous are its supporters ; and thus the projects of a cabinet become identified with the wishes of the people, and both are gratified in the prosecution of War.

A support more systematic and powerful is however given to War, because it offers to the higher ranks of society a profession which unites gentility with profit, and which, without the *vulgarity* of trade, maintains or enriches them. It is of little consequence to inquire whether the distinction, as regards vulgarity, between the toils of War and the toils of commerce be fictitious. In the abstract, it is fictitious ; but of this species of reputation public opinion holds the *arbitrium et jus et norma* ; and public opinion is in favour of War.

The army and the navy, therefore, afford to the middle and higher classes a most acceptable profession. The profession of arms is, like the profession of law or of physic, a regular source of employment and profit. Boys are educated for the army as they are educated for the bar ; and many parents appear to have no other idea than that War is part of the business of the world. Of *younger sons*, whose fathers, in pursuance of the unhappy system of

primogeniture, do not choose to support them at the expense of the heir, the army and the navy are the common resource. They would not know what to do without them. To many of these the news of a peace is a calamity; and though they may not *lift their voices* in favour of new hostilities for the sake of gain, it is unhappily certain that they often secretly desire it.

It is in this manner that much of the rank, of the influence, and of the wealth, of a country become interested in a promotion of wars; and when a custom is promoted by wealth, and influence, and rank, what is the wonder that it should be continued? It is said (if my memory serves me, by Sir Walter Raleigh), "He that taketh up his rest to live by this profession shall hardly be an honest man."

By depending upon War for a subsistence, a powerful inducement is given to desire it; and when the question of War is to be decided, it is to be feared that the whispers of interest will prevail, and that humanity, and religion, and conscience. will be sacrificed to promote it.

SECRET MOTIVES OF CABINETS.

Of those causes of War which consist in the ambition of princes, or statesmen, or commanders, it is not necessary to speak, because no one to whom the world will listen is willing to defend them.

Statesmen however have, besides ambition, many purposes of subtle policy which make wars convenient; and when they have such purposes, they are sometimes cool speculators in the lives of men. They who have much patronage have many dependents, and they who have many

dependents have much power. By a war, thousands become dependent on a minister; and, if he be disposed, he can often pursue schemes of guilt, and intrench himself in unpunished wickedness, because the war enables him to silence by an office the clamour of opposition, and to secure by a bribe the suffrages of venality. He has, therefore, many motives to War: in ambition, that does not refer to conquest; or in fear, that extends only to his office or his pocket: and fear and ambition are sometimes more interesting considerations than the happiness and the lives of men. Cabinets have, in truth, many secret motives to wars of which the people know little. They talk in public of invasions of right, or of breaches of treaty, of the support of honour, of the necessity of retaliation, when these motives have no influence on their determinations. Some untold purpose of expediency, or the private quarrel of a prince, or the pique or anger of a minister, are often the real motives to a contest, whilst its promoters are loudly talking of the honour or of the safety of the country.

IDEAS OF GLORY.

But perhaps the most operative cause of the popularity of War, and of the facility with which we engage in it, consists in this, that an idea of glory is attached to military exploits, and of honour to the military profession. The glories of battle, and of those who perish in it, or who return in triumph to their country, are favourite topics of declamation with the historian, the biographer, and the poet. They have told us a thousand times of *dying heroes*, who "resign their lives amidst the joys of conquest, and,

filled with their country's glory, smile in death ;" and thus every excitement that eloquence and genius can command, is employed to arouse that ambition of fame which can be gratified only at the expense of blood.

Into the nature and principles of this fame and glory we cannot now minutely inquire ; but in the view alike of virtue and of intellect, they are low and bad. "I cannot tell" said Jane Taylor, "how or why the love of glory is a less selfish principle than the love of riches." "Christianity" says Bishop Watson, "quite annihilates the disposition for martial glory." Another testimony, and from an advocate of War (Paley's *Evid.*, p. ii. c. 2), goes further, and says "that no two things can be more different than the heroic and the Christian character."

Such is the foundation of the glory which has for so many ages deceived and deluded multitudes of mankind ! Upon this foundation a structure has been raised so vast, so brilliant, so attractive, that the greater portion of mankind are content to gaze in admiration, without any inquiry into its basis, or any solicitude for its durability. If, however, it should be that the gorgeous temple will be able to stand only till Christian truth and light become predominant, it surely will be wise of those who seek a niche in its apartments as their paramount and final good, to pause ere they proceed. If they desire a reputation that shall outlive guilt and fiction, let them look to the basis of military fame. If this fame should one day sink into oblivion and contempt, it will not be the first instance in which widespread glory has been found to be a glittering bubble, that has burst, and been forgotten. Look at the days of chivalry.

Of the ten thousand Quixotes of the middle ages, where is now the honour or the name? Yet poets once sang their praises, and the chronicler of their achievements believed he was recording an everlasting fame. Where are now the glories of the tournament?—glories

“Of which all Europe rang from side to side.”

Where is the champion whom princesses caressed and nobles envied? Where are now the triumphs of Duns Scotus, and where are the folios that *perpetuated* his fame? The glories of War have indeed outlived these: human passions are less mutable than human follies; but I am willing to avow my conviction, that these glories are alike destined to sink into forgetfulness; and that the time is approaching when the applauses of military heroism, and the splendours of conquest, will be remembered only as follies and iniquities that are past. Let him who seeks for fame, other than that which an era of Christian consistency will allow, make haste; for every hour that he delays its acquisition will shorten its duration. This is certain, if there be certainty in the promises of Heaven.

Of this factitious glory as a cause of War, Gibbon speaks in his *Decline and Fall*. “As long as mankind” says he, “shall continue to bestow more liberal applause on their destroyers than on their benefactors, the thirst of military glory will ever be the vice of the most exalted characters.” “’Tis strange to imagine” says the Earl of Shaftesbury, “that War, which of all things appears the most savage, should be the passion of the most heroic spirits.” But he gives us the reason:—“By a small *misguidance of the affection* a lover of mankind becomes a ravager; a

hero and deliverer becomes an oppressor and destroyer."

These are amongst the great perpetual causes of War. And what are they? First, That we *do not inquire* whether War is right or wrong. Secondly, That we are habitually *haughty* and *irritable* in our intercourse with other nations. Thirdly, That War is a source of *profit* to individuals, and establishes *professions which are very convenient* to the middle and higher ranks of life. Fourthly, That it gratifies the *ambition* of public men, and *serves the purposes of state policy*. Fifthly, That *notions of glory* are attached to war-like affairs; which glory is factitious and impure.

In the view of reason, and especially in the view of religion, what is the character of these Causes? Are they pure? Are they honourable? Are they, when connected with their effects, compatible with the Moral Law?—Lastly, and especially, Is it probable that a system of which these are the great ever-during Causes, can itself be good or right?

CONSEQUENCES OF WAR.

To expatiate upon the miseries which War brings upon mankind, appears a trite and a needless employment. We all know that its evils are great and dreadful. Yet the very circumstance that the knowledge is familiar may make it inoperative upon our sentiments and our conduct. It is not the intensity of misery, it is not the extent of evil alone, which is necessary to animate us to that exertion which evil and misery should excite; if it were, surely we should be much more averse than we now are to contribute, in word or in action, to the promotion of War.

But there are mischiefs attendant upon the system which are not to every man thus familiar, and on which, for that reason, it is expedient to remark. In referring especially to some of those Moral consequences of War which commonly obtain little of our attention, it may be observed, that social and political considerations are necessarily involved in the moral tendency : for the happiness of society is always diminished by the diminution of morality ; and enlightened policy knows that the greatest support of a state is the virtue of the people.

And yet the reader should bear in mind—what nothing but the frequency of the calamity can make him forget—the intense sufferings and irreparable deprivations which one battle inevitably entails upon private life. These are calamities of which the world thinks little, and which, if it thought of them, it could not remove. A father or a husband can seldom be replaced ; a void is created in the domestic felicity which there is little hope that the future will fill. By the slaughter of a war, there are thousands who weep in unpitied and unnoticed secrecy, whom the world does not see ; and thousands who retire in silence to hopeless poverty, for whom it does not care. To these the conquest of a kingdom is of little importance. The loss of a protector or of a friend is ill repaid by empty glory. An addition of territory may add titles to a king, but the brilliancy of a crown throws little light upon domestic gloom. It is not my intention to insist upon these calamities, intense and irreparable and unnumbered as they are ; but those who begin a war without taking them into their estimates of its consequences, must be

regarded as, at most, half-seeing politicians. The legitimate object of political measures is the good of the people;—and a great sum of good a war must produce, if it out-balances even *this* portion of its mischiefs.

DESTRUCTION OF HUMAN LIFE.

Nor should we be forgetful of that dreadful part of all warfare, the destruction of mankind. The frequency with which this destruction is represented to our minds, has almost extinguished our perception of its awfulness and horror. Between the years 1141 and 1815, an interval of six hundred and seventy years, our country was at war with France alone *two hundred and sixty-six years*. If to this we add our wars with other countries, probably we shall find that one-half of the last six or seven centuries has been spent by this country in war! A dreadful picture of human violence! How many of our fellow-men, of our fellow-Christians, have these centuries of slaughter cut off! What is the sum total of the misery of their deaths!*

TAXATION.

When political writers expatiate upon the extent and the evils of taxation, they do not sufficiently bear in mind the reflection that almost all our taxation is the effect of War. A man declaims upon national debts. He ought to declaim upon the parent of those debts. Do we reflect that if heavy taxation entails evils and misery upon the community, that misery and those evils are inflicted upon us by War? The amount of supplies in Queen Anne's

* "Since the peace of Amiens more than *four millions* of human beings have been sacrificed to the personal ambition of Napoleon Buonaparte."—*Quarterly Review*, No. xxv. Art. 1, 1825.

reign was about seventy millions; and of this about sixty-six millions was expended in War. Where is our equivalent good?

Such considerations ought, undoubtedly, to influence the conduct of public men in their disagreement with other states, even if higher considerations do not influence it. They ought to form part of the calculations of the evil of hostility. I believe that a greater mass of human suffering and loss of human enjoyment are occasioned by the pecuniary distresses of a war, than any ordinary advantages of a war compensate. But this consideration seems too remote to obtain our notice. Anger at offence, or hope of triumph, overpowers the sober calculations of reason, and outbalances the weight of after and long-continued calamities. The only question appears to be, whether taxes enough for a war can be raised, and whether a people will be willing to pay them. But the great question ought to be (setting questions of Christianity aside), whether the nation will gain as much by the war as they will lose by taxation and its other calamities.

If the happiness of the people were, what it ought to be, the primary and the ultimate object of national measures, I think that the policy which pursued this object, would often find that even the pecuniary distresses resulting from a war make a greater deduction from the quantum of felicity, than would those evils which the war may have been designed to avoid.

MORAL DEPRAVITY.

“But War” says Erasmus, “does more harm to the morals of men than even to their property and persons.”

If, indeed, it depraves our morals more than it injures our persons and deducts from our property, how enormous must its mischiefs be !

I do not know whether the greater sum of moral evil resulting from War is suffered by those who are immediately engaged in it, or by the public. The mischief is most extensive upon the community, but upon the profession it is most intense.

Rara fides pietasque viris qui castra sequuntur.—LUCAN.

No one pretends to applaud the morals of an army, and as for its religion, few think of it at all. The fact is too notorious to be insisted upon, that thousands who had filled their stations in life with propriety, and been virtuous from principle, have lost, by a military life, both the practice and the regard of morality ; and when they have become habituated to the vices of War, have laughed at their honest and plodding brethren, who are still spiritless enough for virtue or stupid enough for piety.

Does any man ask, What occasions depravity in military life ? I answer in the words of Robert Hall, "War reverses, with respect to its objects, all the rules of morality. It is nothing less than a temporary repeal of all the principles of virtue. It is a system out of which almost all the virtues are excluded, and in which nearly all the vices are incorporated." And it requires no sagacity to discover that those who are engaged in a practice which reverses all the rules of morality, which repeals all the principles of virtue, and in which nearly all the vices are incorporated, cannot, without the intervention of a miracle, retain their minds and morals undepraved.

FAMILIARITY WITH PLUNDER.

Look, for illustration, to the familiarity with the plunder of property and the slaughter of mankind which War induces. He who plunders the citizen of another nation without remorse or reflection, and bears away the spoil with triumph, will inevitably lose something of his principles of probity.* He who is familiar with slaughter, who has himself often perpetrated it, and who exults in the perpetration, will not retain undepraved the principles of virtue. His moral feelings are blunted; his moral vision is obscured; his principles are shaken; an inroad is made upon their integrity, and it is an inroad that makes after inroads the more easy. Mankind do not generally resist the influence of habit. If to-day we rob and shoot those who are "enemies" we are to-morrow in some degree prepared to shoot and rob those who are not enemies. Law may indeed still restrain us from violence; but the power and efficiency of Principle is diminished and this alienation of the mind from the practice, the love, and the perception, of Christian purity, therefore, of necessity extends its influence to the other circumstances of life. *The whole evil* is imputable to War; and we say that this evil forms a powerful evidence against it, whether we direct that evidence to the abstract question of its lawfulness, or to the practical question of its expediency. *That* can scarcely be lawful which necessarily occasions such wide-spread

* "This terrible truth, which I cannot help repeating, must be acknowledged: indifference and selfishness are the predominant feelings in an army." Miot's *Mémoires de l'Expédition en Egypte, &c.* Mem. in the MS.

immorality. *That* can scarcely be expedient, which is so pernicious to virtue, and therefore to the State.

IMPLICIT OBEDIENCE TO SUPERIORS.

The economy of War requires of every soldier an implicit submission to his superior ; and this submission is required of every gradation of rank to that above it. "I swear to obey the orders of the officers who are set over me : so help me, God." This system may be necessary to hostile operations, but I think it is unquestionably adverse to intellectual and moral excellence.

The very nature of unconditional obedience implies the relinquishment of the use of the reasoning powers. Little more is required of the soldier than that he be obedient and brave. His obedience is that of an animal which is moved by a goad or a bit without judgment of its own ; and his bravery is that of a mastiff that fights whatever mastiff others put before it.* It is obvious that in such agency the intellect and the understanding have little part. Now I think that this is important. He who, with whatever motive, resigns the direction of his conduct implicitly to another, surely cannot retain that erectness and independence of mind, that manly consciousness of mental freedom, which is one of the highest privileges of our nature. A British Captain declares that "the tendency of strict discipline, such as prevails on board ships of war, where almost every act of a man's life is regulated by the orders of his superiors, is to weaken the faculty of inde-

* By one article of the Constitutional Code even of *republican* France, "the army were expressly prohibited from deliberating on any subject whatever."

pendent thought.”* Thus the rational being becomes reduced in the intellectual scale : an encroachment is made upon the integrity of its independence. God has given us, individually, capacities for the regulation of our individual conduct. To resign its direction, therefore, to the absolute disposal of another, appears to be an unmanly and unjustifiable relinquishment of the privileges which He has granted to us. And the effect is obviously bad ; for although no character will apply universally to any large class of men, and although the intellectual character of the military profession does not result *only* from this unhappy subjection, yet it will not be disputed, that the honourable exercise of intellect amongst that profession is not relatively great. It is not from them that we expect, because it is not in them that we generally find, those vigorous exertions of intellect which dignify our nature, and which extend the boundaries of human knowledge.

RESIGNATION OF MORAL AGENCY.

But the intellectual effects of military subjection form but a small portion of its evils. The great mischief is, that it requires the relinquishment of our moral agency ; that it requires us to do what is opposed to our consciences, and what we know to be wrong. A soldier must obey, how criminal soever the command, and how criminal soever he knows it to be. It is certain that, of those who compose armies, many commit actions which they believe to be wicked, and which they would not commit but for the

* Captain Basil Hall's *Voyage to Loo Choo*, c. 2. We make no distinction between the military and naval professions, and employ one word to indicate both.

obligations of a military life. Although a soldier determinately believes that the war is unjust, although he is convinced that his particular part of the service is atrociously criminal, still he must proceed,—he must prosecute the purposes of injustice or robbery, he must participate in the guilt, and be himself a robber.

To what a situation is a rational and responsible being reduced, who commits actions, good or bad, at the word of another? I can conceive no greater degradation. It is the lowest, the final abjectness of the moral nature. We see that it is this if we take away the glitter of War, and if we add this glitter it remains the same.

Such a resignation of our moral agency is not contended for, or tolerated, in any other circumstance of human life. War stands alone upon this pinnacle of depravity. She only, in the supremacy of crime, has told us that she has abolished even the obligation to be virtuous.

Some writers who have perceived the monstrousness of this system, have told us that a soldier should assure himself, before he engages in a war, that it is a lawful and just one; and they acknowledge that, if he does not feel this assurance, he is a "murderer." But how is he to know that the war is just?—It is frequently difficult for the people distinctly to discover what the objects of a war are. And if the soldier knew that it was just in its commencement, how is he to know that it will continue just in its prosecution? Every war is, in some parts of its course, wicked and unjust; and who can tell what that course will be? You say, When he discovers any injustice or wickedness, let him withdraw: we answer, He cannot: and the

truth is, that there is no way of avoiding the evil, but by avoiding the army.

It is an inquiry of much interest, under what circumstances of *responsibility* a man supposes himself to be placed, who thus abandons and violates his own sense of rectitude and of his duties. Either he is responsible for his actions, or he is not; and the question is a serious one to determine.* Christianity has certainly never stated any cases in which personal responsibility ceases. If she admits such cases, she has at least not told us so; but she has told us, explicitly and repeatedly, that she does require individual obedience and impose individual responsibility. She has made no exceptions to the imperativeness of her obligations, whether we are required by others to neglect them or not; and I can discover in her sanctions no reason to suppose that in her final adjudications she admits the plea, *that another required us to do that which she required us to forbear*. But it may be feared, it may be *believed*, that how little soever Religion will abate of the responsibility of those who obey, she will impose not a little upon those who of War: unless, indeed, any one shall tell me that responsibility attaches nowhere; that that which would be wicked-

* Vattel indeed tells us that soldiers ought to "submit their judgment." "What" says he "would be the consequence, if at every step of the Sovereign the subjects were at liberty to weigh the justice of his reasons, and refuse to march to a war which, to them, might appear unjust?"—*Law of Nations*, b. 3, c. 11, sec. 187. Gisborne holds very different language. "It is" he says "at all times the duty of an Englishman steadfastly to decline obeying any orders of his superiors which his conscience should tell him were in any degree impious or unjust."—*Duties of Men*.

ness in another man is innocence in a soldier ; and that Heaven has granted to the directors of War a privileged immunity, by virtue of which crime incurs no guilt and receives no punishment.

BONDAGE AND DEGRADATION.

Again, no one doubts that military power is essentially arbitrary. And what are the customary feelings of mankind with respect to a subjection to arbitrary power ? How do we feel and think, when we hear of a person who is obliged to do whatever other men command, and who, the moment he refuses, is punished for attempting to be free ? If a man orders his servant to do a given action, he is at liberty, if he think the action improper, or if, from any other cause, he choose not to do it, to refuse his obedience. Far other is the nature of military subjection. The soldier is compelled to obey, whatever be his inclination or his will. Being in the service, he has but one alternative—submission to arbitrary power, or punishment—the punishment of death perhaps,—for refusing to submit. Let the reader imagine to himself any other cause or purpose for which freemen shall be subjected to such a condition, and he will then see that condition in its proper light. The influence of habit and the gloss of public opinion make situations that would otherwise be loathsome and revolting, not only tolerable but pleasurable. Take away this influence and this gloss from the situation of a soldier, and what should we call it ? We should call it a state of degradation and of bondage. But habit and public opinion, although they may influence notions, cannot alter things. It is a state

intellectually, morally, and politically, of bondage and degradation.

But the reader will say that this submission to arbitrary power is necessary to the prosecution of War. I know it and that is the very point for observation. It is *because* it is necessary to War that it is noticed here : for a brief but clear argument results :—That custom to which such a state of mankind is necessary must inevitably be bad ; it must inevitably be adverse to rectitude and to Christianity.

EFFECTS ON THE COMMUNITY.

Yet I do not know whether the greatest moral evil of War is to be sought in its effects on the military character. Upon the community its effects are indeed less apparent, because they who are the secondary subjects of the immoral influence, are less intensely affected by it than the immediate agents of its diffusion. But whatever is deficient in the degree of evil, is probably more than compensated by its extent. The influence is like that of a continual and noxious vapour : we neither regard nor perceive it, but it secretly undermines the moral health.

Every one knows that vice is contagious. The depravity of one man has always a tendency to deprave his neighbours ; and it therefore requires no unusual acuteness to discover, that the prodigious mass of immorality and crime which is accumulated by a war, must have a powerful effect in “demoralizing” the public. But there is one circumstance connected with the injurious influence of War, which makes it peculiarly operative and malignant. It is, that we do not hate or fear the influence, and do not

fortify ourselves against it. Other vicious influences insinuate themselves into our minds by stealth; but this we receive with open embrace. Glory, and patriotism, and bravery, and conquest, are bright and glittering things. Who, when he is looking delighted upon these things, is armed against the mischiefs which they may veil?

The evil is in its own nature of almost universal operation. During a war, a whole people become familiarized with the utmost excesses of enormity,—with the utmost intensity of human wickedness,—and they rejoice and exult in them; so that there is probably not one man in a hundred who does not lose something of his Christian principles during a period of war.

“It is in my mind” said C. J. Fox, “no small misfortune to live at a period when scenes of horror and blood are frequent. * * * One of the most evil consequences of War is, that it tends to render the hearts of mankind callous to the feelings and sentiments of humanity.”

Those who know what the moral law of God is, and who feel an interest in the virtue and the happiness of the world, will not regard the bitterness and the restlessness of resentment which are produced by a war, as trifling evils. If anything be opposite to Christianity, it is retaliation and revenge. In the obligation to restrain these dispositions, much of the characteristic placability of Christianity consists. The very essence and spirit of our religion are abhorrent from resentment. The very essence and spirit of War are promotive of resentment; and what, then, must be their mutual adverseness? That War excites these passions needs not to be proved. When a war is in

contemplation, or when it has been begun, what are the endeavours of its promoters? They animate us by every artifice of excitement to hatred and animosity. Pamphlets, placards, newspapers, caricatures,—every agent is in requisition to irritate us into malignity. Nay, dreadful as it is, the pulpit has too often resounded with declamations to stimulate our too sluggish resentment, and to invite us to slaughter. And thus the most unchristianlike of all our passions, the passion which it is most the object of our religion to repress, is excited and fostered. Christianity cannot be flourishing under circumstances like these. $\sqrt{\text{The}}$ more effectually we are animated to War, the more nearly we extinguish the dispositions of our religion. War and Christianity are like the opposite ends of a balance, of which one is depressed by the elevation of the other.

These are the consequences which make War dreadful to a State. Slaughter and devastation are sufficiently terrible, but their collateral evils are their greatest. It is *the immoral feeling* that War diffuses,—it is *the depravation of Principle* which forms the mass of its mischief.

To attempt to pursue the consequences of War through all their ramifications of evil, were, however, both endless and vain. It is a moral gangrene, which diffuses its humours through the whole political and social system. To expose its mischief, is to exhibit all evil; for there is no evil which it does not occasion, and it has much that is peculiar to itself.

That, together with its multiplied evils, War produces some good, I have no wish to deny. I know that it sometimes elicits valuable qualities which had otherwise been

concealed, and that it often produces collateral and adventitious, and sometimes immediate advantages. If all this could be denied, it would be needless to deny it; for it is of no consequence to the question whether it be proved. That any wide-extended system should not produce *some* benefits can never happen. In such a system, it were an unheard-of purity of evil, which was evil without any mixture of good.—But, to compare the ascertained advantages of War with its ascertained mischiefs, and to maintain a question as to the preponderance of the balance, implies not ignorance, but disingenuousness, not incapacity to decide, but a voluntary concealment of truth.

And *why* do we insist upon these consequences of War?—Because the review prepares the reader for a more accurate judgment respecting its lawfulness. Because it reminds him what War is, and because, knowing and remembering what it is, he will be the better able to compare it with the Standard of Rectitude.

LAWFULNESS OF WAR.

INFLUENCE OF HABIT.

I would recommend to him who would estimate the moral character of War, to endeavour to forget that he has ever presented to his mind the idea of a battle, and to endeavour to contemplate it with those emotions which it would excite in the mind of a being who had never before heard of human slaughter. The prevailing emotions of such a being would be astonishment and horror. If he

were shocked by the horribleness of the scene, he would be amazed at its absurdity. That a large number of persons should assemble by agreement and deliberately kill one another, appears to the understanding a proceeding so preposterous, so monstrous, that I think a being such as I have supposed would inevitably conclude that they were mad. Nor is it likely, if it were attempted to explain to him some motives to such conduct, that he would be able to comprehend how any possible circumstances could make it reasonable. The ferocity and prodigious folly of the act would, in his estimation, outbalance the weight of every conceivable motive, and he would turn unsatisfied away,

“Astonished at the madness of mankind.”

There is an advantage in making suppositions such as these; because when the mind has been familiarized to a practice however monstrous or inhuman, it loses some of its sagacity of moral perception; the practice is perhaps veiled in glittering fictions, or the mind is become callous to its enormities. But if the subject is by some circumstance presented to the mind unconnected with any of its previous associations, we see it with a new judgment and new feeling; and wonder perhaps that we have not felt so, or thought so, before. And such occasions it is the part of a wise man to seek; since, if they never happen to us, it will often be difficult for us accurately to estimate the qualities of human actions, or to determine whether we approve them from a decision of our judgment, or whether we yield them only the acquiescence of habit.

It may properly be a subject of wonder that the arguments which are brought to justify a custom such as War

receive so little investigation. It must be a studious ingenuity of mischief which could devise a practice more calamitous or horrible ; and yet it is a practice of which it rarely occurs to us to inquire into the necessity, or to ask whether it cannot be, or ought not to be, avoided. In one truth, however, all will acquiesce,—that the arguments in favour of such a practice should be unanswerably strong.

THE APPEAL TO ANTIQUITY.

Let it not be said that the experience and the practice of other ages have superseded the necessity of inquiry in our own ; that there can be no reason to question the lawfulness of that which has been sanctioned by forty centuries ; or that he who presumes to question it, is amusing himself with schemes of visionary philanthropy. “There is not, it may be” says Lord Clarendon in his *Essays*, “a greater obstruction to the investigation of truth or to the improvement of knowledge, than the too frequent appeal, and the too supine resignation of our understanding, to antiquity.” Whosoever proposes an alteration of existing institutions, will meet, from some men, with a sort of instinctive opposition, which appears to be influenced by no process of reasoning, by no considerations of propriety or principles of rectitude, which defends the existing system because it exists, and which would have equally defended its opposite if that had been the older. “Nor is it out of modesty” continues Lord Clarendon, “that we have this resignation, or that we do in truth think those who have gone before us to be wiser than ourselves ; we are as proud and as peevish as any of our progenitors ; but it is out of laziness ; we will

rather take their words than take the pains to examine the reason they governed themselves by." To those who urge objections from the authority of ages, it is indeed a sufficient answer to say, that they apply to *every* long-continued custom. Slave-dealers urged them against the friends of the abolition; Papists urged them against Wickliffe and Luther; and the Athenians probably thought it a good objection to an apostle, that "he seemed to be a setter forth of *strange* gods."

It is some satisfaction to be able to give, on a question of this nature, the testimony of some great minds against the lawfulness of War, opposed, as these testimonies are, to the general prejudice and the general practice of the world. It has been observed by Beccaria, that "it is the fate of great truths to glow only like a flash of lightning amidst the dark clouds in which error has enveloped the universe;" and if our testimonies are few or transient, it matters not, so that their light be the light of truth. There are indeed many, who, in describing the horrible particulars of a siege or a battle, indulge in some declamation on the horrors of War, such as has been often repeated, and often applauded, and as often forgotten. But such declamations are of little value and of little effect; he who reads the next paragraph finds, probably, that he is invited *to follow the path to glory and to victory;—to share the hero's danger and partake the hero's praise*; and he soon discovers that the moralizing parts of his author are the impulse of feelings rather than of principles, and thinks that though it may be very well to write, yet it is better to forget them.

There are, however, testimonies delivered in the calm of reflection by acute and enlightened men, which may reasonably be allowed at least so much weight as to free the present inquiry from the charge of being wild or visionary. Christianity indeed needs no such auxiliaries; but if they induce an examination of her duties, a wise man will not wish them to be disregarded.

"They who defend War," says Erasmus, "must defend the dispositions which lead to War: *and these dispositions are absolutely forbidden by the Gospel*. Since the time that Jesus Christ said, 'Put up thy sword into its scabbard,' *Christians ought not to go to war*. Christ suffered Peter to fall into an error in this matter, on purpose that, when He had put up Peter's sword, it might remain *no longer a doubt that War was prohibited*, which, before that order, had been considered as allowable."—"Wickliffe," says Priestley, "seems to have thought it was wrong to take away the life of man on any account, and that War was utterly unlawful."—"I am persuaded," says Bishop Watson of Llandaff, "*that when the spirit of Christianity shall exert its proper influence War will cease throughout the whole Christian world*." "War," says the same acute prelate, "has practices and principles peculiar to itself, *which but ill quadrate with the rule of moral rectitude, and are quite abhorrent from the benignity of Christianity*." The poet Southey bears this remarkable testimony: "There is but one community of Christians in the world, and that, unhappily, of all communities one of the smallest, enlightened enough to understand the *prohibition of War by our Divine Master*, in its *plain, literal, and undeniable sense*, and conscientious

enough to obey it, subduing the very instinct of nature to obedience."

THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES.

Those who have attended to the mode in which the Moral Law is instituted in the expressions of the Will of God, will not be surprised to find that it contains no *specific* prohibition of War. Accordingly, if we be asked for such a prohibition,—in the manner, for instance, in which "*Thou shalt not kill*" is directed to murder,—we willingly answer that no such prohibition exists;—and it is not necessary to the argument. Even those who would require such a prohibition, are themselves satisfied respecting the obligation of many negative duties on which there has been no specific decision in the New Testament. They believe that suicide is not lawful: yet Christianity never forbade it. It can be shown, indeed, by implication and inference, that suicide could not have been allowed, and with this they are satisfied. Yet there is, probably, in the Christian Scriptures, not a twentieth part of as much indirect evidence against the lawfulness of suicide as there is against the lawfulness of War. To those who require such a command as "*Thou shalt not engage in War*," it is therefore sufficient to reply, that they require that, which, upon this and upon many other subjects, Christianity has not seen fit to give.

We suppose that no thoughtful man will deny that the characteristic nature of the Moral Law is a law of *Benevolence*. Benevolence means good-will and kind affections towards one another, and is placed at the base of practical

morality,—it is “the fulfilling of the law ;” it is the test of the validity of our pretensions to the Christian character. We can moreover see no reason to doubt, that this law of Benevolence is universally applicable to public affairs as well as to private, to the intercourse of nations as well as of men. Let us refer, then, to some of those requisitions of this law which appear peculiarly to respect the question of the moral character of War.

Have peace one with another.—By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Walk with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.

Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another ; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous : not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing.

Be at peace among yourselves. See that none render evil for evil unto any man.—God hath called us to peace.

Follow after love, patience, meekness.—Be gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.—Live in peace.

Lay aside all malice.—Put off anger, wrath, malice.—Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.

Avenge not yourselves.—If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink.—Recompense to no man evil for evil.—Overcome evil with good.

Now we ask of any man who looks over these passages, What evidence do they convey respecting the lawfulness of War? Could any approval or allowance of it have been subjoined to these instructions, without obvious and most gross inconsistency?—But if War is obviously and most

grossly inconsistent with the general character of Christianity; if War could not have been permitted by its teachers, without an egregious violation of their own precepts, we think that the evidence of its unlawfulness, *arising from this general character alone*, is as clear, as absolute, and as exclusive, as could have been contained in any form of prohibition whatever.

But it is not from general principles alone that the law of Christianity respecting War may be deduced.—“Ye have heard that it *hath* been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but *I* say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”—“Ye have heard that it *hath* been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but *I* say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; for if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye?”

Of the precepts from the Mount the most obvious characteristic is greater moral excellence and superior purity. They are directed, not so immediately to the external regulation of the conduct, as to the restraint and purification of the affections. In another precept it is not enough that an unlawful passion be just so far restrained as to produce no open immorality,—the passion itself is forbidden. The tendency of the discourse is to attach guilt not to action only but also to *thought*. “It has been said, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but *I* say unto you, that whosoever is *angry* with his brother, shall be in danger of the judg-

ment." Our Lawgiver attaches guilt to some of the violent feelings, such as resentment, hatred, revenge; and by doing this, we contend that He attaches guilt to War. War cannot be carried on without those passions which He prohibits. Our argument, therefore, is syllogistical:—War cannot be allowed, if that which is necessary to War is prohibited. This, indeed, is precisely the argument of Erasmus:—"They who defend War must defend *the dispositions which lead to War; and these dispositions are absolutely forbidden.*"

Whatever might have been allowed under the Mosaic institution as to retaliation or resentment, Christianity says, "If ye love them only which love you, what reward have ye?—Love your *enemies.*" Now what sort of love does that man bear towards his enemy, who runs him through with a bayonet? We repeat, that the distinguishing duties of Christianity must be sacrificed when War is carried on. The question is between the abandonment of these duties and the abandonment of War, for both cannot be retained.*

It is however objected, that the prohibitions, "Resist not evil," etc., are figurative; and that they do not mean that no injury is to be punished, and no outrage to be repelled. It has been asked, with complacent exultation,

* Yet the retention of both has been, unhappily enough, attempted. In a late publication, of which a part is devoted to the defence of War, the author gravely recommends soldiers, whilst shooting and stabbing their enemies, to maintain towards them a feeling of "good-will!"—*Tracts and Essays by the late William Hey, Esq., F.R.S.* And Gisborne, in his *Duties of Men*, holds similar language. He advises the soldier "never to forget the common *ties of human nature* by which he is inseparably united to his enemy!"

What would these advocates of peace say to him who struck them on the right cheek? Would they turn to him the other? What would these patient moralists say to him who robbed them of a coat? Would they give a cloak also? What would these philanthropists say to him who asked them to lend a hundred pounds? Would they not turn away. This is *argumentum ad hominem*; one example amongst the many, of that low and dishonest mode of intellectual warfare, which consists in exciting the feelings instead of convincing the understanding. It is, however, some satisfaction that the motive to the adoption of this mode of warfare is itself an indication of a bad cause: for what honest reasoner would produce only a laugh, if he were able to produce conviction?

We willingly *grant* that not all the precepts from the Mount were designed to be literally obeyed in the intercourse of life. But what then? To show that their meaning is not literal, is not to show that they do not forbid War. We ask in our turn, What is the meaning of the precepts? What is the meaning of "Resist not evil?" Does it mean to allow bombardment,—devastation,—slaughter? If it does not mean to allow all this, it does not mean to allow War. What again do the objectors say is the meaning of "Love your enemies," or of "do good to them that hate you?" Does it mean, "ruin their commerce,"—"sink their fleets,"—"plunder their cities,"—"shoot through their hearts?" If the precept does not mean to allow all this, it does not mean to allow War. It is therefore not at all necessary here to discuss the precise signification of some of the precepts from the Mount, or to

define what limits Christianity may admit in their application ; since, whatever exceptions she may allow, it is manifest what she does not allow : * for if we give to our objectors whatever license of interpretation they may desire, they cannot, without virtually rejecting the precepts, so interpret them as to make them allow War.

Of the injunctions that are contrasted with, “ eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,” the entire scope and purpose is the suppression of the violent passions, and the inculcation of forbearance, and forgiveness, and benevolence, and love. They forbid, not specifically the act, but the *spirit* of War ; and this method of prohibition Christ ordinarily employed. He did not often condemn the individual doctrines or customs of the age, however false or however vicious ; but He condemned the passions by which only vice could exist, and inculcated the truth which dismissed every error. And this method was undoubtedly *wise*. In the gradual alterations of human wickedness, many new species of profligacy might arise which the world had not yet practised : in the gradual vicissitudes of human error, many new fallacies might obtain which the world had not yet held : and how were these errors and these crimes to be opposed, but by the inculcation of principles that were applicable to every crime and to every error ?—principles which do not always

* It is manifest, from the New Testament, that we are not required to give a “cloak,” in *every case*, to him who robs us of “a coat ;” but I think it is equally manifest that we are required to give it *not the less*, because he has robbed us : the circumstance of his having robbed us, does not entail an obligation to give ; but it also does not impart a permission to withhold. If the necessities of the plunderer require relief, it is the business of the plundered to relieve them.

define what is wrong, but which tell us what always is right.

SUBJECTS OF CHRIST'S BENEDICTION.

There are two modes of censure or condemnation · the one is to reprobate evil, and the other to enforce the opposite good ; and both these modes were adopted by Christ. —He not only censured the passions that are necessary to War, but inculcated the affections which are most opposed to them. The conduct and dispositions upon which He pronounced His solemn benediction are exceedingly remarkable. They are these, and in this order : Poverty of spirit ;—Mourning ;—Meekness ;—Desire of righteousness ;—Mercy ;—Purity of heart ;—Peace-making ;—Sufferance of persecution. Now let the reader try whether he can propose eight other qualities, to be retained as the general habit of the mind, which shall be more incongruous with War.

Of these benedictions, I think the most emphatical is that pronounced upon the *Peace-makers*. “Blessed are the peace-makers : for they shall be called the children of God.” Higher praise or a higher title, no man can receive. Now, I do not say that these benedictions contain an absolute proof that Christ prohibited War, but I say they make it clear that He did not approve it. He selected a number of subjects for His solemn approbation ; and not one of them possesses any congruity with War, and some of them cannot possibly exist in conjunction with it. Can any one believe that He who made this selection, and who distinguished the peace-makers with peculiar approbation, could

have sanctioned that His followers should destroy one another? Or does any one believe that those who were mourners, and meek, and merciful, and peace-making, could at the same time perpetrate such destruction? If I be told that a temporary suspension of Christian dispositions, although necessary to the prosecution of War, does not imply the extinction of Christian principles; or that these dispositions may be the general habit of the mind, and may both precede and follow the acts of War, I answer that this is to grant all that I require, since it grants that when we engage in War we abandon Christianity.

MATTHEW XXVI. 52.

When the betrayers and murderers of Jesus Christ approached Him, His followers asked, "Shall we smite with the sword?" and without waiting for an answer, one of them "drew his sword, and smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear."—"Put up again thy sword into his place," said his Divine Master, "for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." There is the greater importance in the circumstances of this command, because it prohibited the destruction of human life in a cause in which there were the best of possible reasons for destroying it. The question, "Shall we smite with the sword?" obviously refers to the defence of the Redeemer from His assailants by force of arms. His followers were ready to fight for Him; and if any reason for fighting could be a good one, they certainly had it. But if, in defence of Himself from the hands of bloody ruffians, His religion did not allow the sword to be drawn,

for what reason can it be lawful to draw it? The advocates of War are at least bound to show a better reason for destroying mankind, than is contained in this instance in which it was forbidden.

It will, perhaps, be said, that the reason why Christ did not suffer Himself to be defended by arms, was, that such a defence would have defeated the purpose for which He came into the world, namely, to offer up His life; and that He Himself assigns this reason in the context. He does indeed assign it; but the *primary* reason, the *immediate* context is,—“for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” The reference to the destined sacrifice of His life is an after reference. This destined sacrifice might perhaps have formed a reason why His followers should not fight *then*; but the first, the principal, reason which He assigned, was the reason why they should not fight *at all*.—Nor is it necessary to define the precise import of the words “for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword;” since it is sufficient for us all that they imply reprobation.

THE APOSTLES AND EVANGELISTS.

It is with the apostles as with Christ Himself. The incessant object of their discourses and writings is the inculcation of peace, of mildness, of placability. It might be supposed that they continually retained in prospect the reward which would attach to “Peace-makers.” We ask the advocate of War, whether he discovers in the writings of the apostles or of the evangelists, any thing that indicates their approval of War. Do the tenor and spirit of their

writings bear any congruity with it? Are not their spirit and tenor entirely opposed to it? We are entitled to renew the observation, that the pacific nature of the apostolic writings proves presumptively that the writers disallowed War. *That* could not be allowed by them as sanctioned by Christianity, which outraged all the principles that they inculcated.

“Whence come wars and fightings among you?” is the interrogation of the apostle James, to some whom he was reproving for their unchristian conduct: and he answers himself by asking them, “Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?” This accords precisely with the argument that we urge. Christ forbade the passions which lead to War; and now, when these passions had broken out into actual strife, His apostle in condemning War refers it back to their passions. We have been saying that *the passions are condemned, and therefore War*; and now again the apostle James thinks, like his Master, that the most effectual way of eradicating War is to eradicate the passions which produce it.

In the following quotation we are told, not only what the arms of the apostles were not, but also what they were. “The weapons of our warfare are *not carnal*,” says the apostle Paul, “but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; and bringing into captivity *every thought to the obedience of Christ*.” I quote this, not only because it assures us that the apostles had nothing to do with military weapons, but because it tells us the object of their warfare—the bringing of every *thought* to the obedience of Christ: and this object I would beg the reader to notice because it

accords with the object of Christ Himself in His precepts from the Mount,—the reduction of the *thoughts* to obedience. The apostle doubtless knew that, if he could effect this, there was little reason to fear that his converts would slaughter one another. He followed the example of his Master. He attacked wickedness at its root; and inculcated those general principles of purity and forbearance, which in their prevalence would abolish War, as they would abolish all other crimes. The teachers of Christianity addressed themselves not to communities but to men. They enforced the regulation of the passions and the rectification of the heart; and it was probably clear to the perceptions of apostles, although it is not clear to some species of philosophy, that whatever duties were binding upon one man, were binding upon ten, upon a hundred, and upon the State.

War is not often directly noticed in the writings of the apostles. When it is noticed it is condemned, just in that way in which we should suppose any thing would be condemned that was *notoriously* opposed to the whole system; just as murder is condemned at the present day. Who can find in modern books that murder is formally censured? We may find censures of its motives, of its circumstances, of its degree of atrocity; but the act itself no one thinks of censuring, because *every one knows* that it is wicked. Setting statutes aside, I doubt whether, if an Otaheitan should choose to argue that Christians allow murder because he cannot find it formally prohibited in their writings, we should not be at a loss to find direct evidence against him. And it arises perhaps from the same causes, that a formal prohibition of War is not to be found in the

writings of the apostles. I do not believe they *imagined* that Christianity would ever be charged with allowing it. They write as if the idea of such a charge never occurred to them. They did nevertheless virtually forbid it ; unless any one shall say that they disallowed the passions which occasion War, but did not disallow War itself ; that Christianity prohibits the cause but permits the effect ; which is much the same as to say, that a law which forbade the administering of arsenic did not forbid poisoning.

But although the general tenor of Christianity and some of its particular precepts appear distinctly to condemn and disallow War, it is certain that different conclusions have been formed ; and many, who are undoubtedly desirous of performing the duties of Christianity, have failed to perceive that War is unlawful to them.

In examining the arguments by which War is defended, two important considerations should be borne in mind. First, that those who urge them are not simply defending War, they are also defending *themselves*. If War be wrong, their conduct is wrong ; and the desire of self-justification prompts them to give importance to whatever arguments they can advance in its favour. Their decisions may therefore with reason be regarded as in some degree the decisions of a party in the cause. The other consideration is, that the defenders of War come to the discussion prepossessed in its favour. They are attached to it by their earliest habits. They do not examine the question as a philosopher would examine it to whom the subject was new. Their opinions had been already formed. They are discussing a question which they had already determined : and every

man who is acquainted with the effects of evidence on the mind, knows that under these circumstances a very slender argument in favour of the previous opinions possesses more influence than any great ones against it. Now all this cannot be predicated of the advocates of Peace; they are *opposing* the influence of habit; they are contending *against* the general prejudice; they are perhaps dismissing their own previous opinions: and I would submit it to the candour of the reader, that these circumstances ought to attach in his mind *suspicion* as to the validity of the arguments against us.

THE CENTURION

The narrative of the centurion, who came to Jesus at Capernaum to solicit him to heal his servant, furnishes one of these arguments. It is said that Christ found no fault with the centurion's profession; that, if He had disallowed the military character, He would have taken this opportunity of censuring it; and that, instead of such censure, He highly commended the officer, and said of him, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

An obvious weakness in this argument is this;—that it is founded not upon an approval, but upon silence. Approbation is indeed expressed, but it is directed, not to his arms, but to his "faith;" and those who will read the narrative will find that no occasion was given for noticing his profession. He came to Christ not as a military officer, but simply as a deserving man. A censure of his profession *might* undoubtedly have been pronounced, but it would have been a gratuitous censure, a censure that did not

naturally arise out of the case. The objection is, in its greatest weight, presumptive only ; for none can be supposed to countenance everything that he does not condemn. To observe *silence* * in such cases, was indeed the ordinary practice of Christ. He very seldom interfered with the civil or political institutions of the world. In these institutions there was sufficient wickedness around Him ; but some of them, flagitious as they were, He never on any occasion even noticed. His mode of condemning and extirpating political vices was by the inculcation of general rules of purity, which, in their eventual and universal application, would reform them all.

But how happens it that Christ did not notice the centurion's *religion* ? He probably was an idolater. And if so, would there not be as good reason for maintaining that Christ approved idolatry because He did not condemn it, as that He approved War because He did not condemn it ? Reasoning from analogy, we should conclude that idolatry was likely to have been noticed rather than War ; and it is therefore peculiarly and singularly unapt to bring forward the silence respecting War, as an evidence of its lawfulness.

CORNELIUS.

A similar argument is advanced from the case of Cornelius, to whom Peter was sent from Joppa ; of which it is said that although the Gospel was imparted to Cornelius by the

* "Christianity, soliciting admission into all nations of the world, abstained, as behoved it, from intermeddling with the civil institutions of any. But does it follow, from the silence of Scripture concerning them, that all the civil institutions which then prevailed were right, or that the bad should not be exchanged for better ?"—Paley.

especial direction of Heaven, yet we do not find that he therefore quitted his profession, or that it was considered inconsistent with his new character. The objection applies to this argument as to the last,—that it is built upon silence, that it is simply negative. *We do not find*, it may be urged, that he quitted the service. I might answer, Neither do we find that he continued in it. We only know nothing of the matter; and the evidence is therefore so much less than proof, as silence is less than approbation. Yet that the account is silent respecting any disapprobation of War, might have been a reasonable ground of argument under different circumstances. It might have been a reasonable ground of argument, if the primary object of Christianity had been the reformation of political institutions; or perhaps even if her primary object had been the regulation of the external conduct; but her *primary* object was neither of these. She directed herself to the reformation of the heart, knowing that all other reformation would follow. She embraced indeed both morality and policy, and has reformed, or will reform, both,—not so much immediately as consequently, — not so much by filtering the current, as by purifying the spring. The silence of Peter therefore in the case of Cornelius will serve the cause of War but little: that little is diminished when urged against the positive evidence of commands and prohibitions; and it is reduced to nothingness when it is opposed to the *universal tendency and object* of the revelation.

It has sometimes been urged that Christ either paid taxes to the Roman Government, or approved of their payment, at a time when it was engaged in war, and when therefore the

money that He paid would be employed in its prosecution. This we shall readily grant ; but it appears to be forgotten by our opponents, that if this proves War to be lawful they are proving too much. These taxes were thrown into the exchequer of the State, and a part of the money was applied to purposes of a most iniquitous and shocking nature ; sometimes probably to the gratification of the emperor's personal vices, and to his gladiatorial exhibitions, etc. : and certainly to the support of a miserable idolatry. If therefore the payment of taxes to such a Government proves an approbation of War, it proves an approbation of many other enormities. Moreover, the argument goes too far in relation even to War ; for it must necessarily make Christ approve of all the Roman wars, without distinction of their justice or injustice,—of the most ambitious, the most atrocious, and the most aggressive ; and these even our objectors will not defend. The payment of tribute by our Lord was accordant with His usual system of avoiding direct interference in the civil or political institutions of the world.

LUKE XXII. 36.

“He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.” * This is another passage that is brought against us. “For what purpose,” it is asked, “were they to buy swords, if swords might not be used ?” It may be doubted

* Upon the interpretation of this passage of Scripture, I would subjoin the sentiments of two or three authors. Bishop Pearce says, “It is plain that Jesus never intended to make any resistance, or suffer a sword to be used on this occasion.” And Campbell says, “We are sure that he did not intend to be understood literally, but as speaking of the weapons of their spiritual warfare.” And Beza : “This whole

whether with some of those who advance this objection it is not an objection of words rather than of opinion. It may be doubted whether they themselves think there is any weight in it. To those, however, who may be influenced by it, I would observe that, as it appears to me, a sufficient answer to the objection may be found in the immediate context: "Lord, behold here are two swords," said they; and He immediately answered, "It is enough." How could two be enough when eleven were to be supplied with them? That swords in the sense, and for the purpose, of military weapons, were ever intended in this passage, there appears much reason for doubting. This reason will be discovered by examining and connecting such expressions as these: "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them," said our Lord. Yet, on another occasion, He says, "I came not to send peace on earth but a *sword*." How are we to explain the meaning of the latter declaration? Obviously, by understanding "sword" to mean something far other than steel. There appears little reason for supposing that physical weapons were intended in the instruction of Christ. I believe they were not intended, partly because no one can imagine His apostles were in the habit of using such arms, partly because they declared that the weapons of their warfare were *not* carnal, and partly because the word "*sword*" is often used to imply "dissension," or

speech is allegorical. My fellow soldiers, you have hitherto lived in peace, but now a dreadful war is at hand; so that, omitting all other things, you must think only of *arms*. But when he prayed in the garden, and reproved Peter for smiting with the sword, He Himself showed *what these arms were*."—See *Peace and War, an Essay*. Hatchard, 1824.

the religious warfare of the Christian. Such a use of language is found in the last quotation ; and it is found also in such expressions as these : “ *shield* of faith,”—“ *helmet* of salvation,”—“ *sword* of the spirit,”—“ I have *fought* the good *fight* of faith.”

But it will be said that the apostles did provide themselves with swords, for on that same evening they asked, “ Shall we smite with the sword ? ” This is true, and it may probably be true also, that some of them provided themselves with swords in *consequence* of the injunction of their Master. But what then ? It appears to me that they acted on this occasion upon the principles upon which they had wished to act on another, when they asked, “ Wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them ? ” And that their Master’s principles were also the same in both :—“ Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of ; for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” *This* is the language of Christianity ; and I would seriously invite him who now justifies “ destroying men’s lives,” to consider “ what manner of spirit he is of.”

I think, then, that no argument arising from the instruction to buy swords can be maintained. This at least we know, that when the apostles were *completely* commissioned, they neither used nor possessed them. An extraordinary imagination he must have, who conceives of an apostle, preaching peace and reconciliation, crying “ forgive injuries,”—“ love your enemies,”—“ render not evil for evil ; ” and at the conclusion of the discourse, if he chanced to meet violence or insult, promptly drawing his sword and maiming

or murdering the offender. We insist upon this consideration. If swords were to be worn, swords were to be used; and there is no rational way in which they could have been used, but some such as that which we have been supposing. If therefore the words, "He that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one," do not mean to authorize *such a use* of the sword, they do not mean to authorize its use at all: and those who adduce the passage, must allow its application in such a case, or they must exclude it from any application to their purpose.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

It has been said, again, that when soldiers came to John the Baptist to inquire of him what they should do, he did not direct them to leave the service, but to be content with their wages. This also is at best but a negative evidence. It does not prove that the military profession was wrong, and it certainly does not prove that it was right. But in truth, if it asserted the latter, Christians have, as I conceive, nothing to do with it; for I think that we need not inquire what John allowed, or what he forbade. He confessedly belonged to that system which required "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" and the observations which we shall by and by make on the authority of the law of Moses, apply therefore to that of John the Baptist. Even if it could be proved (which it cannot be) that he allowed wars, he acted not inconsistently with his own Dispensation; and with that Dispensation we have no business. Yet, if any one still insists upon the authority of John, I would refer him for an answer to Jesus Christ Himself.

What authority *He* attached to John on questions relating to His own Dispensation, may be learnt from this,—“The *least* in the kingdom of heaven is *greater* than he.”

FAR-FETCHED ARGUMENTS.

It is perhaps no trifling indication of the difficulty which writers have found in discovering in the Christian Scriptures arguments in support of War, that they have had recourse to such equivocal and far-fetched arguments. Grotius, in his *Rights of War and Peace* adduces a passage, which he says is “*a leading point of evidence*, to show that the right of War is not taken away by the law of the Gospel.” And what is this leading evidence? That Paul, in writing to Timothy, exhorts that prayer should be made “for kings!” Another evidence which this great man adduces is, that Paul suffered himself to be protected on his journey by a guard of soldiers, without hinting any disapprobation of repelling force by force. But how does Grotius know that Paul did not hint this? And who can imagine that for a prisoner to suffer himself to be guarded by a military escort, in the appointment of which he had no control, was to approve War?

But perhaps the real absence of sound Christian arguments in favour of War, is in no circumstance so remarkably intimated as in the citations of Milton in his *Christian Doctrine*. “With regard to the duties of War,” he quotes, or refers to, thirty-nine passages of Scripture,—thirty-eight of which are from the Hebrew Scriptures. And what is the individual *one* from the Christian?—“What king going to war with another king, etc.!”

NEGATIVE EVIDENCE.

Such are the arguments which are adduced from the Christian Scriptures, by the advocates of War. In these five passages the principal of the New Testament evidences in its favour unquestionably consist : they are the passages which men of acute minds, studiously seeking for evidence, have selected. And what are they ? Their evidence is in the majority of instances negative at best. A “NOT” intervenes. The centurion was *not* found fault with : Cornelius was *not* told to leave the profession : John did *not* tell the soldiers to abandon the army : Paul did *not* refuse a military guard. I cannot forbear to solicit the reader to compare these objections with the pacific evidence of the Gospel which has been laid before him ; I would rather say, to compare it with the Gospel itself ; for the sum, the tendency, of the *whole revelation* is in our favour.

PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

In an inquiry whether Christianity allows of War, there is a subject that always appears to me to be of peculiar importance ;—the prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the arrival of a period of universal Peace. The belief is perhaps general amongst Christians that a time will come when vice shall be eradicated from the world, when the violent passions of mankind shall be repressed, and when the pure benignity of Christianity shall be universally diffused. That such a period will come we indeed know assuredly, for God has promised it.

Of the many prophecies of the Old Testament respecting this period, we refer only to a few from the writings of

Isaiah. In his predictions respecting the "last times," by which it is not disputed that he referred to the prevalence of the Christian religion, the prophet says,—“They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn War any more.” Again, referring to the same period, he says,—“They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” And again, respecting the same era,—“Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.”

Two things are to be observed in relation to these prophecies. First, that it is the will of God that War should eventually be abolished. This consideration is of importance; for if War be not accordant with His will, War cannot be accordant with Christianity, which is the revelation of His will. Our business, however, is principally with the second consideration,—*that Christianity will be the means of introducing this period of Peace.* From those who say that our religion sanctions War, an answer must be expected to questions such as these:—By what instrumentality, and by the diffusion of what principles, will the prophecies of Isaiah be fulfilled? Are we to expect some new system of religion, by which the imperfections of Christianity shall be removed and its deficiencies supplied? Are we to believe that God sent His only Son into the world to institute a religion such as this,—a religion that, in a few centuries, would require to be altered and amended? If Christianity allows of War, they must

tell us what it is that is to extirpate War. If she allows "violence, and wasting, and destruction," they must tell us what are the principles that are to produce gentleness, and benevolence, and forbearance.—I know not what answer such inquiries will receive from the advocate of War, but I know that Isaiah says the change will be effected by *Christianity*: and if any one still chooses to expect another and a purer system, an apostle may perhaps repress his hopes :—"Though we or an angel from Heaven," says Paul, "preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which *we* have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

THE REQUIREMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY ARE OF PRESENT
OBLIGATION.

Whatever the principles of Christianity will require hereafter, they require now. Christianity, *with its present principles and obligations*, is to produce universal Peace. It becomes therefore an absurdity, a simple contradiction, to maintain that the principles of Christianity allow of War, when they, and they only, are to eradicate it. If we have no other guarantee of Peace than the existence of our religion, and no other hope of Peace than in its diffusion, how can that religion sanction War?

The case is clear. A more perfect obedience to that same Gospel which, we are told, sanctions slaughter, will be the means, and the only means, of exterminating slaughter from the world. It is not from an alteration of Christianity, but from an assimilation of Christians to its nature, that we are to hope. It is because we violate the principles of our religion, because we are not what they require us to

be, that wars are continued. If we will not be peaceable let us then at least be honest, and acknowledge that we continue to slaughter one another, not because Christianity permits it, but because we reject her laws.

THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

The opinions of the earliest professors of Christianity upon the lawfulness of War are of importance, because they who lived nearest to the time of its Founder were the most likely to be informed of His intentions and His will, and to practise them without those adulterations which we know have been introduced by the lapse of ages.

During a considerable period after the death of Christ, it is certain, then, that His followers believed He had forbidden War; and that, in consequence of this belief, many of them refused to engage in it whatever were the consequences, whether reproach, or imprisonment, or death. These facts are indisputable. "It is as easie," says a learned writer of the seventeenth century, "to obscure the sun at mid-day, as to deny that the primitive Christians renounced all revenge and War." Christ and His apostles delivered general precepts for the regulation of our conduct. It was necessary for their successors to apply them to their practice in life. And to what did they apply the pacific precepts which had been delivered? They applied them to War; they were assured that the precepts absolutely forbade it. This belief they derived from those very precepts on which we have insisted; they referred expressly to the same passages in the New Testament, *and from the authority and obligation of those passages* they refused to

bear arms. A few examples from their history will show with what undoubting confidence they believed in the unlawfulness of War, and how much they were willing to suffer in the cause of Peace.

EXAMPLE AND TESTIMONY OF EARLY CHRISTIANS.

Maximilian, as it is related in the *Acts of the First Martyrs*, by Ruinart, was brought before the tribunal to be enrolled as a soldier. On the proconsul's asking his name, Maximilian replied, "I am a Christian, and cannot fight." It was however ordered that he should be enrolled; but he refused to serve, still alleging *that he was a Christian*. He was immediately told that there was no alternative between bearing arms and being put to death. But his fidelity was not to be shaken:—"I cannot fight," said he, "if I die." He continued steadfast to his principles, and was consigned to the executioner.

The primitive Christians not only refused to be enlisted in the army, but when they embraced Christianity, whilst already enlisted, they abandoned the profession at whatever cost. Marcellus was a centurion in the legion called Trajana. Whilst holding this commission he became a Christian; and believing, in common with his fellow-Christians, that War was no longer permitted to him, he threw down his belt at the head of the legion, declaring that he had become a Christian, and that he would serve no longer. He was committed to prison; but he was still faithful to Christianity. "It is not lawful," said he, "for a Christian to bear arms for any earthly consideration;" and he was in consequence put to death. Almost immediately

afterwards, Cassian, who was notary to the same legion, gave up his office. He steadfastly maintained the sentiments of Marcellus; and like him was consigned to the executioner. Martin, of whom so much is said by Sulpicius Severus, was bred to the profession of arms, which, on his acceptance of Christianity, he abandoned. To Julian the Apostate, the only reason that we find he gave for his conduct was this:—"I am a Christian, and therefore I cannot fight."

These were not the sentiments, and this was not the conduct, of isolated individuals who might be actuated by individual opinion, or by their private interpretations of the duties of Christianity. Their principles were the principles of the body. They were recognised and defended by the Christian writers, their contemporaries. Justin Martyr and Tatian talk of soldiers and Christians as distinct characters; and Tatian says that the Christians declined even military commands. Clement of Alexandria calls his Christian contemporaries the "Followers of Peace," and expressly tells us "that the Followers of Peace used none of the implements of war." Lactantius, another early Christian, says expressly, "It can *never* be lawful for a righteous man to go to war." About the end of the second century, Celsus, one of the opponents of Christianity, charged the Christians *with refusing to bear arms even in case of necessity*. Origen, the defender of the Christians, does not think of denying the fact; he admits the refusal, and justifies it *because War was unlawful*. Even after Christianity had spread over almost the whole of the known world, Tertullian, in speaking of a part of the Roman

armies. including more than one-third of the standing legions of Rome, distinctly informs us that "not a Christian could be found amongst them."

All this is explicit. The evidence of the following facts is however yet more determinate and satisfactory. Some of the arguments which, at the present day, are brought against the advocates of Peace, were then urged against these early Christians; and *these arguments they examined and repelled*. This indicates investigation and inquiry, and manifests that their belief as to the unlawfulness of War was not a vague opinion, hastily admitted and loosely floating amongst them, but that it was the result of deliberate examination, and a consequent firm conviction that Christ had forbidden it. The very same arguments which are brought in defence of War at the present day, were brought against the Christians sixteen hundred years ago; and sixteen hundred years ago they were repelled by these faithful contenders for the purity of our religion. It is remarkable, too, that Tertullian appeals to the precepts from the Mount, in proof of those principles on which this Essay has been insisting:—*that the dispositions which the precepts inculcate are not compatible with War, and that War therefore is irreconcilable with Christianity.*

If it be possible, a still stronger evidence of the primitive belief is contained in the circumstance, that some of the Christian authors *declared that the refusal of the Christians to bear arms* was a fulfilment of ancient prophecy. The peculiar strength of this evidence consists in this,—that the fact of a refusal to bear arms is assumed as notorious and unquestioned. Irenæus, who lived about the year 180.

affirms that the prophecy of Isaiah, which declared that men should turn their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks *had been fulfilled in his time*; "for the Christians," says he, "have changed their swords and their lances into instruments of peace, and *they know not how to fight*." Justin Martyr, his contemporary, writes,—"That the prophecy is fulfilled you have good reason to believe, for we, who in times past killed one another, *do not now fight with our enemies*." Tertullian, who lived later, says, "You must confess that the prophecy has been accomplished, as far as *the practice of every individual is concerned* to whom it is applicable."

It has been sometimes said, that the motive which influenced the early Christians to refuse to engage in War, consisted in the *idolatry* which was connected with the Roman armies.—*One* motive this idolatry unquestionably afforded; but it is obvious, from the quotations which we have given, that their belief of the unlawfulness of *fighting*, independent of any question of idolatry, was an insuperable objection to engaging in War. Their words are explicit: "I cannot *fight*, if I die."—"I am a Christian, and therefore I cannot *fight*."—"Christ," says Tertullian, "*by disarming Peter*, disarmed every soldier;" and Peter was not about to fight in the armies of idolatry. So entire was their conviction of the incompatibility of War with our religion, that they would not even *be present* at the gladiatorial fights, "lest," says Theophilus, "we should become partakers of the murders committed there." Can anyone believe that they, who would not *even witness* a battle between two men, would themselves fight in a battle between armies? And the

destruction of a gladiator, it should be remembered, was authorized by the State as much as was the destruction of enemies in war.

It is therefore indisputable, that the Christians who lived nearest to the time of our Saviour, believed with undoubting confidence, that He had unequivocally forbidden War ;—that they openly avowed this belief ; and that in support of it they were willing to sacrifice, and did sacrifice, their fortunes and their lives.

CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS.

Christians it is true afterwards became soldiers. But when? When their *general* fidelity to Christianity became relaxed ;—when, *in other respects*, they violated its principles ;—when they had begun “to dissemble,” and “to falsify their word,” and “to cheat ;”—when “Christian casuists” had persuaded them that they might “*sit at meat in the idol’s temple ;*”—when Christians accepted even *the priesthoods of idolatry*. In a word they became soldiers when they had ceased to be Christians.

The departure from the original faithfulness, was however not suddenly general. Like every other corruption, War obtained by degrees. ‘During the first two hundred years, not a Christian soldier is upon record. In the third century, when Christianity became partially corrupted, Christian soldiers were common. The number increased with the increase of the general profligacy ; until at last, in the fourth century, Christians became soldiers without hesitation, and perhaps without remorse. Here and there, however, an ancient father still lifted up his voice for Peace;

but these, one after another, dropping from the world, the tenet that *War is unlawful* ceased at length to be a tenet of the church.

Let it always be borne in mind by those who are advocating War, that they are contending for a corruption which their forefathers abhorred ; and that they are making Jesus Christ the sanctioner of crimes, which His purest followers offered up their lives because they would not commit.

WARS OF THE JEWS.

An argument has sometimes been advanced in favour of War, from the divine communications to the Jews under the administration of Moses. It has been said, that as wars were allowed and enjoined to that people, they cannot be inconsistent with the will of God.

To such an argument our answer is short :—If *Christianity* prohibits War, there is to *Christians* an end of the controversy. War cannot be justified by the referring to any antecedent Dispensation.

But even under the Old Dispensation the prophets foresaw that wars were not accordant with the universal Will of God, since they predicted that, when that Will should be fulfilled, War should be eradicated from the world. And by what Dispensation was that Will to be fulfilled ? By that of the “Rod out of the stem of Jesse.” It is worthy of recollection, too, that David was forbidden to build the temple *because* he had shed blood. “As for me it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God ; but the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars : thou shalt

not build an house unto my name, *because* thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in My sight." So little accordancy did War possess with the purer offices even of the Jewish Dispensation.

DUTIES OF INDIVIDUALS AND NATIONS.

Perhaps the argument to which the greatest importance is attached by the advocates of War, and by which thinking men are chiefly induced to acquiesce in its lawfulness is this, —*That a distinction is to be made between rules which apply to us as individuals, and rules which apply to us as subjects of the State ; and that the pacific injunctions of Christ from the Mount, and all the other kindred commands and prohibitions of the Christian Scriptures, have no reference to our conduct as members of the political body.* In the judgment of the writer this argument possesses no force or application.

When persons make such broad distinctions between the obligations of Christianity on private and on public affairs, the proof of the rectitude of the distinction must be expected of those who make it. General rules are laid down by Christianity, of which in some cases the advocate of War denies the applicability. *He*, therefore, is to produce the reason and the authority for the exception. And that authority must be a *competent* authority,—the authority, mediately or immediately, of God. It is to no purpose for such a person to tell us of the magnitude of political affairs,—of the greatness of the interests which they involve,—of "necessity,"—or of expediency. All these are very proper considerations *in subordination* to the Moral Law ;—other-

wise they are wholly nugatory and irrelevant. Let the reader observe the manner in which the argument is supported.—If an individual, it is argued, suffers aggression, there is a power to which he can apply that is above himself and above the aggressor ; a power by which the bad passions of those around him are restrained, or by which their aggressions are punished. But amongst nations there is no acknowledged superior or common arbitrator. Even if there were, there is no way in which its decisions could be enforced, but by the sword. War therefore is the only means which one nation possesses of protecting itself from the aggression of another. The reader will observe the fundamental fallacy upon which the argument proceeds. It *assumes*, that the reason why an individual is not permitted to use violence is, *that the laws will use it for him*. Here is the error ; for the foundation of the duty of forbearance in private life, is *not* that the laws will punish aggression, but *that Christianity requires forbearance*.

Undoubtedly, if the existence of a common arbitrator were the foundation of the duty, the duty would not be binding upon nations. But that which we require to be proved is this,—that Christianity exonerates nations from those duties which she has imposed upon individuals. This the present argument does not prove : and, in truth, with a singular unhappiness in its application, it assumes, in effect, that she has imposed these duties upon neither the one nor the other.

If it be said, that Christianity allows to individuals some degree and kind of resistance, and that some resistance is therefore lawful to States, we do not deny it. But if it be

said, that the degree of lawful resistance extends to the slaughter of our fellow Christians—that it extends to War,—we do deny it: we say that the rules of Christianity cannot, by any possible latitude of interpretation, be made to extend to it. The duty of forbearance, then, is *antecedent* to all considerations respecting the condition of man; and, whether he be under the protection of laws or not, the duty of forbearance is imposed.

The only truth which appears to be elicited by the present argument is, that the *difficulty* of obeying the forbearing rules of Christianity is *greater* in the case of nations than in the case of individuals: *the obligation to obey them is the same in both*. Nor let any one urge the difficulty of obedience in opposition to the duty; for he who does this has yet to learn one of the most awful rules of his religion,—a rule that was enforced by the precepts, and more especially by the final example, of Christ, of apostles, and of martyrs,—the rule which requires that we should be “obedient even unto death.”

Let it not, however, be supposed that we believe the difficulty of forbearance would be as great in practice as it is great in theory. Our interests are commonly promoted by the fulfilment of our duties; and we hope hereafter to show that the fulfilment of the duty of forbearance forms no exception to the applicability of the rule.

OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE WAR.

The intelligent reader will have perceived that the “War” of which we speak is all War, without reference to its objects, whether offensive or defensive. In truth, respecting

any other than defensive War, it is scarcely worth while to entertain a question, since no one with whom we are concerned to reason, will advocate its opposite. Some persons indeed talk with much complacency of their reprobation of offensive War. Yet to reprobate no more than this, is only to condemn that which wickedness itself is not wont to justify. Even those who practise offensive War affect to veil its nature by calling it by another name.

In conformity with this, we find that it is to *defence* that the peaceable precepts of Christianity are directed. *Offence* appears not to have even suggested itself. It is, "Resist not *evil*:" it is, "Overcome *evil* with good:" it is, "Do good to them that *hate* you:" it is, "Love your *enemies*:" it is, "Render not evil for *evil*:" it is, "Unto him that *smiteth thee on the one cheek*." All this supposes previous offence, or injury, or violence; and it is *then* that forbearance is enjoined.

It is common, with those who justify defensive War, to identify the question with that of individual self-defence; and although the questions are in practice sufficiently dissimilar, it has been seen that we do not object to their being regarded as identical. The Rights of Self-Defence have already been discussed, and the conclusions to which the Moral Law appears to lead, afford no support to the advocate of War. [See Dymond's *Essays*, Eighth Ed., p. 259.]

We say the questions are practically dissimilar; so that, if we had a right to kill a man in self-defence, very few wars would be shown to be lawful. Of the wars which are prosecuted, some are simply wars of aggression; some are for the maintenance of a balance of power; some are in

assertion of technical rights; and some, undoubtedly, to repel invasion. The last are perhaps the fewest; and of these only it can be said that they bear any analogy whatever to the case which is supposed; and even in these, the analogy is seldom complete. It has rarely indeed happened that wars have been undertaken simply for the preservation of life, and that no other alternative has remained to a people than to kill, or to be killed. And let it be remembered, that *unless this alternative alone remains*, the case of individual self-defence is irrelevant; it applies not, practically, to the subject.

But indeed you cannot in practice make distinctions, even moderately accurate, between defensive War and War for other purposes.

Supposing the Christian Scriptures had said, *An army may fight in its own defence, but not for any other purpose.*—Whoever will attempt to apply this rule in practice, will find that he has a very wide range of justifiable warfare; a range that will embrace many more wars than moralists, laxer than we shall suppose them to be, are willing to defend. If an army may fight in defence of their own lives, they may and they must fight in defence of the lives of others: if they may fight in defence of the lives of others, they will fight in defence of their property: if in defence of property, they will fight in defence of political rights: if in defence of rights, they will fight in promotion of interests: if in promotion of interests, they will fight in promotion of their glory and their crimes. Now let any man of honesty look over the gradations by which we arrive at this climax, and I believe he will find that, *in practice*, no curb can be

placed upon the conduct of an army until they reach that climax. There is indeed a wide distance between fighting in defence of life, and fighting in furtherance of our crimes; but the steps which lead from one to the other will follow in inevitable succession. I know that the letter of our rule excludes it, but I know that the rule will be a letter only. It is very easy for us to sit in our studies, and to point the commas, and semicolons, and periods, of the soldier's career: it is very easy for us to say he shall stop at defence of life, or at protection of property, or at the support of rights; but armies will never listen to us: we shall be only the Xerxes of morality, throwing our idle chains into the unpe-
stuous ocean of slaughter.

WARS ALWAYS AGGRESSIVE.

What is the testimony of experience? When nations are mutually exasperated, and armies are levied, and battles are fought, does not every one know that with whatever motives of defence one party may have begun the contest, both in turn become aggressors? In the fury of slaughter soldiers do not attend, they cannot attend, to questions of aggression. Their business is destruction, and their business they will perform. If the army of defence obtains success, it soon becomes an army of aggression. Having repelled the invader, it begins to punish him. If a war has once begun, it is vain to think of distinctions of aggression and defence. Moralists may *talk* of distinctions, but soldiers will *make* none; and none can be made: it is outside the limits of possibility.

PALEY.

Indeed some of the definitions of defensive or of *just* War which are proposed by moralists, indicate how impossible it is to confine warfare within any assignable limits. "The objects of *just* War," says Paley, "are precaution, defence, or reparation."—"Every *just* war supposes an injury perpetrated, attempted, or feared."

I shall acknowledge that, if these be justifying motives to War, I see very little purpose in talking of morality upon the subject.

It is in vain to expatiate on moral obligations, if we are at liberty to declare war whenever an "injury is feared :"—an injury, without limit to its insignificance ! a fear, without stipulation for its reasonableness ! The judges also of the reasonableness of fear, are to be they who are under its influence ; and who so likely to judge amiss as those who are afraid ? Sounder philosophy than this has told us, that "he who has to reason upon his duty when the temptation to transgress it is before him, is almost sure to reason himself into an error."

Violence, and rapine, and ambition, are not to be restrained by morality like this. It may serve for the speculations of a study ; but we will venture to affirm that mankind will never be controlled by it. Moral rules are useless, if from their own nature they cannot be, or will not be, applied. Who believes that if kings and conquerors may fight when they have fears, they will not fight when they have them not ? The morality allows too much latitude to the passions, to retain my practical restraint upon them. And a morality that will not be practised,—I

had almost said, that cannot be practised,—is a useless morality. It is a *theory* of morals. We want clearer and more exclusive rules ; we want more obvious and immediate sanctions. It were in vain for a philosopher to say to a general who was burning for glory, “ You are at liberty to engage in the war provided you have suffered, or fear you will suffer, an injury ; otherwise Christianity prohibits it.” He will tell him of twenty injuries that have been suffered, of a hundred that have been attempted, and of a thousand that he fears. And what answer can the philosopher make to him ?

WAR WHOLLY FORBIDDEN.

If these are the proper standards of just War, there will be little difficulty in proving any war to be just, except indeed that of simple aggression ; and, by the rules of this morality, the aggressor is difficult of discovery, for he whom we choose to “ fear,” may say that he had previous “ fear ” of us, and that his “ fear ” prompted the hostile symptoms which made us “ fear ” again. The truth is, that to attempt to make any distinctions upon the subject is vain. War must be wholly forbidden, or allowed without restriction to defence ; for no definitions of lawful and unlawful War, will be, or can be, attended to. If the principles of Christianity, in any case, or for any purpose, allow armies to meet and to slaughter one another, her principles will never conduct us to the period which Prophecy has assured us they shall produce. There is no hope of an eradication of War, but by an absolute and total abandonment of it

OF THE PROBABLE PRACTICAL EFFECTS OF ADHERING TO THE MORAL LAW IN RESPECT TO WAR.

We have seen that the duties of the religion which God has imparted to mankind require irresistance ; and surely it is reasonable to hope, even without a reference to experience, that He will make our irresistance subservient to our interests :—that if, for the purpose of conforming to His will, we subject ourselves to difficulty or danger, He will protect us in our obedience, and direct it to our benefit :—that if He requires us not to be concerned in War, He will preserve us in Peace :—that He will not desert those who have no other protection, and who have abandoned all other protection because they confide in His alone.

This we may reverently *hope* ; yet it is never to be forgotten that our apparent interests in the present life are sometimes, in the economy of God, made subordinate to our interests in futurity.

Yet, even in reference only to the present state of existence, I believe we shall find that the testimony of experience is, that forbearance is most conducive to our interests. There is practical truth in the position that “When a man’s ways please the Lord, He maketh even his *enemies to be at peace with him.*”

QUAKERS IN AMERICA AND IRELAND.

The reader of American history will recollect, that in the beginning of the last century a desultory and most dreadful warfare was carried on by the natives against the European settlers ; a warfare that was provoked—as such warfare has

almost always originally been—by the unjust and violent conduct of the Christians. The mode of destruction was secret and sudden. The barbarians sometimes lay in wait for those who might come within their reach on the highway or in the fields, and shot them without warning; and sometimes they attacked the Europeans in their houses, “scalping some, and knocking out the brains of others.” From this horrible warfare the inhabitants sought safety by abandoning their homes, and retiring to fortified places, or to the neighbourhood of garrisons; and those whom necessity still compelled to pass beyond the limits of such protection, provided themselves with arms for their defence. But amidst this dreadful desolation and universal terror, the *Society of Friends*, who were a considerable portion of the whole population, were steadfast to their principles. They would neither retire to garrisons, nor provide themselves with arms. They remained openly in the country, whilst the rest were flying to the forts. They still pursued their occupations in the fields or at their homes, without a weapon either for annoyance or defence. And what was their fate? They lived in security and quiet. The habitation which, to his armed neighbour, was the scene of murder and of the scalping-knife, was to the unarmed Quaker a place of safety and of peace.

Three of the Society were however killed. And who were they? They were three who abandoned their principles. Two of these victims were men who, in the simple language of the narrator, “used to go to their labour without any weapons, and trusted to the Almighty, and depended on His providence to protect them (it being their

principle not to use weapons of war to offend others, or to defend themselves); *but a spirit of distrust* taking place in their minds, they took weapons of war to defend themselves; and the Indians,—who had seen them several times without them, and let them alone, saying they were peaceable men and hurt nobody, therefore they would not hurt them,—now seeing them have guns, and supposing they designed to kill the Indians, therefore shot the men dead.” The third whose life was sacrificed was a woman, who “had remained in her habitation,” not thinking herself warranted in going “to a fortified place for preservation, neither she, her son, nor daughter, nor to take thither the little ones; but the poor woman after some time began to let in a slavish fear, and advised her children to go with her to a fort not far from their dwelling.” She went;—and shortly afterwards “the bloody, cruel Indians, lay by the way, and killed her.” [*Select Anecdotes*, by John Barclay, pp. 71, 79.]

The fate of the Quakers during the Rebellion in Ireland was nearly similar. It is well known that the Rebellion was a time not only of open War but of cold-blooded murder; of the utmost fury of bigotry, and of the utmost exasperation of revenge. Yet the Quakers were preserved even to a proverb; and when strangers passed through streets of ruin and observed a house standing uninjured and alone, they would sometimes point, and say, “That, doubtless, is the house of a Quaker.”* So complete indeed was the preservation which these people experienced, that in an

*The Moravians, whose principles upon the subject of war were similar to those of the Quakers, experienced also similar preservation.

official document of the Society they say,—“No member of our Society fell a sacrifice but one young man;” and that young man had assumed regimentals and arms. [Hancock’s *Principles of Peace Exemplified.*]

It were to no purpose to say, in opposition to the evidence of these facts, that they form an exception to a general rule.—The exception to the rule consists in the *trial* of the experiment of non-resistance, not in its *success*. Neither were it to any purpose to say, that the savages of America, or the desperadoes of Ireland, spared the Quakers because they were *preciously* known to be an unoffending people, or because the Quakers had *previously* gained the love of these by forbearance or good offices :—we concede all this; it is a part of the argument which we maintain. We say, that a *uniform, undeviating* regard to the peaceable obligations of Christianity *becomes the safeguard of those who practise it*. We venture to maintain that no reason whatever can be assigned, why the fate of the Quakers would not be the fate of *all* who should adopt their conduct. No reason can be assigned why, if their number had been multiplied ten-fold or a hundred-fold, they would not have been preserved. If there be such a reason, let us hear it. The American and Irish Quakers were, to the rest of the community, what one nation is to a continent. And we must require the advocate of War to produce (that which has never yet been produced) a reason for believing that, although individuals exposed to destruction were preserved, a nation exposed to destruction would be destroyed. We do not however say that, if a people in the customary state of men’s passions should be assailed by an invader. and should on a sudden

choose to declare that they would try whether Providence would protect them,—of such a people, we do not say that they would experience protection, and that none of them would be killed : but we say, that the evidence of experience is that a people who habitually regard the obligations of Christianity in their conduct towards other men, and who steadfastly refuse through whatever consequences to engage in acts of hostility, *will experience protection in their peacefulness*.—And it matters nothing to the argument, whether we refer that protection to the immediate agency of Providence, or to the influence of such conduct upon the minds of men.*

COLONISATION OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Such has been the experience of the unoffending and unresisting, in individual life. A *National* example of a refusal to bear arms has only once been exhibited to the world : but that one example has proved, so far as its

* Ramond, in his *Travels in the Pyrenees*, says he fell in from time to time with those desperate marauders who infested the boundaries of Spain and Italy,—men who were familiar with danger and robbery and blood. What did *experience* teach him was the most efficient means of preserving himself from injury? To go “*unarmed*.” He found that he had “little to apprehend from men whom we inspire with no distrust nor envy, and everything to expect in those from whom we claim only what is due from man to man. The laws of nature still exist for those who have long shaken off the law of civil government.”—“The assassin has been my guide in the defiles of the boundaries of Italy ; the smuggler of the Pyrenees has received me with a welcome in his secret paths. *Armed* I should have been the enemy of both : *unarmed* they have alike respected me. In such expectation I have long since laid aside all menacing apparatus whatever. Arms irritate the wicked and intimidate the simple : the man of peace amongst mankind has a much more sacred defence—his character.”

political circumstances enabled it to prove, all that humanity could desire, and all that scepticism could demand, in favour of our argument.

It has been the ordinary practice of those who have colonised distant countries to force a footing, or to maintain it, with the sword. One of the first objects has been to build a fort and to provide a military. The adventurers became soldiers, and the colony was a garrison. Pennsylvania was however colonised by men who believed that War was absolutely incompatible with Christianity, and who therefore resolved not to practise it. Having determined not to fight, they maintained no soldiers and possessed no arms. They planted themselves in a country that was surrounded by savages, and by savages who knew they were unarmed. If easiness of conquest, or incapability of defence, could subject them to outrage, the Pennsylvanians might have been the very sport of violence. Plunderers might have robbed them without retaliation, and armies might have slaughtered them without resistance. If *they* did not give a temptation to outrage, no temptation could be given. But these were the people who possessed their country in security, whilst those around them were trembling for their existence. This was a land of Peace, whilst every other was a land of War. The conclusion is inevitable although it is extraordinary :—they were in no need of arms *because they would not use them.*

These Indians were sufficiently ready to commit outrages upon other States, and often visited them with desolation and slaughter ; with that sort of desolation, and that sort of slaughter, which might be expected from men whom

civilisation had not reclaimed from cruelty, and whom religion had not awed into forbearance. "But whatever the quarrels of the Pennsylvanian Indians were with others," says Clarkson in his *Life of Penn*, "they uniformly respected and held as it were sacred, the territories of William Penn." The same writer also quotes Oldmixon as saying in 1708, "The Pennsylvanians never lost man, woman, or child, by Indians ; which neither the colony of Maryland, nor that of Virginia can say, no more than the great colony of New England."

The security and quiet of Pennsylvania was not a transient freedom from War, such as might accidentally happen to any nation. "She continued to enjoy it," says Oldmixon, "for more than seventy years : " and, says Proud, "subsisted in the midst of six Indian nations, without so much as a militia for her defence." "The Pennsylvanians," says Clarkson again, "became armed, though without arms; they became strong, though without strength; they became safe, without the ordinary means of safety. The constable's staff was the only instrument of authority amongst them for the greater part of a century, and never, during the administration of Penn, or that of his proper successors, was there a quarrel or a war."

I cannot wonder that these people were not molested,—extraordinary and unexampled as their security was. There is something so noble in this perfect confidence in the Supreme Protector, in this utter exclusion of "slavish fear," in this voluntary relinquishment of the means of injury or of defence, that I do not wonder that even ferocity could be disarmed by such virtue. A people generously living

without arms amidst nations of warriors ! Who would attack a people such as this ? There are few men so abandoned as not to respect such confidence. It were a peculiar and an unusual intensity of wickedness that would not even revere it.

And when was the security of Pennsylvania molested, and its peace destroyed ?—When the men who had directed its counsels and *who would not engage in War were outvoted in its legislature ; when they who supposed that there was greater security in the sword than in Christianity became the predominating body.* From that hour the Pennsylvanians transferred their confidence in Christian Principles to a confidence in their arms ;—and from that hour to the present they have been subject to War. [Clarkson's *Penn.*]

Such is the evidence, derived from a national example, of the consequences of a pursuit of the Christian policy in relation to War. Here are a people who absolutely refused to fight, and who incapacitated themselves for resistance by refusing to possess arms : and these were the people whose land, amidst surrounding broils and slaughter, was selected as a land of security and peace. The only national opportunity which the virtue of the Christian world has afforded us, of ascertaining the safety of relying upon God for defence, has determined that it is safe.

CONFIDENCE IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

If the evidence which we possess does not satisfy us of the expediency of confiding in God, what evidence do we ask, or what can we receive ? We have His promise that He will protect those who abandon their seeming interests in

the performance of His will ; and we have the testimony of those who have confided in Him, that He has protected them. Can the advocate of War produce one single instance in the history of man of a person who had given an unconditional obedience to the will of Heaven, and who did not find that his conduct was *wise* as well as virtuous, that it accorded with his *interests* as well as with his duty ? We ask the same question in relation to the peculiar obligations to irrisistance. Where is the man who regrets that, in observance of the forbearing duties of Christianity, he consigned his preservation to the superintendence of God ?—And the solitary national example that is before us confirms the testimony of private life ; for there is sufficient reason for believing that no nation, in modern ages, has possessed so large a portion of virtue and of happiness, as Pennsylvania before it had seen human blood. I would therefore repeat the question,—What evidence do we ask or can we receive ?

This is the point from which we wander :—WE DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD. When this statement is formally made to us, we think perhaps that it is not true ; but our practice is an evidence of its truth ; for if we did believe we should also *confide* in it, and should be willing to stake upon it the consequences of our obedience.* We can talk with sufficient fluency of “trusting in Providence ;” but in the application of it to our conduct in life, we know

* “The dread of being destroyed by our enemies if we do not go to war with them, is a plain and unequivocal proof of our disbelief in the superintendence of Divine Providence.”—*The Lawfulness of Defensive War impartially considered. By a Member of the Church of England*

wonderfully little. Who is he that confides in Providence, and for what does he trust Him? Does his confidence induce him to set aside his own views of interest and safety, and simply to obey Divine precepts even if they appear inexpedient and unsafe? This is the confidence that is of value, and of which we know so little. There are many who believe that War is disallowed by Christianity and who would rejoice that it were for ever abolished; but there are few who are willing to maintain an undaunted and unyielding stand against it. They can talk of the loveliness of Peace, ay, and argue against the lawfulness of War; but when difficulty or suffering would be the consequence, they will not refuse to do what they know to be unlawful; they will not practise the peacefulness which they say they admire. Those who are ready to sustain the consequences of undeviating obedience, are the supporters of whom Christianity stands in need. She wants men who are willing to *suffer* for her principles.

RECAPITULATION.

The positions then which we have endeavoured to establish are these :—

- I. That those considerations which operate as general Causes of War, are commonly such as Christianity condemns.
- II. That the effects of War are, to a very great extent, prejudicial to the moral character of a people, and to their social and political welfare.
- III. That the general character of Christianity is wholly incongruous with War, and that its general duties are incompatible with it.
- IV. That some of the express precepts and declarations of the Christian Scriptures virtually forbid it.

- V. That the Primitive Christians believed that Christ had forbidden War; and that some of them suffered death in affirmance of this belief.
- VI. That God has declared in Prophecy, that it is His will that War should eventually be eradicated from the earth; and that this eradication will be effected by Christianity, by the influence of its *present* principles.
- VII. That those who have refused to engage in War, in consequence of their belief that it is inconsistent with Christianity, have found that Providence has protected them.

Now we think that the establishment of any considerable number of these positions is sufficient for our argument. The establishment of the whole forms a body of Evidence, which must, I cannot but believe, convince any inquirer, to whom the subject was new. But since such an inquirer cannot be found, I would invite the reader to lay prepossession aside, to suppose himself to have now first heard of battles and slaughter, and dispassionately to examine whether the evidence in favour of Peace be not very great, and whether the objections to it bear any proportion to the evidence itself. But whatever may be the determination upon this question, surely it is reasonable to try the experiment, whether security cannot be maintained without slaughter. Whatever be the reasons for War, it is certain that it produces enormous mischief. Even waiving the obligations of Christianity, we have to choose between evils that are certain and evils that are doubtful; between the actual endurance of a great calamity, and the possibility of a less. It certainly cannot be proved that Peace would not be the best policy; and since we know that the present system is bad, it were reasonable and wise to try whether

the other is not better. In reality I can scarcely conceive the possibility of a greater evil than that which mankind now endures ; an evil, moral and physical, of far wider extent, and far greater intensity, than our familiarity with it allows us to suppose. If a system of Peace be not productive of less evil than the system of War, its consequences must indeed be enormously bad ; and that it would produce such consequences we have no warrant for believing, either from reason or from practice,—either from the principles of the moral government of God, or from the experience of mankind. Whenever a people shall pursue, steadily and uniformly, the pacific morality of the Gospel, and shall do this from the pure motive of obedience, there is no reason to fear for the consequences : there is no reason to fear that they would experience any evils such as we now endure, or that they would not find that Christianity understands their interests better than they do themselves ; and that the surest and the only rule of wisdom, of safety, and of expediency, is to maintain her spirit in every circumstance of life.

“There is reason to expect,” says Dr. Johnson in his *Falkland Islands*, “that as the world is more enlightened, policy and morality will at last be reconciled.” When this enlightened period shall arrive, we shall be approaching, and we shall not till then approach, that era of purity and of peace when “violence shall no longer be heard in our land, wasting nor destruction within our borders ;”—that era in which God has promised that “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all His holy mountain.” That a period like this will come, I am not able to doubt : I believe it, because it

is not credible that He will always endure the butchery of man by man, because He has declared that He will not endure it; and because I think there is a perceptible approach of that period in which He will say—"It is enough." In this belief the Christian may rejoice; he may rejoice that the number is increasing of those who are asking—"Shall the sword devour for ever?" and of those who, whatever be the opinions or the practice of others, are openly saying, "I am for Peace." [Psalm cxx. 7.]

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

It will perhaps be asked, What then are the duties of a subject who believes that all War is incompatible with his religion, but whose governors engage in a war and demand his service? We answer explicitly, *It is his duty mildly and temperately, yet firmly, to refuse to serve.*—Let such as these remember, that an honourable and a most solemn duty is laid upon them. It is upon their fidelity, so far as human agency is concerned, that the Cause of Peace hangs. Let them then be willing to avow their opinions and to defend them. Neither let them be contented with words, if more than words, if suffering also, is required. It is only by the unyielding fidelity of virtue that corruption can be extirpated. If you believe that Jesus Christ has prohibited slaughter, let not the opinions or the commands of a world induce you to join in it. By this "steady and determinate pursuit of virtue," the benediction which attaches to those who hear the sayings of God and *do* them, will rest upon you; and the time will come when even the world will honour you, as contributors to the work of human reformation.

APPENDIX

CHRISTIANITY THE TRUE REMEDY FOR WAR.

OPINIONS OF EMINENT MEN.

BISHOP FRASER.—“War is not the triumph of righteousness. It is the triumph of brute force. Can anything be conceived more unchristian, more irrational, than the present mode by which international quarrels are commonly adjusted?”

DR. CHALMERS.—“The mere existence of the prophecy, ‘They shall learn War no more,’ is a sentence of condemnation on War.”

ROBERT HALL.—“War is nothing less than a temporary repeal of the principles of virtue.”

SYDNEY SMITH.—“God is forgotten in War: every principle of Christianity is trampled upon.”

JOHN WESLEY.—“Shall Christians assist the Prince of Hell, who was a murderer from the beginning, by telling the world of the *benefit or the need of War?*”

DR. ADAM CLARKE.—“War is as contrary to the spirit of Christianity as murder.”

HENRY RICHARD.—“I will venture to say this, that if all the ministers of Christ's Gospel were with one voice, constantly, courageously, earnestly, to preach to the nations the Truce of God, and were to denounce War, not merely as costly, and cruel, and barbarous, but as essentially and eternally unchristian, another War in the civilized world would become impossible.”

LORD CARNARVON.—“You have no right to divorce your system of politics from your system of morals. There are no two sides to that silver shield.”

DUKE OF WELLINGTON (to Lord Shaftesbury).—"War is a most detestable thing. If you had seen but one day of War, you would pray God that you might never see another."

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION.

A PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE.

OPINIONS OF EMINENT MEN.

GROTIUS, in his great work, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, says of Arbitration:—"Christian kings and States are bound, above all others, to adopt this expedient to prevent War. Therefore, it would be useful, and in some sort necessary, that the Christian Powers should appoint some body in which the disputes of any States might be settled by the judgment of the others which are not interested."

WILLIAM PENN says:—"The Princes of Europe should establish one Sovereign Assembly, before which all international differences should be brought, which cannot be settled by the Embassies."—*Essay on the Peace of Europe*.

LORD RUSSELL.—"On looking at all the wars which have been carried on during the last century, and examining into the causes of them, *I do not see one of these wars, in which, if there had been proper temper between the parties, the questions in dispute might not have been settled without recourse to arms.*"

EARL DERBY (when Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1867).—"Unhappily there is no International Tribunal to which cases can be referred, and there is no International Law by which parties can be required to refer their disputes. *If such a Tribunal existed, it would be a great benefit to the civilized world.*"

RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE.—"I am fully convinced that there is reserved for this country a great and honourable destiny in connection with this subject. If we are to become effective missionaries of these principles, we can only derive authority by making them our own, and by giving to them practical effect by acting on the principles of moderation, goodwill, and justice. If we do so, then every year will add more and more weight to the abstract doctrines we preach."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE (when Secretary of State).—"It is our sincere and earnest belief that the interests of this country and of the whole world lie in the direction of a *peaceful* instead of a *warlike* policy. We firmly believe that the differences between nations may best be settled by the counsels that prevail in time of peace, and not amidst the excitement and clash of War."

Since the Peace of 1815 there have been about sixty instances of Arbitration for the settlement of International disputes, some of them involving great and difficult questions. In all of these cases a satisfactory and permanent settlement was effected.

SOME OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE MODERN WAR SYSTEM.

DESTRUCTION OF LIFE FROM WAR IN 25 YEARS (1855-80).

	Killed in battle, or died of wounds and disease.
CRIMEAN WAR	750,000
Italian War, 1859	45,000
War of Schleswig-Holstein	3,000
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR—the North...	280,000
—the South...	520,000
War between Prussia, Austria, and Italy in 1866 .	45,000
Expeditions to Mexico, Cochin China, Morocco, Paraguay, etc.	65,000
FRANCO-GERMAN WAR OF 1870-71 :	
—FRANCE	155,000
—GERMANY	60,000
RUSSIAN AND TURKISH WAR OF 1877 .	225,000
ZULU AND AFGHAN WARS, 1879	40,000
Total	2,188,000

Killed in 25 years of nineteenth century "civilization !"

If the execution of two or three criminals justly excites horror, what should be the feeling produced by the contemplation of such an awful sacrifice of human life in millions upon millions, and often amid circumstances of unimaginable horror.

THE COST OF RECENT WARS (1855-80).

Crimean War	£340,000,000
Italian War of 1859	60,000,000
American Civil War—North	940,000,000
” ” —South	460,000,000
Schleswig-Holstein War	7,000,000
Austrian and Prussian War, 1866	66,000,000
Expeditions to Mexico, Morocco, Paraguay, etc. (say only)	40,000,000
Franco-Prussian War	500,000,000
Russian and Turkish War, 1877	210,000,000
Zulu and Afghan Wars, 1879... ..	30,000,000
	<hr/>
	£2,653,000,000

This vast sum is equal to £2 for every man, woman, and child in the world ! It represents a mass of wasted labour and money, which might, if wisely directed, have been an untold blessing to the nations.

It has been computed that the actual workers in Great Britain, even in time of Peace, work every day of the year to pay the interest of the National Debt, twenty-six minutes ; for the maintenance of our armaments, thirty minutes a day ; for the cost of collecting the taxes, four minutes a day ; for the relief of the poor, nine minutes a day ; for local taxes, nine minutes a day ; for the cost of civil government, twelve minutes a day. Adding these together, we find our labourers working every day of the year one hour and thirty minutes, or nine hours per week, for the payment of our national and local taxes. Very nearly two-thirds of this time is occupied in producing the cost of our War system, that is, of our National Debt and of our Armaments.