

laboring to effect this purpose ; they have appealed to rulers, held crowded conventions, distributed innumerable publications, and employed intelligent and active agents ; and now, after a long period of general peace, increased international intercourse and commercial friendship,—when it was imagined that such Christian influences had been everywhere shed as to render war almost impossible—it has burst upon us in all the fury, the cruelty, the destructiveness and wastefulness, the crime and immorality, of any that has preceded it.

The friends of peace may learn a solemn lesson from this melancholy disappointment : they may see that the martial spirit is not to be allayed by the methods they have heretofore tried. Vain is the appeal to grasping sovereigns and cabinets, to settle by congresses and arbitrations, questions they do not desire to settle : vain is the prediction to the aristocracy of wealth, of national bankruptcy and augmented pauperism, when their own coffers will be more replenished : vain is the heart-rending representation of the slaughters and desolations of martial campaigns to military chiefs, in camp or in council, whose compassion is drowned in chivalric ardor : vain is the mournful tale of the sorrows of bereaved relatives ; it is unheard in the shouts and illuminations of victory : vain even is the citation of the gospel precepts of benevolent forbearance to churches corrupted by power, or the blind multitude who revere no religion.

But let us not despair of the ultimate realization of the predicted reign of peace ; a new path is yet open to it, but we have passed the space necessary to give direction to it ; and propose to renew the subject, and point it out in next number.

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#### A PLEA FOR PEACE.

THANKSGIVING SERMON, *delivered November 22, 1855, in the Eleventh Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, by the REV. D. B. CHENEY, Pastor.*

“ I AM FOR PEACE,” — Psalms cxv. 7.

The religion of the Bible is a religion of peace. Its spirit is a peaceful spirit. Coming to man arrayed in rebellion against his Maker, the gospel proposes terms of peace and reconciliation. It invites man to lay down the weapons of his rebellion, and to make his peace with God. In harmony with this prevailing characteristic of the religion of the Bible was the angelic chorus proclaiming the Saviour's birth “ on earth peace, good will toward man ” — as if they were the briefest possible summary of the principles of the Messiah's kingdom : “ peace ” and “ good will. ” Moreover, peace is revealed in prophecy as one of the characteristics of the latter day glory, when “ men shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and when they shall learn war no more.

But while all this is so, and must be received by all who make the word of God their guide, still there is no other subject that occupies a twentieth part as much space in the history of the world as the subject of war. Open any

civil history you will, and almost the first and last thing that will meet your eye, will be the record of some scene of blood and carnage.

Nor does this apply simply to the rude and barbarous nations of the earth, nor has it been confined to the dark ages of the world's history. But Christian nations, such as England and America — nations engaged in sending the gospel of peace to the poor and the benighted, even under the noon-tide of light belonging to the middle of the nineteenth century, can not only gravely debate the subject of war in the House of Parliament, and upon the floor of Congress, but can actually summon their soldiers to the tented field. But a few years have passed since an army, mostly composed of our citizen soldiers, was marching upon the capital of a neighboring republic, and this year England is carrying on a war upon a gigantic scale, with its rival power of Eastern Europe. Nor can it be urged in entire justification on their part, that these wars have been forced upon these Christian nations by the semi-barbarous people of Mexico and Russia. We have heard, during the past few weeks, the rumors of war even between these two nations, which we are proud to call the most enlightened and christianized of all the nations of the earth. Our public journals have been filled with these rumors. Ministers of State have been engrossed with the matters of difference between the two nations, and multitudes have been speculating upon the chances of peace or war among a people, whose language and religion, origin and interests should make them like a band of brothers. And though we are slow to believe that England and America can be brought again into actual war for any ordinary consideration, yet enough has already transpired to show that with many the war-spirit still exists, and that at some unexpected moment, like the pent-up fires of the volcano, it may again break forth. Enough has transpired to lead thoughtful men to pause and consider. In time of peace it may be well to estimate the evils of war. When the blessings of peace call for a nation's tribute of thanksgiving, it may be well to consider what war has done to impoverish and desolate the world. War as a system is evil; only evil, and that continually. It is conceived in an evil spirit; an evil spirit is engendered in it, and it entails uncounted evils upon a community subject to its ravages. The question is not whether war under any circumstances is justifiable, but whether war as a system can be justified. A war strictly defensive may be engaged in as a necessary evil to be met and sustained by the defendants. But a defensive war on the one side becomes an aggressive war on the other, and the theory of an aggressive war will find but few defendants.

Having then the general objects before us, *I propose in this discourse to present some considerations which should lead the Christian world to desire universal peace.*

I. And first, we should desire this, because war is so expensive. From public records and other authorities, the most reliable, we may learn that the expense of the war-system is so enormous as to baffle our highest conception. From the best examination I have been able to give to this subject, I have arrived at the painful conclusion that warlike preparations, *even in the time of peace*, constitute more than three-fourths of all the expenses of all the governments of the earth. It is a well known truth, that there is no nation of equal strength with our own, that has done so little in time of peace to prepare for war. Our dependence for the nation's defence has not been upon a large standing army or navy, but rather upon the patriotism of our citizens. Compared with Great Britain, for example, our warlike preparations have been exceedingly small. From statistics published a few years ago, we learn that, where we had, at that time, one war vessel, England had seven; and where we had one thousand men in our standing army, England had thirty thousand.

But what has it cost our nation to maintain its comparatively small war establishment, *even in times of peace*? For several years before our late war

with Mexico, our governmental expenses were some \$26,000,000 annually. Of this sum, about \$21,000,000 were appropriated to military and naval purposes. From this statement we see that eighty cents of every dollar of our national expenses are for warlike purposes. It costs more money to support one war ship than any six colleges in the land, and the expense of each gun in our navy would more than support twenty missionaries of the cross on heathern shores. Within the last fifty years, in times of peace, this country has expended, for warlike preparations, more than \$500,000,000.

But if we turn to the nations of Europe we shall find warlike expenses on a much larger scale. Simply the wall that was built around Paris, in 1840, cost \$50,000,000, and the palace at Versailles is said to have cost \$200,000,000 — a sum well nigh sufficient to build a city like that in which we dwell. The war department of France costs, in times of peace, twenty-fold all her other expenses. The annual charge of Great Britain, for her war debt alone, is not less than \$140,000,000. It is said, that in 1827, a year of peace, England paid for the purposes of war \$220,000,000, while her other expenses were not more than one-fortieth part of that sum.

But actual war is much more expensive. It cost this country \$350,000,000 to purchase her independence in the war of the Revolution, \$120,000,000 in the war of 1812, and \$40,000,000 to hunt a few Indians from the swamps of Florida.

But this is not to be compared to the expenses of the English wars. Look at a single period of her history from 1688 to 1815, a period of 127 years. The war of 1688, which continued nine years, cost \$180,000,000. Next was the Spanish succession, which cost \$300,000,000. Then came the Spanish war of 1739, which cost \$270,000,000. Next was the war of 1756, in which England spent \$560,000,000. Then came the American Revolution, which cost England \$680,000,000. Her wars with Napoleon, after the French Revolution, cost England the amazing sum of \$1,000,000 a day during the entire period of their continuance, and reaching in the aggregate the incredible amount of \$8,115,000,000. The cost of the present war in the Crimea to the various parties involved in it, will be for the future historian to record, but its present indications are that it will rival all former precedents.

We might further estimate the expensiveness of war from the present war debts of the nations, which, in Europe alone, are said to amount to more than five times all the specie on the globe; but we forbear. From the facts already adduced, selected from a multitude of a similar character, we may learn that war wastes the substance of the nations engaged in it, and lays upon their people oppressive burdens and grievous to be borne. And from this we may readily see why Christian nations should desire universal peace, in view of the expensiveness of war.

II. But, secondly, we should desire the prevalence of universal peace, and the utter abatement of the war system, because of the immense sacrifice of human life in war. Do you ask for an epitome of what history informs us upon this feature of war? Although it is painful to contemplate, and from it our feelings would naturally turn away in sadness, still it demands a consideration. It has been estimated that the present war in the Crimea has already sacrificed a half million of lives, or a population equal to all the men, women and children of this great city.

During the memorable march of Napoleon upon Moscow, it is estimated that in the brief period of six months a half million of the French alone perished, and probably as many more of their enemies. During these twelve years of the wars of Napoleon, no less than 5,800,000 lives were lost from nominal Christians. The French themselves estimate that their wars must have sacrificed 6,000,000 of lives.

The Spaniards in twelve years are said to have destroyed 12,000,000 of American Indians. And if we go back to earlier periods of history, it would seem as if the world was one great slaughter house of human beings. The wars in the time of Sesostriis, cost 15,000,000 of lives; those of Semiramis, Cyrus and Alexander 10,000,000 each; the wars of Alexander's successors 20,000,000; Grecian wars sacrificed 15,000,000; Jewish wars 25,000,000; the wars of the twelve Cæsars 30,000,000 in all; the wars of the Romans, before Julius Cæsar, 60,000,000; the wars of the Roman Empire, the Saracens and the Turks, 60,000,000 each; the wars of the reformation 30,000,000; the wars of the middle ages and the nine crusades in two centuries 40,000,000 each; the wars of the Tartars 80,000,000, and those of Africa 100,000,000.

Such estimates do indeed appear incredible, and still they are taken from sources entitled to consideration. Of course, it is not claimed that perfect accuracy can be attained in such statistics; it is impossible. You might as well count the blades of grass that grow in midsummer, or the drops of rain that fell in Noah's flood; but if they have even an approximation to truth, the entire havoc of human life in war must baffle our utmost powers of conception. Says the learned Dr. Dick: "If we take into consideration the number of those who have perished through the natural consequences of war, as well as those who have been slain in battle, it will not perhaps be overstating the destruction of human life if we estimate that one-tenth part of the entire human family have been destroyed by the ravages of war, and, according to this estimate, more than fourteen thousand millions have been slaughtered in war since the world began!" Sir Edmund Burke, one of the most intelligent men of his age, went still further, and reckoned the sum total of its ravages, from the first, at not less than thirty-five thousand millions, or more than forty times the present entire population of the globe.

According to this estimate, allowing each man to be of an average height of five feet, could their graves be placed in a continuous line, they would encircle the globe more than thirteen hundred and twenty-five times. And were each body to occupy a space five feet by one and a half, they would pave an area larger than the State of Massachusetts. And, oh! what a pavement! Nine thousand one hundred square miles covered entire with human bodies slain in war! What a maelstrom this to engulf the human family! Now, from this view of war, may we not see why individual Christians and Christian nations should desire universal peace?

III. But again, we should desire the prevalence of universal peace and the utter abatement of the war system, because of the immorality and wickedness of war. The very spirit of war is that of hatred and malice and every evil passion. It is the very antagonism of the peaceful and loving spirit of the gospel of the blessed God. Hence said the Duke of Wellington, "Men of conscientious scruples in religious matters have no business in the army." All conscience, all sense of right must be laid aside by the soldier when engaged in the art of war. Said Lord Nelson to the privates of his fleet, "Obey all your orders from your superior, without inquiring whether thy are right or wrong, and hate a Frenchman as you would the devil." Murder, rapine, theft, falsehood, cruelty and hate are military virtues; and the commander rewards with laurels, what God forbids on pain of eternal death. Says one, "When God says love your enemies, war says hate them. When God says bless them that curse you, war says curse them. When God says do good to them that despitefully use you, war says do them all the injury in your power." Nor is this all; the same act which is a military virtue in the sight of one army is a capital crime in the sight of the other. The deed which procured for Major André a halter from the Americans, procured for him an immortality of fame in England. Nor does military virtue depend upon the character of the cause in which the hero is engaged. The brave

defender of a bad cause is honored just as much as the brave defender of a good one. It is a well known fact that the same monument tells the deeds of Wolfe and Montcalm, who fell at the head of their respective armies when engaged in mortal combat.

The camp of war is a poor place to develop and illustrate the principles of the Gospel. Well has one observed, "From none but Cromwell was ever heard the pious exhortation, 'trust in God and keep your powder dry,' and no camp but his has ever been celebrated for theological discussions, prayers and psalm-singing." On the contrary, the vices of the camp are proverbial. War is not only a repeal of all the virtues, but also of all the sanctions of our holy religion. The restraints of home, and of Christian society, and especially of the Christian Sabbath, are all lost in the camp. It is well known that not a few of the most sanguinary and celebrated battles have been fought on the Sabbath day. And the maxim is in high repute — "there are no Sabbaths in revolutionary times."

But I need not further speak of the immorality and wickedness of the camp. Whoever has made himself at all familiar with the war system, surely cannot fail to see enough in this feature of it to awaken a desire for the spread of peace through all the earth.

IV. But once more: we should desire the prevalence of universal peace, because of the great inequality and injustice of war. I mean by this, that those who are the movers and advocates of war, evade the responsibility. It falls on helpless and unoffending men. Were over-heated politicians and pseudo statesmen, who love to gaze at a distance upon the paraphernalia of the camp, whose music is the clash of arms, the roar of artillery and the mingled groans of dying men — were they to fight out the wars which in their blindness they helped to urge on, the whole subject would assume a different aspect. But no; those men who declare war have little idea of fighting it through at the cannon's mouth. The men who do the fighting, as a general thing, have not received the slightest injury, nor have even their honors been insulted. A recent writer has well said, "The soldier must shoot down a perfect stranger, made his enemy by the caprice of his sovereign, or by the single vote of a republican, perhaps a Hotspur in his cups. Were those who declare war or who accept it, the only men to fight, and their animal powers to accomplish for their respective parties what their intellectual and moral powers had failed to do, national hostilities would show some reason and justice, perhaps, if not humanity. But such men have little idea of representing their constituents at the cannon's mouth, of risking their precious persons before villainous saltpetre. Between patriotic services for eight dollars a day, with roast beef, champagne and feather beds, and those rated at six dollars a month, with the privilege of camping out on the frozen ground, of feeding upon horse-flesh, and, not least, of being shot, they see some room for choice."

Then again, there is great inequality between officers and private soldiers in the army. The latter must be the most exposed, while the former receives the greater pay and the greater honor. Think of Napoleon with 6,000,000 of victims of his wars. He is the conqueror and must be honored as such by old and young. His name is heard in the story and in the song, and is engraved on the triumphal arch and monumental pile. And even his dust, after reposing for years in the grave, is borne from land to land amid the shouts of applause and the incense of adoration from the countless multitudes. But who thinks of the soldiers who fell under his command, to do them honor, who were shot in the field, or died in the hospital under circumstances more resembling pauperism than patriotism? Napoleon was honored in life and in death, and received at last one of the proudest burials which one of the richest nations of the earth could bestow. But who cares for the victims of Borodino, of Austerlitz, or of Waterloo? Napoleon's name is enrolled among

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the great, but who pauses to shed a tear of sympathy over that ill-fated army, the flower of France, whose bones were left to bleach on the cold hills of Russia? The hero's name is emblazoned in letters of gold, and a bright halo of glory was thrown around him, but his soldiers fell unwept, uncoffined,

“Nor in sheet nor in shroud they bound him,  
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,  
With his martial cloak around him,  
They carved not a line, they raised not a stone,  
But left him alone in his glory.”

True, there may have been widows' hearts that bled, and orphans' tears that flowed as freely as the rain drops of a summer's shower, because their husbands and fathers were not. But what are these in war?

Ah! how strangely perverse is public sentiment upon this whole subject. We regard that man a monster who kills his neighbor, but sing the praises of him who has slaughtered his thousands. We laud to the skies men whose names live only in recollection of a field of carnage, a sacked town and a stormed citadel, and give our praise, our admiration and our love to that which reason, religion, interest, every consideration should teach us to condemn, to avoid, to abhor! Well has it been written in one comprehensive line —

“One murder makes a villain, millions a hero.”

But the opening year has shown the divine mercy, and the same mercy is crowning its close. Blessings have been abundant, but high upon the list of them, and in a measure sanctifying them all, have been the blessings of peace. In peace our fields have been tilled, and they have brought forth their abundant harvests. In peace our schools and seminaries of learning have been cared for and fostered, where our sons and daughters are receiving the culture that shall prepare them for the active duties of life. In peace we have enjoyed the comforts and endearments of home. Husbands and wives, fathers and children, brothers and sisters, have been spared from the painful separation incident to a time of war. And above all, in peace we have repaired to our sanctuaries and altars of devotion. War often closes the house of God, and desecrates its altars; but it has not interrupted our devotions, though we have heard so much of war and of its rumors during the year. For these blessings of peace we are called upon to render devout thanksgiving unto God. And oh, while we return thanks, let us pray for the prevalence of universal peace. It is a blessing devoutly to be desired for our war-cursed world. And it is a blessing that will be enjoyed only in proportion as the gospel spreads in its purity. We have already said that peace — universal peace, is one of the characteristics set forth in prophecy, of the latter day glory, when Christ, the “Prince of Peace,” shall extend His kingdom over all the earth. Then

“No strife shall vex his reign,  
Or mar the peaceful years;  
To plowshares men shall beat their swords,  
To pruning hooks their spears.  
Peace, with her olives crowned, shall stretch  
Her wings from shore to shore:  
No trump shall rouse the rage of war,  
No murderous cannon roar.”