

ADDRESS

TO THE

MASSACHUSETTS PEACE SOCIETY,

AT THEIR SECOND ANNIVERSARY, DEC. 25, 1817.

BY THE HON. THOMAS DAWES.

WE are told by unbelievers that it is in the very nature of prophecy to fulfil itself: Meaning, I suppose, that as mankind are prone to admire the marvellous, so they are always inclined to verify the predictions of antiquity. But how can that impair the evidence of their divine origin? Their omniscient Author, foreknowing the natural disposition of his intelligent creatures, or having constructed them to promote the objects of his wisdom, might have directed their instrumentality in bringing to pass what He had ordained from the beginning of the world. By a comparison of profane with sacred writings it appears that some men are commissioned to execute the orders of Providence, without their own knowledge and contrary to their own intentions; whilst others are the conscious and obedient messengers of the Eternal Will.

In the fulness of military power, at the head of the veteran legions of Rome, Titus had determined to spare the temple of the Jews, as an exception from the general ruin that awaited them, and as a lasting memorial of the victor's clemency. But his besieging cohorts commenced its destruction, and he was soon impelled, though

with reluctance, to raze it from its deep foundations ; thus inflicting the awful sentence that not one stone should be left on another of that splendid monument of human glory.

Ages before the christian era, Zachariah had designated the peculiar manner in which the Prince of Peace was to make his public entry at the gates of Jerusalem. And when he actually appeared on that momentous occasion, two of his disciples, who had been astonished at his mighty works, though they remembered not the prediction till after he had been glorified, ran at his bidding to a neighbouring village to bring the colt that was to bear Emanuel to the city of David.

As to the voluntary obedience of others to accomplish the evident designs of Heaven, the examples on record are striking and sublime ; and it is no disparagement to prophecy that any of the sons of men are the cheerful instruments of its fulfilment : nor is its grandeur diminished because its promises are not immediately performed. A prophet of the Most High looks through the long vista of future times to the most magnificent events ; as Herschel is enabled to descry new constellations in the remote regions of space. For *us* it is matter of congratulation that at this interesting period of the world's chronology we have seen so many predictions realized, and are therefore not slow of heart to believe in those which relate to the kingdom of Peace. May our confidence in their authenticity inspire us with ardour to hasten its advent, though its more perfect fruitions may be reserved for another generation.

It has been triumphantly enquired why we do not found a society to regulate the winds : as if the phenomena of nature were as much within our control as our moral propensities. But another answer is, that even as to those physical disorders which seem to disturb the aspect of

the universe, God has occasionally intrusted his creatures with many alleviations and important remedies. And though it was not given to Xerxes to command the elements, yet Franklin was permitted to divert the lightning's blaze from the abodes of men. Within the memory of men yet living what ravages were made by a terrific pestilence, visiting almost periodically, and after short intervals of respite, every nation in its turn, to humble the pride of beauty and thin the ranks of mankind. Yet under the smiles of Providence, by human means that were then considered as visionary and preposterous, it was at first meliorated and is now supplanted.

Ninety years have scarcely elapsed since inoculation was introduced into England by the lady Montague. She had learned its efficacy from some poor cottagers in the Turkish dominions and by actual experiment on her infant son. How would her generous heart have exulted, could she have foreseen the transition from that to the more perfect antidote which we have since borrowed from the lower creation.

But I mention this distinguished female more particularly for her sentiments on the *moral* imperfections of our species. After acknowledging with gratitude the improvements of science, she considers the world as yet in its infancy, when recollecting the many palpable follies still persisted in. She places that of *war* as among the pranks of boys; and observes "whenever we come to man's estate, perhaps a thousand years hence, it may appear quite as ridiculous. Several discoveries will then be made and several truths be made clear, of which we have now no more idea than the ancients had of the circulation of the blood or the optics of Sir Isaac Newton."

Such were the beamings of an original and gifted mind, expanded by education and confirmed by experience.

She was the wife of an ambassador, had been familiar with courts and had discerned the motives of statesmen. She must have seen that the mass of mankind were as puppets, whose wires were managed in the cabinets of princes; that war was a stupendous system of crimes for the aggrandizement of a few by the destruction of millions. Had she known that in less than a century powerful monarchs would be combined for the abolition of the slave trade, she would have calculated upon a shorter period than a thousand years for the suppression of that more enormous custom which Milton has branded with the name of "infinite manslaughter." But the march of wisdom is slow. Full as many years had passed after our Saviour's birth before English parents were forbidden by law to sell their own children into foreign servitude, a barbarous practice imported by their Saxon forefathers. When that prohibitory statute was made, the art of printing not being known, parliamentary debates were not published; or we might have read among the speeches of the opposition of those days how repugnant such an act of legislation was to parental authority and the rights of man.

Long was the night of mental darkness: and when the twilight of philosophy appeared, some of its explainers were sent to the stake, for believing in the spherical form of the earth. Even after the Reformation had enlightened one half of Europe, Galileo was condemned as an heretic for proving that the sun was thestead fast centre of revolving worlds. To come yet nearer to modern times, how shocking and almost incredible are those pages of judicial history which are stained with punishments for witchcraft. How painful the reflection that such sanguinary laws should have been enacted, ah, and enforced even to the death, upon hapless, though innocent fellow beings, for their supposed correspondence

with the prince of the power of the air ; as if he or they could have been admitted into the arcana of the invisible world, to share in its government with the Almighty !

But as no errors have been too absurd for adoption in one age, so but few have escaped the corrections of another. And on such analogy let us build our hopes that if not in this age, yet in the next, the monster War will disappear from the face of the earth, as a beast of prey retires from the settlements of civilized man. Such a happy change in human affairs would not be much more surprising than the abrogation of private warfare among the feudal barons of the middle ages. While that lasted, and it was for several centuries, its calamities were full as tremendous as those which accompany the invasions of foreign armies. Nay, worse ; for the combat was between members of the same community ; and historians appear to emulate each other in describing its horrors, as the most awful visitations of offended Heaven. And how was such a prodigy of sin and crime exterminated ? By the gradual change of public opinion, introduced by men of a pacific temper, in their still small voice of reason, and afterwards more strenuously urged and enforced by their persevering and undaunted efforts, until emperors, kings and prelates, not excepting the Roman Pontiff, were confederated to do away the abomination.

That such a strange abuse of power, maintained and exercised, under a pretence of the rights of nobility, but so ruinous to all other orders of the people, should have lasted so long, now appears to be truly wonderful. Yet its reformers had almost as many obstacles to encounter as the apostles of Jesus had in diffusing the doctrine of a resurrection to immortal life. But we have abundant reasons for hope that in this enlightened age no attempt at any important reformation can meet with such serious discouragement. And unless we discard Revelation, we

must rejoice in our belief that the time must come, sooner or later, when all nations and tribes and languages shall bend in grateful homage to Him who was the desire of all nations and whose empire is love.

Many remarkable occurrences have lately appeared to justify those bright forebodings which *we* encourage; though scrupulous philosophers may consider them as the dreams of Benevolence. By the mighty aid of Bible Societies glad tidings are proclaimed in regions which sat in darkness, and their benign and cheering influence extends to all climes from the rising to the setting sun. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard: their sound has gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world.

The Holy League of august sovereigns, in which the Emperor of all the Russias has taken so conspicuous a part, is a strong indication of the future prevalence of the cause of Peace. Jealous politicians may have doubted the motive. But they had not then read the undisguised answer of that illustrious man to the corresponding Secretary of this society. Some of our friends in New-York have been favoured with similar expressions of the Emperor's regard for that peace and good will towards men which were celebrated by angels at the Redeemer's birth. We should be blind indeed not to perceive in such signs of the times the operations of an overruling Providence.

We shall be told that all these prognostics are fallacious; that the Creator for wise purposes, though inscrutable to us, has so entwined the destiny of war with the constitution of man that one is to last as long as the other; or at least for as many ages yet to come as have already rolled away from Nimrod down to Napoleon. To such observers, of whose sincerity we have no doubt, we would answer—Neither you nor we can foretell the decrees of the Eternal Mind. But *we* shall continue to maintain

that the inculcations of Humanity can never be useless. And because we cannot effect every thing, shall we attempt nothing?

In all sorts of governments, but especially in those which are elective, the actions of rulers take their hue from the people's morals. And if a war can be got up or protracted, to gratify favourites or to keep a commander in place, of which there have been too many instances in *former* times, how important is it to civil society that such a mad spirit should be counteracted by associations of the friends of peace. And should they, by adding their influence to the scale, when parties are nearly equal, be the means of saving their country from one unnecessary war in the course of a century, they would not be said to have lived in vain. And as to their own reward, they would find it in their sympathy with multitudes of fellow men preserved from vice and poverty, and untimely death: a consolation which would far outbalance all the reproaches of all the fighters of Christendom. Fighters of Christendom! What a solecism, that two adverse armies of Christians should be drawn out in battle array, each by its chaplains invoking the LORD of hosts and calling for destruction on the other, in a dispute, perhaps about their claims to some wilderness, whilst hungry vultures on the neighbouring rocks are watching with impatience to enjoy the carnage. Better to leave such contested soil to its native animals, who, though wild, are never so wild as to devour their own species. It *may be*, that the expected conflict is to avenge an affront that might have been settled by three honest arbitrators in an hour. But injured *Honour* is exasperated; and nothing but blood can atone! When Christians go to war, they are apt to expose their own inconsistencies, not only by shallow pretences and lame excuses in their manifestoes, but by an ostentatious display of the symbols and tokens of a

peaceful religion : so awkward do men appear when their principles and conduct are at variance. Thus Constantine, the first christian Emperor, made use of the cross of Christ as a military standard : and at this day some nations give the names of saints and martyrs to their ships of the line. In the last great naval action between three neighbouring powers, the most formidable ship in their fleets, bore on her stern an inscription that was fit only for a church consecrated to the service of Him who hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth.

Leaving to ministers of the Gospel the question what sort of wars are justified by its precepts, it may at least be doubted whether *any* War, whose object was *conquest*, has ever resulted in the benefit of the majority of any people.

Volumes might be filled with illustrations of a sentiment I have some where met with, that "leaders in strife reap all the fruits of it, and gather the spoils of those battles in which Craft only blows the trumpet, while De-lusion does the whole work and runs all the danger."

Soon after the accession of Queen Ann, her favourite Marlborough turned the doubtful question in favour of a new war upon Lewis : and history has condemned his unworthy motives. It acknowledges, indeed, that England acquired celebrity from his triumphs. But they plunged her into debts that threatened a general bankruptcy. What *he* gained is known to every reader. The castle of Blenheim was dedicated to his everlasting fame, because in one of his battles only five thousand of his own troops were killed, whilst *he* slew or pushed into the Danube, where they perished, more than double that number of French and Bavarians. The privations of families, the sufferings of humble individuals are seldom recorded. They are beneath the notice of pens employed to display

the exploits of a conqueror. The dying groans of sons and brothers are lost in the shouts of victory. But in their remote and once loved homes is heard the voice of lamentation and weeping and great mourning; many a Rachel refusing to be comforted because her children are not.

I have referred you to one of the most brilliant events in modern warfare prior to the French revolution. It is recent enough to be almost within our knowledge, yet not so near to us as to be looked at with prejudice or exaggeration. And it shews what an extravagant price in lives and property may be paid for conquests which when obtained, are worth nothing but a sound that may echo long after its authors are silent. But standing armies, when once raised, must be employed; and should they happen to produce no fighting at home, quarrels must be picked for them abroad; they must be transported beyond sea, and be made parties to the dissensions of strangers, whose language they do not understand, and with whom they have no more cause of dispute than Bonaparte had with the Egyptians. And what was the glory of taking and burning towns and laying Germany waste, if the people's happiness at home was not promoted?

When War is the fashion, or as some would express it, when it is all the rage, its contagious frenzy is not confined to military men: it is caught by other classes, especially poets and orators who delight in panegyric. Even the amiable and accomplished Addison, whose moral effusions, for truth and beauty are not excelled, was not exempt from the common frailty; he versified the bloody campaigns of a chief I have named, whom he compared to an angel riding in a whirlwind and performing the orders of the King of kings. Not long before, another poet of exemplary life and eminent for his pious works, had canonized a monarch of fighting memory and embellished his urn with the richest ornaments of rhyme. I am

not blaming these excellent men. It was a fault of the age, as fanaticism had been the infirmity of a former one. I only name it as one among many of the prolific sources of succeeding wars. For inordinate praise is the recompense of ambition, and excites to new enterprizes for sanguinary fame. Alexander of Macedon was so fond of this air blown reward, that he always carried with him a tribe of writers to compliment him for his supernatural genius and unrivalled achievements. And that did not satisfy him; for he had no Homer to immortalize his guilty name in heroic song. May the day arrive when Eloquence shall cease to lavish her commendations on Barbarity, reserving her encomiums for the affectionate Samaritans and saving physicians of the lives and morals of the human race.

Though Wars and fightings arise from the passions of men, they are not therefore always inevitable. The same apostle who asks "whence come they" answers his own question and prescribes the remedy. He exhorts the twelve tribes then scattered abroad to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts.

Our numerous pulpits are doing every thing *they* can do to circulate this grand lesson of the duty of man. And in accordance with them, for light has sprung up, there have lately risen amongst us, Societies of laity as well as clergy, of different names and tenets, but all in unison for the common objects of humanity. Among them I would observe the Association of Instructors of Youth in this metropolis and its vicinity. I can hardly conceive of an institution that may be turned to better advantage. Preceptors, by comparing each others reflections, may carry to their respective schools and academies new improvements for the *hearts* as well as the understandings of the rising generation. It is to be regretted that any circumstance introductory to a liberal educa-

tion should be unfavourable to the growth of a Christian temper. Some Heathen books from which the dead languages are taught, though they are fountains of much wisdom, yet having been written before the Gospel of Peace, are tinged with the bitterness of revenge. Their ideas of Honour and Resentment are so strongly associated that after experience may never be able to separate them. The romantic bravery of ancient warriors, sung in concert to the harp of Achilles, has a fascinating charm too powerful for the moral sense, before it is matured and sanctified by judgement. Many a mad adventurer for military applause, may have imputed to his first impressions and early emotions the pernicious influence of his future character on the peace of his fellowmen. I may be thought to advert to circumstances of little account in the formation of such a gigantic mischief as that of War. But rills and streams are tributary to the greatest river that makes its way to the ocean.

Some of the books alluded to are not only commentaries on the art of killing, but are calculated to imbue young minds with a disrelish for ordinary pursuits. Martial Pride looks down upon Industry as from an eminence. One of the Tarquins disgusted his soldiers because he had employed them, when not fighting, in making canals and other improvements for the common good. They complained that "he had dishonoured the conquerors of neighbouring nations in treating them like mechanics." Such notions have been too common with armies ever since; though I acknowledge some very honourable exceptions. When our own armies were disbanded, many who had escaped with their lives, though not all of them without scars or mutilations, returned with a good grace to agriculture or the mechanic arts or other peaceful professions. And on that very account no

citizens have been more highly respected. But this does not impeach the general observation that the sentiments of soldiers for life are too often incompatible with those of the yeomanry. And what are the morals of a camp? And when it is broken up, what examples can be expected from multitudes who leave it? Consult the penitentiaries or prisons of any country that has tasted of War. Ask some philanthropist who from compassionate curiosity is accustomed to visit them—Ask some Howard, if another Howard can ever be found, to lead you to the grated windows or subterraneous cells; and if there be any remnant of truth in such confines of wickedness, there satisfy your enquiries what portions of the miserable tenants are indebted for their dreadful condition to vices which sprang from Idleness the offspring of War.

We would avoid *political questions*, as unseasonable on the birth-day of the Prince of Peace. We would abstain from any remarks on the causes or consequences of the war from which we have lately emerged. But the valedictory message of our last President when descending from the chair of state, demands our grateful acknowledgements. Its pacific sentiments are similar to those which, ten years ago, gave to our young nation a title on the other side of the Atlantic, high above the sword's renown.

In a biographical sketch of our then Ambassador, now President Monroe, its writer observes "Luckily for America, all her great men have cultivated peace: and in this particular whigs and tories, federalists and republicans have at least endeavoured to unite." That was a noble picture of our country, though a flattering likeness. Her countenance was soon changed and the resemblance was lost. But thanks be to the negotiators of Ghent, the smile has returned to her brow, and let us all rejoice on this anniversary of her restoration.

If there be a nation under the sun whose interest is peace it is ours. Embracing a variety of climates, with an increasing population, she may live at home and flourish, fearless of the rest of the world. Not that we are advocates for a Chinese policy. Glory to Commerce that links the nations in brotherhood ! But such is our country's youthful strength, that very strange and untoward accidents must be blown together to make a war excusable for her safety, honour, or prosperity. Our growth is without example. Some of the earliest planters of a Southern Colony lived to see her one of those thirteen Independent States which were led by Washington up the ascendant, whilst all Europe admired the brightness of their rising.

But let not our characteristic be vanity. Let us not be inflated with self conceit, or unreasonably proud of blessings which are not of our own creation. As with individual man, so it is with nations. Youth and manhood and old age have their respective advantages ; and we cannot expect to monopolize them at any one period of our political existence. Moreover, it remains to be proved by the infallible test of Time, whether we shall be wiser than the rest of mankind. It is a happy reflection that hitherto we have been equal to emergencies. But that is no reason for our inviting new competitions. As our natural condition, rightly improved, places us above fear, there is less reason in point of magnanimity, for our neglecting to make proper allowance for the frailties of others, or to pay a decent regard to the rights and feelings of nations who have gone the road of empire before us. It is for us to learn wisdom from their mistakes. The ancient and solemn rule of doing to others as we would have them do to us, when resolutely and constantly observed, would be a much stronger guarantee

of our future peace and liberty than a standing army of a hundred thousand men.

From a glance over the estimates of military establishments of some great nations, one would be almost ready to infer, that were their territories set up for sale, they would hardly defray the expenditures of the last century. But as it is not our business to reform the old world, let us do all in our power to correct the new. Let the work of amendment begin at home, without waiting for the repentance of sinners in another hemisphere.

Without intending any invidious comparisons between our own and other nations, it may be observed that they rose by slow degrees from a savage state, and some of its customs grew up with them. The founders of our nation were already civilized. And as they had no neighbours to contend with, except the Indian tribes, war was not to be a part of their system—it was not to be a profession. Let children improve upon their fathers' designs. We have tried one grand experiment ; and let us complete it by another. We have raised a republican government upon the principles of our ancestors : and let us at least endeavour to ingraft upon it perpetual peace, notwithstanding the incredulity of those who think that nothing which is old can be mended, and that nothing which is new can ever succeed.

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS
PEACE SOCIETY.

ON this Second Anniversary of the Massachusetts Peace Society its officers have the pleasure of announcing to their brethren, that the God of peace has smiled on the efforts for diffusing the pacific principles of his beloved Son,—and has given great encouragement for more powerful and persevering exertions.

It is however proper to observe, that in representing the success of the Society as great, respect is had to the means employed. In any other view great effects are not to be expected from such limited means as have hitherto been at the command of the Executive Committee. The funds of the Society have principally consisted of the annual subscriptions of one dollar to each member. From this statement it must be evident that the pecuniary means have not comported with the magnitude of the object—
PEACE ON EARTH.

At the Annual Meeting of the last year there remained on hand, of the Sermon on War 590 copies—of the first Circular Letter 230. These, excepting a few copies, have been gratuitously distributed; and 1500 copies of a second Circular Letter have been printed for the Committee of Inquiry, and distributed by them. In addition to these the Executive Committee have distributed 355 copies of the Solemn Review, and 2696 of the several Numbers of the Friend of Peace. This statement includes what the members of the society have received according to the Constitution.

The gratuitous distributions have not been confined to this State nor to the United States; they have been extended to Canada, Nova Scotia and New-Brunswick, on this continent; to France and Russia, on the continent of

Europe; to Asia, by the Congregational and Baptist Missionaries; to various parts of the island of Great-Britain, and to St. Domingo. So far as information has been obtained the Tracts have been gratefully received, and have generally procured friends to the objects of the society. It has been particularly the aim of the Executive Committee to excite the attention of men of intelligence and respectability, whose opinions and exertions would have influence on others. In this attempt they have been successful.

In the course of the last year the society has been increased by the addition of 131 members. The whole number, so far as reports have been made, is 304*—of which 80 are ministers of religion; and the greater part of the new members are persons of respectable standing and influence.

But in estimating the prospects of success we are not limited to what has been done by this society; we may justly take into view the exertions of others in the same cause.

In our own country two societies have been formed in the course of the year—the Peace Society of Maine, and the Cayuga Peace Society. Several others have been proposed if not actually established.

The Society in Ohio has been divided into four organized branches; and the last accounts stated a probability that another branch would soon be formed, including a part of Indiana. The Ohio Society has published in the course of the year 3000 copies of several Numbers of the *Friend of Peace*, the most of which had been disposed of in October. The society consists of more than 100 members, among whom are some respectable clergymen and statesmen.

* More than 20 names have since been reported.

Several of the pamphlets which have been circulated by the Massachusetts Peace Society, have gone through five or six editions in different parts of this country ;—all of them have been reprinted, excepting the last Circular Letter and the Tenth Number of the Friend of Peace. To the New-England Tract Society, and to several Editors of Newspapers and Periodical Works, this society is under obligations for friendly and gratuitous aid in the good cause.

The Divine influence in favour of peace has not been confined to the United States. We have friends and coadjutors in the neighbouring British Provinces, and in different parts of Europe. In London a Society has been formed for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace, between which and this society a correspondence has commenced. The letter from the London Society, of June 18th, informs that they had then printed 32,000 Tracts, besides 20,000 copies of an Address to the public ; and that they were preparing to translate some of their Tracts into foreign languages, and to introduce the subject among the neighbouring nations. From the character of several of their Committee, whose names are known in this country, we may anticipate persevering exertions and favourable results.

In the enumeration of auspicious occurrences, the letters from His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, and His Excellency Prince Galitzin are worthy of particular notice,—as containing a pledge that their “power and influence shall be employed in striving to secure to the nations the blessings of that peace which they now enjoy.” Nor should their condescension and goodness be forgotten in sending their letters in our own language. We can hardly conceive how their letters could have more clearly expressed their approbation of the object of the

society, or have been better adapted to encourage our hearts.

On receiving these letters, believing it would be agreeable to Prince Galitzin, the Trustees elected him an Honorary Member of the Massachusetts Peace Society—which measure they hope will be approved by this meeting.

Many agreeable letters have been received in the course of the year; from which, as well as from verbal intelligence, it appears that prior to the establishment of Peace Societies, a far greater number of Christians than was generally supposed, had been shocked by the contrast between the spirit and practice of war, and the precepts and example of the Messiah. It has also appeared that the minds of other reflecting men have been remarkably open to receive light on the subject of war, and that but little attention has been necessary to convince them, that war is not a fruit of that wisdom which is from above. Some who have doubted the practicability of abolishing war, have professed a belief that the exertions of Peace Societies will do much good, that they will cause statesmen more seriously to reflect on the subject and thus prevent so frequent a recurrence of the calamity as would otherwise take place. This, it will be perceived, is admitting enough to justify the greatest exertions.

But if it be correct to infer from what has been done with very limited expense and exertion, what might be done by more ample means and efforts, there will be no room to doubt that a *hundredth part* of the annual expenditures of Christian nations in preparing for war, if judiciously employed, would be sufficient, in twenty years, to abolish the custom from every country on which the gospel shines.

It does not require a learned education, nor much reflection, to convince men of common sense, that War is the Enemy and Peace the Friend of mankind. What if some men have been enriched by war; is it not obvious that they must have fattened on the spoils and blood of their brethren of another country, or on the toil and oppression of their fellow citizens? What if others complain that they have been impoverished and ruined by peace; is it not clear that the foundation of their bankruptcy was laid in the preceding war, or in their own improvident thirst for gain?—But to one who is a gainer by war, thousands are sufferers; and to one who suffers by peace, thousands are gainers. Besides, the existence of such a custom as war for the settlement of disputes, subjects every thing to hazard, and renders insecure the most prosperous and flourishing conditions of communities and individuals. This year they may be surrounded with every earthly comfort; the next they may be reduced to beggary or butchered by an army of ferocious and licensed robbers, urged on by a Christian government!

Not only is war the greatest scourge and curse of nations—the means of despotism, oppression, poverty and woe, but it ever involves the most flagrant injustice, and crimes of the deepest die. The fame of the conqueror, which resounds through the world, results from multiplying ten thousand fold the sin of Cain and the most atrocious crimes of unlicensed robbers and pirates. All that one nation gains by war is so much lost to another, or to suffering individuals; and nineteen out of twenty of the conquering nation are real sufferers by what is called a successful war.

To this catalogue of evils we may add, that war is the grand reservatory and hotbed of vice and crime—from which every country is filled with felons, who live by

depredation, till they find their way to the prison or the gallows.

To effect the abolition of such a custom, what exertions can be too great ! Only to save such a town as Boston from the fate of Moscow, or from the usual calamities of a city taken by assault, would justify the expense of a hundred millions of dollars, and ten years of benevolent exertion throughout the United States. If this be doubted, let fancy for a moment apply to this town the sacking of a city taken by storm ;--a hundred thousand ferocious troops—let loose from all restraint, inflamed by malignity, avarice and lust—plundering or burning your property according to their pleasure—filling your streets and houses with massacre and blood, violation and death ! Say not that such a scene in Boston is impossible. For to such horrors every town and city on earth is now liable, in consequence of the popularity which has been given to war as a just and honourable mode of deciding the controversies of Rulers. If no means are in operation to prevent it, better adapted to the purpose than preparations, for war, it may safely be said, that Boston is more likely to be sacked within ten years to come, than Moscow was ten years ago. To save *this town*, and all the towns and cities of the world from such horrible scenes is the object of Peace Societies. Indeed it embraces the virtue and happiness of the whole human family. If then there be any institution in which all mankind are interested, and which claims the favour and patronage of all, such are societies for the abolition of war and the promotion of peace.

Were there only a probability of such partial success as the doubting friends of the society admit, the object would justify the fervent prayers and vigorous exertions of every christian in every country. But there is some-

thing more than a probability of partial success ; there is a moral certainty of complete success—provided, that exertions be made corresponding with the importance of the object. And every cent which is given in this cause, may be the means of saving a hundred dollars in war taxes ;—and what is still more important, every cent may save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins. For the cause is the Lord's, and he will give effect to benevolent exertions.

In this age the eye of benevolence has discovered that *preventing evil* is entitled to the front rank among the various modes of *doing good* ; and that it is much better to prevent pauperism, beggary and crime, by seasonably providing the means of virtuous education and employment, than to support paupers, beggars and criminals in a state of idleness and vice. May we not then reasonably presume that it will soon be discovered, that it is much better and cheaper, as well as more christian, to prevent war by pacific means, than to support such a barbarous, expensive and all-devouring custom ? And that “the most noble of all ambitions is that of promoting peace on earth and good will to man.”

The dire calamities which have recently been felt on both continents—the progressive illuminations of the word of life, and the conciliating tendency of a thousand benevolent institutions, have all conspired to prepare the minds of Christians to listen to the principles of peace, to desire their dissemination, and to co-operate in one form or another to emancipate the world from the guilt, the tyranny and the desolations of war.

In conclusion, it may be proper to indulge a thought on the auspicious coincidence of Anniversaries. This is not only the Anniversary of the Massachusetts Peace Society, but also of the Annunciation of the Pacific Alliance in

Europe, and of the birth of the Prince of Peace ; who has taught us to love our enemies—to bless and curse not. In two of the neighbouring states, this day has been set apart for public thanksgiving and praise. May we not then rejoice in the belief that much will have been done in various parts of the world to aid the cause for which we are assembled. May we not also indulge the pleasing hope that CHRISTMAS will henceforth be generally appropriated to the work of promoting the design of the Saviour's mission,—that the anthem of angels will be better understood,—that on each successive return of this season the temples of the Lord in every land will be crowded with worshippers, and resound with the song—GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST—ON EARTH PEACE—GOOD WILL TOWARDS MEN.

FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY, OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PEACE SOCIETY, DEC. 25, 1817.

AFTER stating the objects of their inquiry according to their Circular Letter—the difficulties they had to encounter, and the importance of more aid, the Committee proceed as follows :—

WITH these disadvantages, it is hoped that a few general remarks and estimates on the most important subjects of enquiry, will be at present accepted, in the place of such details as were originally intended.

The extent of the military establishments of civilized nations in war and peace, is the first subject to which the attention of your Committee has been called ;—on this point but little authentic information, it is believed, exists in this country.

By returns to the British Parliament it appears that on the 1st January, 1817, the total of the Regular Army of that nation, was 178,406 men ; the Standing Militia 76,359,

making together 254,665, permanently employed as soldiers. The volunteers and sea fencibles were in 1804—435,000, and supposing them not reduced in 1807, the whole of the British defensive force would amount at that time to 690,000 men, exclusive of the naval equipment, which in 1813 was 143,000. It is presumed the standing force could not have been diminished at later periods of the war, and what will be the permanent establishment during peace, it is impossible at present to state.

Of the other European powers it is more difficult to speak with certainty; the numbers furnished to the war by the belligerents in Europe in 1813 have been roughly estimated as follows:—

Russia,	320,000
France and its dependencies,	500,000
Austria,	400,000
Prussia,	100,000
Poland,	50,000
Sweden,	30,000
Britain, as computed,	250,000
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Total,	1,650,000

exclusive of those unenumerated, and those in domestic and naval service; so that it is probable not less than *two millions and five hundred thousands* of men were under arms in Europe in that year:—this would be one fiftieth of its whole population. If we suppose that the same proportion of military force exists in every other part of the world, and admit the whole population of the earth (as it has been calculated) at 700,000,000, we obtain a result of fourteen millions of men, employed at the same moment, in a profession chiefly adapted to prepare them for the destruction of others.—Your Committee are aware that this is a vague calculation, but many circumstances induce them to believe it does not exceed the truth. The Chinese army alone was stated by its gov-

ernment to Lord McCartney at 1,000,000 of infantry, and 800,000 cavalry in time of peace. This might have been a designed exaggeration, but the whole is estimated by a French writer (M. De Guignes) at 842,000.

With regard to the expense of War and military establishments, your Committee conceive it may not be difficult to ascertain the amount of national expenditures for military establishments only; but it is apprehended that much additional incidental expense is incurred by nations, which does not come within the views of their government, or form a part of national reports; and hence it is impossible to estimate the whole amount of national losses or expenditures by war;—and the European nations have been so constantly engaged in war, until within the last two years, and have yet found it expedient to maintain such extensive military forces, that no calculation can now be made of the comparative expenses of Peace and War, which the present age would produce.— If it should please Divine Providence, to preserve the present state of Peace for any length of time, it will be more practicable at a future day, to make this computation with effect.

By statements to the British Parliament, it appears that in four years from 1806 to 1809 inclusive, the average

Annual expense of the Military department was	£.16,419,133
Of the Navy at the same time	18,223,786
The Ordnance department	3,743,716

Making the sum of	£.38,386,635
To which add the sum applied to subsidize foreign powers in prosecuting the war	1,500,000

And there appears an aggregate sum of	£.39,886,635
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or upwards of \$177,000,000, paid by that government in each of those years, for the maintenance of the war and of its military establishments. It is believed that the ex-

expense was not less in any succeeding year, while war existed; but in the present year it appears that the whole supplies were as follows:—

For the Army	2,7,050,000
Navy	6,397,000
Ordnance	1,246,000
Commissariat and Barracks	880,000

Making an aggregate of 2,15,573,000

or \$69,000,000. The difference of expense between the 2 years therefore, \$108,000,000, is the annual saving by Peace to that nation, in the expense of the military establishments in its pay.

It is however by the increase of national debts, that the effects of war on national revenues are most strikingly displayed, although this cannot shew its whole expense, which is partly defrayed by war taxes. It will be seen by an accurate statement already presented to you, in the ninth number of the Friend of Peace, that the debt of the British Government was augmented from 2,600,000 sterling in 1689, to 2,943,000,000 in 1816. It is well known that it is only *war* that increases national debts, which are always diminished in peace; now it has been estimated, that the portion of war expense defrayed by war taxes, is at least half as great as that which occasions increase of debt; and hence it may be concluded that the expense of wars to the British Government, during the period spoken of, exceeded 2,1,400,000,000 or upwards of *six thousand millions of dollars*, in 127 years.

By the statement alluded to, it also appears that the debt of Austria was raised from nothing in 1783, to 2,000,000,000 florins in 1816, or \$800,000,000 in 23 years only.

By the recent Treasury Report of our own Government it appears, that the whole funded debt of the United

States is upwards of \$115,000,000, and that there has been issued at various times \$36,000,000 of Treasury Notes, making an aggregate of \$151,000,000; from which if we deduct \$37,000,000 of debt before the war, we shall find \$114,000,000 increase of debt, solely on account of the war: and taking into view the share of expense defrayed by increased revenue, it is probable that not much less than \$150,000,000 has been expended by the United States in prosecuting a war of 5 years only.

Taking another and more general view of this subject, and assuming as a basis the annual saving, already stated of the British government by Peace, say \$100,000,000— if we suppose the war expenses of every government in Europe, to be as great in proportion to their population; and assume the population of the British Isles and dependencies at 15,000,000, and that of the nations of Europe and the United States 160,000,000; and if we further suppose that one half of these nations on an average, have been engaged in war at the same time, which is believed to fall short of the truth, it will result that \$500,000,000 have been annually expended by these governments on war; that is, *eight thousand millions of dollars* since the commencement of the present century. Your Committee entertain no doubt, that this is within the truth, and they cannot refrain from asking the solemn question: If this sum, thus squandered on employments, which have tended only to destroy, degrade and demoralize mankind, had been judiciously applied by those nations, to the encouragement of the Arts and Sciences, the diffusion of comforts and improvements, and particularly to the extension of the knowledge and influence of the Gospel of Christ; what would have been the state of society at the present time, compared with what it actually is?

Your Committee now proceed to a still more melancholy subject, the destruction of human life by War. They have collected many particulars of the losses in various battles of the present century, but they are found to grow in such a manner under their hands, to become such uninteresting repetition of loss after loss in every action and campaign, and are yet of necessity so inadequate to the production of general results, that your Committee forbear to fatigue your attention with their details, and think they cannot do better than to transcribe a general statement, drawn from a French writer, of the losses by war in Europe in the present century, which has already been presented to the public.

In this statement the war of France and England from 1802 to 1814 is said to have destroyed	200,000
The Invasion of Egypt,	60,000
The winter campaign of 1805 and 1806	150,000
The campaign of Calabria from 1805 to 1807	500,000
The war of the North from 1806 to 1807	300,000
The war of Spain from 1807 to 1813 (French and Allies, English, Spaniards and Portuguese,)	2,100,000
The war of Germany and Poland in 1809	300,000
The Campaign of 1812, French and Allies, Russians, and Poles	1,000,000
The campaign of 1813 in Germany and France	450,000
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Making an aggregate of	5,060,000

of the human race destroyed by a *part* of the wars of the civilized part of the world, in the last 17 years. If it is recollected that this statement refers not merely to those slain in battle, but to all the deaths which have resulted from the military operations of the armies engaged, it will not be considered as greatly exaggerated.

Were we to take the aggregate number as a datum, and assign to the nations who carried on these wars a probable population of 150,000,000, and to the world as before 700,000,000, and suppose the other nations of the

world to have been at the same period engaged in wars equally destructive, in proportion to their population, the result would be, more than 23 millions of our fellow beings destroyed by the war in the space of the last 17 years.

Pursuing this track of computation, some idea may be formed of the magnitude of the destruction caused by this devouring frenzy, since the beginning of the world. It appears from history that wars have ever afflicted the earth from the earliest ages. The proportionate numbers of each nation engaged in them, and the proportion of the slain in battle of those engaged, were greater in ancient than in modern times, and may therefore safely be assumed at the same. If we then suppose the population of the earth to have increased in arithmetical progression since its creation, or in 5800 years, if we then take the loss of 23,000,000 as an average of the loss of 20 years instead of 17 of war and peace at the present population, and from these data make a calculation, we obtain as a result the enormous amount of 3,346 millions of human beings, sacrificed on the earth to the idol of war.

Your Committee do not offer these as accurate or even approximate calculations, the materials for which are not accessible to them; but they perceive no other reason for doubting that a destruction so great as this has occurred, but the startling view of its magnitude. They present them with a view of exciting serious attention to the subject and with a belief that when means are found of making more satisfactory computations, the immensity of the sacrifices which have been offered at the shrine of the Demon of war, will unite many hands and voices in efforts to abolish or at least diminish this tremendous evil.

When we depart from the direct losses and expenses of war to nations, and approach its incidental effects on individuals and society, we enter a field of almost inter-

minable extent. On this subject your Committee will not pretend to offer any distinct estimates; if at all practicable, they are aware that any probable statement, must be the result of long and laborious research. But on taking a rapid glance at the variety of evils inflicted by war, the capture and destruction of private property, and the ruin of innumerable families and individuals; the ravages and cruelties of armies, the diseases, famine and other distresses, which these ravages have occasioned; the violation of public and private liberty, and the substitution of every species of oppression; its unfavourable influence on the Arts and Sciences, the philanthropic institutions and improvements of society, and above all its inconsistency with Christianity, and its demoralizing effect on the minds and habits of men, it will readily be seen that what are called the national losses and expenses it occasions, are but a minor part of its evils, and the confused imagination in vain attempts to take a comprehensive view of the mass of misery and crime which this single custom occasions to mankind. A detail of the afflicting scenes which your Committee have met with, in the short course of their researches, would far exceed the limits of a report; they cannot have escaped your attention; the battles, sieges, marches or retreats of armies, are but varied scenes of a vast sanguinary tragedy, from which Christian philanthropy turns with horror.

Your Committee are sensible that the general calculations and representations now offered, are but very imperfect substitutes for the specific facts they may have been expected to produce, but they trust they will suffice to afford matter for deep and solemn reflection, and attract more serious attention to the magnitude of the depravity and misery which it is their object to display. They gladly turn from these melancholy subjects, the in-

investigation of which has been assigned to them, to the indulgence of better hopes ; they are led by the encouraging indication of extensive change in the opinions of the world on the subject of war, to the anticipation of that brighter era promised in the Scriptures of truth, when "nation shall not rise against nation, neither shall learn war any more." That this benignant design of Providence is to be effected by voluntary human agency, your Committee see no reason to doubt. They do not feel it within their province to obtrude on you, the methods by which this event is most likely to be accelerated, which the wisdom of the Society can better devise, and of which the harmony and benevolence by which it is actuated, affords ample promise. They can only devoutly pray, that wherever the humble but divinely directed efforts of man are employed, to sow and water the seeds of pacific sentiments, the infinite mercy and power of God will bestow the increase.

By order of the Committee of Inquiry,

JOSHUA P. BLANCHARD.

VOTES OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PEACE SOCIETY, AT A MEETING OF THE BOARD, JAN. 8, 1818.

Voted, I. That all the funds resulting from the annual subscription shall be at the disposal of the Executive Committee to promote the objects of the Society, and also such donations or life subscriptions, as the donors shall wish to have expended in the course of the year.

II. That the Executive Committee shall have power to elect additional members to their own body, or appoint agents in different places, as shall appear to the Committee most conducive to the benefit of the Society.

III. That each member of the Board, and of the Executive Committee and such agents, as the committee shall appoint, be authorized to receive the annual payments of members, to receipt therefor, and to pay them into the hands of the treasurer: And it is recommended, that each officer of the society be furnished with copies of the Constitution for obtaining new subscribers, and with a convenient book for keeping an account of all monies received in behalf of the Society, and that each make a quarterly report to the Treasurer of the members and of the money obtained.

IV. That the Executive Committee be authorized to propose to the members of the Society who live remote from Boston, a plan for forming themselves into Branch Societies, whenever in the opinion of the Committee this measure will be a convenience to members and promotive of the general welfare of the Society.

V. That Messrs. J. P. Blanchard, Thomas Wallcut and Lewis Tappan be requested to continue their labours as a Committee of Inquiry, with power as heretofore to add to the number of the Committee such other persons, as shall be able and willing to aid them.

PROPOSED PLAN OF FORMING BRANCH SOCIETIES.

THE Executive Committee of the Massachusetts Peace Society have been authorized to propose a plan for forming Branch Societies, whenever in their opinion this will be a convenience to members and promotive of the general object. They therefore propose the forming of Branch Societies on the following principles —

I. That a Branch Society be formed in every town or vicinity, in which as many as ten members can unite for the purpose, and be better accommodated by the measure.

II. That the members of each Branch elect a President who shall be ex officio a member of the Executive Com-

mittee of the Massachusetts Peace Society. And also such other officers as they shall deem expedient.

III. That, when organized, each Branch be allowed annually, in peace publications, at the wholesale price, the full amount of the money which it shall pay into the Treasury of the Massachusetts Peace Society, and that the officers of such Society be the agents for distributing the Tracts according to the Constitution ; that is, refunding one half the annual subscription to each member and disposing of the remaining Tracts to the best advantage to promote the cause of peace.

IV. That the President of each Branch Society be expected to make regular reports of the number of members in his Society, and of the quantity of Tracts necessary to meet their demands according to the preceding Article.

V. That all the members of Branch Societies be also regarded as members of the Massachusetts Peace Society, engaged for the same object, and entitled to equal privileges with other members.

In proposing this plan the Committee have had in view several objects ; the more rapid enlargement of the Society ; the promotion of its great design ; the convenience of all its members, and of such as may wish to become members, in respect to paying their annual subscriptions and receiving their Tracts ; they have also aimed to diminish the labour of the Treasurer, and to facilitate the distribution of pamphlets. If on trial any of the proposed arrangements shall be found inconvenient, they can be amended ; if further regulations shall be necessary, they can be made. The Committee will cheerfully attend to any propositions which may be adapted to render the plan more perfect ; and they entertain a hope that a considerable number of Branch Societies will soon be organized. The officers and agents of the Society and the ministers of religion who belong to the Society, are requested to employ their influence to carry into effect the plan proposed.