

SKETCHES OF THE PEACE CAUSE.

From the First Annual Report of the New York Peace Society.

ORIGIN OF PEACE SOCIETIES IN THIS COUNTRY.

"Prior to the formation of any Peace Society, various articles were published in different quarters, calling in question the lawfulness of the custom of war. The first of the kind was written by a merchant in this city, in 1809, and was entitled, 'The Mediator's Kingdom not of this World.' This tract elicited a joint reply from three literary men (one of them a clergyman), which was entitled, 'The Duty of a Christian in a Trying Situation.' This brought forth from the merchant a rejoinder; in addition to which, early in 1815, he published a treatise entitled, 'War Inconsistent with the Religion of Jesus Christ.' The celebrated tract entitled, 'Solemn Review of the Custom of War,' written by that patriarch of the peace cause, the late Dr. Worcester, was published in Boston, on Christmas day of the preceding year. The first proposition for the establishment of peace societies in England, was published in July, 1815, in a periodical entitled the Philanthropist.

"The first peace society ever formed, as far as we have any account, was in August, 1815, *in this very city*. It consisted of about twenty members, of different religious denominations. The Ohio Peace Society was formed on the second of December of the same year, by certain individuals who had read the 'Solemn Review.' The Constitution of the Massachusetts Peace Society was signed on the 26th of the same month and year, by twenty-two members. The Society for Promoting Permanent and Universal Peace was formed in London, July 14th, 1816. Thus, four peace societies,—associations of the most novel character,—sprung up, spontaneously, about the same period, in parts remote from each other, and in all probability unconscious of one another's existence. Who can reflect on this circumstance, without being forcibly struck with the singular coincidence? A parallel cannot probably be found in any other case; and if a spontaneous and simultaneous impulse of the human mind towards a particular object, in various parts of the world, is any index of the exigences of the times, and the pathway of Providence, the friends of the peace cause, above most others, have great reason for encouragement and perseverance in their course.

"In the progress of the cause, other societies have from time to time been formed. In France, the prospectus of the Society of Christian Morals, one of whose objects is, to promote the cause of peace, was published on the 15th of August, 1821. This Society was established by the influence of S. V. S. Wilder, Esq. The Peace Society of Pennsylvania was organized in December, 1822. And, passing over the dates of the formation of others, the American Peace Society itself was regularly organized in this city, on the 8th of May, 1838; since which period, its anniversaries have been constantly celebrated here. At the last anniversary, it was voted to

remove the head quarters of that Society to Boston, where its anniversaries are in future to be observed.”

EFFORTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

“While the cause is thus progressing in this country, its friends are not inactive in other lands. It appears by the Report of the London Peace Society for 1836, on the occasion of its twenty-first anniversary, at which J. Pease, Esq., M. P., presided, that peace petitions, numerous and respectably signed, have been presented to both Houses of the British Parliament. In these petitions, reference is made to the recent mediation of Great Britain between France and the United States; and the petitioners, in view of this successful experiment, and of the evils of war, use the following language:

“Your petitioners, therefore, most respectfully entreat, that in all national differences, whether they may more immediately concern our own, or threaten the welfare of other countries, your Honorable House will give its powerful sanction to a similar interposition, so much in unison with the sentiments of right reason and humanity, and so obviously in accordance with the great and benign principles of the Founder of the Christian dispensation.”

“In Geneva, the Peace Society there has awarded a silver medal prize to Mr. Sartorius, Professor of the University of Zurich, for an essay on the best means of procuring a general and permanent peace. The competing essays were numerous, and in various European languages. Count De Sellon, a Member of the Sovereign Council of Geneva, who offered the prize, and who has addressed several of the courts of Europe on the subject, and has excited no small degree of interest in relation to the peace cause on the Continent, is still zealously engaged in its promotion.

“In France, the Society of Christian Morals makes the promotion of the peace cause one of its objects. This Society is patronized by some of the most eminent men in the kingdom. The influence which it exerts in favor of the cause, is by no means inconsiderable.

“In India, the subject of peace has excited some attention; and the Massachusetts Peace Society, and the American Peace Society, have received some handsome donations in money from that quarter!

“In Holland, some movement has been made towards the formation of a Peace Society: and some interest has been excited relative to the subject in Ireland, South America, and Nova Scotia. Indeed, there cannot be a doubt, that the whole civilized world has been sensibly affected, and the war-spirit greatly restrained, by means of the peace movement. ‘It is astonishing,’ says Mr. Hargreaves, the Foreign Corresponding Secretary of the London Peace Society, in a letter to Mr. Ladd, ‘what a change has been effected during the last ten years. This change has been produced almost imperceptibly. The principle of peace has operated like the leaven hid in the meal. Persons seem to have forgotten in what light they once viewed the subject of war and peace. War, even apart from the religious principle, is now generally deprecated as an

evil, whether considered physically or politically, and an evil to be avoided by all possible means. Those who still advocate its lawfulness in extreme cases, are ready to acknowledge its inexpediency and undesirableness, and to lament its direful consequences, in the sacrifice of money, morals, and men.

Change of public feeling among ourselves. "As to the general state of the peace cause in this country at the present time, it is manifest that a very great change in relation to the custom of war has been effected in the public mind, since the establishment of peace societies. Even in Congress, it was recently remarked by a very distinguished member (Hon. John C. Calhoun), that the age was too enlightened for two such nations as the United States and Great Britain to go to war. How different this, from the language from that quarter not many years ago! The public press is likewise, to no small extent, open to the discussion of the peace subject. More than a thousand clergymen are pledged to preach annually upon it. It is the theme of discussion in colleges, academies and lyceums. In some cases, prizes are stately awarded, for the best essays and poems on the subject of peace, and of arbitration as a substitute for war. Numerous ecclesiastical bodies of various denominations have passed resolutions in favor of the cause. The American Peace Society has already a large number of auxiliaries, several of which are State Societies, and eight Female Societies. Several agents are employed by it; in addition to which, Mr. Ladd, its president, performs an agency gratuitously, devoting both his time and money to the promotion of this great cause."

GLIMPSES OF WAR.

Causes of War. These, says Dr. Knox, are often such as would disgrace any animal pretending to the least degree of rationality. James tells us their real character. "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts?"

Suwarrow's Catechism. This teaches the soldier's duties!! And here is a part of them. "Push hard with the bayonet. Stab once! and off with the Turk from the bayonet! Stab the second! stab the third! A hero will stab half a dozen! If three attack you, stab the first, fire on the second, and bayonet the third!" Such is war. Is it like the Sermon on the Mount?

Waste of property by War. It is incalculable, because we can estimate only its expenses, a mere fraction of what it wastes; but these alone are enormous, even in a time of peace. The expenses of the United States in one form or another for war in 1832, were \$30,554,000, and for all other purposes only \$3,702,000. From 1816 to 1834, a period of 18 years, our national expenses were \$463,915,756, an average of \$25,773,097 a year, all of which, except about three millions and a half, were for purposes of war! Of the whole sum, more than 398,000,000, were for war, and only about 64,000,000, less