

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

PEACE SOCIETY

OF HARTFORD COUNTY,

IN THE CENTRE CHURCH, HARTFORD.

BY REV. SAMUEL W. WHELPLEY, A. M.

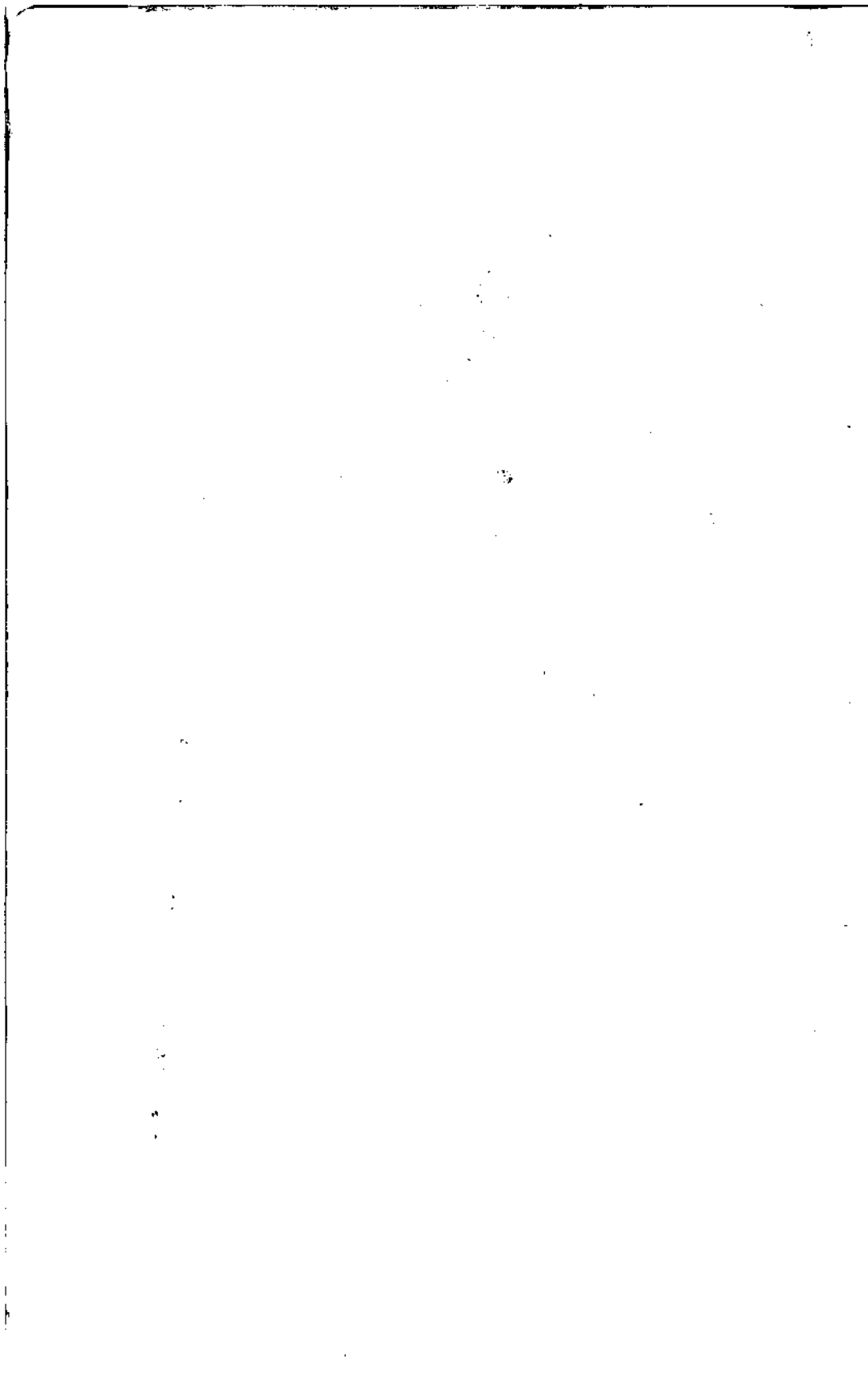
PASTOR OF THE FIRST ECCLESIASTICAL SOCIETY, EAST WINDSOR.

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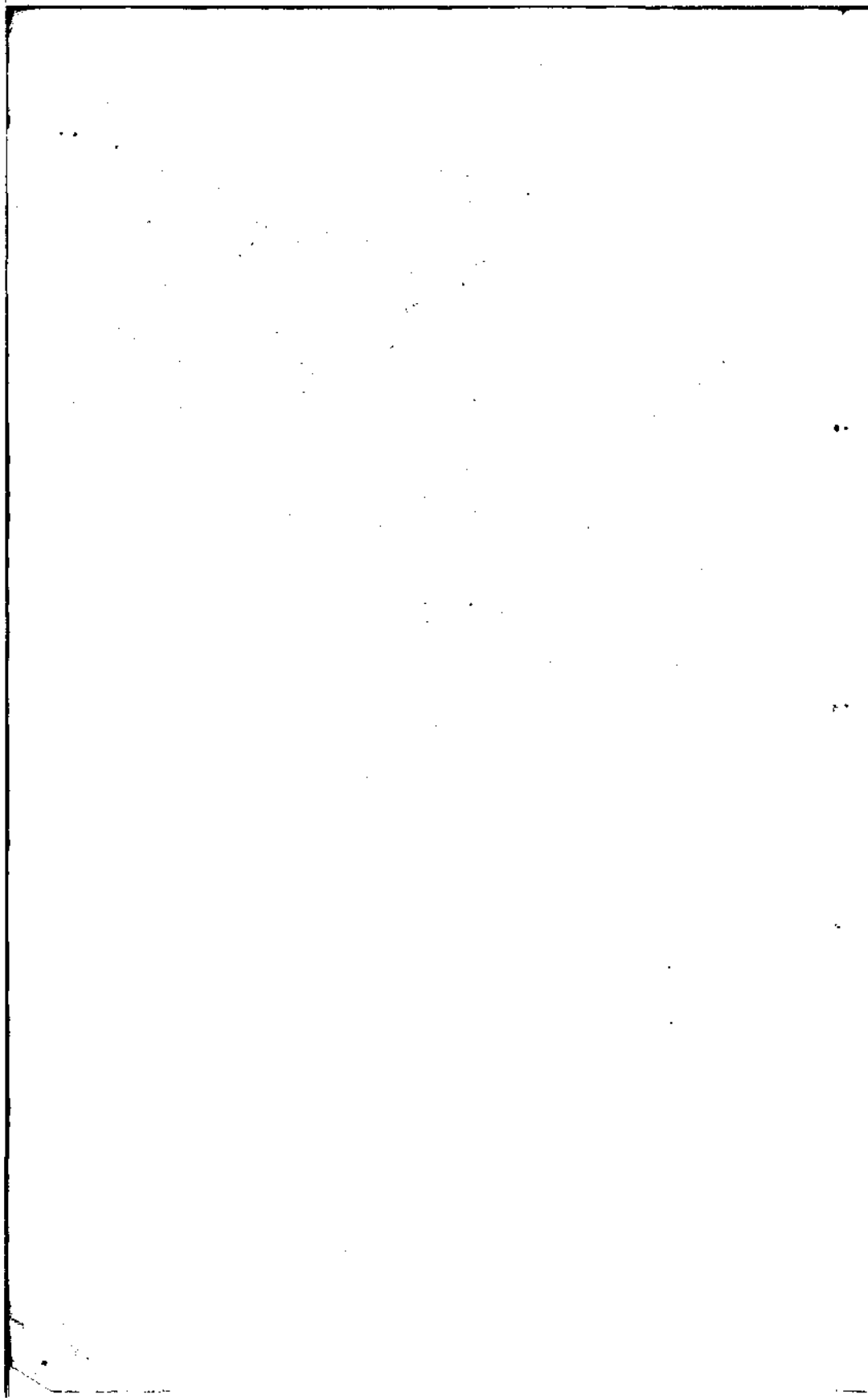


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ADDRESS, &c.

"And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."—*Gen. iv. 10.*

It is a mournful fact in the annals of the human race that the first man that ever was born murdered the second. The ancestral stock of the elder branch of the human family being stained with blood, the whole lineage seemed abandoned to reprobation. Blood guiltiness early stained the house of Jacob. The voice of prophecy gave to two of the twelve patriarchs the well known character, "Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations."—(*Gen. 49.*) The sin of Cain may justly be denominated the sin of the human family. This seems to be intimated in that famous passage recorded, *Isa. i. 18*, "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord : Though your sins be as scarlet," &c.—The stain of scarlet and crimson is the stain of blood, and I am greatly mistaken if this is not in the strongest constructive sense *the appropriate badge of our race.*

The catastrophe of the two first born of Adam's race was probably designed to show what the world *should* be. From that hour to this our world has been filled with contention and slaughter and the incessant cry of blood. The blood shed in the numerous wars which have been waged in every quarter of the globe, and in individual private contests, unite their streams with that of the Prophets, the Son of God, the Apostles and Martyrs, and carry their solemn complaint to the Throne of justice against a guilty race. On a moderate estimate it has been calculated that *fourteen thousand millions* of human beings have perished in war since the beginning of the world,—which is equivalent to the destruction of the inhabitants of eighteen worlds of the population of ours. (See

Dick's Philosophy of Religion, pp. 312 and 13.) For ages the ploughshare of destruction has been driven over Europe, and laid waste the vast and populous regions of Asia. In the wars connected with, and growing out of the French revolution, every nation of Europe was drawn into the frightful vortex, and the tide of ruin threatened to annihilate every form of monarchical government and every vestige of religion. O war, thou frightful scourge of nations—parent of nameless calamities ! Thou art surrounded with mischief, confusion, discord and destruction ; misery, pestilence and famine attend thy course ! The earth groans under thine enormous crimes. How long shall man be thy friend and cherish thy dire progeny of monsters !—O indelible disgrace ! Eternal source of regret ! Mourn, O ye heavens, in whose radiant beams man's infamy is written ! Ye elements of nature, mourn ; ransacked and pillaged to find out new means of death and torture ! Sigh, ye winds and waves, which waft him to every corner of the earth in quest of blood ! And let all the works of nature send up one united voice,—one solemn, fervent supplication, to the eternal Throne ; to that Being who formed the mind, and can change the course of human actions.

My respected hearers, I rise this evening as the advocate of Peace. As a minister of the God of peace I should be ashamed to take any other ground : as a *philanthropist*, I could take no other ; and as a *politician*, I need not. In pursuance of my general object, I shall call your attention to two points, viz. :

1st. Have we authority to take the life of man, in any case ?

2d. Is it probable that wars will cease among the nations of the earth, by reason of their progress in civilization and virtue ?

With our limited knowledge of the laws of the Divine government, the history of nations and the operation of moral causes, we cannot hope to do full justice to this momentous subject ; and we wish that many things that may be advan-

ced, in the progress of the discussion, may be viewed more in the light of suggestions than of formal arguments.

1. Then, we enquire, *have we authority to take the life of man, in any case ?* If this question is to be settled by *precedents*, either human or divine, or by the opinions of all nations, there is no room for discussion. For there are precedents under the Divine government, and precedents under human governments ; and the opinion of mankind, in every age, has been loudly and unequivocally expressed.

God, the Creator and governor of the world, has an unquestionable right to take the life which he gave ; and, in whatever instance it can be made to appear that he has given a right to any man or body of men to take life, in every such instance the right is not to be questioned. It then behooves us to enquire whether God ever did give such a right to any man or any body of men ; and, whether it was his design that this should be *universal* in its extent, and *perpetual* in its duration. By the Mosaic institutions, it appears that God did vest in the Hebrew government a right to take life for certain crimes. But it is well known that the Jewish penal code was wholly embosomed in, and inseparably connected with, the ceremonial law, which was abrogated at the death of Christ. With regard, therefore, to the Jewish penal code, it becomes merely a question of expediency whether we will adopt it or not.

Many things in the Jewish law seem to have been adapted to the character and circumstances of a particular people, and not to be of universal application. God says, by Ezekiel, " I gave them statutes which were not good, and judgments whereby they *should not live*." Reference is no doubt had to their terrible penal code, in which more than one hundred crimes were punished by death. These were judgments by which they could not live. If this memorable declaration concerning the Mosaic institution was true as it related to the Israelites, it is certainly much more so as it relates to us who live under a more benign and pacific dispensation. It is common to predicate the right of taking life upon the decla-

ration of God to Noah, (Gen. ix. 6.) "And whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Here, however, we see nothing more than *the declaration of a fact*. The declaration has obviously not the force of a command, specifying and enforcing a duty ; but rather that of a *decree*, importing the purpose of him who spoke, and the agency by which it should be effected. We have not the slightest evidence that there was any divine law given whereby murder was punished by death before the flood. But it is certain the *law of retaliation* was known as early as the days of Cain. As early as one man formed and effected the design of killing another, a *third man* formed the design of taking vengeance. True, indeed, the third man's design was with much the greatest show of natural justice. And this was doubtless one of those things which the Apostle affirms God winked at, in the times of ignorance. Seeing man's cruel and vindictive nature, he recognized in a measure and confirmed the law of retaliation to Noah, and carried it forward into the Jewish economy. And this we conclude was one of those laws which were not good, and one of those judgments whereby the people could not live ; for surely it prevented a great many thousands from living. Hence its abolition by our Saviour. (Math. v.)

The great object of our Saviour's mission on earth was to atone for sin by the sacrifice of himself, and abolish the cruel and sanguinary institutions of former dispensations. This he did, and, in the whole course of his ministry, no word escaped him, which can, by any power of sophistry, or by any legitimate law of interpretation, be tortured or construed into an approbation of the custom of taking life, or of war, in any form, on any pretence whatever. How, then, we ask, is the warrant for killing, and war in general, to be made out from divine authority ? The Law says, "Thou shalt not kill ;" and the Gospel says, "Thou shalt love thine enemy" and "Resist not evil."

Is there a sufficient warrant from *the nature and powers of*

human governments to take life? Human governments which originate in the voluntary consent of contracting parties, may be said to be founded in justice. In such governments it is commonly said that each member of the community freely surrenders a part of his natural rights, and throws it into a common stock, in order that he may be the more effectually secured in the enjoyment of the rest. But has any man a *right to kill himself*? Has any man power over his own life? What right has he then to throw it into a common stock? Can I delegate a power which I do not possess? Or does the delegated power, after it is thrown into a common stock, undergo such an amazing change as that it can justly recoil upon the heads of those from whom it sprang, and crush them to death? Certainly not. If I have no right to kill myself, I have no power to vest that deadly right in any body else. But if any government has a right to take life, it is certainly that government which is founded in the social compact. As for governments whose powers are usurped by force or fraud, I know nothing, and can see no just principle on which their taking life can be defended. No inference surely can be had from the Mosaic institutions to them. They can indeed show no title founded in reason and justice, whereby they exercise authority over men, in any respect. Their chain of title, when traced, will be found to consist in, and to originate from, arbitrary power of the rankest growth.

Whether the power of taking life be argued from human or divine authority, it must doubtless rest on the same principles, viz., that *the life of the offender has become inconsistent with the general good of community*. But a moment's reflection will be sufficient to show us that this principle is void of consistency and strength. What man can make so perfect an estimate of the world and the universe of beings, as to determine with unerring certainty what particular life or lives are inconsistent with the public good?—I answer, no man. This estimate can only be made by a Being possessing infinite

knowledge and wisdom. But we find that infinite wisdom itself has not always considered even the life of the murderer inconsistent with the general good.—We might instance the case of David in the matter of Uriah—of the sons of Jacob killing Hamor and Schechem, and of Moses killing the Egyptians.

To determine the guilt or innocence of killing a man, the most zealous advocates of the war system must allow that several things must be nicely weighed : such as the characters of the killer and killed—their particular motives of conduct at the time, and the consequences which are likely to follow from the alleged injury. From whence it is manifest the declaration of God to Noah ought not to be considered in the light of a divine, universal and invariable law, importing that murder shall be punished with death, but rather as a *maxim* founded on the very natural law of retaliation, which is fully dilated and largely exemplified in the law of Moses.

The following suggestions may throw some light on this great question :

The life of every man is forfeited by sin ; but under a dispensation of Grace, God has suspended the execution of the penalty, to give men a space for repentance, and the means of salvation. Whoever, therefore, lays violent hands on a man's life, virtually impeaches the tardiness of divine justice, and cuts off the offender from all the means of grace. Further, the Creator has not given to any person a right to take his own life, on any account ; and whoever does, is considered a self-murderer. As, therefore, I cannot convey to another a right which I do not possess, in order to take any life, my neighbour must show me a right founded on divine authority. But we have already seen God has reserved to himself that right, or at least, has not communicated it to men, but *merely as an indulgence*, in condescension to their weakness and ignorance, and that *under various restrictions as to time and place*.

Moreover, there is good reason to believe that the practice

of taking life and making war, is utterly abolished and forbidden by the Gospel, which breathes nought but peace and good will to men. Our Saviour expressly, constantly and very strongly inculcated the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, in opposition to the principle of retaliation and war. His declarations on this subject are numerous and familiar to all. This matter was so understood by the primitive Christians till near the time of Constantine. Even when their numbers were so great as to lead the Roman Emperor, on one occasion, to observe, that if the Christians should rise for their own defence, they would subdue his empire, still they were wholly passive. In the midst of their extreme sufferings, when they had nothing to hope for from tame submission but ignominy and death, and when the prospect of self-defence was flattering to every worldly view, they adhered firmly to their pacific principles, and refused to take the life of others in their own defence. This fact may teach us, that Christianity, in its utmost perfection does not admit or require the taking of life in self-defence, much less in wars of aggression.

It is a question whether, when the visible Church changed her pacific for her warlike character, and her spiritual for carnal weapons, she did not lose one essential property of Religion, and become closely assimilated to the world. Furthermore, it is a question whether the warlike character of Christian nations has not been a principal means of retarding the progress of the Gospel among heathen nations. How deep must have been the prejudice of the emperor of China, against the Christian religion, to have caused him to observe, that "Wherever the professors of this religion had obtained a footing they had whitened all the countries with human bones."

It is indeed wonderful, considering the mild and gentle spirit of the Gospel, how the Latin Church of the middle age should have acquired so warlike a character. It may, in some measure, be accounted for from the influence exercised

by the Gothic and Germanic tribes, who overturned the Western Empire. Being of a warlike character, and finding that the Jewish Scriptures accorded sufficiently with their martial spirit and maxims, they eagerly adopted the language and spirit of the Mosaic institutions, overlooking or misconceiving the spirit and design of the Gospel. Thus it was, that in the seventeenth century, and earlier, the most atrocious acts of violence and injustice were justified by Scripture; and professedly Christian Kings concealed the sword under the Mass Book, and in the name of God, spread desolation. It is recorded of Henry V. of England, that he so far perverted the word of God, as to offer peace to the defenders of Harfleur if they would open their gates, in accordance with the law laid down in Deut. chap. xx. 10, 15.—Little, indeed, is that community entitled to the dignified appellation of the *Holy Mother Church*, which has shed the blood of saints with such profusion; and concerning which a judicious historian (Dr. Geddes) observes that, "Were all the wars, massacres, assassinations and public confusions, that have arisen on account of religion, put together, they would not make a hundredth part of those that have been caused by the Papacy in the space of six hundred years."

There are other considerations that ought to have weight with us besides those drawn from the want of divine authorities, to kill and wage war, and from the anti-christian nature of war. The belief that it is right to wage war and destroy human life, has filled the world with blood and slaughter. This sentiment is the parent of every wilful act of killing since Cain slew Abel. While nations believe it is right to wage war, they will never want for reasons to waste one another; and individuals will easily discover pretexts for killing. Men are not prone to be very nice or scrupulous in their choice of reasons or motives when goaded on by interest, or influenced by passion.

The belief of all nations in this formidable doctrine has converted the earth into a vast aceldama. The portentous

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maxims of the Mahomedan faith have ever had the effect of converting the disciples of the false prophets into demons of cruelty. The soldiers of the faith are taught to believe that plunder is their inheritance and extermination their duty. Under the operation of such principles they carried war from the Danube to the Ganges, and destroyed all before them. The fierce and warlike conquerors of Europe successfully transfused their sentiments and spirit into the nations they subjugated, and from thence the war system has been transmitted to us.

The belief in the justice and equity of war and killing, has the strongest tendency to every species of cruelty and oppression. Instead of operating as a counteracting force to the passions, it gives boundless scope to them. It is said of the lions of Africa, when once they have tasted human blood, they will leave all other game to prey upon the human species. When once men have imbrued their hands in the blood of their fellow creatures, it seems as though nought but blood will satisfy their raging passions. Hence the low estimate made of the value of human life in Turkey, and the cruelty and rapacity of the eastern conquerors. Bonaparte seemed never tired of shedding blood, and was seldom, if ever, known to be touched with pity at the immense waste of life of which he was the cause. At the taking of Alexandria, though the inhabitants fled to their mosques, seeking protection from God and their prophet, men and women, old, and young, and infants at the breast, were slaughtered without mercy, and the horrid butchery continued four hours. After the battle of the pyramids, remarks an eye-witness, the whole way through the desert was tracked with the bones of men and animals, who had perished in these frightful wastes. And it was by a fire composed of the bones which the vultures had spared, that Bonaparte lay down to sleep in the desert. And yet this same man, who subsequently shook every throne in Europe, and subjugated nearly all its kingdoms, in speaking of himself, says, "I was so occupied that I

never was truly happy on the throne. Not that I have to reproach myself with doing evil while seated there. I made war, certainly ; but in almost every instance, I was either forced to it, or had some great political object in view."—*Nap. Ex. p. 99.*

I need not stop to tell you what would be the effect, were the sentiment that it is wrong to take life and make war, to obtain universally among christian nations. Human sacrifices would cease to be offered up ; no man would lift his hand against his neighbour, and " nations would learn war no more." Should this doctrine universally prevail, it would cut off the main sources of cruelty, and dry up the great fountain of misery.

Should we drop every higher consideration, and look upon this question merely as a question of *policy*, still I can see no reason for changing my ground. The severest laws against high crimes have not been found sufficient to prevent crimes. The laws of Draco, said to have been written in blood, could only be supported by perpetual streams of blood. Upon an exact survey of human governments, I think it would be found that the fewest capital crimes have arisen, where the greatest lenity is tempered with wisdom. The criminal code of Austria visits very few offences with death, and this may account for the fact stated, that there are more crimes committed in one county of England in twelve months, than in all of the Austrian states in two years. In no system of government does the inefficacy of the most terrible punishments to prevent crime, appear more strikingly, than in *that government which was devised by infinite wisdom, and carried into effect by Almighty power.* And I think it a fair implication, at least, from Scripture, that no code of criminal law, no variety, or severity of punishment, will or can be sufficient, of itself, to check the progress of crime. It must be effected by other means.

It is thought, by some, that perpetual confinement with hard labour, would operate as powerfully against the commission of crimes, as death itself. Thus, while criminals

would be no expense to the state, an opportunity would be afforded them for reflection, and repentance. Whereas, if they are executed, they are hurried from the stage of action, in all their guilt. Alas! how inveterate are the feelings of those whom nothing will satisfy, but the death of the offender! For them divine justice is too slow. No wonder "the whole creation groans." Angels might weep, and the surrounding skies put on sackcloth. And alas! human governments have so long been engaged in the work of killing, that it has become nearly impossible to convince them of their error, and effect a change in opinion and practice. Some writers on law and government seem to have believed and taught, that government could not be maintained, and the interests of society secured, without the *shedding of blood*. O, Providence, how mysterious is thy course! How long shall thy dreadful wheels roll in clouds and darkness! Shall the condition of man never be meliorated? Blessed be God, there is a way to avoid the evils with which the present system of belief is fraught. It is but to imbibe and exercise the benevolent spirit of the Gospel—to imitate the example of Christ.

II. Is it probable wars will cease among the nations, by reason of their progress in civilization and virtue?

It is generally thought that conclusions drawn from experience form the best grounds of judging concerning human affairs. In order to derive aid from experience, in the solution of this question, it will be necessary to institute two inquiries, viz. whether the nations of the earth, in the lapse of ages, have made progress in civilization and virtue,—and whether there is more or less war now than in former times. If, on the whole, the world gains in civilization and virtue, and if there is less war, and if the latter, by any certain evidence, appears to be the consequence of the former, then, indeed, however slow the increase of the one and the decrease of the other may be, the time must inevitably come, when wars must cease.

We possess but scanty means for solving these fundamental inquiries. Who can determine whether the system of war prevails more or less? Looking back through the best mediums of ancient and modern history, we cannot find the means of forming a rational conjecture on the subject. During the rise and fall of the ancient monarchies, there were, indeed, great wars. But the fall of the Roman empire opened a scene of blood and desolation never before witnessed. And what ancient wars equalled those under Mahomet and his successors?—or of the Tartars, under the dynasty of Tamerlane, or of the Ottoman Turks, or indeed of the Christian kings of Europe, in the crusades?—or nearer our own times, the papal and imperial wars,—the wars of Charles the Vth, or of Lewis the XIVth? Nor has the eighteenth century passed without wars and revolutions. The history of half a century past leaves us in doubt, whether the nations love fighting and killing less than when Alexander or Sesostris carried war from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean. The flames of war which were kindled up by the French revolution, spread all over Europe, and almost all the ancient kingdoms were subverted, and millions of lives were sacrificed, until, at length, the universal conqueror was arrested, and confined to his sea-girt sepulchre.

On the second inquiry it is but just to remark, that with all the boasted pretensions of the moderns to refinement, the general indulgence of the evil passions, and the extensive prevalence of the war spirit, shows that, in an important respect, they are very far removed from rational civilization. Is not the war spirit the spirit of the Goths and Vandals? And can savages do more than polite nations, who make havoc of their species, in defiance of common reason and common probity? And if the boasted civilization of the day, with all the present advances in science and philosophical speculation, does not lead men to execrate the barbarous custom of war, what can we claim on the score of rational civilization above the ancients?

Bad as the world is, however, there is little doubt that civilization and virtue do now spread their benign influence over a greater portion of the globe than at any former period. A considerable portion of the human race have made some progress in the knowledge of their interests and rights, and of the means of happiness. At present, the northern nations of Europe are rising in mental improvement, and gradually meliorating their condition. Though a retrospect of the history of Russia leads the mind back into the gloomy regions of barbarism, and though at the present time, the great majority of her people are not a great ways removed from an uncivilized state, and the pulse of mind is feeble throughout this vast empire, nevertheless great improvements have been made and are now making in their condition, and great moral changes are going on in the north. Within little more than a century, Russia has had three sovereigns who employed despotic power for the improvement of the character and condition of the people. These were Peter, Catharine, and Alexander. Alexander was the patron of education and religion, and he exhibited his munificence in the establishment of schools and universities. This monarch possessed the means of indulging in boundless magnificence, but he lived in great simplicity, and in his last illness, he lay on a small iron bed, without even a curtain attached to it, and attended only by his royal partner.

England, Germany, and France, with their appendages, allies, and neighbours, are more civilized and virtuous, than when Clovis mounted the Gallic throne, or when Constantine swayed the sceptre. In the times of Alexander and Cyrus, they were, in a great measure, unknown to history. Though gold has long been the idol of England, and war the occupation of her government, yet it is true that there is no country where the virtues which tend to alleviate the sufferings and improve the condition of mankind, are more cultivated, and flourish in greater luxuriance ;—none where the operations of benevolence are conducted on so large a scale. While

for a century past Europe has been wasted with war, and the English government has been a principal actor in the bloody drama, the English people have been labouring to discover and multiply the means of doing good, and to spread the lights of science and religion over the world.

Italy and Greece seem ostensibly to have fallen off—to be less civilized than in former ages. It would not be strange, if, from the prevalence of superstition and particular forms of government, and from the influence of great revolutions, the progress of science and virtue should meet with many serious checks, and be more rapid in some parts than in others. A new era, however, has dawned upon Greece, and the time cannot be far distant, when populous cities shall rise on her sunny isles, agriculture and commerce revive, and when the lights of science and religion shall be again rekindled in those spheres in which they originally shone.

There is little in the state of Asia and Africa, to denote the progress of civilization and virtue ; yet some faint streaks of light begin to shoot across the eastern world. The great scene of Revelation has been the East. There the sources of genuine inspiration were first opened, and from thence the streams of divine knowledge began to flow. There the prophets uttered their predictions, and there the Son of God illustrated and fulfilled them. There, also, the impostor Mahomet erected his standard, propagated his religion, and established his dominion over the minds of millions. The eastern countries have ever been a prey to tyrants. There, genius is chained in perpetual slumber, and enterprise is inebriated in the lap of luxury and indolence. In Arabia, the condition of mankind has greatly deteriorated ; all valuable institutions and public buildings are falling rapidly into decay, and even Islamism itself is on the wane. Persia has nothing left to attract our notice, but the magnificence of its ruins, and the proud historical recollections which cover its plains with glory. The whole empire of Turkey is sunk in ignorance, and enslaved by delusion, and notwithstanding the

plans set on foot by the last of the Osman race to prevent or retard its downfall, the catastrophe seems inevitable. In a country where education has no other object but to inculcate intolerance and foster fanaticism, where the laws of the empire, and the civil and religious institutions are, like those of the Medes and Persians, immutable, there can be little hope of the melioration of the condition of the people, or of the improvement of their character. Such a system of intolerance and corruption prevails in all the departments of this empire, that without great moral and political changes, it must be subject to endless agitations, and eventually crumble to pieces. No one could contemplate, without alarm for the safety of Turkey, the clouds which of late rose with such menacing rapidity over the towers of the imperial city.

We may indulge the pleasing reflection, that never any country, in any age, opened so promising a scene of improvement, civilization, and virtue, as the United States. We, in a sense, owe our origin to Christianity,—were nursed in her arms, and cradled by her side. Hence it has happened, that while the Eastern nations have been, for ages, stationary in the sciences and in morals, or have gone back to deeper ignorance, and while the European nations, from the nature and policy of their governments, and from the powerful operation of moral causes, have made but little progress in virtue, we have, since we commenced our national career, made great and rapid improvements in all those things which tend to purify the heart, and exalt the character and diffuse happiness. And we may challenge any to show such an amount of intelligence and virtue among the great body of any people, as there exists among us.

If, then, many parts of the world are better than they were in past ages, and, in some, very great and perceptible improvement has been made, and the rainbow of promise encompasses the whole world with its lovely and magnificent arch, it follows, that civilization and virtue are gaining ground on the whole.

Notwithstanding the unfavourable results of former experiments, and however doubtful all the conclusions are, which can be drawn from experience, we venture to say, that but two things are necessary to put a stop to wars, viz.

1. That *war should be viewed in its true light*, a tremendous, inexpressible evil, adding incalculably to the number and weight of human calamities.

2. As all nations consist of individuals, and as it can never be for the interest of a majority of the individuals of any two nations, to go to war, and butcher one another—and as mankind will, on the whole, never fail to act according to the greatest prospect of advantage, it is only necessary that the great body of every nation should view things so, and wars would cease. Ambitious men and corrupt rulers would be unmasked, and it would clearly appear to all eyes, that wars were almost uniformly instigated by those who are *enemies to the public good*: and all men would see the folly of giving power to any man, or body of men, to enable them to drive them like sheep to the slaughter, where they must fall by thousands, without any prospect of advantage to themselves or the country. The declaration of war is an indirect mode of condemning thousands to death—thousands to perpetual mourning and sorrow, and thousands to poverty, pain, and disgrace.

In order, then, for the total abolition of this horrid custom, mankind must be brought to right views and feelings on the subject. The number of those who are favourable to this cause must be increased by the addition of all the friends of humanity and religion throughout the world. Many proselytes have already been made to the pacific system. They are probably more numerous now than at any former period, setting aside the *first age*. Many are now warmly advocating the *gospel* doctrine of peace, and among them there are some great philosophers and men of note in the zodiac of literature, whose opinions have the weight of authority, and whose example cannot fail to exert a happy influence. Every real

Christian is, at heart, opposed to war, in all its forms, and wishes for universal peace. Every minister of the gospel of the God of peace, is, or ought to be, on the side of peace, and every pulpit, throughout the Christian world, should be the *organ of peace*, and speak a language on this subject, *intelligible, decisive, and strong*.

The more wise and considerate part of community are strongly opposed to war—to all war, except what is *strictly defensive*. Could you pass through every enlightened nation on earth,—could you take every person, arrived at years of discretion by the hand, and ask their opinion of war, you would be astonished at the uniformity of their answer. They would deprecate war with united voice, and execrate the fomenters and authors of it. Judging from the conduct of Great Britain, one might suppose that her people delighted in war. But it is far otherwise :—the intelligent and sober part of her people detest war as much as we do, and are drawn into it with the greatest reluctance. For many hundred years, the British government has been governed by counsels as hostile to the spirit of Christianity, as to the peace of the world. Mankind are deluded by their passions, and duped by the arts of corrupt and designing men. They are easily agitated with hope and fear, and that monarch, or government that can wield these master passions, can manage them at pleasure.

The lovers of war are far less numerous than we should suppose, from the frequency of wars, and from the facility with which great armies are raised. The vices and dregs of one army furnish materials for another. What man, who has tasted the sweets of domestic life—who has a wife whom he loves, and children in whose education and welfare he feels interested, would be willing to abandon his family, and enter the army as a common soldier? What young man would willingly renounce days of tranquillity and peace, and scenes of love and friendship, for the ruthless fate of a common soldier—the tyranny of martial discipline—the fatigue of

long marches and sleepless nights—the confusion and diseases of a camp—to say nothing of the terrors of the field of battle. The forlorn and debased wretch, whose native meanness forever excludes him from all the walks of honour,—whose vices have banished him from all virtuous company, in whom all relish for the pleasures of friendship or society is dead, he wishes for war, that he may indulge in all the depravity of his heart. The man who has shipwrecked his estate by his extravagance, and his principles by vicious habits, wishes for war, in hopes, that in the turn of affairs, he may seize something that may restore him to affluence. The wicked and politic prince wishes for war, in order that restless and fiery spirits which surround him, may find scope and employment at a distance from him :—in order that the public eye may find something else to scrutinize besides his character and conduct. He wishes for war to enrich his coffers with plunder ; to extend his dominion by conquest, and to magnify his glory by victory.

On the whole, I am inclined to think, that should the grand question, *whether wars should cease in the earth*, be discussed in the full assembly of all nations, and then be *fairly determined by vote*, there would be an overwhelming majority for peace. In that majority would doubtless be found many who have shone in war. Could that vote have been taken in the times of Washington, Jefferson, and Franklin, it is not doubtful which side they would have espoused. Says Washington, in a letter to a friend, “For the sake of humanity it is devoutly to be wished, that the manly employments of agriculture, and the humanizing benefits of commerce should suspend the wastes of war, and the rage of conquest, and that the sword may be turned into the ploughshare.” Thus Jefferson writes, “Will nations never devise a more *rational* umpire of difference than force? Are there no means of coercing injustice, more gratifying to our nature than a waste of the blood of thousands? Wonderful has been the progress of human improvement in other lines. Let us hope then that we shall at

length be sensible, that war is an *instrument entirely inefficient to the redress of wrongs,*" &c.

Men holding pacific principles, are scattered through all the countries of Christendom, and could their voice be heard on this subject, no feeble note of remonstrance would be heard, but it would be like the "sound of many waters and mighty thunderings." These have the greatest inducements to be more strenuous in their endeavours, more laborious and assiduous to disseminate their principles, more wise and politic to concentrate their strength, and combine their utmost influence in the sublime cause of giving peace to the world. As the scheme is inoffensive, having life and happiness for its object, it cannot appear contemptible to any but weak and callous minds. Their addresses could never be disgusting to the spirit of Christianity, nor offend the philosophic ear.

In the work of making proselytes to this glorious cause, science, philosophy, and religion offer their aid. Science displays her treasures,—she smiles, and beckons the ardent youth to avoid fields of slaughter. She takes him by the hand, and offers to lead him through the splendid apartments of her magnificent pavilion. Philosophy, arrayed in beauties still more attractive, invites the restless mortal to the delectable shades of contemplation; she presents him with a mental telescope, brings near nature's fairest scenes, entertains him with new and beautiful objects, and with soaring wing wafts him into fields of discovery. To the mind tormented with ambition, stung with disappointment, and driven to despair, Religion presents a sovereign balm, objects worthy of pursuit, pleasures of an exalted kind. She takes the unhappy mortal by the hand, and points him to a world where oppositions of interest, conflicting passions, and the alternations of hope and fear, joy and sorrow, are never known, but where peace and honor and glory await his coming. Religion yields firm support in adversity, because her ground is perfect rectitude, and eternal mercy. She invites us to all the pleasures of hope and faith, through the plenitude of infi-

nite goodness and love. The perfect, universal, and eternal law of love, forbids contention and tends to universal peace and happiness. Though the theories of the advocates of peace might be smiled on as visionary, yet the ear of majesty might listen to them with complacency, and every good and benevolent monarch would sigh for the return of the golden age, that his kingdom might flourish in everlasting peace.

What though it should be granted, that *public opinion is yet in favour of war*? Wonderful has been the progress of improvement within a century past, and from the salutary changes which have been effected in public opinion on many important subjects, and in a line with those improvements and changes, may we not hope that a great and radical change will take place, ere long, in public sentiment on the subject of war? May we not hope, that all thinking and virtuous men will at length discover that (to use the language of Jefferson,) "war is an instrument utterly inefficient to the redress of wrongs," and combine together to abolish it? Already have nine sanguinary customs, once popular among Christian nations, been condemned at the bar of public opinion. This shows the progress of improvement, and the triumphs of justice and humanity; and when the war system shall be as thoroughly and as universally examined, it must inevitably share the same fate.

It is asked what is there in this wonder-working age which will arrest the strong current of popular sentiment? There is a power in *education* to do it. I mean education taken in a large sense, including under it the discipline and government of the mind, and whatever tends to enlarge our views, exalt the character and purify the heart. Men must be *enlightened* before they can be *reformed*: they must *see* their errors before they will abandon them.

"What guides man in his high pursuit;
Opens, illumines, cheers his way;
Discerns the immortal from the brute?
God's image from the mould of clay?
'Tis knowledge:—knowledge to the soul
Is power, and liberty, and peace." MONTGOMERY.

The diffusion of sound knowledge on moral and political subjects—a discovery of the relations men sustain to one another and to God—a knowledge of their rights and obligations, and of their real and essential interests cannot fail to disabuse their minds of popular errors, and create in them a deep abhorrence of every species of injustice and cruelty. In this noble work of enlightening mankind, the *schoolmaster* with his Reader and Testament, and the *mother*, in the appropriate sphere of her labour, may do more to abolish the custom of war, than the judge on the bench, or the wisest political schemers of the day. The system of *Sabbath school* instruction is adapted by its nature and ubiquity to the production of the grandest effects in renovating the character of the rising generation, and sapping the foundation of every system of error. If the minds of all the children in Christendom were early imbued with the pacific sentiments of the Friends and the Moravians, it would not be long before it would be difficult, if not impossible, to collect the materials of armies, and to coerce the nations into war. When men shall be brought to look less at the pomp and circumstance, than at the unavoidable and interminable horrors of war ;—when the glory of military achievements shall cease to exalt the character and perpetuate the fame of the chieftains, then may we look for a change in the policy and conduct of nations.

“ O, that forever from the rolls of fame,

——had perish'd ev'ry conqueror's name !

Then had mankind been spared in after times,

Their greatest sufferings and their greatest crimes.

The Hero scourges not his age alone,

His curse to late posterity is known ;

He slays his thousands with his living breath,

His tens of thousands by his fame in death.

Achilles quench'd not all his wrath on Greece,

Through Homer's song, its miseries never cease :

'T was not in vain the son of Philip sigh'd,

For worlds to conquer,—o'er the western tide,

His spirit, in the Spaniard's form o'erthrew

Realms that the Macedonian never knew.

The steel of Brutus struck not Cæsar dead ;

Cæsar in other lands hath reared his head. MONTGOMERY.

For ages the great mass of mankind has been viewed only as so much physical force ; and whole nations have been reduced by ignorance and oppression, to comparative weakness ; and little has been done to prevent the immense amount of intelligence from wasting away. But at length the veil has been lifted from a world of living intelligences, and many are now exploring the opening field of contemplation, and numerous and powerful agencies are now employed for the universal diffusion of knowledge and religion. Already do the people of many nations begin to feel and see their importance in the scale of being ; and, instead of uttering their complaints in low and stifled murmurs, the thunder of popular indignation is uttered in the ear of majesty ; and the current of opinion is setting so strongly against the abuses of government, and the laws and customs of a barbarous age as to compel those in power to relax much of the sternness and severity of ancient rule, and to exercise unwonted precaution and wisdom in their public measures. The lessons of experience have not, we believe, been entirely useless to mankind ; and when knowledge shall be more universally diffused, they will be more influential still. To a considerable extent men have been taught to look upon the schemes of ambitious men, and especially upon the wars which have been waged, on various pretences, as in a majority of instances, a gross abuse and misapplication of the powers of government, and to execrate the persons who have made the principal figures in the drama.

Of late years the progress of correct public sentiment has been more rapid and visible than it had been for centuries previous ; and we anticipate the time as not far distant when those rude and shapeless masses of which nations are composed, and which have been for ages dashing violently against each other, like the waves of the ocean, will be reduced to order, and pervaded with intelligence and virtue. The great events which characterize the present period, taken in connection with the causes now operating so extensively, clearly

indicate the unfoldings of prophecy and the progress of mind. Even the unprecedented rise of infidelity in this enlightened country, and the new and extraordinary movements of the Papal power to extend itself, and find an asylum from the convulsions and revolutions of the Old World, in a land of free inquiry and regenerating agencies, together with the combined and aggressive movements of the friends of Christianity, in Bible, Missionary, Education, Tract, and Sabbath School Societies, plainly shows that the decisive conflict between truth and error, holiness and sin, is drawing on ; and that the empire of darkness and superstition is about to be subverted by the power of God. True it is, clouds are seen moving with menacing rapidity over the moral world ; but still the light is seen, in many places, bursting through their broken masses, and ere long the breath of the Almighty will blow them all away, and the Sun of righteousness shall shed his heavenly light upon all nations.

We may not expect the cessation of wars until an indefinite series of changes and revolutions. It will not, probably, be the effect of any particular form of government, or system of belief ; nor will it take place every where at once ; nor will wars of every description, or killing of every sort, cease at the same time. If the human mind should increase in light and strength over a considerable portion of our globe ; if philosophy and humanity should get the better of the vindictive passions ; *some nation*, whose commanding situation will entitle them to respect, roused by the dictates of wisdom and benevolence, will grasp at the sublime object of *giving peace to the world*. The views disclosed, and the measures adopted, by the illustrious Canning, on assuming the conduct of foreign affairs in 1822, were without a parallel among contemporary Ministers, and all tended to one great point, viz., the establishment of universal Peace throughout Europe. It was a part of his great plan that England should retire into a more *neutral* station, and assume a mediatorial attitude ; and had he lived to execute his liberal and ~~enlightened~~ schemes, it is

probable he had done more for the world, than any or all of his predecessors. Next to England, the United States holds a rank which cannot fail to give them influence among the nations ; and to them is presented the opportunity of adopting a system of policy, which shall tend to promote universal peace. Or it may be some inferior power will take the lead in this noble work, and have the honour of giving the first grand impulse to this cause, which shall ensure its ultimate and universal triumph.

When the example shall be set, other nations, struck with emulation, will rise up and follow on in the same track. New political institutions will arise, and new barriers will be thrown up. The veil will drop from the eyes of mankind, and they will see clearly that neither numbers nor ancient usage can justify a barbarous custom : they will see plainly that *war is murder on a large scale* ; and that he who fights for territory, or revenue, or power, or fame, barter an overflowing fountain, for a drop of water. New expedients will be devised to prevent a relapse into war's frightful abyss. The vast expenses of military systems, now absorbing the treasures of the globe, will be diverted into the service of civil establishments, and for the promotion of science and the useful arts. New arts and new sciences will, from time to time, mark the progress of human improvement. Then shall Philosophers visit every clime in safety—the Eastern world shall be laid open to the students of oriental learning—and the Missionary and Bible agent shall travel on, unmolested, until earth's jubilee shall be proclaimed by a universal song of praise. Then, when the influence of Christianity shall be *complete as universal*, raising human nature to the highest elevation of human improvement, and infusing itself through all the creations of genius, and inspiring all with holy love, the earth shall be once more the abode of peace and purity.

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
HARTFORD COUNTY PEACE SOCIETY.

In presenting before you the second annual Report of this Society, it is the duty of your Committee to exhibit a simple detail of the operations of the Society during the past year, and to advert to a few of the numerous considerations which demand our continued, and more active efforts to promote the cause of universal peace.

It is an encouraging fact, that the members of this Society have increased from 134 to 266 during the past year. We cannot but consider this as a favourable indication of our duty to go forward, patiently meeting the obstacles which may impede our progress; and earnestly soliciting the efficient co-operation of every friend of humanity, in the great and noble design of banishing from the earth a monster, whose steps are to be traced only by the destruction of our brethren.

Of the first annual Address delivered by Mr. Linsley, which is connected with our first Report, there have been distributed to the members of the Society, of the Legislature, and others, gratuitously, 700 copies.

Of Mr. Brace's Address, 400 copies have been distributed. The Society have loaned to the members for perusal, of the Friend of Peace and other pamphlets, 298 copies.

They have now on hand for the same purpose 194 copies; and eight copies of the London publication, entitled the Herald of Peace. Your Committee have made arrangements to receive this last mentioned valuable pamphlet regularly from London, in future.

By your Treasurer's Account, it appear that \$80.06 have been received for subscriptions and donations; and that \$85.87 have been expended for sundry publications, and incidental expenses during the past year. The balance of the Treasurer's account against the Society is \$2.49.

Your Committee, deeming it important to the advancement of the good cause in which we are engaged, to excite the attention of the public to a subject which so deeply involves the present and eternal welfare of our fellow men, have en-

deavoured to keep in circulation a variety of publications, which exhibit, in forcible and affecting views, the moral and physical evils of War, and the rich blessings of Peace. As this is one of the necessary means to be used for enlightening and affecting the public mind on this subject, it is desirable that every member of this Society should aid in the same work of benevolence ; and, instead of allowing the Peace tract to lie covered with dust, to send it round as a heavenly messenger, to cultivate the spirit of love and peace in the hearts of men. In this kind service, every friend of man may consistently engage, not excepting those who believe that war in some cases may be just and necessary ; for surely it is every man's duty to use means to prevent the occurrence of a case, in which it is supposed to be necessary to resort to the direful expedient of shedding the blood of our brethren.

We may confidently appeal to every bosom which has imbibed the temper of Christianity, whether that blessed spirit of love does not demand a more concentrated and vigorous effort of the disciples of Jesus to enlighten and affect the public mind, and to remove the impervious veil of false glory, with which delusion has covered the truly detestable character of the war system. We may appeal to every heart which can ever beat with compassion for the woes of humanity, whether it is consistent with that compassion to keep silence, and do nothing, when much may be done, by influencing public opinion, to check the direful work of human murder, for the gratification of pride, of hatred, and of revenge ! Surely, if there ever was a cause which was worthy of the exertions of benevolence, this cause is worthy of those exertions. It involves not only the dearest interests of intelligent man, during his short residence in this probationary state ; but his higher and eternal interests. Is it possible for Satan himself to imagine a more subtle and effectual device, to exclude from the heart of man that spirit which is essential to his salvation, than to inspire him with the spirit of war ? *"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."* Can a man have the spirit of Christ and the spirit of war ? Is not the spirit of Christ the spirit of forbearance, of forgiveness, of peace and of love ? Is not the spirit of war a spirit of retaliation, of revenge, of strife, and of hatred ? Is not every thing appertaining to the war system a perfect contrast to the spirit, the precepts, and the example of Him who hath set us a pattern that we should walk in his steps ? Even if we contend that there may be cases in which it

would be justifiable to go to war, we cannot deny that it would be our duty to go in the spirit of the gospel of Peace. Whether this is possible or not—whether it is practicable for a man to go to war in the exercise of the Christian spirit, and in the work of destruction act consistently with that spirit, and consistently with Christian character, is a question, concerning which, a diversity of sentiment may exist. But it is conceived, that there can be no diversity of sentiment among the true friends of humanity, respecting the duty of using all lawful means to banish from the bosom of man the infernal spirit of war. This is the grand design of Peace Societies. Who then can question their claim to the patronage of the benevolent? Who that desires the accomplishment of the divine prediction of the universal reign of Peace, can refuse to aid us in advancing this glorious era? The Lord has promised it. This is our encouragement to pray and labour for it. He will be inquired of by his people to do what he has promised; and he requires those prayers which excite to the diligent use of the means which he has been pleased to connect with the fulfilment of his gracious purposes. We are commanded, not only to *pray* for peace, but to *seek* it, and to follow peace with all men, whatever relation they may bear to us.

The important bearing which this subject has upon the general interests and advancement of the Redeemer's holy kingdom, demands our serious consideration. This kingdom is "righteousness, *peace*, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "The fruit of righteousness is sown *in peace of them that make peace.*" Can we consistently expect to sow the fruit of righteousness among the heathen, or at home, so as to produce an abundant harvest of souls unto salvation, if we make and advocate war? What a spectacle has warring Christendom exhibited to the world for centuries! To what abuse and reproach has the pure religion of Christianity been exposed by the mad conduct of its professors! What a libel on the Prince of Peace! Can we conceive of any thing more shockingly impious, than to behold men rising from the table of the dying Saviour, who expired praying for his murderers, and going forth to imbrue their hands in the blood of their brethren? Can we conceive of any thing better adapted to awaken and perpetuate prejudice in the hearts of infidels and the heathen against that religion by which alone they can be saved from the second death?

Among the various customs which tend to excite and inflame that fiend-like spirit of war, which has filled the earth

with guilt and woe, we consider all military fetes and balls ; and deeply regret that such practices should meet with any encouragement in the community. All such measures have a direct tendency to excite in the minds of youth and others a contempt for that disposition of forbearance and peace which the Saviour has inculcated. Is it not a mockery of the Christian name, for any one to assume it, who can give countenance to such customs ?

After the wisdom of the world has done its utmost in defending this sanguinary and desolating custom, its character still stands delineated on the page of inspiration as the effect of the lusts of the flesh, and the gratification of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God and man. It is a custom in which the most savage, depraved, and idolatrous nations, have vainly gloried, though (to our shame be it recorded,) not more so than the nations assuming the name of Christian. That men, boasting of all the refinement of civilization, with the light of the Gospel beaming upon them, and professing themselves the followers of the Prince of Peace, should have so long gloried in the same barbarous butchery of their brethren, which delighted Goths and Vandals and Turks and Cannibals, presents to the considerate mind an affecting and deplorable absurdity, for which it would be difficult to find a parallel.

We are not to expect that either the spirit of the Gospel of peace, or the means which divine wisdom hath appointed for the pacification of a warring world, should be approved by the carnal spirit of such as seek the honour which cometh from man ; who make flesh their arm, " who mind earthly things," and " who glory in their shame." Until the Prince of Peace shall sway his blessed sceptre over the hearts of all men, opposition to his holy and peaceful government will be manifested. In this world of depravity, every good cause has opposition to meet and overcome. The patience, sincerity, and zeal of the advocates of truth and righteousness must be tried. " Blessed is he that overcometh."

While we lament the apathy of some, and the opposition of others to the cause in which we are imperfectly engaged, we feel encouraged by the assurance, that there are many of the sons of peace in various places, who are more actively and zealously devoted than ourselves to the same holy purpose. The London Peace Society is continuing its benign operations. The acting Secretary of that Society (with whom your Secretary has been favoured with a personal interview since our last annual meeting) gives an encouraging account

of its auxiliaries and agents, who are endeavouring to promote the spirit of peace in various parts of the kingdom. In the month of May last, the American Peace Society met in the city of New York ; and is now promoting the cause of universal peace, by various operations in different sections of our country. Other similar societies in the United States are uniting with us in this labour of love. We cherish the hope, that the humble means adopted and pursued by the friends of Peace in various parts of the earth, accompanied by the prayer of faith ; however they may appear to the eye of human wisdom, will be crowned with the blessing of the God of Peace, and be instrumental of advancing the happy period when the blood of man shall no longer cry out against his brother from the ground. "Many are the devices of man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord shall stand." That counsel declares, that the warriors "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and the nations shall learn war no more." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Dr. Hartford County Peace Society, in Acc't with Henry Grew, Cr.

32

1828.		\$	cts.	1829.	\$		cts.
Dec. 29	To Cash paid for carriage of Books - - -	19		Mar. 10	By balance from old Acc't.	-	3 32
30	do. do. postage - - -	10		May 5	By Cash rec'd from subscribers - - -	-	10 70
	The above omitted in former Acc't.			1830.			
1829.				Apr. 10	By do. do. - - -	-	61 23
Apr. 23	To cash paid Mr. Ladd for Pamphlets - - -	5	00	"	By do. donations - - -	-	8 13
May 24	do. for Paper - - -		50				
"	do. 131 copies of Friend of Peace - - -	7	26				
27	do. lighting meeting-house - - -	2	00				
June 9	do. for oil for do. - - -	3	23				
* "	do. 100 copies of Linsley's Address - - -	5	00	18	By Balance to new Acc't. - - -	-	2 49
26	do. 100 do. do. - - -	5	00				
Aug. 11	do. Mr. Canfield, for printing 500 copies of Linsley's Address, &c. - - -	28	92				
Sept. 12	do. for postage - - -	20					
1830.							
Jan. 9	do. Mr. Canfield, for 300 copies Brace's Addr. - - -	17	75				
"	do. sundry pamphlets - - -	10	72				
		85	67				
April 13	To Balance - - -	2	49				

* These and the other pamphlets purchased of Mr. Watson, according to vote of the Trustees.

Hartford, April 13, 1830.
Errors excepted,
HENRY GREW,
Treasurer, H. C. P. S.