

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE PEACE SOCIETY

OF

AMHERST COLLEGE,

JULY 4, 1838.

BY REV. RUFUS P. STEBBINS.

AMHERST:
PUBLISHED BY J. S. & C. ADAMS.
1838.

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN :—

I STAND before you with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow. Of joy, that it is my privilege to lift up my voice in favor of a truth on the spot where I first drank in its power, to advocate a principle in the halls where I learned it. Of sorrow, that some one better able than myself to do justice to the cause did not appear before you as its advocate. The place and occasion are both silent yet powerful advocates of the cause, which I would attempt to aid this day. The place is one where the mind is considered the man ; where intellectual strength is considered as true greatness ; where the vigor and activity of the body is valued only as it expands and exalts the mind ; where young men are forming habits, and establishing principles which are to be their guide and rule in life ; whence an influence is to go forth as healthful to the country as the river of God ; to which, above all, the church,—virtue, looks for her ablest and most devoted champions. The occasion is the birth day of our nation, the day that tried men's souls, the day on which a nation was declared free. How proper then, that here on this day we should look to the true safety and welfare of the country, and the hostility to both of a custom which has desolated the earth for ages. I know it would be more grateful to some ears to hear the story of our fathers' wrongs repeated, and how they redressed them—of the energy of soul, and depth of suffering which are written on every page of their history—of the wilderness, the Indian, the wild beast, the famine, and how all were subdued and endured. I know it would be more grateful to some ears to hear of our present condition—of the canvas which we spread upon all the

seas, of the magic of our name in every ear, of the spirit of enterprise in every village from the St. John's to the Yellow Stone. But enough will be said by others of all these; enough, and more than enough, will be said of the stars and the stripes, of the bird of Jove, and the Thunderer himself. The ringing of bells and the roaring of cannon will echo from many a hill, and rise from many a valley. We leave these themes, therefore, so often dwelt upon, and of such thrilling interest, to speak of war; to show that it is both impolitic and unchristian; that it is ruinous both to the prosperity of a people, and the highest welfare of the mind; that it is both a violation of true policy, and christianity.

I need not say to this audience that this subject is one of interest, deep, and painful interest at this moment. The war trumpet has been sounded near us, its echoes have been heard by our own firesides, and many have sprung upon their feet for the onset. The roar of cannon has been heard upon our borders, and the wail of death has swept along our shores, like an angel of destruction. Vengeance is on many a lip; revenge falls from many a tongue. The fatal steel reflects back to our eyes the rays of the morning sun. Such is our condition, and is it not one of painful interest to us, as men, as citizens, as philanthropists, as christians?

I. We turn then to consider the impolicy of war, and this may be seen in its expensiveness. Victor or vanquished, that nation bleeds to the very heart which engages in war. It sends poverty to the hearths of thousands. In a pecuniary point of view, war is a curse. Take one example. The war of our country with a few Indians has already cost this nation more, infinitely more, than the Territory of Florida is worth. Yea more; if we had taken the fifteen thousand dollars per head, which we have already spent for their extermination, we could have educated them so that their talents would cast into the shade, those of the epauletted heroes who have been hunting them with blood hounds. Yes, we have already spent enough in our war of extermination, to have created an amount of intellect in those persecuted sons of

the forest, which would have caused the heart of the civilized world to beat more quickly. This is but one specimen. The history of older nations is an unbroken ledger of monies squandered in war. England and France alone, have during the last three centuries, more than twice bankrupted themselves. Taxes are the fruit of England's victories, "which are imposed," says the *Edinburg Review*, "upon every article which enters the mouth, or covers the back, or is placed under foot: Taxes upon every thing which is pleasant to see, hear, smell, or taste: taxes on every thing on earth and the waters under the earth: taxes on every thing which comes from abroad or is raised at home: taxes on the raw material: taxes on every fresh value which is added to it by the industry of man: taxes on the sauce which pampers man, and on the drug which restores him to health: on the ermine which decorates the judge and on the halter which hangs the criminal: on the ribbons of the bride and the brass nails of the coffin. The dying Englishman pours his medicine, which has paid seven per cent., into a spoon which has paid fifteen per cent., flings himself on a bed which has paid twenty-two per cent., makes his will on an eight pound stamp, and dies in the arms of an apothecary who has paid one hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death. Then, besides his probate, large fees are exacted for burying him in the chancel: his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble, and he is then gathered to his fathers to be taxed no more."

The gold, which has been held out to bribe man to slay his fellow man, would pave the earth. Yes, give me the money which has been spent in war, and I will buy every acre of land and every spire of grass, every herd, and every flock which the world contains, twice over. The shout of victory, the boast of conquest, the triumphal feast attract our attention from the emaciated countenance of a country after a war. The actual amount of expense, however, is never known. The destruction of private property is more than equal to that of the public. Desolated villages, ruined crops, rifled houses are sprinkled all along the track of an army.

The impolicy of war is seen also in its attempts to protect our rights. Sometimes the victory is gained by the side to which it is due, but it is not so always, or generally. Truth is often made error by war, right wrong, if you permit victory to determine the question; vastly more uncertain is the result of a war than the throw of a dice. At Waterloo, the eagle crouched at the feet of the lion, only because a French general was too fond of his dinner. And yet we rely upon war as the arbiter of right among nations; we consider ourselves safe, when surrounded by a rampart of steel. Why are we not willing to see our error reflected by the page of history? Nations have surrounded their borders with ramparts of stone, the everlasting rocks have lifted up themselves against the power of the intruder, and yet the glory of their name has departed before the tread of the conqueror, and the ramparts on which they relied for defence, have been crumbled under the feet of the invader. Cities have built their towers to the skies, and marshaled on their tops the wise and the brave, and boasted of their power, yet how strong they were, and how well calculated such means are to stand the shock of attack, the traveler will tell you, who has given up the search, in despair of ever finding the spot where they stood. The proud monarch, who, when upon the heights of his city, and overlooking its lofty towers, and impenetrable walls, its palaces and gardens, exclaimed, "Is not this Babylon, which I have builded?" thought that he had erected a monument to his memory, which would stand the assaults of foes for ages; and yet, not seventy years elapsed before its haughty prince, confidently relying upon the impregnable walls which encircled him, was killed at his own table by the hand of the enemy, and long, long since have these lofty towers and massive walls been mingled with the dust on which they looked down so proudly. Monarchs have surrounded themselves with armed men, clothed with steel; shut themselves up in deep dungeons, called palaces, and yet the dagger would find its way to their hearts. Bulwarks and arms never did, and we believe, never can support and protect government. The history of the world shows it; the philosophy of the mind shows it, and still

we are unwilling to learn the lesson which is taught us by the expiring voice of ruined empires, subdued, pillaged cities and desolated fields. We cling to the broken fragments of the past, and read not the warning which is engraved on their tombstone.

Whatever may be true in respect to the benefit of a standing army, to preserve internal peace in despotic governments, in our own, a military establishment, especially a militia system, would be of no avail. The very soldiers would be a part of the people, and they would be the very ones on whom this iron police ought to operate; the very ones to feel the effect of a power which they alone possess, and which, of course, they would not put forth to their own ruin. The idea that we need an army, an organized militia, to preserve internal peace, is no less preposterous, than that we need an astronomer to regulate the sun. And yet in old Massachusetts, we pay more than thirty thousand dollars annually, out of the public treasury, for the support of the militia, to protect you and me from our neighbors. Yes, you were spurned, when you kneeled at the door of the legislature, and begged for a covering to shelter you, when you asked for food for the mind, when you asked for the means of exalting the immortal spirit into communion with truth, while we pay thirty thousand dollars every year, for polishing swords, grinding bayonets, and scouring cannon! Spirit of freedom, where art thou fled! Genius of literature, which divided the children's bread to build a schoolhouse in the wilderness, hast thou left these hills forever! I am not speaking of fancies of my own. I am stating naked truths, truths which you here feel. I would give more for one schoolhouse to protect my rights against force, than for a regiment of soldiers; I would give more for one young man, well educated within these halls to protect me against violence, than for a troop of lancers. Force in our country is powerless. Truth is omnipotent; and on it alone, can we rely.

Spend the money which we now squander for warlike preparation, in educating the hundred thousand voters, who cannot read the constitution of our country, nor write their own names, and we should then be safe. Better sell our arsenals and muskets,

our war ships and swords, and buy spelling books, and turn our generals and commodores into school masters, if we wish to prepare for, and keep peace, than increase our army and navy as we are doing. I never had a doubt but that in our quarrel with France, we should have had war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt, had we been ready for it. Had our coast been lined with ships of war, like blood hounds ready to slip from the leash, the deep would now be reverberating with the roar of our cannon, and be stained with the blood of our fathers and brothers. Our commanders knew we should be beaten for five years if we began, and they had no desire to fight unless they could reap a rich harvest of glory. To prevent war, be unprepared for it; so when the passions are up they will have time to subside, ere we can act. A warlike spirit and preparation is the most active, and deadly foe of peace. Who is the peaceful man; he who carries his dirk and pistols, or he who is unarmed, and careful in the discharge of his duties? Is not the man with a bowie knife looking out for insult, seeking for an opportunity to shew his courage? Who are the quarrelsome members of society? are they not our boxers and fighters? In what neighborhood would you prefer to live for safety's sake; in that where knives and dirks were worn and used, or in that where no such weapons were named or known? The spirit of war—the military spirit, is the one for us to fear; it is the one, which will plunge us into blood.

The boast which war makes, that it defends us from insult and attack from abroad, is equally false as the assertion, that it preserves peace at home. What nation has been prepared for war, which has not had war? The best preparations are attended, on the part of those who make and possess them, with a desire to use them; and so far are they, as we have already observed, from protecting us, that they excite us to try our power, and show how brave we are. Besides, to attack a nation which is well defended, if there be a possibility of success, or even of a noble failure, is a greater glory than to beat down the defenceless, and tread upon the fallen. Nothing but the deepest

meanness could induce a nation to attack a defenceless people, whose only preparation for insult was a spirit of forgiveness, whose only return for wrong was a kiss. No laurels would be gathered on such a field as this, and the commander who should be sent to crush to the dust such a people, would shoot himself for shame. It is not in human nature, unless sunk to the lowest depth of infamy and debasement, to insult and mock and destroy the weak and defenceless. Innocence is clothed with triple steel. I say then, that war and all its boasted heraldry, is a poor and weak means of protection from abroad. Justice is stronger than ramparts; innocence is mightier than armies; forgiveness is fleetier than swift ships. Let nations guard themselves with these virtues,—let them not prepare to deluge the land with blood upon every trivial, supposed insult, and the east and the west would join hands together, and sit down in peace under the olive tree.

War fails entirely, also, of fulfilling its pretensions in redressing wrongs. Grant that might is on the side of right,—that the croak of the raven is on the propitious side of the army, and that victory sits upon the flag of the injured. The cost is greater than the purchased good. The sum which was your due, and for the attainment of which you engaged in war, has been exceeded a hundred fold by the equipments of your fleets and armies. You are like the man, who, to repay an insult or obtain his rights, mangles his limbs, burns his house, and turns his family out of doors, and then calls upon his neighbors to rejoice with him, as he holds up in his gashed hand, the shining piece of silver which his contest has obtained for him, and, houseless, homeless, helpless, limps to the surgeon under colors, at the sound of music. To be pitied is that people, who do not know that to redress their wrongs is to do themselves a greater wrong than any that they have suffered, or can suffer. I speak of general rules, of common results. There may be exceptions to these rules; but the prominence which is given to these supposed exceptions, proves them to be exceptions, and rare ones, and shows that my remarks are true to the very letter.

II. But I forbear to enlarge on this topic. I wish to present my views, more at length, on the other point which I proposed to consider. I turn, then, from the consideration of the impolicy of war, from showing that it is dangerous to our liberties instead of protecting them, to notice its inconsistency with Christianity, to show that they are opposites in the sentiments which they cherish, in the principles of moral obligation which they establish, and in the standard of true greatness which they erect. And I do this with the more confidence upon this occasion, as here christian principle is allowed to be the only safe guide in action.

I. We now notice the different sentiments which these systems, war and christianity, cherish. Christ teaches us to love our enemies. This sacred and holy rule he observed in all he did and suffered. He never rendered even an evil wish for an evil act. He cherished deep pity for those who wronged him, and sought, by every means within his power, to reform and make better and happier his bitterest foes. His love was not circumscribed to the chosen few who were his constant attendants, who ministered to his wants, and supported him, feebly though it was, in his trials. He looked abroad lovingly upon all mankind. He had but one desire, and that was the good of each member of society. He never lost sight of the individual, as he looked upon the race. Personal good was his object. If you love those who love you, what reward have you? The christian religion demands of us love, love to all, to enemies as well as friends. There is no class so low as to be exempted from our love, none so hostile that we are not bound to cherish for them love. We are not allowed by her code, to cherish any other sentiment towards any human being; the greater the enmity, the greater the strength to be put forth to subdue it; the more bitter the hate, the more efficiently must we exert ourselves to root it up. The Samaritan is to bind up the bruised frame of his mortal foe, the Jew. Our sympathy is not to be hemmed in by state lines; "mountains interposed" are not to make enemies of nations; no people is so remote as not to be bound to us by ties of brother-

hood ; no land so barren that its inhabitants are not God's children, members of one family, worthy of our love, demanding our sympathy. Sentiments of love are thus to be cherished for our race every where. What narrow views has he of christianity, who supposes that any outward circumstances can cut off a human being from his sympathy ; that any depth of moral degradation places him beyond the reach of efforts to reclaim him ; that any, or all of these, are to break the chain which unites all men in one great family, and makes them fellow helpers in one great work. Christ's spirit was an all-pervading, all-comprehending one. He hastened to answer the beggar's call as soon as Herod's ; he dined at the house of the publican as readily as in the hall of the anointed. He was a living exposition of the great principle of his religion. love. Love pervades it every where,—love for foes as well as friends, for ungrateful as well as grateful.

Turn now from this code of pure love, as taught by christianity, and read the statutes of war upon this subject. Does war tell us to cherish love for our enemies ? Does it tell us to hasten to relieve the pain, the misfortune of those who have injured us ? On what page of the statute book of war does such an enactment lie ? Where can it be found ? No where. War tells us to cherish hatred towards those whom christianity commands us to love. What would be said to you by an army, were you to exhort them, upon the eve of a battle, to love their enemies, to cherish feelings of good will towards those whom they were about to destroy ? Would not many a lip of scorn be curled at your weakness and folly ? Would you not be told that such doctrine would do for the church, and not for the battle field,—for cravens, not men,—for pietists, not heroes ? Would not the commander-in-chief order you to be seized for preaching treachery to his troops ?

I ask again, where in the code of war do you find the broad, deep, unbounded love of the New Testament inculcated to the soldiery ? Are they not commanded to kill their foes ? Are they not permitted, yea taught, to wreak their vengeance on their

enemies? Of what nature is that spirit, which burns in the bosoms of those who fight for hire—and most who do fight, are thus situated,—who sell themselves to the highest bidder to be shot at, and shoot at others for a few cents a day? What is the feeling predominant in the bosoms of those young heroes who rush to the sound of slaughter, whenever it may be heard? Is it the spirit of love, the feeling of forgiveness? Can there be love, love that endureth all things, and thinketh no evil, in the bosom of that man who returns from the field exulting in the death of his foe? Go to the army, and hear the prayers which are there offered, and tell me what spirit he is of, who prays that the aim of the musket may secure its victim, and the roar of the cannon be the requiem of thousands, and the sea weeds be the winding sheet of men? * Are these the sentiments of christianity, is this the spirit which it inculcates? Far from it. It was the spirit of our great exemplar, to ask his Father's blessing, not his curse, upon his foes. Hear him pour forth his deep sympathy for Jerusalem. He prayed for those who nailed him to the cross. This is the spirit of christianity; those the feelings which it cherishes; those the sentiments which it utters. But in war the maddest passions must be waked and kept excited, the most revengeful feelings be set on fire, and kept burning. This is not the place to quote from history, to prove this to be the fact in respect to war. I am speaking to those who know what the records of human strife say upon this subject. And to you I appeal fearlessly—I ask without a doubt respecting the answer you will give. Is not this statement true? The page is black with a description of the worst passions—the annals of war, are one continued record of burning hate, revenge and enmity festering in the bosom, or exerting their desolating power abroad upon the foe. A christian cannot read the account of a battle, without feeling a chill run over his frame; and is such a state of mind and heart, such a course of life consistent with love—love to

* Fear, O Lord, if our enemies will fight us, let them have fighting enough. (!) If more soldiers are on their way hither, sink them O Lord, to the bottom of the sea. (!)—THATCHER'S *Journal*.

our enemies? Ask the child in the unspotted age of innocence, and it will answer, No; ask the man when he is not mad with malice, and he will answer, No; ask the New Testament, the religion of Jesus Christ, and they answer—all answer with the voice of many waters, No.

Am I told that in war, soldiers are governed by a sense of duty, that they fight, from a sacred obligation which they feel that they are under, for their country, their God, and their holy religion, and that, therefore, they may love their enemies, while they are doing them harm? I answer, in the first place, that most soldiers fight, because it is their *trade* to fight. They have no more idea of the right or wrong of the controversy in which they are engaged, than their cannon, and care little more about it. They will fight upon the side which will give the highest wages or the most glory; it is no inquiry for them to make whether the highest bidder be right or wrong. Besides, they are under the control of superiors who order them to their posts without their own consent. They sell themselves for slaughter, and know not but their own kindred may be the object of their attack. But granting that soldiers fight from a sense of duty, a love of country, and a reverence for the commands of God, they do not love their enemies. How can love consist in doing harm, unmixed harm? “Love,” says Paul, “worketh no ill to its neighbor.” Did not Christ rebuke the disciples who wished to call down fire on the village of Samaria? Did he ever encourage them to do evil, to perform deeds of the utmost malignity, that they might thereby cherish feelings of love, long suffering and kindness? Such a doctrine never fell from his lips. It is contrary to philosophy both human and divine. What! encourage men to mangle and hew each other to pieces to cherish the spirit of love! Lead out men to fight, array them face to face, teach them to call each other hard names, to gash and shoot each other, to make them forgiving, tender hearted! Tell it not to human beings that men who are stabbing the heart, who are plunging the bayonet into the bosoms of their fellow men, are filled with love. No; far otherwise. It has been well said in the description of a hotly

contested battle, "that the soldiers fought with *rage*," with the bitterest curses on their lips against their foes. I speak of the great mass of the soldiery. I speak not of what may be the state of mind of a few individuals, a few enlightened, good men; though I might say this of them even, with but few exceptions.

War is the school where hatred and revenge are cherished, not suppressed, where vice is ruler, not subject; and this evil spirit, which is cherished towards others in the field, does not cease to exert its influence at home. The hero fresh from conquest and blood, has not learned to forgive a wrong, and he seeks to revenge every supposed insult upon his honor. What greater scourge upon a people could there be, than to turn loose upon them a large army. How would the country bleed at every pore. How would the pure air be contaminated by the corrupt spirit of the camp, and how would the morals of the soldiery infect the unsophisticated customs of good neighborhood; what malignant feelings, bred on the battle field, would burst into a flame on every occasion of opposition. Smollett says, the jails of England were filled with soldiers, after the armies were disbanded. Love then, I repeat it yet once more, love does not find support in war; its whole spirit is hostile to war, and till light and darkness become the same, will love and war remain different.

2. Let us notice the different principles of moral obligation, which these systems establish. Christianity says, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you. It returns not evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but contrariwise. It thinketh no evil, much less doeth it. Christ did his enemies good, he returned love for hate, kindness for ill, works of charity for deeds of revenge. He came to bring peace on earth. He was announced by the hosts of heaven, as the messenger of peace. He came with a divine philosophy which the world knew not of; be peaceful yourselves, if you wish others to be so; be kind to others, if you wish them to be kind to you; unkind acts beget unkind acts.

“ An enemy can bear the voice of keen reproach,
Or the strong flash of fierce resentment ;
But cannot stand the touching silence,
Nor the patient eye of meek forgiveness.”

He taught us to make friends by being friendly ourselves ; if we wish to make those peaceful who are disposed to fight, give them no one to fight with. He instructed us in the heaven-descended doctrine of overcoming evil with good. “ Love is mightier than vengeance.” Even Seneca, heathen though he was, declared that “ inflexible goodness conquers malice, and that it was base to overcome injuries by inflicting evil.” When the daughter of Dr. Doddridge was upon her death-bed, and every one was hastening to see her, and inquiring after her condition, some one asked her how every body came to love her so ; she replied ; “ Because I love every body.” Glorious reply ! it should be engraven upon the tablet of every heart. It is what christianity teaches us. It is light from above. But how slow have we been to be quickened by it. We still think that the way to make peace is to fight, the way to promote love, to quarrel,—and war teaches us this. It is its living spirit. The *trade* of the warrior is to injure ; his sworn duty is to harm ; his office, to destroy. It may be said, and probably will be said, that this evil is done that good may come out of it. Do evil that good may come ! Not so thought Paul. This is the rule of christianity, do good, good only, unmixed good. Does one change the ground of debate and say, that it is no evil to war ? We reply, the very argument we are now urging, shows it to be an evil, for it is doing harm, not good to those who injure us. This is the avowed, the declared purpose of war. It is to harm, to injure, to kill. It is to desolate the fruitful field ; to return famine instead of harvest ; blood instead of treasure, to the laborer. Follow with me the track of a victorious army. Why do I call it victorious ? Because desolation, misery and death are in its path. See the fertile fields waste, the ravaged village smouldering in its own ruins ; birds of prey, uttering their cries, hastening to devour ; children flying, imploring the protection of

their pale and trembling mothers, who are themselves exposed to the brutality of the soldiers, and fear life more than death; sons gnawing the ground in the agony of the death struggle; fathers lifting up imploring hands for protection, only to be pinned to the earth with the bayonet; husbands begging for a drop of water, or praying to be run through with the sword, to relieve them from their misery, their excruciating torture; groans from the mangled, and wails from the expiring. 'This is war: these are the deeds of love which are performed on the battle field; this is the mercy which exercises its kind offices in war; this is the forgiveness which soldiers offer to their enemies. 'This is the hand of friendship which is extended to bind up the wounds of a foe.

Look at that majestic ship, "walking like a thing of life," upon the bosom of the ocean, its sails all white as love, kissing the sky. See the thousand human beings on board, their bosoms swelling high with hope, their hearts beating with pride. In the distance, a flag is seen streaming upon the edge of the waters. It is the enemy's. The running to and fro—the bustle—the confusion—the imprecations upon the foe—the oath—the curse—tell what deeds of darkness are to be done. One short hour is enveloped in smoke, and that beautiful ship is sinking beneath the waves. Its snowy canvas is torn and stripped—its deck slippery with human blood—fragments of human bodies strewed every where—the sea is crimson with the current of life—the cockpit filled with those who are worse than dead, enduring every extremity of torture. Now a smile of joy lights up the distorted features of these mangled victims; word is passed that the enemy's ship is foundering—a shout of victory goes up from those parched and dying lips, and they go down, victor and vanquished, a thousand fathoms into the boiling ocean. What a triumph this! What a work is this for christian hands to be engaged in! What a dying hour is this, for a disciple of the Prince of Peace! What a rejoicing is this to be uttered by the lips of one who professes to be a follower of him who, when reviled, reviled not again! What a condition in which to meet him who died for his foes! Need I pause to ask

whether feelings which produce such actions, which call forth such sentiments, which can triumph in another's misery, and ruin, are in accordance with the spirit of christianity which commands us to forgive our enemies, as we hope to be forgiven of God ; which tells us to pray for those who despitefully use us and persecute us ? Christianity cannot be uttered in the same breath with war, without sullyng its unspotted purity.

I need not stop to prove to you that revenge, retaliation, is the very spirit of war. Love has no part nor lot in the matter. Wrong must be met by wrong, insult by insult. The honor of the nation has been questioned, and he who dared to do it must pay for his temerity with his blood. Retaliation and vengeance are the watch words of an army. Submit or perish, conquer or die are written in letters of blood upon the standard, and stamped upon the cannon. Retaliation, I say, is the living spirit of war. It is daily acted upon. If an act of injustice is perpetrated by the troops of one party, the innocent victims who are in the power of the foe, are made to feel the stroke. It is evidence enough against them, that they bear the name of enemy, if they have personally done no harm. Innocent prisoners are led forth and decimated, and hurried away as a sacrifice to the manes of some of their enemies. It has been said by high authority, to be a sacred duty, which we owe to God, to wreak vengeance on those who harm us. But what says christianity ? " If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses." War says, do as you are done by. Christianity says, do as you would be done by. Hate for hate, eye for eye, harm for harm, blood for insult or blood, says war. Not so says christianity. Render to no man evil for evil : if thine enemy hunger, feed him, overcome evil with good : and no circumstance, however urgent, no violence, however great, will annul these enactments, in the statute book of heaven. Nations have not, and never can have, the right to spend time, and treasure, and blood, in taking vengeance from the hands of the Lord. War is not peace ; retaliation is not forgiveness. The laws of war, are entirely hostile to the laws of God.

War especially disregards that cardinal virtue, veracity. The commanding officers of an army, not only act falsehoods, but they speak them, and cause them to be spoken. They give out word, that their strength is twice as great as it is, to encourage their own men, and intimidate the enemy. They hire men to go into the enemy's camp, and tell what is absolutely false. They send spies who pretend to desert, and after having learned the strength of the enemy, return and betray them. And such actions are praised. The performers in such acts, are called heroes, and are canonized in the annals of war; their names are written in letters of gold in cathedrals, and the monumental pile rises over their ashes! Is this right? Is this christian? What say the oracles of truth, respecting the portion of the falsifier? What is the moral character of him who is taught to deceive? What is the nature of that system which needs such support, and rewards those, who thus work iniquity, with fame and wealth? Can it be consistent with the meek character and pure teachings of heaven's messenger to men? No. Christianity wears on her brow, the beautiful image of truth, and she feels its impress in her bosom. She teaches us to speak truth, not falsehood, to trust, not suspect, to confide, not distrust. I will not enter upon a consideration of the abstract question whether it be right to tell a falsehood under any circumstances. I leave that question for those to determine, who have time to spend, and a heart to do it, in attempting

“———to sever and divide

A hair 'twixt south and south west side.”

One thing is clear; no man has a right to make a business of telling falsehood, of selling truth for gold. No one has a right to make it his *trade* to deceive his fellow men: and any system of action which requires this, is wrong, is opposed to the teachings of heavenly wisdom. And war does this. It is understood that in war, a man must pay no regard to truth; must cast off her spotless robe, and put on the armor of error; blot out the ex-

pression of frankness, which sits like a sun upon his features, and put on the mask of falsehood ; shut his mouth upon fact and fidelity, and give license to fiction and treachery ; he must exchange the hand of friendship for the dagger of Ehud ; the tale of suffering for the lie of the Gibeonites ; the promise of hospitality for the nail of Jael ; the token of love, for the kiss of Judas. Christianity would blush and hang her head, were she charged with countenancing such a system. She is not its friend, but its foe : She does not support but destroys it : she loves not the words of falsehood. How then can her followers engage in war, which requires them to trample upon her commands, and disregard her voice ?

Shall I be told that it is impossible to carry on war, and not disobey the commands of Christ ? that it is a necessary evil attending war, that those who engage in it are compelled by circumstances, to do what he has forbidden ? All this only proves that the whole system is wrong. If it cannot be kept in operation without violating the laws of high heaven, it ought not to be countenanced. It is sufficient evidence that a system is wrong, full of evil, when it requires him who is its supporter, to violate the principles of christianity. Her laws are not to be disregarded. Heaven and earth may pass away, and with them sceptres and thrones, but not one tittle of her laws will be abated ; and the system which does abate, or attempt to abate them, is to be given up. Truth is not to be offered upon her own altar, the sacrificial knife is not to be buried in her bosom. Nations, therefore, must not fight : they must adjust their difficulties in some other manner. It is of no avail to say that there is no other way in which national difficulties can be settled. It is evading the question. If there could be no other way, it is quite clear that war is not the proper arbiter, and that they had infinitely better be left unsettled than employ it to adjust them. What is the nature of that policy which to recover a debt of one dollar, spends one thousand ; to obtain from an enemy five millions, spends five hundred millions ? No other way in which national difficulties may be settled ! Has any other way been

tried? Has this, or any other enlightened nation, said to the civilized world, let us take each other by the hand; let us send to some more useful employment, the four millions of men whom we are now training for slaughter; let us spend for some more valuable purposes, the eight hundred millions of dollars, which we now pay annually for blood, and solemnly pledge ourselves, to each other and to heaven, that we will always submit our international differences to some third party, some proper tribunal, to the decision of intelligent beings, and not to the power of lead and steel. This can be done. It must be done. It will be done. The whole world groaneth under the accumulated burden of war, and it will free itself from it. The diffusion of knowledge so universally, and the increase of commercial interests, promise such an event; and its coming is no more to be feared in relation to the protection of national rights, than was the change from personal combat to trial by jury in relation to personal rights. The latter was the dawn of a better day; the former will be the full noon of man's deliverance from a bondage as unhumanizing, as it is bloody.

I know of but one objection which can be made to this statement. It is that there must rest somewhere a power to see that law is executed; that the nation which feels itself injured by the decision of this tribunal or third party agreed upon, be compelled to acquiesce in it. So there must. But there is more than one mode of compelling them to submit. Let the whole civilized world withdraw from them all intercourse. Let them be shut out from the society of men. Shall I be told that the nations who thus withdraw would be sufferers, as well as the nation whom they wished to punish? I grant it. But how much more severely would they suffer, if they engaged in war to subdue it. The objection is good for nothing. The mere disgrace of withstanding the decision of such a tribunal, would compel to acquiescence without a resort to non-intercourse. But again; what system is perfect? No one pretends that such a tribunal will do away with all bitterness, and human imperfection. We believe that such a tribunal would err in its decisions;

for what tribunal does not? We only pray that it may be tried. For six thousand years we have been pursuing a system which has always, or nearly so, defeated the object which it professed to be capable of accomplishing. Let it not be said, then, that such a tribunal would not succeed. Let it be tried. We ask only that it may be as perseveringly tried as has been the policy of war; and then if it fail more entirely than war has done of effecting its object, we will consent that it shall fall, fall for ever. But till it has been tried, we believe oppressed virtue and down-trodden human nature will lift up their voices louder, and remonstrate in deeper and deeper tones.

3. Let us glance at the different standards of true greatness which are established by christianity and war. He among you, says the Divine Messenger, who would be first, let him be your servant. This is the true greatness of man, serving others, ministering to the wants and necessities of our fellow men. How different from the philosophy of war. He who would be great, must gather around him a retinue of obsequious minions: must have every wish anticipated by the zeal of some pensioned or possessed fellow being: must have every desire gratified by the hazard of life or limb of those whom power enables him to force into his service: he must be dragged in chariots by his fellow creatures, and be carried upon the shoulders of those whom he ought to serve. When, oh when, will Christians even, understand that true greatness consists in making great sacrifices for the good of others,—consists in making men free, not in subduing them under our power. And this freedom is wrought out, not by the sword and flourish of trumpets, but by truth,—as the chains which bind the earth to winter are not broken by the winds and storms which come careering in their power from the mountains, but are melted by the silent, noiseless sunbeams of spring time. Shame to the conqueror who, because he has trod a nation down, and made slaves of half a kingdom, boasts himself as great, and demands to be called a god. The menial who holds his stirrup may be greater, more worthy of reverence,—on whom he looks with supreme contempt, and thinks of no value,

except as a footstool by which he may vault from the ground into his saddle. The sceptre is not the mark of true greatness; it is the widow's two mites. True greatness is not measured by the depth of blood on the field of battle, nor are his virtues, who claims the rank and title of a genuine christian hero, numbered by the bodies of the slaughtered enemy. He who has forgiven the most offences, he who has fed his hungry enemy, and clothed his naked foe, he is the true hero. He who can bear his name defamed and feels within that the charge is false, who will not stoop to revenge an insult, and feels only pity for those who have wronged him, and performs only acts calculated to win back the evil doer to friendship and love, he alone is entitled to the name of great. On the contrary, war looks only at the injury done the foe. If the smoke of the carnage puts out the sun: if the groans of the dying make the ear tingle; if the firesides of thousands are deprived of a husband, and hundreds of thousands of children are made orphans, the laurel is entwined, the triumphal arch erected, the pean chanted, and the prostrate multitude adore. Now I pause and ask, is this a heroism which is worthy the name? Is it such a heroism as a christian man ought to seek to exhibit? Is it right for a community to encourage men to seek such a distinction by pronouncing indiscriminate eulogy upon their character? Is a licentious man to have a pean sung over his grave, and the tongue of eloquence extol his name, because he died in the field or on board the ship, engaged in a contest for his own personal honor, as has been done?

Animal courage has been ranked too high. It surely requires no great degree of courage to stand up and be a mark for a rifle, if you are to be rewarded for it with an apotheosis. Many a man fears unpopularity more than death; many a man fears a sneer more than a bullet, and could face a cannon with more composed muscles than he could meet a contradiction, or even a disappointment. The warrior is not necessarily a great man. Some of the lowest of our species have manifested a skill, a courage or recklessness, call it what you please, in the field, which has called down upon them the applause of the world; and yet

it was the same courage, no higher, nor different in kind from that, which we see every day in the brute creation. It is common to the beasts; and surely what we partake in common with them is not the highest height to which we may aspire. The splendor of the war dress, and the homage of the multitude dazzle and awe us. Strip that man of his tinsel, who now sees the crowd bend at his feet, and none would be so poor as to do him reverence. His mind is unenlightened, his heart untouched. There is no principle at the bottom of his character, which would command a moment's respect. Let me not then be pointed to the unshrinking nerves of the warrior, as a manifestation of real courage. Many a murderer and assassin upon the gallows looks into his open coffin as indifferently, as unblenchingly. It shows brutality, not high resolve,—it shows stupidity, and not firm principle,—thus to act. I do not say, that true firmness may not be manifested in death; but I do say, that the simple fact of one's exposing himself to death is no proof of his courage; he may have been too great a coward to have lived; he may have been too timid to look upon the finger of scorn, or bear the taunt and jeer which would have been his lot: he may have been a victim of his own passions, a slave to his own fears, and hence a being as despicable as pitiable. To subdue the outward world is not the greatest of conquests. He who subdues his passions has done more worthily than he who subdues kingdoms. He who can govern himself has nobler sway than he who rules an empire. To lead an army to battle and conquest is far easier than to meet scorn without shrinking, and hostility without hate. Seek moral strength. Be not dazzled with the applause which the multitude bestow upon mere physical energy; feel that to stand unmoved before the arm of power and speak for virtue, truth, and principle, in the very eye of reproach, is a mightier achievement than to conquer the world. We mistake true greatness. It is vastly easier to fight for virtue and right, than to live for them: it is a shorter, easier road to fame, to clap our hands with the excited multitude, than to reprove sin, at the peril of scorn; but he who does the latter has a greatness, a

majesty, like the ocean in a calm, whose power can neither be measured nor fathomed, when it lifts up its voice in the storm.

No dignity is worthy the attention of men, but that which is obtained by forbearance, which never ceases to be a virtue—by self denial for the good of others, which shines like a star on the face of evening—by suffering for the sake of our foes, which is a gem of unsullied purity in that crown which will be blazing with unsurpassed brilliancy, when the star which glitters on the front of heaven shall have been dimmed for ages.

“ There may be glory in the might
That treadeth nations down—
Wreaths for the crimson conquerer,
Pride for the kingly crown :
But nobler is that triumph hour
The disenthralled shall find,
When vengeful passion boweth down
Unto the godlike mind.”

Yes, “ nobler ” is that victory which man gains over himself, his passions, his desire to injure his foe, his mad ambition to establish a throne on the necks of his kinsmen, his vanity to erect a monument of “ human skulls ” to perpetuate his fame, than any outward conquest however glorious, or earthly victory, however triumphant. He who has won this victory, over his inner man, who feels love, not hatred for his foes, who performs deeds of kindness, not acts of hostility to his enemies, who holds out the hand of friendship to him who has wronged him, and offers his own fame, honor and goods upon the altar of humanity, he has erected a monument “ aere perennius,” a monument which will stand, when crowns shall have fallen, sceptres crumbled, and thrones gone down to dust, a beacon to the world ; on whose top will play the light of christian love, though tempests may roar about it in their might, and the tumultuous deep beat upon it in its fury ;—a monument which will stand an object of admiration and love, while there is a heart to admire what is beautiful, or reverence what is sublime :—a monument which will be the pride of the good after that sun shall have become dim, and this earth a blackened ruin.

If such be the nature of war, so opposite in all its effects to Christianity, we may well pause and ask in the language of James, "whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, of your lusts which war in your members?" Henry VIII. wished for a divorce from Catherine, and Europe was in war for an age. The best blood of France, Germany and Spain was poured out like water; the indirect effect of this unprincipled monarch's passion. Charles the II. March 17, 1672, declared war against the Dutch for these, among other reasons no better, and had the shameless face to publish them to the world; that the Dutch fleet, on their own coast, refused to strike to an English yacht, and that a picture was publicly exhibited in Dort, derogatory to the character of the English. This picture was a portrait of that great soldier De Wit, which the magistrates of Dort had obtained and hung up in the chamber of the town house. In the perspective of this picture, was drawn a representation of some ships on fire in a harbor, commemorative of an advantage gained by De Wit over the fleet of Charles. It was too much for the monarch to brook. War was begun, carried on with vigor by both countries. While the ambassadors of each were trying to form a treaty, intrigue met intrigue, objection met objection, insult followed insult, till both were in a state of war and commission councils, and it was agreed, February 22, 1674, almost two years after, that the honor of the flag should be yielded to the Dutch in the most extensive terms; and the picture, for aught that is said, was permitted to grace the halls of the town house of Dort. Should it be said that these were not the real reasons of the war, let it be granted: but how base must have been the motives with which it was undertaken, if these were the reasons he dared to give instead of the real ones. These are but two specimens, taken at random from the history of christian nations, proving that war is from the lusts of men; that it has not its origin in love, nor good will. The origin of war is in the unholy passions and desires of men; check these, plant the white banner of love upon the field, and men would meet for deeds of kindness, not of death. Oh, the evil of war! it cuts the

life-strings of many hearts ; millions of our fellow beings it carries to the grave, "unhousel'd unanel'd."

Go with me to the field of battle, and tell me if it is not an arena of the worst passions which burn in the human bosom ; tell me if Christ's religion teaches men to do thus ; tell me if he taught the sword to devour, the fire to burn, the bullet to mangle God's image ; tell me if loving ever covered a field with slaughter, with the dead and dying ; if praying for those who injure us ever carried pain to the domestic circle, and caused widows and orphans to pour forth tears like water. Go with me to the hospitals and see the misery which war brings with it, and tell me whether it be an angel from heaven or a fiend from the pit ; tell me whether Christianity ever achieved such deeds of darkness, spread such a curtain of sackcloth over human prospects ! No, Christianity is an angel of light, she bears in her hand the symbol of peace, and as she flies through the heavens proclaims the glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, **PEACE**. She chants her song of love under the paternal roof, and pours a spirit of joy around the domestic fire side ; war startles its inmates by the peal of the trumpet, and sprinkles blood upon the threshold of the dwelling. Peace causes the family circle to utter words of happiness, and put on the garments of rejoicing ; war sends up a wail from the bereaved and clothes them in mourning. Peace plants the deserts with roses, levels the mountains and causes man to love his brother man ; war blasts the hopes of the laborer, tears the father and son from the fire-side, sows discord in the human breast, and stirs up the bitterest passions of the soul. Peace scatters blessings in her path, and plenty attends her footsteps ; war pours a storm of iron hail upon the fruitful valley, and want follows in its track of desolation.

When the fourth seal in the book of the apocalypse of war was opened by the twenty years carnage in Europe, and the pale horse trampled over its soil, from the wine presses of Spain to the snow hills of Russia, with death upon him, and famine and pestilence in his path behind ; when the blood came up to the horses' bridles, and the wail of a continent, in its death agony, went up

to Heaven; then it was learned that war was as great a curse as sin, that it was as terrible a blight to the prosperity, as to the morals of a community. Why then, I ask, if war is so terrible an evil, and so hostile to the first principles of the religion of Christ, why then does the chariot of peace delay her coming? Why tarrieth it so long? Why do men still whet the sword for slaughter; why does man still hate man, and lift up his hand against his brother? Why are our shores lined with vessels of death, and why is the sound of the hammer heard forging implements for the destruction of our race? Plainly it is not because Christianity teaches us to do thus. It is because we disobey it; it is because we disregard its teachings; it is because we rely upon brute force to subdue mind. We have not learned that fire and sword only scatter ruin and death. We think that iron chains can confine the spirit: and war teaches us this. We have not yet felt that every human being has a mind to be impressed by truth, a heart to feel its power. We must learn to rely upon our own virtues, and not upon our pistols. We must treat our neighbor kindly, and not jostle every man we meet in the streets, to show our independence. We must learn to depend upon truth, virtue, and this truth and virtue must be disseminated by individual effort. The world has always opposed change. The mass must be moved by one. A little leaven, if it be the real truth, thrown into this corrupt body of public opinion, will leaven it all. It is time that the world should have learned the true secret of human progress: that truth proclaimed by human lips, and virtue manifested in a christian life, are the only levers which move the world. Force is an obstacle in her path: it binds her wings as she struggles to fly upward. Still and weak as those means appear, they will regenerate mankind. The gentle, yet uncompromising proclamation of a simple truth does more for human improvement than fleets and armies. The invention of the immortal artist of Mentz has done more for liberty and human rights, than all the warriors from Nimrod down to General Sutherland. The invention of Gari of Amalfi has done more for commerce than all the naval achievements of Blake, Van Tromp,

and Nelson. In the olive groves of the sages and reformers of the sixteenth century, was wrought out a more glorious palladium of freedom, than the sword had been able to carve out of human flesh, for centuries.

Take an example to our purpose, showing that human philosophy, would we but listen to her, teaches the same lessons as divine. When the thick darkness of eight centuries had enveloped the human soul in an Egyptian night of error and superstition; when the manacles of a worse than pagan despotism had been riveted upon freedom of speech, and the sentence of eternal perdition hung by a single hair over freedom of thought; when no sceptre dared but do homage to the mitre; when to doubt was worse than death; then Charles Fifth, Francis First, and Henry Eighth, for different, and more or less laudable motives, attempted to break the chain. The cabinet councils of each, and all, spent days and nights of anxiety to originate some plan which would free themselves and their subjects from a power greater than their own. The clangor of the trumpet; the rush of hosts in battle array; the glittering helmet and the pointed steel were the instruments which they used and were using in vain. The world seemed lost to hope. Men despaired of the coming of the day spring from on high. But there was no occasion to despair. They had mistaken the means of dispelling error and advancing truth. They had used only the instruments of destruction; the engine of regeneration they knew not of. But there was one who did know it, and who knew how to use it effectively; who knew that truth would penetrate where balls could not; that it would find its way to the heart quicker than steel. Martin Luther, the poor Augustine friar, unknown to the world, without friends, without influence, "seized the iron trumpet of his mother tongue, and blew a blast that shook the nations from Rome to the Orkneys; sovereign, citizen, and peasant started at the sound; and in a few short years; the monk who had begged his bread in the streets of Eisenach, no longer friendless, no longer forsaken," was hailed by ransomed thousands as the deliverer of mankind. Yes, Martin Luther by his translation of the Bible into the German language, in the castle of War-

burg, and his indomitable spirit in the face of power, and at the peril of his life to proclaim the truth, did more for human improvement than all the councils and armies of the three heroes of that century; and his name will be spoken with reverence, and be remembered with gratitude, when the memory of his crowned contemporaries will be forgotten, or held in merited contempt. Such is the force of truth, if clothed in her terrible majesty by the self devotion and unflinching perseverance of her herald. If its champion be David, Goliath must fall; if his brethren, the giant of Gath will still trample in the valley and defy the armies of the living God. Truth is omnipotent; but like the electric fire, it must be collected and discharged, before the gnarled oak can be shattered. The work has been commenced. A word has been spoken by the son of Mary, on the shore of Tiberias, which will be heard and felt around the globe. Truth, christian truth, is the life boat of the world; and he, who has the courage and energy to utter it, will redeem mankind.

But I must tear myself from the subject. I am surrounded by tokens of promise that this will be done, that champions of truth will be found. These walls, consecrated to science and virtue, Christ and the church, inspire us with bright hopes for the future. Hail then as you come up in the long array to these halls of knowledge. Hail as you gather from the four quarters of the earth to this hill of Zion. Welcome, ardent youth, to this "consecrated eminence;" welcome to these well-springs of virtue and principle; thrice welcome to the sublime truths and stirring motives which here thrill the heart. Here, within these hallowed walls, erected by the prayers and tears of the Church; here, on this height, whence the desire of the nations is to go forth, the words of life and truth, drink in the spirit of patriotism, humanity, virtue, and as you cast the "last longing, lingering look behind," at these fountains of principle, as you go forth to act upon the world, make a vow to heaven, that in the senate, at the bar, and the altar, your most withering rebuke shall be uttered against that spirit which feeds upon men; and your noblest eulogy be pronounced upon that virtue which saves a foe from his own ruin, and, linking together every human being, binds them to the throne of God.

NOTE.—It ought perhaps, in justice to Mr. Stebbins, to be stated, that the Committee appointed by the Peace Society, in Amherst College, to superintend the publication of the preceding Address, finding it extremely difficult to forward the proof sheets to him, have by advice, taken the responsibility of printing it without his inspection.

1844-61