

THE CAUSE AND CURE OF WAR.

By REV. D. D. STALKER.

[The following sermon was delivered by Rev. D. D. Stalker in the Presbyterian church at Calumet, Mich., Sunday, August 23. Mr. Stalker is well known here, having visited relatives in Scotland county the past Spring, and while here preached several times in the Presbyterian church. —ED. EXCHANGE.]

"Put up thy sword unto the sheath."—John 18:11.

Sheath the sword is the command of Jesus Christ. Human history reveals how universally the command has been disregarded, for history is one continued story of war and bloodshed. Literature and art combine in giving precedence to the glory of arms rather than to the art of peace. Orators adjured their people and stirred their patriotism by the memory of their battles. Poets sang the praise of arms and men of letters extolled the heroes of war. Even the church—God's mouthpiece on earth—pursued a similar course and failed to proclaim effectively the commands of her master, the Prince of Peace. The pious Milton mentioned among the goodly trophies of Cromwell, "garments stream with blood of Scots, imbrued." In the middle ages the church vied with the State in despotism and the claims of supremacy. She was nationalized and her bishops asserted the divine right of kings and condoned many of their acts of tyranny. Brute force methods were justified and prayers offered for success in wars of aggressiveness and selfishness. In modern times the church is not so closely connected with the state. In this country the connection has been completely severed and the church today proclaims more effectively the teachings of her master on peace, especially the great doctrine of the brotherhood of man. This is apparent in society, no intelligent individual will today appeal to physical methods, but to judicial or fraternal to settle his differences with his neighbor. The church has not been so successful in the sphere of internationalism, as is evidenced by the barbaric war that is carried on in Europe today. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is as binding on nations as on individuals. Has the church been faithful in proclaiming this great truth? Has the church in Europe during the past forty years been loyal to her national obligations, true to her Christian evangel and pressed home with deep earnestness on rulers and ruled alike the commands of the Master relative to the brotherhood of man? If so, would the ideals of mediocrity survive to this day? Those nations at war are professedly Christian, yet acting with variance with the injunctions of Him whose name they bear. The people for the most part are a great people, a noble people, educated, cultured and advanced in science and art, and have given to us what is best in our civilization. They are closely related to each other and to us in kinship, religion, education, industry and commerce. They are our brothers. We entertain a high regard for them, sympathize with them in their trials and sorrow. They are engaged in a titanic struggle, compared with which every other war of history will fade into nothingness. A war that threatens with terrific destruction an entire hemisphere, that will take a century of peace to repair. Think of millions of men armed with the most deadly weapons human genius can devise facing each other in mortal combat. The thought is sickening and revolting to all that is best in the human heart. The loss of life will be appalling. The continent will be drenched with human blood, the blood of the flower of the nations. Mil-

lions who will escape death will be maimed and incapacitated for life. Countless towns and villages will be peopled with widows, orphans and sorrowing parents. And billions of money will be wasted. That is not all, no; is the worst. Bitter animosities will be aroused that will not be allayed for generations. This is exemplified by the people of the Balkan States, the previous war between France and Germany and the wars of this country. For many years after the war of Independence it was regarded the proper thing for the Fourth of July orator to give a few twists of the lion's tail. In the civil war feelings were engendered that will take many years fully to remove. And is it any wonder? A correspondent writing from Brussels some days ago describes in lurid colors the first touch of the invader in Belgium. A country rich the week before in cornfields and beautiful gardens is now laid waste, villages are in ruins, families left homeless and destitute and sorrowing over the death of those dear to them. Will not these people entertain the bitterest hatred to the invader? Such is the price of war!

What is the cause of the war, the influence of which is felt throughout Christendom and that is laying its paralyzing hand on almost every industry? It is not waged for freedom, nor for the defense or propagation of some great principle. Some give one reason, others another. Some blame one person, others another. "The real cause of the war we believe to be the preparedness for war. The advocates of peace, who for many years have been advocating the settlement of all international disputes by judicial, rather than warlike methods, have always been met with the declaration that the best way to preserve peace was to be well prepared for war. This was the plea of the rulers and statesmen of Europe. It was the plea of some of our own rulers and statesmen. Now we see the falsity of the plea, and that the surest way to bring on war is to have its complete machinery always ready, such a machinery as exists in Europe today. Soldiers trained by the tens of millions, battleships that cost as much to build as a whole navy cost a few years ago, ships that will fly in the air and deal out death where men have been safe before, guns that will kill while the foe is out of sight, submarines and mines that will blow up a fleet to atoms in a moment. Troop trains that in a few hours will carry armies to the scene of conflict. For decades Europe has been spending millions upon millions perfecting these machines of death. Since the war of 1871 France and Germany have been building navies and constructing armaments that are the wonder of the military world. Since the war with Japan—the Britons of the East—Russia has been strengthening the weakness disclosed by that war. Britain depending on the world for bread has for centuries striven to maintain a navy that will guarantee safety to her wheat-bringing ships. Austria, a loose union of jarring races, is supporting a large army to enforce the power of her ruling family. All this has brought the insolence of power and that insolence is bearing its fruit today in the crime of the ages. Many an individual has committed murder because he was well armed. If private citizens were armed as nations are there would be frequent fights and murders. Were the officers and workmen of the C. & H. mine armed with deadly weapons last year when the strike began, blood would have been shed in abundance. Men fight because they are armed and

trained to fight. Fighting is their business. They talk about it, read about until it becomes a mania, and they are eager for the fray, being confident that they will win because they have confidence in their skill and equipment. Wholesale murder is committed in Europe today because of over-confident managers of tremendous fighting machines. Were these machines not so perfect there would be no war.

What is the cure for war? Obedience to the commands of Jesus, is to sheath the sword and love our neighbor as we do ourselves. It is because these commands have been disregarded that the earth has been deluged with human blood. The sword must be sheathed, not only sheathed, but broken so that it can be used no more. That day is coming because God, the ruler of nations, has promised it. He said the time will come when the implements of war shall be turned into instruments of industry and peace, and when men shall learn the arts of war no more. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into scythes; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Notwithstanding the present war the signs of the times point to the fulfillment of this promise. The leaven of the gospel is at work and the sentiment for the abolition of war as a means of settling international disagreements is rapidly growing. Even in those countries now at war there is a strong and ever-increasing party opposed to all war. In Paris lately a procession of men marched through the streets shouting "Down with war!" The sentiment is growing very rapidly in this country. Our government today would not think of engaging in war except in self-defense. Were the country insulted half a dozen years ago as she has been this year by Mexico, war would be inevitable. Had the same sentiment existed sixteen years ago there would have been no Spanish-American war. Our wise president is showing a passion for peace and a tremendous aptitude for maintaining it. In this he has the support of all parties and classes. We should be thankful that we have a man of high ideals and wise statesmanship in the chair during this crisis. He has manifested wisdom in calling on the citizenship of the country to observe perfect neutrality and refrain from taking sides in the lamentable conflicts in Europe. The people at war are our brothers, but the victims of an iniquitous system that must be destroyed.

It is confidently expected that this war will be the last among the Christian nations. Premier Okuma of Japan said a few days ago: "To bring about a great peace a great war is sometimes unavoidable." He added that perhaps a general disturbance in Europe would resolve itself into the final war of the world, leading to permanent and undisturbed peace. The potentates of Europe probably felt the rising tide among the people of aversion to war, and that the day was near when the immense national armaments must be reduced or totally destroyed. Before the tide arose to an uncontrollable height they were anxious to show the power of their fighting machines, and if successful they would entrench themselves securely in their positions for years to come. They did not require much of an excuse to start the war, but before it ended some of them may lose their crowns. Napoleon lost his after the Franco-Prussian war, and when this war is over there may be some crowns without rulers to wear them. The spoils of the war, however, should not be, and we confidently believe will not be the acquisition of new territory by the victors, nor the destruction of the vanquished, but disarmament for the victors and

vanquished alike. All national armaments must be destroyed except such as may be necessary to maintain peace within the borders of each separate nation. All international questions must be settled by an international tribunal of justice. The sword must be sheathed forever as an instrument of justice. It had its day and that day must soon end. From the day of Cain until now it has been held aloft as a minister of justice. Its justice has been no justice. Its judgments have been not of right, but of might, not of truth, but of skill, not of law, but of force. Its work is nearly done and it will go down to eternal night. But not until autocracy and despotism are dethroned forever. Then there will be no more mastery of the continents or mistressship of the sea, neither for Europe, Asia or America. When democracy destroys despots it will have no use for masters. In this final settling up America will have her part to play and we hope that she will play it well.

In the meantime it is ours to pray for the men on the field of battle, for sorrowing parents, for widows and orphans deprived of their shelter and support. Pray the Lord of Hosts who controls the armies of men that he will bring the war speedily to a close and overrule all for His glory and the ultimate good of the human race.

As a Man Thinketh.

An old darkey who had been sick for a long while had been treated by a colored physician without getting any better, decided to change doctors and called Dr. J—, a white man. Dr. J—, before the examination, wishing to find out something of the previous history of the case, asked several questions about the way the colored doctor had conducted the treatment; asked if he had taken his temperature, the old darkey replied, "He tuk mah watch an' all de money Ah had, and Ah great, Ah tuk mah temperature too."

The doctor prepared his thermometer, placed it under the tongue, and while waiting for it to register, turned to the window just in time to see a runaway horse come charging down the street attached to a buggy containing a lady and child. Almost opposite the negro cabin the buggy upset and spilled the occupants, slightly injuring both. The doctor rushed out, forgetting his thermometer, picked up the lady and child, took them to his office, dressed their wounds, sent them home and entirely forgot his patient for some two or three hours. Finally, remembering that he had not completed his examination of the patient or prescribed for him, he returned to the sick room and found him lying flat on his back, eyes tightly closed with the most angelic smile spread over his entire countenance, the thermometer still in his mouth. Upon its being removed and asked how he felt, he said, "I tell you, Doc, dat little glass thing done me more good dan all de medicine dat nigger gin me all de whole time he was treatin' me."

Scotland Does Things.

Scotland county has not let the grass grow under its feet in preparing for the storage of cotton. The contract has been let for several warehouses and work is being rushed on the construction of three of them at Laurinburg. More will be built as fast as they are required. That is the right spirit—to act and not merely talk. —Whiteville News-Reporter.

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