

of another man who wades "through slaughter to a throne, and shuts the door of mercy on mankind."

As in the case of the individual, the violation of the commandments—Thou shalt not covet, Thou shalt not steal, and Thou shalt not kill, are usually traceable to the violation of the first great commandment, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me"—that is, to the putting of self before service of the Creator; so the violation of these commandments by nations is not always but usually due to selfishness—the putting of supposed material advantages before obedience to the Divine law.

War is occasionally altruistic in purpose and the soldier always exhibits unselfishness of a high order, but, as a rule, conflicts are waged for selfish ends.

The individual finds that Jehovah's justice can not be evaded; for wrong-doing works its own punishment on the wrongdoer in the form of perverted character, even when he escapes the penalties of human law. The nation is as powerless to repeal or to ignore with impunity the laws of God—"though hand join in hand they shall not be unpunished."

If I have made it clear that the doctrine that might makes right is the most common cause of war, we may pass to the consideration of the maxim quite sure to be applied in war, namely, that "Like cures like"—the theory upon which retaliation rests.

The two are so closely allied that it is almost inevitable that those who endorse the former will resort to the latter—one represents the spirit of evil, the other its most familiar manifestation. Retaliation is rivalry in wrong-doing—a neck and neck race toward the bottomless pit. And yet there are many believers in the gospel of force who have brought themselves to think that cruelty can be cured by greater cruelty—that the only way to win an antagonist away from inhuman acts is to surpass him in inhumanities. Absurdity of absurdities!

But might must find a pretext for arming itself; and what is the pretext? There was a time when men openly advocated war as a thing to be desired; commended it to each generation as a sort of tonic to tone up the moral system and prevent degeneracy, but we have passed that day.

Now, all join in the chorus for peace. And how, according to the jingoes, shall peace be insured? "By preparedness," say these sons of Mars. Prepare, all prepare; equip yourselves with the most modern implements of destruction; arm, drill; get ready; and then stand with finger on a hair trigger musket and preserve peace—yes, preserve it until some one, by accident or design, gives the signal—then all fall upon each other with cries for blood. Preparedness is the kindling; opportunity is the match.

We dare not trust the peace of the world to those who spend their time in getting ready for wars that should never come. Half the energy employed in preparing for war would effectually prevent war if used in propagating the principles which make for peace.

Instead of preventing war, preparedness provokes war, because it is impossible to coerce the people into bearing the burdens incident to continuous and increasing preparation without cultivating hatred as if it were a national virtue. There must be some one to fear; some other preparing nation that must be represented as plotting for war.

Hate sets up sham standards of honor and converts every wound into a festering sore; hate misunderstands; hate misinterprets; hate maligns its supposed adversary, while every contractor, battleship builder and manufacturer of munitions of war applauds.

How can preparedness prevent war if all prepare? Each step taken by one nation toward more complete preparedness excites the other nations to additional purchases and new levies, until all have exhausted their productive industries and menaced their moral progress.

The doctrine that preparedness will prevent war will not stand the test of logic and the conflagration in Europe shows that it fails when tested by experience.

If any nation is without excuse for entering into a mad rivalry with the belligerent nations in preparation for war it is the United States. We are protected on either side by thousands of miles of ocean and this protection is worth more to us than any number of battleships. We have an additional protection in the fact, known to everyone, that we have the men with whom to form an army of defense if we are ever attacked; and it is known also that we have the money, too—more money than we would have

had if all the surplus earnings of the people had been invested in armament. We not only do not need additional preparation, but we are fortunate in not having it, since it seems impossible for a nation to have what is called preparedness without having along with it a disposition to use its preparedness on the slightest provocation.

The leading participants in the present war are the nations that were best prepared, and I fear it would have been difficult for us to keep out of this war if we had been as well prepared as they.

Happy for our nation that we have in the White House at this time a president who believes in setting the old world a good example, instead of following the bad example which it sets in this matter! What an unspeakable misfortune it would have been if, in such an hour as this, the nation has been under the leadership of a president inflamed by the false philosophy which has plunged Europe into the abyss of war!

## THE WAY OUT

### A Road to Permanent Peace

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Having considered the war as it is and the injury which it does neutrals, and then the origin of the war and the causes which led up to it, we are now ready to make inquiry as to the way out, that is, the means by which hostilities can be brought to an end and permanent peace restored. To state in a sentence the propositions which I shall proceed to elaborate: Mediation is the means, provided by international agreement, through which the belligerent nations can be brought into conference; time for the investigation of all disputes is the means by which future wars can be averted and the cultivation of international friendship is the means by which the desire for war can be rooted out.

What are the nations fighting about? No one seems to know, or if anyone does know he has not taken the public into his confidence. We have been told, in a general way, that the Allies are fighting against "militarism" and in defense of "popular government," and that Germany is fighting in defense of "German culture" and for the nation's right to "a place in the sun." But these generalities are so differently interpreted as not to convey a definite idea. When the president offered mediation at the very beginning of the struggle the answers which he received from the various rulers were so much alike that one telegram might have served for all. The substance of each answer was "I DID NOT want war and I am not to blame for the war that now exists." But that was ten months ago; the question now is not whether those in authority in the belligerent nations did or did not want war **THE!** we may accept their answers as given in good faith, but the important question is still unanswered. "I DID NOT want war" may have been deemed sufficient at the time the answers were given, but the real question is, **DO YOU WANT WAR NOW?** If not, why not say so? The months have dragged their bloody length along—each more terrible than the month before—and yet the crimson line of battle sways to and fro, each movement marked by dreadful loss of life. While warriors die and widows weep the sovereign rulers of the warring powers withhold the word that would stop the war. No chief of state has yet said "I DO NOT want war." No one in authority has yet publicly declared his willingness to state the terms upon which his nation is ready to negotiate peace. Are not these dying men and these tiating women entitled to know definitely sorrowing women entitled to know definitely for what their nation is fighting? Is it territory? Then how much territory and where is it located? Is it the avenging of a wrong done? Then how much more blood must be spilled to make atonement for the blood already shed? Some day accumulated suffering will overflow; some day the pent up anguish which this war is causing will find a voice. Then, if not before, the rulers in the war zone will pause to listen to the stern question "Why do we die?"—the question which shakes the thrones and marks the farthest limits of arbitrary power.

And is not the outside world entitled to know the price of peace? Must the neutrals bear the penalties which war necessarily visits upon them and yet remain in ignorance as to the issues at stake? Their trade is interrupted, their citizens are drowned, they are victims of stray bullets—have they no right to know what it is that, being done, will draw down the curtain on this dark

tragedy? Has any nation a purpose for continuing this war which it does not dare to state to the world, or even to its own people?

Surely neither side thinks it can annihilate the other. Great nations can not be exterminated—population can not be wiped out by the sword. The combatants, even though the war may have made them heartless, will shrink from the task of carrying this slaughter beyond the point necessary to win a victory. And it must be remembered that war plans often miscarry. Predictions made at the beginning of the war have not been fulfilled. The British did not destroy the German fleet in a month, and Germany did not take Paris in two months, and the Russian army did not eat Christmas dinner in Berlin. But even if extermination were possible, it would be a crime against civilization which no nation or group of nations could afford to commit. If it is vandalism to destroy the finest specimens of man's workmanship, is it not sacrilege to engage in the wholesale destruction of human beings—the supreme example of God's handiwork? We may find cases of seeming total depravity among individuals, but not in a nation or in a race. The future has use for the peoples now at war; they have a necessary part in that destiny which mankind must work out together, regardless of these ebullitions of anger. The Lord might have made all flowers of one kind, of one color and alike in fragrance—but He did not. And because He did not, the world is more attractive. Variety, not uniformity, is the law among men as well as among the flowers. The nations which are actively participating in this war are what they are because of struggles that have lasted for centuries. They differ in language, in institutions, in race characteristics and in national history, but together they constitute a great living bouquet of surpassing beauty.

We may put aside, therefore, as wholly impracticable, if not inconceivable, the thought that this war can continue until one side has annihilated the other. What then can be the purpose? The complete domination of Europe by one nation or group of nations? The absurdity of such a plan is only second to the absurdity of the thought that either side can annihilate the other. The world is not looking for a master; the day of the despot is gone. The future will be gloomy indeed if the smaller nations must pass under the yoke of any power or combination of powers. The question is not, Who shall dictate on land? or, Who shall dominate upon the sea? These questions are not practical ones. The real question is, not how a few can lay burdens upon the rest, but how all can work together as comrades and brothers.

Even if it were possible for one side to force the other side to its knees in supplication—even if it were possible for one side to write the terms of the treaty in blood and compel the other side to sign it, face downward and prostrate on the ground—it could not afford to do so; and unless the belligerents have read history to no purpose, they will not desire to do so. Time and again some nation, boastful of its strength, has thought itself invincible, but the ruins of these mistaken and misguided nations line the pathway along which the masses have marched to higher ground. Despotism has in it the seeds of death; the spirit that leads a nation to aspire to a supremacy based on force is the spirit that destroys its hope of immortality. Only those who are unacquainted with the larger influences can place their sole reliance on the weapons used in physical warfare. They see only the things that are transient and ephemeral; they do not comprehend the higher truth that "the things that are seen are temporal; the things that are unseen are eternal."

Christian nations need to read again Christ's prayer upon the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." All the participants in this war have sinned enough to make them anxious to exhibit that forgiving spirit which is the measure of the forgiveness which can be claimed.

When can peace be restored? Any time—now. If the participants are really weary of this war and ready for it to end. If any nation is not ready, let its ruler state in clear, distinct and definite terms the conditions upon which it is willing to agree to peace; then if an agreement is not reached, the blame for the continuance of the war will be upon those who make unreasonable demands.

What can be done by the advocates of peace? First. They can crystallize the sentiment in favor of peace into a coercive force, for public opinion at last controls the world. There is a work which the neutral nations can do; they