

will by no means clear the guilty, and that He visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and to the fourth generation, we need not be cast down or plunged into despair, but should rather rejoice that we are living in a moral universe, controlled by one who is altogether righteous, and knowing this we shall gird ourselves and work with rekindled zeal to bring all men to repentance. The war calls us, trumpet-tongued, to make enlarged sacrifices for the advancement of the kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy.

The greatest conception lodged in the human mind in the nineteenth century was the inexorableness of law. Men in other centuries had caught glimpses of the great fact, but in the nineteenth century it took possession of the popular mind. The greatest gift presented to us by modern science is the idea of a universe under the reign of law. Law, says service, is universal. There is no lawless realm in the whole physical universe. Law is operative at the equator and at the poles, on the top of the highest mountain and at the bottom of the deepest sea. The same laws which hold our little planet in their grip are also in force upon the sun and moon and upon the farthest of the stars. All the atoms of matter, so far as the scientist has gotten his eyes upon them, are seen to be dancing in obedience to the music of a law that is universal and also without change. This unchangeableness of law is as wonderful as its universality. No law has ever yet been altered. Not one has for an instant been suspended. From everlasting to everlasting all laws remain the same. But this is not all. Law is universal, law is unchangeable, and law is inexorable. It has no pity. It makes no exceptions. It recognizes no distinctions. Gravitation, fire, water, electricity, poison, all work in the same way in all places, and with them there is no respect of persons. Every man of science has this for his creed—Law is universal, unchangeable, and inexorable.

BUSINESS AND POLITICS CORRUPTED BY FALSE STANDARDS

But is the spiritual universe governed according to law? Are persons as well as atoms in the grip of laws which they can not escape? Are souls bound by unbreakable bonds to a throne? We are all ready to say yes within the circle of individual life. Jesus has announced principles which we accept as binding upon us in the home, in society, and in the church. He has set up standards which we acknowledge in the domain of our domestic and social life. He has revealed ideals which we confess to be beautiful, and up to which we strive with varying degrees of earnestness to bring our lives. But can we carry the ethics of Jesus into business? A multitude answer no! "Business is business," says the hard-headed merchant, "and the minister of Jesus Christ has no warrant for interfering with my methods of conducting my affairs. The Golden Rule is for Sunday Schools, but not for the counting house and store!" It is because the ministers of Christ have listened too often to this protest of godless business men that the world of business has been cursed by a series of scandals which shall be carried to heaven. Can the morality of Jesus be carried into politics? "Certainly not. The notion that you can obey the Ten Commandments in political life is an iridescent dream. Let the minister of Christ keep out of politics. The New Testament is for the sick room and not for the rooms in which men are moulding civic policies and programs." It is because too many ministers have turned their back on the great world of political thought and discussion that politics has in so many cities become rotten and disgraced us in the eyes of the world.

Can the principles of Jesus be carried into the arena of international life? Can diplomats and statesmen wisely act on the ideas which the Man of Galilee proclaimed? Are the virtues which He recommended vices in the realm of diplomacy? Are the graces which He praised to be condemned when seen in prime ministers and rulers? Jesus spoke often of patience and humility and forbearance and the willingness to forgive. Is this salutary teaching for Parliaments and kings, or is it intended for use solely in the home? The New Testament emphasizes the tremendous importance of gentleness, and long-suffering, and meekness. Are such traits of character commendable in the chancelleries of the world?

One need only to glance at the history of European diplomacy to discover that Europe has never been Christian in the realm of political ideal and action. She has remained through

all the centuries miserably pagan. Her fundamental principle has been always self-interest. She has never recognized the principle of love. Many of the most influential political teachers and leaders, such as Machiavelli, Frederick the Great, Napoleon I, and Disraeli, have been pagans to the core. The prime ministers and diplomats have been baptized into the name of Jesus, but they have said in the realm of political action, "we will not have this man to rule over us!" Jesus was frank and open, but European diplomacy has been secret and underhanded. Jesus despised the love of dominion, but dominion has been the prime ambition of European diplomats. Jesus counselled patience, but the leaders of Europe have believed that a nation should strike first and hard. Jesus believed in gentleness, but the lords of European statecraft have believed in diplomatic pressure, meaning by that a pressure of guns. Most of the rulers and statesmen of Europe have partaken regularly of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but they have crucified Jesus Christ in their action. They have said what the crowd said on the day of the crucifixion: "Not this man, but Barabbas!"

It was out of this unchristian conception of national life that there came the pernicious policy of armed peace. It was a pagan world which coined the adage: "In time of peace prepare for war," and Christian Europe would never have adopted it had she been Christian in her political thought. For forty years Europe used up a large part of her income on guns and battle-ships. Nations hold their wealth as stewards of God. He does not entrust them with wealth that it may be squandered on instruments devised for the slaughter of beings created in His image. For this sin of wasting gold Europe now stands before the judgment throne. For forty years a large part of the mental energy of the great nations of Europe went into the construction of gigantic war machines. The military and naval establishments grew larger and larger. They were a vampire sucking the blood of the people. All the nations of Europe have for years been nervous and excitable and sick, because of this constant and weakening drain on the fountains of vitality. Millions of men have been obliged to throw away the best years of their life in military and naval drill. For this squandering of time, Europe now is judged. In order to keep up armies and navies, it was necessary for the governments of Europe to rob their people. There has been a soldier on every peasant's back. In some countries all movements for social betterment were held up. Schools were closed. Children were deprived of an education that soldiers might be fed. The body was starved and so was the mind. Thousands of Europeans have been fleeing from Europe in order to escape the crushing burden. Multitudes of them have come to our own shores. A constant stream has been flowing for a quarter of a century into our republic from southeastern Europe. Who could stand at Ellis Island and look into the faces of these strangers and not be touched with pity and indignation. Backs bent, eyes with the light of hope almost extinguished, faces marked by deep lines which poverty and suffering engrave, in many instances the very skulls trampled out of shape by the boots of the war lords of Europe!

MINISTERS OF CHURCH STAND CONDEMNED

But the war lords are not the only sinners. The ministers of the Christian church must also stand condemned. What did they say about this wicked squandering of the people's money? What protest did they offer to this shameless and grinding oppression of the helpless and the poor? What thunderbolt of condemnation and warning did they hurl at rulers and statesmen? For the most part they were silent. In Russia the priests were dumb dogs. In Italy and Austria the Roman Catholic priests were speechless. In Germany the Lutheran pulpit was gagged. In England the Anglican pulpit gave forth a tone feeble and uncertain. Even the nonconformist leaders, with numerous notable exceptions, failed to get their eye on this heinous and damning sin.

The educators were also culprits. They knew many things, but they did not know the one thing which it was most necessary that they should know. They boasted of their "higher" learning, but their learning did not carry them high enough to see what is the will and way of God. They were "advanced" thinkers, but they failed to advance to where Jesus stood when He preached the Sermon on the Mount. They were aware of the fact that Copernicus had taken the earth out of the central place, substituting the sun, but they did not realize that God has put

Jesus of Nazareth and not Mars at the centre, and has decreed that all nations must bow to him. The leaders of Europe—political, ecclesiastical, and educational—were blind, and alas, the nations are all in a ditch. If men can not see that the systematic and continuous squandering of human energy and thought on perfecting the methods of slaughter, is a sin against Almighty God, then they are certain, soon or late, to be overwhelmed by the destruction they deserve. The amazing thing is not that Europe is being drenched with blood, but that the affliction was so long postponed. Because of the protracted delay men became increasingly reckless until they boasted of armament as a badge of honor, and measured the glory of nations by their equipment for destruction.

For years the cry of the oppressed has gone to heaven—"O Lord, how long!" and men have been tempted to say in their hearts: There is no God! But at last He has laid bare His arm.

"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small; Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all."

JUDGMENTS OF GOD FALL AS LIGHTNING

Take down your Bible and read what it says on the subject of retribution. Every sentence shines with a deeper meaning when read in the glare of this European conflagration. How suddenly the war came! It had often been predicted, but nobody realized it was at the door. A hundred thousand Americans, fearing nothing, were on a pleasure tour through Europe when in an instant the sky blackened and the lightnings began to flash. Europeans were as amazed as were the Americans. Rulers and prime ministers were off on their summer holiday, and in the twinkling of an eye the volcano belched fire. The judgments of God are long delayed, but when they fall they fall as the lightning does. So it was in the days of Noah, and so it was in the century in which Jerusalem was destroyed, and so it was in the eighteenth century when France took fire and the old regime was consumed, and so it was in the year 1914 when the greatest of all wars began.

The Bible tells us that there is such a thing as a "Too Late." We had read about it, but it was only a story which we dimly understood. In August of 1914 we saw the meaning as we had never seen it before of the parable of the virgins who were foolish. What earnest efforts were made in July to ward off the horrifying catastrophe. One can not read the diplomatic correspondence of those feverish, distracted days without concluding that in all the countries honest hearts sincerely desired to keep the feet of Europe in the paths of peace. Sir Edward Grey of Europe suggested a tribunal. But it was too late. Peace tribunals must be constructed before men's hearts become wild with fear. In Russia and Germany and England and France there was an effort to secure just a little time for reflection and conference, but no time was given. It was too late. The boat, long risking the rapids, was caught by a current which could not be stemmed. Will you ever forget how helpless you felt in that awful hour when you realized that Europe was rushing to her doom? You turned to the right and the left in search of some one strong to deliver, but you found none. You went forward and then backward, but there was none to save. You looked heavenward, but even God's face seemed to be averted. The patience of the Almighty can be exhausted and there comes a time when He leaves men and nations to drink the cup of His wrath.

The awfulness of the punishment can not be put into words, for it passes beyond the comprehension of the mind. The tragedy of the war is so vast we can not take it in. The horror of it is so immeasurable that it leaves us stunned. We only know that Europe is being beaten with many stripes, that she has been cast into the darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. We know that the nations have been cast into Gehenna and the smoke of their torment goes up before our eyes day and night. It is indeed an awful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, unless you are in harmony with His will. It is true, as the apostle says, that whatsoever we sow, that also we are certain to reap. Nations can not escape the consequences of their sins. There is a judgment throne before which they must stand. Paul was not mistaken when he said that however nations might have lived in the past, God now calls all men to repentance, for He will judge the nations by that man whom He has ordained, the man who rode into Jerusalem on the back

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