

motion, commits, however unconsciously, a great wrong. Let it be conceded that he who engages in military life is bound, as in other professions, to ensure from his employers the means of support, and that he may innocently seek the honor which is awarded to faithful and successful service. Still from the peculiar character of the profession, from the solemnity and terribleness of its agency, no man can engage in it innocently or honorably, who does not deplore its necessity, and does not adopt it from generous motives, from the power of moral and public considerations. That these are not the motives which now fill armies is too notorious to need proof. How common is it for military men to desire war, as giving rich prizes and as advancing them in their profession. They are willing to slaughter their fellow-creatures for money and distinction ; and is the profession of such men peculiarly glorious ? We are not prepared to deny that human life may sometimes be justly taken ; but it ought to be taken under the solemn conviction of duty, and for great public ends. To destroy our fellow creatures for profit or promotion, is to incur a guilt from which most men would shrink, could it be brought distinctly before their minds. That there may be soldiers of principle, men who abhor the thought of shedding human blood, and who consent to the painful office only because it seems to them imposed by their country and the best interests of mankind, is freely granted. Such men spring up especially in periods of revolution, when the liberties of a nation are at stake. But this is not the spirit of the military profession. Men generally enter this profession from selfish motives, and hire themselves to kill for personal remuneration and advantage. They are ready to slay their fellow-creatures from inducements nor a whit more disinterested than those which lead other men to fell an ox or crush an insect ; and, of consequence, the profession has no peculiar title to respect. I know that society views this subject differently, and that more blame should be attached to society than to the soldier ; but still the character of the profession remains degraded by the motives