

viduals are subject each to a higher power than themselves. Nations are not. But that does not answer the question why fighting should be the only way adopted by mankind of settling a national quarrel. The consideration of one of the probable reasons why it is so, may be interesting.

It must, however, be admitted that a few instances have been placed on record, of national differences of opinion being settled by other means than by fighting. The Geneva award forever settled the "Alabama" claims, without a blow being struck. The evident desire of the European powers at present to adjust international differences shows also that a clearer light is breaking in upon the nations, and that the god-like faculties of reason, will not always leave fair play, justice and right to the uncertain arbitrament of arms.

In looking for a cause we naturally desire to consider whether or not the generally accepted method be the cheapest, most expeditious, and best that could be employed. We desire to apply the same tests that we would employ in considering the utility of any projected commercial undertaking or enterprise. Here we are met, however, by very strange contradictions. Mr. A. L. Wallace, in an able article on a kindred subject, says:—

"The loss involved in these huge armaments is of three distinct kinds: 1. By the number of men, mostly in the prime of life, and of the very best physique, who are kept idle or unproductively employed; 2. By the burden of increased taxation which the rest of the community have to bear; and 3. By the actual destruction of life and property in war, which, wherever it occurs, inevitably diminishes the productive and purchasing powers of that country."

War impoverishes the victors and the vanquished, and, for a time, embarrasses neighbouring nations by the suspension of commercial arrangements. If, then, this, the generally accepted method, is found to be a *loss* to all concerned, why is not something else found to take its place? But there are other anomalies to be considered. This method involves certain strangely pre-arranged consequences or effects which do not naturally follow from a given cause. For example: if 100,000 men contend with 50,000 men, and, at the end of the struggle, the figures stand 70,000 against 15,000, all the world will rest perfectly satisfied that a national wrong has been righted, or that a national insult has been resented, requiring only a treaty to emphasize the triumph. If it could be so arranged beforehand, the destruction of an equal number of women might be made to do duty as cause for a similar result. Clearly the effect is not produced by the assigned cause. But war imperatively calls for the destruction of men, and for their destruction in prescribed ways. International regulations prevent modern warfare from descending to the level of massacre. The use of explosive bullets is prohibited, but the use of larger and more deadly shells is encouraged. To mine below a fort and blow it up, thus destroying a whole army at one blow, would be considered inhuman, but to use a torpedo and destroy the same number of lives on a man-o'-war would be perfectly legitimate. If the destruction of life be the desideratum, why make these distinctions? But that faint gleams of light are trying to pierce the gloom of ages. When a soldier is armed with a Winchester or "Martini-Henri" repeating rifle, he is potentially endowed with power to destroy an unlimited number of his fellow-men, and he wields an absolute power, against which no resistance can be successfully offered. But the strange part of it is that each soldier is endowed with and exercises this power for the purpose of destroying the lives of men who have little or no concern—certainly as little as their destroyers—with the national question supposed to be in solution at the time. It is, therefore, a most desperate tyranny over the individual who suffers; for the power of restitution is not known to mankind.

If, then, it is conceded that the generally accepted method is most hugely expensive, that it entails great loss on those nations employing it, and also on surrounding nations, that it is illogical, that it is hedged about by arbitrary restrictions, that it is not the most expeditious, that it is tyrannous in its operation on the individual, that it is not the best method that could be employed. If these things are conceded, then most surely it is strange that it should have such a hold upon civilized nations. It has a strong hold on mankind, strange as it may seem, or else the sober judgment of an intelligent humanity would long ago have relegated war to the limbo of the forgotten arts. But the origin of the hold it has is deep-seated and deep-rooted in man's nature.

Yale, B. C.

A. O. BROOKSIDE.

MY FRIEND.

The problem of the ideal and its attainment is one which presents itself to us all. "My Friend" has undertaken to solve it in his own way; so do most of us. But in spite of individual and therefore diverse treatment, the problem does not at last elude us; nor does it change its nature. It presents itself wherever there is admiration for the beautiful in nature and in art. The majority determined largely by force of circumstance, compromise the matter, and finally make choice of the woman possessing most of the admired qualities—since Pygmalion's experience was too blissful to be repeated—happy if the choice be blessed in the making. But there are some like "My Friend" whose ideal is too delightful to forego, and who live upon the daily manna of imagination.

Such a man is *my* friend, who has opened his heart to me in rare moments when the human soul yearns for sympathy, the offspring of mutual and confidence confession. A man of fine susceptibilities and lofty aspirations, he placed his ideal in the hands of the gods themselves. "Your ideal," he used to say, "cannot be placed too high." Very good; but what about the attainment? For him the search for the ideal has been a labour of sorrow and disappointment.

How he loved the beautiful and good in those days! At times, in his enthusiastic way, he would speak of the intellectual pleasure of the search, and the brightness of hope would inspire him to quote from a famous love song:—

"Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth,
Where thou feedest thy flock, where thou makest it to rest at noon;
For why should I be as one that wandereth,
Beside the flocks of thy companions?"

And then he would break into that magnificent song from the same poem, beginning,—

"Rise up, rise up my love,
My fair one, and come away."

The enthusiasm of those early days lingers with me yet, and adds a touch of pathos to the gentle memory of the unforgotten past. Alas! that my friend has, after a long time, failed in his search. Faith in his high ideal is gone forever. Living my own quiet bachelor life, and speculating sometimes upon this subject of high ideals, my friend's present opinions—greatly changed in these years—have still a fascination for me, and I listen now, as then, with deep interest to his lucubrations.

"In no woman," he says, "do we find the attainment of our ideal. I have sought it long; I have searched faces; I have analysed motives; I have examined the springs of action and conduct; and I am forced to confess the time wasted and the effort futile. Let me warn you, my dear fellow, against any such waste,"—then looking down at my somewhat well-worn coat of ancient cut, and my generally seedy appearance, he goes on:—"at least warn any young enthusiast friend who may ask you for advice not to undertake a task of that kind. The ideal woman is a phantom of the imagination, a phantom that dwells longest in the imagination of a fool. Look at my experience, where I have found great, almost perfect, beauty, I have generally found some terrible defect in character or understanding. In cases in which physical beauty was wanting, where I have been told character and beauty of soul existed in their place, I have found pedantry or conceit, or what, if we spoke of men, we should call priggishness. At best I have found the common place. Of course I have been most interested in beautiful women; it is hard to maintain your ideal without great physical beauty. To them, Pope's lines, which I used to detest, are not so inapplicable after all:

"Nothing so true as what you once let fall,
Most women have no characters at all;
Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
And best distinguished by black, brown or fair."

"Another writer, and a greater than Pope, has a remark, the truth of which I have often seen exemplified: 'man's desire is for the woman; woman's desire is for the desire of the man.' The inherent vanity of the sex you see—"

"Are you not misinterpreting Coleridge there?" I ask, confident that I can confute him in this one point at least.

But he rises, passing one hand rapidly over the other, as if to put an end to the discussion; and, soon after, he leaves me alone, to ponder the moral of all this; with some sadness, too, that he has thus come to speak of women with flippant indifference.

GERAINT.