

PHARISAISM AND WAR

God's law run operative throughout the earth ; your duty and mine may lead us in different paths, but let us beware at this time that we keep with us the sense of the appalling wrong which has been done to this poor struggling world of ours and to all that slowly gathered, slowly builded conscience of the nations which now stands gaping like a cathedral after the shells have done their work. If the sort of temper is to continue which has directed German militarism, in truth ' the world will be no place for a gentleman to live in '. Without righteousness human life is impossible, the Hebrews taught that to us, and just now the very foundations of righteousness are shaken.

2. But while Pharisaism is closely connected with morality, the difference is fundamental. Pharisaism is morality gone sour. No morality can thrive without a centre of aspiration which gives its sanction to every known law and calls out those tiny thrills of sensitiveness that herald laws unknown and as yet in embryo. Law for its own sake is a very dull thing, and, as St. Paul saw long ago, questionably moral. We need something to live for, something to give ourselves to, and when we have found what we need, morality follows of itself. Now the most effective aspiration is the love of God, mingled, as it always must be, with the love of man. (There may be other centres of a true life, but I do not know them and therefore cannot bring them into the argument.) The love of God and love of man are always above a man pulling him up to them, they make him concern himself with his own shortcoming, and when in his heart they speak of moral law, it is himself they bid him test. Later on it may become his duty to test others also, that he may give them aid, but a Christian must deal with what is in his own eye, mote or beam as it may be, before he begins to criticize another. Christianity lays a man on his face in the dust before God. It is the only way to become fit to rise. The really religious man is always so conscious of how much more he has to learn