

The Victories of Peace

[By W. R. Dunlop]

In the midst of the seething maelstrom of cruel war you may naturally ask with faltering lips, "Where are the victories of Peace in our own day?" Think of the marvellous advances in Art and Science and in Benevolence which characterised the great Victorian era, an era made possible by the overthrow of Napoleonic power; think of men who, in the face of early ridicule and with a heroism the greater because foreign to the impulse and excitement of the bugle call and battle cry, have despised death in their victorious efforts to pierce the secrets of the air and of the frozen Arctic snows; think of resolute men of a neighboring nation who, though ravaged by disease and oppressed by the sense of falling comrades on every hand, have at length accomplished the Herculean task of cutting a waterway through the malarial swamps of Central America and have increased tenfold the possibilities of commercial enterprise; think of men in the quiet of the laboratory who have successfully grappled with problems of hitherto unknown diseases and have immensely enhanced the resources for the alleviation of suffering and the saving of life; think of gifted men and women who have proved the pen to be mightier than the sword for the uplift of humanity and from the peaceful seclusion of the study have enriched the human mind with priceless treasures of literary genius.

These are but examples; these are but a few of the flowers from the garden of Hesperides; it has still fairer blooms; for the victories of peace are not confined to the magnificent achievements of Science and the imperishable monuments of Literature, which are the offspring of Nations in repose. Peace, in whatever sphere, like virtue, is its own reward; like mercy it is more than twice blest; and in every strengthening of the sense of Peace and concord in the mind of a child there is the birth of a new hope for a nation's greatness.

We know that, in these times of storm and strife, when civilization with shamed face and drooping wings is staggering under Barbarian blows, it is indeed difficult to realise the Arts and triumphs of Peace; but just as the enveloping flames in 1666, in burning the greater part of mediaeval London, destroyed the festering, plague-ridden corners of an insanitary city and prepared the way for the magnificent metropolis of our Empire—perhaps the healthiest large city in the world of to-day—so may we hope that ~~this~~ holocaust of fire and blood and the untold suffering it entails, will result in the dethronement of militarism and arrogance and in a new appreciation of public law and brotherhood.