

WAR AS NECESSARY AND BENEFICIAL.



WAR is a contest carried on by force of arms between two nations, or between members of the same nation. Let us consider if this contest is necessary, and if it is beneficial for a nation's prosperity.

War is a necessary evil. Almost from the creation of the world we have had wars. The greater part of the Old Testament treats of the wars of God's chosen people. And we will have wars to the end of the world, because it is prophesied that when that time comes nation shall be fighting against nation.

Is there any way to prevent this state of affairs? We have heard considerable talk and discussion during the last few years about peace conferences and the supplanting of war by arbitration. Let us see what they have accomplished in the matter of abolishing war. A few years ago an international conference summoned by the Czar of Russia was held at The Hague to discuss the possibility of disarmament. There were present delegates from all civilized nations, but their efforts to establish a state of perpetual peace were in vain. This was due to various reasons, one being through distrust of the sincerity of the Czar, the prime mover in the enterprise. But greater than this was the impossibility of the project. Governments cannot and will not abolish war, because armies and war are not accidental, but are, on the contrary, symptoms and essential parts of government, as it exists itself. No doubt, at this first conference a tribunal, or court of arbitration, was instituted, to which nations were requested to refer for the settlement of their international quarrels. Now, although England was one of the chief supporters of this movement, she was, in fact, the first nation to refuse to avail herself of the court of arbitration, when, during the South African war, the English ministers refused to accept the offers of the Boers. Hence, we see that the first conference did not accomplish anything in the line of abolishing warfare between nations. And nothing can be done, simply because nations cannot put faith in one another's promises. They are not able to agree to abolish their armaments, or even limit them.

Let us look to the possibility of a group of nations disarming themselves and living together in peace. Now, it is not to be supposed that the whole world would be simultaneously converted to