

fellow. There was a singing-school at Mauchline, which Blane attended. Jean Armour was also a pupil, and he soon became aware of her superior natural gifts as a vocalist. One night there was a "rocking" at Mossiel, where a lad named Ralph Sillar sang a number of songs in what was considered rather good style. When Burns and Blane had retired to their sleeping-place in the stable-loft, the former asked the latter what he thought of Sillar's singing, to which Blane answered, that the lad thought so much of it himself, and had so many airs about it, that there was no occasion for others expressing a favourable opinion—yet, he added, "I would not give Jean Armour for a score of him." "You are always talking of this Jean Armour," said Burns; "I wish you would contrive to bring me to see her." Blane readily consented to do so; and next evening, after the plough was loosed, the two proceeded to Mauchline for that purpose. Burns went into a public-house, and Blane went into the singing-school, which chanced to be kept in the floor above. When the school was dismissing, Blane asked Jean Armour if she would come to see Robert Burns, who was below, and anxious to speak to her. Having heard of his poetical talents, she said she would like much to see him, but was afraid to go without a female companion. This difficulty being overcome by the frankness of a Miss Morton—the Miss Morton of the Six Mauchline Belles—Jean went down to the room where Burns was sitting, and from that time her fate was fixed.

The subsequent history of this pair is well known. Jean ultimately became the poet's wife, and the partner of all of weal or woe which befel him during the Ellisland and Dumfries periods of his life. It is rather remarkable that, excepting two or three passing allusions, Jean was not the subject of any poetry by Burns during the earlier period of their acquaintance, nor till they were seriously and steadfastly married. He then, however, made up for his former silence. It was during the honeymoon, as he himself tells us, and probably while preparing a home for her on the banks of the Nith, that he composed his charming song in her praise—

"O'n' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I loe best;
Though wild woods grow, and rivers row,
Wi' mony a hill between,
Yet day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
She lovely, fresh and fair,
I hear her in the tuncful birds
Wi' music charm the air;
There's no a bonnie flower that springs,
By fountain, shaw, or green,
Nor yet a bonnie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean."

Not long afterwards, he infused his love for her into the still more passionate verses beginning, "Oh, were I on Parnassus Hill!" of which one half stanza conveys a description certainly not surpassed, and we are inclined to think not even approached, in the whole circle of British poetry—the vividness and passion rising in union from line to line, until at the last it reaches a perfect transport, in which the poet involves the reader as well as himself.

"I see thee dancing o'er the green,
Thy waist sac jump, thy limbs sac clean,
Thy tempting lips and roguish een—
By heaven and earth, I love thee!"

Mrs. Burns is likewise celebrated in the song, "This is no my ain lassie," in which the poet describes himself as meeting a face of the fairest kind, probably that of some of the elegant ladies whom he met in genteel society, but yet declaring that it wants "the witching grace" and "kind love" which he found in his "own lassie;" a very delightful song, for it takes a fine moral feeling along with it. Of "Their Groves o' Sweet Myrtles" we are not so sure that Mrs. Burns was the heroine, though if the wives of poetical husbands always had their due, she ought to have been so. Jean survived in decent widowhood for as long a time as that which formed the whole life of the poet, dying so lately as March 1834. She was a modest and respectable woman, and to the last a good singer, and, if we are not greatly mistaken, also a tolerable dancer. She had been indulgent to her gifted though frail partner in his life, and she cherished his memory when he was no more.

Here for the present we must stop: the Ayrshire poet somehow contrived to admire so many ladies, that there is no rumpling them all into the compass of a single paper.

A POSTHUMOUS JOKE.—A Venetian, who died not very long ago, made a provision of torches for his funeral artificially loaded with crackers, anticipating to a confidential friend the hubbub that would result from the explosion, which he had calculated must take place in the most inconvenient spots. It would be an unpardonable omission were I not to state, that this posthumous joke verified the most sanguine expectations of the projector.—*W. S. Rose's Travels in Italy.*

DISCUSSION ON PEACE.

For the Pearl.

REPLY TO MARMION CONTINUED.

"Celsus, the great enemy of christianity, who lived at the close of the second century, brings it as a charge against christians, that they refused in his time, to bear arms for the Roman Emperor, even in cases of necessity, and complains, that, 'if others were of their opinion, the empire would be overrun by barbarians.' This objection—the danger of refusing to fight—better became Celsus the infidel than it does a Christian."—*Burder, Author of Village Sermons, etc.*

"The dread of being destroyed by our enemies if we do not go to war with them, is a plain and unequivocal proof of our disbelief in the superintendance of divine providence."—*The Lawfulness of Defensive War impartially considered: by a Clergyman of the Church of England.*

SIR,—

The idea that the general precepts of the Gospel, are inapplicable to nations, whilst they are binding on individuals, we have endeavoured to prove, has in it more of sophistry than argument. We have ascertained, that individual accountability runs through every relation in which man can be placed;—that a christian cannot lend his influence or his energies to execute the designs of caprice, avarice, ambition, or revenge;—and that when mixed with a hundred thousand of his species, he is no more justified in taking away the life of a man of another country for those ends, than if he acted by himself alone. The man who engages in warfare, retains his private responsibility; and whatever may be the proceedings of his countrymen, whatever the commands of his superiors, he can never dispossess himself of his individual obligation to render to the law of his God a consistent and uniform obedience. We hope we shall not be misunderstood. We mean not to assert that the New Testament embodies, in form, the rules of legislation, or maxims of public policy. Doubtless there may be found in the Scriptures a variety of injunctions relating to the particulars of human conduct, and applicable to men and women only as individuals; but it is one of the excellent characteristics of the moral law of God, that its principles are of universal application to mankind, whatever be the circumstances under which they are placed; whether they act singly as individuals, or collectively as nations.

Now among these fundamental rules—these eternal, unchangeable principles—is that of universal love. The law of God, which is addressed without reservation or exception to all men, plainly says to them: *Love your enemies.* Individuals, nations consisting of individuals, and governments acting on behalf of nations, are all unquestionably bound to obey this law; and whether it is the act of an individual, of a nation, or of a government, *the transgression of the law is sin.* Nations or governments transgress the christian law of love, and commit sin, when they declare or carry on war, precisely as the private duellist transgresses that law, and commits sin, when he sends or accepts a challenge, and deliberately endeavours to destroy his neighbor.

It is not surprising, however, that Marmion should have made the too common and well-known distinction between political and moral right; or in other words, between political expediency and christian duty. As soon as the youth is taught to study and discuss great ethical subjects, he is indoctrinated in the fundamental error. He is constantly told that a nation, though composed of individuals who are bound to obey, even unto death, the settled law of truth and justice as enforced by the precepts of the christian religion, *has no conscience!* and hence forsooth, because the world is bad, force must be opposed to force, evil may be resisted with evil. On this principle, political bargains are often made for convenience, and for convenience are as often broken. On this principle too, Dr. Paley says that "the faith of promises ought to be maintained between individuals, but that it is right for a nation to depart from a public treaty when the terms of the treaty are found to be exceedingly inconvenient—in the transactions of private persons, no advantages can compensate to the public from a breach of the settled laws of justice; but in the concerns of empires, this may safely be doubted,—nay, even that it may be necessary for christians to resign themselves to a common will, though that will is often actuated by criminal motives, and determined to destructive purposes!" That is, if it appears, *on the maxims of expediency*, to the rulers of a nation that war is desirable, all the individuals of that nation are bound by duty to encourage that war, however base the motives which may really have caused it, and disastrous it may prove to the best interests of mankind! If good may come from slaughtering men, women, and children, we may slaughter them! If good may result from stratagem and crime we may practise them! Oh, when shall good men learn and teach the universality of christian obligation! How long shall the philosophy of expediency supplant the plain injunctions of the gospel! How long shall the wisdom of this world be more valued than the oracles of God!

Notwithstanding the clearness and importance of those principles which evince the utter inconsistency of the practice of war with the christian dispensation, it is continually pleaded that wars are often expedient, and sometimes absolutely necessary for the preservation of States. This objection Marmion plies with such force, that an individual might almost be induced to suppose that nearly all modern wars have been urged on the great principle of self-preservation. And yet the impartial student of history would testify that, by far greater part of those wars are so far from having truly borne this character, that they have, in point of fact, even in a political point of view, been much more hurtful than useful to all the parties engaged in them. Where, for instance, has England found an equivalent for the almost infinite profusion of blood and treasure, which she has wasted on her many wars? Must not the impartial page of history decide that almost the whole of her wars, however justified in the view of the world by the pleas of defence and retribution, have, in fact, been waged against imaginary dangers, might have been avoided by a few harmless concessions, and have turned out to be extensively injurious to her in many of their results? The Peace Society of Massachusetts, some years since, appointed a Committee to inquire into this subject. In the Report, "the inquiry is confined to wars, in which civilized nations have been engaged, since they became christians. The report relates to 286 wars of magnitude, in which christian nations have been engaged. These are divided into the eleven following classes," namely:

- 44 Wars of ambition to obtain extent of country.
- 22 Wars for plunder, tribute, etc.
- 24 Wars of retaliation or revenge.
- 8 Wars to settle some question of honor or prerogative.
- 6 Wars arising from disputed claims to some territory.

- 41 Wars arising from disputed titles to crowns.
- 30 Wars commenced under pretence of assisting an ally.
- 23 Wars originating in jealousy of rival greatness.
- 5 Wars which have grown out of commerce.
- 55 Civil wars.
- 28 Wars on account of religion, including the Crusades against the Turks and heretics.

We should naturally infer from the most superficial view of the causes enumerated in this Report, that many of them are very slight. But a more full examination would probably fill us with astonishment. Instead of this scrutiny, however, we may ask in the language of a British legislator, "I should be glad to know what any country ever gained by war, except empty glory and empty pockets. That is the way in which war rewards every nation that embarks in it. After the people have been taught to shout and illuminate, and exhibit all kinds of frightful spectacles at the shedding of each other's blood, when moments of reflection come, they see how much it has cost; and that sometimes reaches their understandings when better principles fail to penetrate them." But the Edinburgh Review for January 1821, has so well described the glorious consequences of English wars, that we cannot refrain from citing a paragraph. Here are the inevitable consequences of being *too fond of glory*:—"Taxes upon every article, which enters into the mouth, or covers the back, or is placed under the foot—taxes upon every thing which it is pleasant to see, hear, feel, smell, or taste—taxes upon warmth, light, and locomotion—taxes on everything on earth, and the waters under the earth—on every thing that comes from abroad or is grown at home—taxes on the raw material—taxes on every fresh value that is added to it by the industry of man—taxes on the sauce that pampers man's appetite, and the drug that restores him to health—on the ermine which decorates the judge, and the rope which hangs the criminal—on the poor man's salt, and the rich man's spice—on the brass nails of the coffin, and the ribbands of the bride—at bed or board, couchant or levant we must pay:—The schoolboy whips his taxed top—the beardless youth manages his taxed horse, with a taxed bridle, on a taxed road:—and the dying Englishman pouring his medicine which has paid 7 per cent., into a spoon that has paid 15 per cent.—flings himself back upon his chintz bed which has paid 22 per cent.—makes his will on an eight pound stamp, and expires in the arms of an apothecary who has paid a license of an hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death. His whole property is then immediately taxed from 2 to 10 per cent. Besides the probate, large fees are demanded for burying him in the chancel; his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble; and he is then gathered to his fathers,—to be taxed no more."

But we are told "there is no safety in the doctrines we inculcate"—nay that our own beloved country would soon be destroyed by acting on "the specious principles we promulgate"—or in the strong language of Dr. Wordsworth, "no people ever was, or can be, independent, free or secure, much less great, in any sane application of the word, without martial propensities and an assiduous cultivation of military virtues!" That is, we must be men-killers to the end of the chapter! The butchery of our species must be maintained, or we cannot be great, independent, free or secure! It is absolutely necessary to cherish martial propensities! To such a plea it might be sufficient to answer that nothing is so expedient, nothing so desirable, nothing so necessary, either for individuals or for nations, as a conformity, in point of conduct, with the revealed will of the Supreme Governor of the universe. We may, however, venture to offer a few general remarks on this part of our subject.

When the doctrine of entire abstinence from war both offensive and defensive is asserted and maintained, it is so far in advance both of public sentiment and public practice, that we are at once met with a host of objections. Many good men, who in the main are averse to violent and sanguinary measures, are greatly alarmed at its announcement, on the ground that if it should prevail, there would be no personal or political safety. We admit that it may be said with some degree of plausibility, that the principles of peace are not the principles of protection; and that, if we throw off the aspect and attitude of war, we shall not only be insecure against hostility, but shall invite it. Whether this objection involves a fallacy or not, it is beyond all question, that it is cordially received as an undoubted truth by many persons, who invest themselves with it as with a shield, and avail themselves of its aid to throw back, to a measureless distance, whatever is addressed either to their understandings or their heart on the great subject of universal peace. They take their stand upon this simple proposition alone, that no nation is safe without military preparation. They assert with as much confidence, as if they were pleading the authority of a mathematical axiom, that there is no security, and no peace, except on the condition of bloodshed; that he who will not fight, must make up his mind to become the prey of every species of depredation. Nor can we justly assert it to be altogether without reason, that men so generally take this position, when we remember that the history of the world, with but few exceptions, is the mournful history of international jealousy and strife. The planes of hostility, violence and revenge, pursued by nations, have made this fair world one great Aceldama, one vast and horrid place of execution, a reeking and smoking slaughter-house. And yet we feel in some degree prepared to maintain, (and we hope with the prospect of a successful issue upon the mind of the objector himself,) that, amid all the belligerent elements existing either in individuals or communities, pacific principles are the surest safeguard. No weapons of self-defence will, on the whole, be found so efficacious as christian meekness, kindness and forbearance, the suffering of injuries, the absence of revenge, the return of good for evil, and the ever-operating love of God and man. If men had the faith to receive

*There are some eminent men who think very differently on this subject. Dr. Gurney makes the following observations:—"When we consider the still degraded condition of mankind, we can hardly at present look for the trial of the experiment; but was there a people who would renounce the dangerous guidance of worldly honour, and boldly conform their national conduct to the eternal rules of the law of Christ—was there a people who would lay aside the weapons of a carnal warfare, and proclaim the principles of universal peace; suffer wrong with condescension; abstain from all retaliation; return good for evil, and diligently promote the welfare of all men—I am fully persuaded, that such a people would not only dwell in absolute safety, but would be blessed with eminent prosperity; enriched with unrestricted commerce, loaded with reciprocal benefits, and endowed for every good, and wise, and worthy purpose, with irresistible influence over surrounding nations."