

war must retain its place beside death as a vital and essential part of the economy of God. The Lord of Hosts has made righteousness the path to victory. In the crash of conflict, in the horrors of battlefields piled with the dead, the dying, and the wounded, a vast ethical intention has still prevailed. Not necessarily in any given case, but absolutely certainly in the majority of cases, the triumph of the victor has been the triumph of the nobler soul of man. Though to this rule history may furnish a thousand exceptions; though in history war has been made a thousand times over the instrument of cruel oppression and of diabolical wrong, yet in that great majority of instances which determines general result the issue of war has made for the ethical advantage of mankind. It must have been so; it could not be otherwise, because ethical quality has tended always to produce military efficiency. With true insight, therefore, did Tennyson write of "The Battle-Thunder of God." He has made of war His instrument wherewith to subdue nations who have broken His laws, but those who would read the processes of His courts in the ages of the past must take for their study, not generations, but centuries, and groups of centuries. They must survey the time as from a mountain summit, and then in the vast horizon they can discern the flashing of His lightning and hear the rolling of that thunder of which the discharge has purified, from epoch to epoch, the atmosphere of the world.

But to those whom the exceptions to this law of God appal; to those who can see in former conflict only confusion and purposeless slaughter and evil often triumphant over good—to these the contemplation of the present working of the same law among mankind, as mankind now is, may well bring comfort and soothing hope. For, as always with great sequences of cause and effect, the vaster the scale the plainer the connection. As humanity gathers itself into larger divisions, the instances in which in war the unrighteous smite down the righteous must tend ever to become rarer and yet more rare. A small people, a State of limited extent and insignificant resources, even though of high military efficiency, must always have been exposed to overthrow by overwhelming numbers in a conflict with some greater foe or coalition of foes, even though these were of inferior military virtue to its own. But if in place of a small people we have a great one, and, instead of a little State, one of wide extent and immense resources, and if the people of this State possess military virtue of a high kind, then it is manifest that the