

wrong; yet, as St. Augustine observes, the order of the world sometimes demands a prompt and terrible visitation of His wrath. So appalling are the ravages spread in hearts and homes by war, with its twin sisters—famine and pestilence, that whatever good may be derived, we ought none the less to pray incessantly that Christian nations may be preserved from the scourge.

And who can form any conception of the extent of carnage and desolation that apparently must mark the course of the war which now menaces Europe? With all the terrible weapons and engines of destruction which the ingenuity of man, applied to the discoveries of modern science, has devised,—needle guns, repeating rifles and gatlings; smokeless powder, dynamite and electricity; who can tell, when the war-cloud bursts, the terror of the explosion and the deluge of fire, lead and blood that must overwhelm the nations of continental Europe? At the present moment the armies stand watching one another, almost breathless with suspense and expectancy. The spark may fly at any moment. It is only the appalling forecast of the consequences which seems to hold back the hand that is to give the signal, forced though it be by the secret societies and all the elements of discontent in Europe.

The truth is that war would prove almost a relief and deliverance from another scourge pressing like a galling weight on those afflicted peoples. This scourge is what is called an *armed peace*, which by its standing armies is a menace of impending war, and a drain on the very sources of a nation's vitality. Europe's actual *armed peace* keeps three million men continually under arms, with a reserve of sixteen millions to be ready at the first signal. Seven hundred million dollars is the annual budget for supplies, taking no account of the eight hundred million dollars deficiency from loss of useful labor.