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diminution of the sources by which that expenditure can be met. That is the future of war—not fighting, but famine, not the slaying of men, but the bankruptcy of nations at the break-up of the whole social organisation."

"Now I begin to perceive how it is that we have as a prophet of the end of war a political economist, and not a soldier."

"Yes," said M. Bloch, "it is as a political economist that I discovered the open secret which he who runs may read. The soldier by natural evolution has so perfected the mechanism of slaughter that he has practically secured his own extinction. He has made himself so costly that mankind can no longer afford to pay for his maintenance, and he has therefore transferred the sceptre of the world from those who govern its camps to those who control its markets."

"But now, M. Bloch, will you condescend to particulars, and explain to me how this great evolution has been brought about?"

"It is very simple," said M. Bloch. "The outward and visible sign of the end of war was the introduction of the magazine rifle. For several hundred years after the discovery of gunpowder the construction of firearms made little progress. The cannon with which you fought at Trafalgar differed comparatively little from those which you used against the Armada. For two centuries you were content to clap some powder behind a round ball in an iron tube, and fire it at your enemy."

"The introduction of the needle gun and of breech-loading cannon may be said to mark the dawn of the new era, which, however, was not definitely established amongst us until the invention of the magazine rifle of very small calibre. The magazine gun may also be mentioned as an