

The following communication breathes so much of the spirit of peace and good will as to render its tone and general bearing acceptable, even if its teachings, on one point, must be viewed as extreme. In such times as these, when the tendencies are all to the opposite extreme, a little on the side of peace may not be altogether inappropriate:—

For the Gospel Tribune.

### THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY IN RELATION TO WAR.

FROM ANDREW ALVINS.

At a time when the world is all patriotism and enthusiasm, all excitement and turmoil, on the subject of war, it may be of importance to enquire, what, in this state of society, is the duty of the Christian? How should those who are not of the world think, speak, and act, in relation to passing events? Shall they seek to mingle with the crowds who throng the fields of carnage? Shall they strive to win for themselves laurels on the field of blood, by leading thousands to death in the hope of victory? or shall they strive to hush the raging elements of war, and cry, in every action of theirs, 'Peace, be still?'

In seeking to answer these questions, we must divest ourselves of everything but the teachings of Him who spake as man never spake; must listen to the authority of Him who is our Master, even Christ. We, as his followers, must listen to his commands. His commission to his chosen ones directs them to teach us "all things whatsoever he has commanded us." To know our duty, then, we have to discover our Saviour's will by enquiring what he taught. In doing so, it will be mine to show that the Gospel sustains the proposition, that

#### CHRISTIANITY IS A RELIGION OF PEACE.

At the commencement of the Christian dispensation, seraphs from the throne of the eternal announced the birth of the Prince of Peace, and in strains more lofty than those which mortals use, sung, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

When our Lord commenced teaching, we hear him announcing the same truth, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." "My kingdom," says Christ, "is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight; but now is my kingdom not from hence." "I came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." These, too, are the words of our Divine Master; and Paul says, "God has called us to peace." Such indeed is what the Prophets, speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit, predicted,—"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

The Christian religion requires that we should ~~serve~~ and not resist. Jesus says:—"I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on

thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Such is also the teaching of the Apostles. Paul says:—"The servant of the Lord *must not strive*; but be patient toward all men." And, again,—"Even unto this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labour, working with our own hands: being *reviled*, we *bless*; being defamed, we *suffer it*." Peter also teaches the same doctrine,—*"For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously."*

Such, then, are the teachings of the Spirit. But let it not be thought the Christian in an enemies' country is left without weapons of defence; true, these "weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty." Having "put on the whole armour of God," taking the "sword of the Spirit," the power of "truth, and the conquering energy of love," he is able, not only to stand on the defensive, but to go forth conquering and to conquer. As weapons of defence, they are superior to all others. I would not assert, that if these were used, and these only, no lives would be lost; but I am confident that if these were used, and the sword and cannon never brought to bear upon a foe of ours, more would be accomplished than is now obtained by arms, and not a tithe of the misery and death would exist, which, alas! we have now to deplore; and, as offensive weapons, there are none like these. Do we wish to slay our enemies, these are the only weapons with which it can be accomplished. The Christian watches his opportunity, and when sickness, affliction, and distress surrounds his foe, he flies to him with arms, heart, and purse, all open, and the work is done! This is the Gospel plan:—"If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for by so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." Oh, yes, brethren! powerful, all-powerful are the Christian's weapons. Furnished with these, he may exultingly enquire,—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" It cannot be done. With those weapons he will conquer every foe. Truth is the Christian's rod of strength; it is the utterance of the power of the Almighty; its illuminations are divinely beautiful and penetrating—chasing away the darkness of ignorance—unmasking and banishing the deeds of the workers of darkness, and throwing its splendours over scenes of duty and toil; all gloomy before, but now pleasing and delightful. Its trumpet-tongued call to duty is more startling than the thunder: its indignant frown turned against evil doers, is darker than the thunder-cloud, and its rebuke more dreadful and scathing than the lightning's flash; and, when to this illuminating, purifying, revolutionizing power of truth, is joined the gentleness and fervour of the love of Christ, the heart of society not only