

In looking more particularly at the moral aspect of the question, strange as it may appear, we find even the professed christian portion of the world, divided in sentiment. While on the one hand it is claimed that God only works by means, and that he would fail to protect us though we should wholly rely upon him if we did not make every possible effort to defend ourselves, when in the language of Paley, "an injury was perpetrated, attempted or feared." On the other hand it is claimed that war, under every circumstance, is Anti-Christian and inexpedient: that a government established upon the only proper basis—the basis of christianity, and conducted under the benign influence of its pure and peaceable spirit, will need no other protection than the guardianship of the Supreme Ruler of the world.

The attentive observer will not marvel at this diversity of sentiment, more especially when he calls to mind, that what has happened may again transpire, "and as the leaders of the people once caused them to err:" Isaiah, chap. 9; ver. 16, even so now in reference to the subject before us, may we not trace the errors in public sentiment, not only to the cause of many ministers of the Gospel, but to the melancholy fact that some of those professedly delegated shepherds of the flock are actually found defending the practice, and encouraging their brethren to engage in its bloody work. Some of us can call to mind a lamentable illustration of this truth, during the time of the Crimean war. On a certain occasion, while the allied armies lay before Sebastopol, a prominent minister of a highly respected christian church, delivered a public lecture, in which he undertook to defend the anomalous doctrine that the meek and devoted followers of the Prince of Peace might justly engage in war; and as the present one was, he assured them, altogether justifiable, that christians ought to pray for its onward progress. Said lecture was published for general circulation, as would appear, under the sanction of the church itself. We can scarcely divest ourselves of the belief that this unfortunate state of the case arises mainly from the want of a candid inquiry into the Scriptural grounds of the question. This belief is further strengthened by the course too generally pursued by the clergy of the United States, during the late civil war. They no doubt greatly encouraged the combatants on both sides, not only by their prayers and exhortations, but some of them engaged in the service, and became active combatants themselves; and if reports say true soon shared the leavening influence of the School in which they were being instructed. "Know ye not," says the Apostle, "that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" Galatians, chap. 5; ver. 9: thereby clearly proving that the camp and battle-field are not the most eligible places to cultivate the graces of the spirit.