

shall weigh with her? Surely the term "spirited" is somewhat out of place; foreign critics account it sordid; and advocates of a policy which has its inspiration solely in our "interests" have but little ground for contempt of those who declare against war altogether. And if we consider only our interests, in one ever memorable sentence Lord Derby has decided the question from that point of view: "Of English interests, beyond all doubt, the greatest is peace." The reproachful term, "Peace at any price," applied to the opponents of war has been very misleading and injurious. It is not for peace, but for war, that the "price," any price, has to be paid, and often paid in vain. Any amount of treasure lavished, and of life expended, any awful "price" paid to ambition, or fanaticism, or lust of gain, is quietly overlooked or craftily thrown into the shade by the advocates of war, and yet they are allowed to taunt those who resist them with "being for peace at any price!" It is high time that the combined arrogance and falsehood of this most deceptive fallacy should cease to impose upon men. Any future struggle among the great European powers is likely to be both bloody and costly beyond all previous experience. When a single shot from a cannon costs five and twenty pounds, besides all charges for transport to the scene of hostilities, it is hard even to imagine, and impossible to calculate, the cost of a war. When a ship that has cost half-a-million, without her stores and armament, can be sent to the bottom in twenty minutes by torpedoes, the price of war has assumed proportions that are simply indefinite. (The Government has lately bought several 100-ton Armstrong guns, at £16,000, without the carriages, which are each very costly.) Then, on land, the forces required for modern campaigns are just nations in arms, nothing less. "To place an army in the field" is a phrase which has in recent

years lost much of its force; to keep it there is the achievement which taxes the belligerent. From almost the commencement of active operations, vast reinforcements have to be poured in; a series of successive armies is in fact required. Thus the accursed conscription is made into a "necessity;" the demon of war demands such hecatombs that the manhood of an entire nation must be laid under contribution to supply them. So it comes to pass that even the joy of a mother in her first-born son is damped by the thought that no sooner has he grown up than he must leave her for military training, and perhaps for a distant and nameless soldier's grave. She rocks the cradle with a pang, at the certain prospect of having, by-and-bye, to yield her darling to the perils of war. The writer has heard such things discussed amid the gladness of a baptismal party. Even in time of peace, the unsettling effect of compulsory military training is severely felt. Just at the age when young men should be getting into some satisfactory position, and perhaps preparing to marry, to be called away from trade or work and be compelled to devote a certain term of the most valuable and critical portion of life to military service, is in itself no slight calamity. And, worst of all, tastes and habits are often formed which affect the after years. If a young man returns to his civil duties, untainted in morals and with his business qualifications and diligence unimpaired, he has escaped dangers of the utmost severity and exhibited extraordinary force of character. Now, is England prepared for compulsory and universal military service, with all its attendant evils? If success did not attend our arms—and of all things the fortune of war is uncertain—it should not be forgotten that the custom of exacting an indemnity from the vanquished has been very much in vogue of late; and from no nation in the world would such an