

settle the differences as they should have done before the clash of arms. As they should have done? No, not so well. One side perhaps lies prostrate at the feet of the conqueror, and with its people depressed, its cities burned, its productive fields laid waste or abandoned, its factories in ruins, and all its industries paralyzed, must from its enfeebled resources pay whatever indemnity the forbearance of the more powerful nation may accept. And who then will comfort the weeping of those who have remained at home awaiting the return of sons, husbands, fathers, who come not, the unknown dead of the field of battle, or the depths of the sea? In the bitterness of their anguish may they not hear a voice whispering, questioning whether war be the surest way of preserving the peace and happiness of a people? Can we not imagine the perplexed wonder with which a guest from a more peaceful planet would view this absurd horror?

"Does this race consider itself intelligent he might ask," that it will expend billions of dollars in an affair of millions, intentionally sacrifice thousands of its bravest and best, and bring lamentation and heartache to multitudes of women and children? Instead of going to all the expense and trouble of preparing for this barbarity why do they not try to arrange beforehand by treaty for an amicable settlement of all difficulties that may occur?

What could be answered is beyond my comprehension. "But," you may say "suppose we are attacked without cause?" "That is so improbable as to be practically impossible. It is only an excuse. We know that we would attack no other nation without cause, and it is hardly fair to presume that we differ greatly from our foreign friends in virtue and magnanimity.

If as a flight of fancy we should imagine that with or without provocation a foreign fleet, knowing that we have no State naval militia to protect us, and also, if it be not irrelevant,

supposing we had no other navy, nor forts, nor brave national guard, should steam into our harbor and knock down our Goddess of Liberty, our City Halls, and the New York Custom House, and drop a few bombs on our breakfast tables, then land troops into our streets and take possession, would it not then, you may ask, be our right and duty to resent the injury and drive out the invader by bloody war? The case is so improbable that it is difficult to say what should be done, but that war would be the proper expedient would certainly not occur to the negative of this debate. War would be but to agument the trouble. A presentation of the facts of the case to the foreign power and a sincere offer to do the amende honorable, if the assault had been provoked by our own citizens, would go far to smooth the difficulty. Our territory is greater than that of Europe; our numerous population is as intelligent, prosperous, and upright, and the moral force of such a nation appealing not to arms, but to the better sense, the honor, and the justice of another country should not be underestimated. But even supposing the hard-hearted enemy should refuse to withdraw, and we were equipped for war, would the offering of our land for devastation, or the devastating of our foe's fair fields make the matter better? Would it not be better to suffer the wrong for a time and trust that in the course of events the inevitable justice must prevail? We live in an age when the people think and act and rule. By peaceful agitation the most despotic governments are induced to bow to the will of their subjects and grant their desires. A president may seat himself on a throne by armed force, but an emperor is deposed by the wish of the people without the sound of a gun or the gleam of a sabre when the fitting time has arrived. Why then should we prepare for war? It is the sum of horrors, a preparation for disasters greater than that of the Conemaugh, a license to