

the peaceful decision of controversies between states whose interests are materially different,—that even where tribunals have been instituted for that purpose, the abuses to which they have been made to lend their authority have seldom failed, in the end, to aggravate and multiply the very evils they were intended to prevent. Experience shows, that of all wars, the most obstinate and terrible are those which grow out of such abuses. They partake of the nature of revolution and civil war; the color of authority on the one side, the sense of injustice on the other, inflame the usual bitterness of hostility; and battles are more sanguinary, and victory less merciful, where the contest is waged by parties standing towards each other in the supposed relation of rebel and tyrant. Such institutions, therefore, unless where the circumstances of a country are very peculiar, have inevitably one of two effects: they either strengthen the hands of the oppressor, or they lead to dreadful and

* 170 desolating wars to overthrow him; sometimes, as in * the case of the Germanic empire, and the house of Austria in the seventeenth century, to both.

Upon the whole, your Committee are of opinion that time is the best reformer in such things, and that any attempt to anticipate the natural progress of events, by institutions arbitrarily adopted, would either be vain, or something worse than vain. They have endeavored to show that the cause of peace is visibly gaining ground; that mankind are already become, and will daily become more and more indisposed to sacrifice their comforts and their business to the ambition of governments; nay, that governments themselves, partaking of the spirit of the times, or dreading its effects, avoid, as much as possible, those ruinous contests by which nations are rendered discontented, and rulers more dependent on them, just when suffering and poverty most dispose them to revolt. Instead of Congresses to put an end to war, generally on the foot of the *statu quo ante bellum*, there are Congresses to prevent a rupture, and piles of protocols attest that power, as was said of the Spartans after a memorable defeat, has lost much of its insolent and peremptory brevity of speech. The truth is, that every war hereafter will, by the social disorders that are likely to accompany or to follow such an event, throw additional obstacles in the way of future ones. The sword will thus prove the surest guaranty of peace.

Your Committee, therefore, do not think the establishment of a permanent international tribunal, under the present circumstances of the world, at all desirable; but they heartily concur with the memorialists in recommending a reference to a third power of all such controversies as can safely be confided to any tribunal unknown to the constitution of our own country. Such a practice will be followed by other powers, already inclined, as we have seen, to avoid war, and will soon grow up into the customary law of civilized nations. They conclude, therefore, by recommending to the memorialists to persevere in exerting whatever influence they may possess over public opinion, to dispose it habitually to the accommodation of national differences without bloodshed; and to the House, the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Committee be discharged from the further consideration of the subject referred to them.