

ILL-TIMED MILITARY DISPLAY.

The opening exercises of the exposition at Atlanta, as those of the Columbian exposition at Chicago, were marred by a military display. Both expositions signalized advance in civilization. Each was a triumph of peace, which hath its victories far more intelligent, useful and God fearing, if less renowned, than war.

War is barbarous. It is horrible in its cruelty. The murder wholesale of human creatures, their maiming for life, the agony of fearful wounds, the constant flow of human blood, the torture of camp contracted diseases, suffering, privation, misery, death, are the inevitable attendants of armed conflicts. The horror of warfare does not end with the agony of the immediate participants. Homes are scattered by its bursting shells. Man's cruelty to man carries woe and desolation, poverty and distress into innocent households. The horrid din of battle is echoed by the lamentation of the widow and the despairing cry of the orphan.

War is a curse. It is wasteful as well as inhuman. It is destructive of property as well as of life. War-lit flames consume the granary and the roofter. Thrift is shriveled in the ashes of its desolation. Industry is paralyzed in time of war, save those activities of the forge, the foundry and the mill that arm the hand of murder with its deadliest weapon. In the midst of arms all that makes for human progress is checked, all that tends to human ferocity is aroused to preternatural activity. Conscience is blunted. Moral cowers at the feet of physical forces. Religion is impotent. Christianity is scattered to the winds. The commands of the Prince of Peace are unheard in the shock of arms. Men claiming to hold God's commission urge on the fearful strife and priests of rival camps insult the throne of mercy by frantic or confident appeals that in the contest of killing and maiming God's

creatures to them shall be awarded victory.

In the moral lesion of a war period greed is deepened into extraordinary and scandalous activity. The moneyed class take advantage of the distress of nations and furnish sinews only at ruinous discounts. There is widespread haste to be rich. The common exchequer is bled by shamelessly corrupt contractors. A shoddy aristocracy flaunts the proceeds of its plunder in the face of a suffering people. In the tempest of baleful passions the sentiment of patriotism is lost. The mercenary takes the place of the volunteer. Government commences conscription and Riches hires Poverty as his substitute for the butchery at the front. The bounty jumper becomes as insolent as the bondholder. If Dives bleeds only in the purse Lazarus discovers no reason why he should bleed in the body. The reign of even-handed justice is superseded by the might that makes right. Drunk with blood, the nation, as Byron said, vomits crime. The period of recovery is a long travail. The scars remain forever.

Justified necessary wars are few. Even when a people make the supreme struggle for liberty against wanton or greedy oppression they have lost much even in their triumph. They have tasted blood and are in danger of themselves becoming oppressors. They have conquered in a defensive war. Why not try their victorious guns in a war of aggression?

The republic of the United States, signally favored among the nations, won its independence in a long war, from which it slowly recovered. Its place in the world is well assured. Its civilization is not Mohammedan or Buddhist. It is Christian, and no peoples on the earth are so happily situated in geographical position, in numbers and in resources, to uphold in practice the Christian doctrine of peace as this republic of the North American continent. It has no colonies to defend, unfortunately it has no commerce in dis-