WAR.

ALTHOUGH the time may be very far distant when the nations will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, there can be no doubt that, with the advance of civilization and of popular institutions, wars will become less frequent. Neighbouring countries do not now look upon themselves as natural enemies; they rather regard themselves as natural friends, who are nevertheless liable to quarrel occasionally. A wrong done by one civilized nation to another creates a feeling of dislike to the aggressor throughout the civilized world; and the influence of public opinion in other nations is perhaps already felt to some extent, and is certain to be felt in a much higher degree hereafter. In the days of absolute monarchies a sovereign may have thought little of the comforts and even the lives of his people; but, now that power is being placed in the hands of those who suffer by war, hostilities will not be lightly entered upon. International trade has been greatly extended of late years, and its interruption by war involves a loss to both countries. Until the present century France was looked upon as the natural enemy of England; but

even independently of our trade with France, who is there now that would not regret having our intercourse with that country cut off, and our friendly relations interrupted ? Wars are expensive, and the expense appears to increase rather than to diminish with the progress of civilization; and when the taxpayers become rulers, this item attains no inconsiderable importance. Then there is the loss of life, the hardships of the conscription that has often to be resorted to, and the necessity of providing for those who have been disabled in the service of their country—all of which considerations will have more weight with the masses than with absolute rulers. With the disappearance of Absolutism, wars of mere caprice will disappear. Wars of conquest, at least among civilized countries, will also become rare. Not only are the people of one civilized country unwilling to keep those of another civilized country in enforced subjection, but they find it unprofitable to do so. Unless there are some special reasons for it (such as the acquisition of a scientific frontier, as it has been termed), ruling over a discontented people is an expensive and thankless task, and the ruling nation finds itself weakened rather than strengthened thereby. It is only when it can make the conquered people contented with their new situation that the acquisition proves of real value. There is, moreover, another obstacle to wars of conquest. Many civilized countries possess local forces capable of accomplishing a good deal in resisting an invading army, but almost incapable of being employed in aggressive warfare. Should this system be extended, and

these local forces organized with care, each of the belligerents may find itself stronger than its adversary in defensive, and weaker in offensive, warfare; in which case a continuance of hostilities could hardly prove beneficial to either. It may be hoped, too, that in future statesmen will be more open to the calls of reason and justice. If we exclude revolutionary wars (which, however, may be in most cases indirectly traced to despotism), there is hardly an European war of the present century that did not arise from the wrong-headedness of some autocrat; while the wars of the nineteenth century have, I believe, been considerably fewer than those of the eighteenth.

These observations are, of course, less applicable to semi-civilized and barbarous races. Civilized races have, I fear, often indulged in purely aggressive wars against these latter, with a view of self-aggrandizement; and their anxiety to extend their trade, and to form colonies, will lead to a continuance of these aggressive wars for some time longer. But at other times these wars are forced upon us. Forbearance on the part of the civilized races is regarded as weakness, and nothing but a sharp lesson will compel their savage neighbours to keep the peace. It is in the gradual extension of civilization over the world that we must seek a remedy for such wars as these, and in the meantime mere rapacity should be forcibly suppressed. Civilized races should neither rob, nor allow themselves to be robbed, nor should they harbour or encourage robbers; and the case is made worse when murder is added to robbery, even

though the murderers risk their own lives in the attempt. Assassins are often courageous, but that circumstance only renders them more dangerous to society.

The object of the present Essay, however, is—treating war as for the present a necessary evil—to consider the manner in which it ought to be conducted. That war between civilized countries is now conducted in a much milder manner than formerly is evident, and most persons will, I think, admit that this is a decided improvement. I may add that this improvement does not seem to have affected the rapidity or completeness of the successes gained by the armies whose campaigns were conducted in accordance with what are now recognized as the usages of civilized warfare. But it seems to me that a mutual agreement among civilized nations to carry the same system farther would be both desirable and practicable. The first rule should be, I apprehend, that under all ordinary circumstances warfare should be confined to organized belligerents. The invading army (for one of the contending armies must always occupy that position) should inflict no injury on the people which is not absolutely necessary for military purposes. The defending army should follow the same course; and the people should likewise abstain from inflicting any injury on the invaders. Perhaps in a genuine war of conquest this last rule might be departed from; but most wars of invasion are not wars of conquest. Both parties frequently become invaders in turn; and neither have any intention of permanently annexing the portion of the enemy's territory which they occupy during their

operations. Indeed it may be doubted whether the employment of undisciplined and half-armed masses in resisting an invasion is ever justifiable. Their resistance brings great suffering on themselves and their country, while it rarely, if ever, exercises an important influence on the issue of the campaign. In open fight they are slaughtered like sheep; but they often play the part of wolves towards the wounded and stragglers whose deaths infuriate but hardly weaken the enemy. Nobody seriously imagined that after the armies of France had been decisively defeated, the advance of the victorious Germans could be arrested by the efforts of the *franc-tireurs;* and beyond the limits of Alsace and Lorraine there never was any real risk of conquest and annexation. The *franc-tireurs* inflicted some loss on Germany at the expense of a much greater loss to France, and most probably their employment did not mitigate a single clause of the subsequent Treaty of Peace. It would have been far better for France, and better also for Germany, if the Republican rulers of the former country had at once accepted the position in which the Emperor had placed them, and made the best terms they could with an enemy whom they could not compel to relinquish his acquisitions, and who was practically in possession of Alsace and Lorraine when they succeeded to power.

I should have almost thought it unnecessary to lay down this rule against doing injury for which there is no strategic reason, were it not that I find an opposite doctrine laid down in the late Mr. Fawcett's very able *Manual of Political Economy*. It does not, however, appear

to have been adopted by the Ministry of which he was a member. That there may be no misrepresentation, I think it best to state the theory in his own words. Having explained how it is that defeated nations often recover very rapidly from the calamities of war, he justly remarks that this is not the case when any considerable portion of the fixed capital of the country has been destroyed in the contest. He then proceeds, 'The richer a country is the more severe may be the injury inflicted on her by war, if the enemy should destroy any considerable part of the wealth which is in the form of fixed capital, and which constitutes her industrial plant. If Germany had adopted this policy in her war with France, it would have been impossible for France to have recovered her prosperity with the very remarkable rapidity to which allusion has just been made. Of late years a feeling of false humanity has attempted to make the rights of private property respected in war. Life may be sacrificed with as much prodigality as ever.* The foremost mechanical genius of a mechanical age is devoted to the production of weapons of death; but civilization, it is said, demands that there should be no wanton destruction of property. No such attempt to palliate the material disasters of war ought to be encouraged. War will be rendered less frequent if a whole nation is made to feel its terrible consequences, instead of concentrating all the horrors

* Mr. Fawcett should have added 'in battle.' In former wars vast numbers of lives were sacrificed otherwise than in battle. This is now rarely done, and creates a general feeling of indignation when it is. The massacres at Batak and Panegurishta cost the present Sultan half of his European territory. It is to be regretted that the other half did not follow.

in the sacrifice of thousands of helpless victims who may be marshalled at the caprice of a despot. If any nation should ever threaten England with invasion, England ought to speak in unmistakable language that her vengeance would not be confined to a retributive slaughter of soldiers, but that she would destroy all the public works upon which the wealth of the nation mainly depended. This will give a practical check to vaulting ambition, and might arouse a nation to restrain the military designs of the most despotic ruler.' (*Manual of Political Economy*, pp. 34–5.)

It is not clear whether Mr. Fawcett intended to speak of a threatened invasion of England only, or also an invasion of her dependencies—of India, for example, by the Russians, or of South Africa by the Boers. The two latter instances, however, are almost enough to refute the theory. The Czar would smile if we threatened to destroy the great railway from St. Petersburg to Odessa in revenge for an invasion of India by his troops; and the Boer has no fixed capital to destroy except perhaps his slaves (whom he alleges are not slaves). But the principle, if good for anything, must be applied to both combatants; and if this country was invaded, Mr. Fawcett would scarcely have wished to see it applied by the enemy to the fixed capital of England. No doubt, owing to our insular position and the strength of our navy, we are tolerably free from risk of invasion so far as our own soil is concerned; but, with the exception of the United States, what civilized country is in the same position? If the principle of destroying fixed

capital had been adopted by both belligerents during the Napoleonic wars, how much of the fixed capital of Europe would have been left at the end of them?* If we except the limited amount of damage that can be inflicted by a hostile navy, this destruction of public property and fixed capital can only be effected by an invading force, and the invaders are most frequently the aggressors. Moreover, as already remarked, the assailants often become defenders and the defenders assailants in the course of the same campaign, or in two successive campaigns; in which case the destruction of property on one side would probably be as great as on the other. Mr. Fawcett seems to have regarded the rapid recovery of France as a thing to be regretted—at least from the German point of view. But is it so? How has the renewed prosperity of France injured Germany? or how is it likely to injure her?

I do not believe there is any instance in history in which a victorious army (unless wholly composed of mercenaries) was arrested in its course of success and compelled to make peace, because the money to carry on the war was not forthcoming. Nor is there an instance of a country, abundantly supplied with brave and disciplined troops, having yielded to the enemy through monetary pressure. If the Prussians could have destroyed half the wealth of France, it would not have

* And as France was not invaded till the very end of these wars, the adoption of the rule would have had no tendency to induce the French people to stay the hand of the Emperor. Europe might have had additional motives for submitting to his dictation, but that would have been all.

saved them after the battle of Jena; nor if the French could have treated the Prussians similarly after the battle of Sedan, would it have influenced the terms of peace. And if the Grand Army had carried its destructive propensities a little farther, how many of those who composed it would have escaped alive from the snows of Russia? The military effects of this destruction of property are in general very small; and as no nation can count upon uniform success, it would be well for belligerents to recollect that the country which is worsted in the struggle may have to pay a war indemnity to the enemy. If in revenge for a Russian invasion of India we laid Odessa in ashes, we might have to rebuild it at our own expense as a condition of retaining any portion of our Oriental dependencies, and we might thus learn an useful lesson with regard to the wanton destruction of private property in war. Had the French employed their fleet in this way during the late contest, it is not improbable that their war indemnity might have been doubled.

Mr. Fawcett relies on the deterrent effects of the destruction of fixed capital; but it has other effects which are equally worthy of notice. If the invaders make war on the people, the people will make war on them. Guerillas, *franc-tireurs*, and treacherous guides will be found on all sides; and if private property is doomed, the defending army or the people themselves will destroy it, and thus expose the advancing force to great inconvenience for want of food and provender. But supposing these difficulties surmounted, and the victorious

invaders dictate a peace to the people whom they have ruined, what will be the result? The conquered will no doubt shrink from a conflict on the same terms, but they will eagerly look out for an opportunity of revenge. The French, for instance, would watch for a chance of obtaining the assistance of Austria or Russia in order to pay the Germans back in their own coin, and whenever the German Emperor found himself in difficulties, and was anxious to secure at least the friendly neutrality of France, he would find that country ranged on the side of his enemies. It is, indeed, the old barbarous methods of warfare, which (softened, perhaps, as regards the lives of non-combatants) Mr. Fawcett sought to revive, that have given rise to those national antipathies which have been transmitted from one generation to another, and are perpetually breaking out into acts of hostility—that have prevented the fusion of conquering and conquered races, and have often made territorial acquisitions a permanent source of weakness to the conquerors. War would have a greater deterrent effect if, whenever a town was captured, the inhabitants were massacred; but Mr. Fawcett would not have advocated a return to this practice. He would only impoverish them; but he would do that as permanently as possible, so that years of progress would be necessary to recover the ground lost by the war, the only gain being that they would, as he supposed, be slower to engage in a new contest with the victors. The latter are as likely to have been in the wrong as in the right, and to have been the aggressors as the defenders, and the deterrent effects of the war may

consist in inducing the vanquished to submit to injuries and insults which they would otherwise have resented—to submit until they see, or believe they see, an opportunity of revenge. And revenge in this case would probably go considerably beyond the limits within which Mr. Fawcett sought to justify it. Reprisals usually repay the original debt with interest at a very high rate. The true rule I believe is, that no injury of any kind should be inflicted without adequate military reasons.

But I now come to a second rule which does not appear to be fully recognised by civilized nations, and which seems still more obvious, viz., that war should not be carried on in such a manner as to injure the countries which take no part in it. This rule is violated by the common process of blockading an enemy's coast. This blockade often intercepts a great part of the trade of the blockaded country. In this trade there are always two countries concerned, one of which is probably neutral; and it is perhaps on this latter country that the blockade inflicts the greatest loss. If the French, for example, should blockade the Chinese coast, it seems certain that, at least so far as the Anglo-Chinese trade is concerned, we would be injured to a greater extent than the Chinese. Sometimes, indeed, neutral powers object to a blockade as ineffective, and call upon the blockading power to render it effective, or else to abandon it. But the effective blockade is the worst of all blockades, and should not be permitted unless there are very strong military reasons for it. Even then I think compensation should be made to the injured

neutrals. The blockade of an enemy's coast, like the destruction of property, hardly ever exercises an important influence on the question of peace and war. The practice seems rather to have descended to us from the days when each country tried to do the other as much damage as possible, without distinguishing between belligerents and non-belligerents. The blockade of the Confederate States would have effected nothing unless the Federals had proved victorious in the field; and if the Confederates had fitted out a hundred Alabamas to commit licensed robberies on the high seas, it would not have saved them from the consequences of Grant's and Sherman's successes. But the blockade injured other countries and England in particular, where the cotton famine is not yet forgotten; while the Southern privateers, had they been more numerous, would have injured other countries also by the partial stoppage of their trade with the United States. Indeed, the wanton destruction of fixed capital in any country can hardly fail to affect other countries injuriously. Destroy the railways, canals, ports, and factories, of any country, and its trade with other countries must suffer, to the detriment of both. To return to a former illustration: if we could destroy a large portion of the fixed capital of Russia in revenge for her invasion of India, the price of Russian corn would be considerably enhanced after the peace; and if circumstances threw us mainly upon Russia for our food supply, we might find that the Russian agriculturists were earning as much as before, while we were paying a much higher

price for our bread. The injury in this case, however, would be only indirect.* In that of a blockade it is direct. The stoppage of the cotton trade between England and the Southern States occasioned quite as considerable a loss to the former country as to the latter. A single country, indeed, could hardly refuse to recognize blockades without involving itself in hostilities with the blockading belligerent, but an united determination on the part of civilized countries would at once put an end to them. No country would, I believe, be really injured by such a determination. I hope, also, that whenever the blockaded country proves victorious, it will insist on an ample war indemnity.

The duty of avoiding unnecessary slaughter of belligerents is pretty generally recognized by civilized countries in the more serious branches of warfare. The slaughter of wounded men, prisoners, and others who are incapable of resisting, is universally condemned and rarely resorted to, while few generals will recklessly expose their own men. Sometimes, indeed, a considerable sacrifice of life at a particular juncture proves a saving of life afterwards, and may even prove the turning-point of a campaign. Much must here be left

* It should be added, however, that much foreign capital, and especially English capital, is invested in railways and other public works in almost every country. We could hardly destroy any of these works without injury to ourselves and to neutrals, even though the enemy should be the greatest sufferers. Again, most countries hold a good deal of English and other foreign capital on loan. If we succeeded in impoverishing such a country, the stability of these loans would be endangered, and we should bear our own share of the resulting loss. For these, among other reasons, property should never be destroyed without some important strategic object.

to the discretion of the general, but a nation should abstain from appointing a commander of known callousness in this respect. Civil war, however, is still frequently made an exception to the prevailing practice of civilized nations. For this exception there is no reason whatever. Our fellow-countrymen are, as a rule, entitled to more indulgence than strangers; and while armies may, at the bidding of a despot or dictator, engage in the most causeless of foreign wars, large bodies of citizens hardly ever rise in arms without strong reasons for so doing. And severity has as little effect on stamping out the seeds of insurrection as it has in preventing a renewal of foreign warfare. There is probably no instance of a formidable civil war ending in the complete subjection of one party, which was followed by less severity to the vanquished than the recent contest in the United States, and there probably is no instance in which the contest is less likely to be renewed. In Hungary, on the other hand, where the insurgents were severely punished, the Emperor of Austria could only regain the allegiance of his subjects by granting them the greater portion of the rights, the deprivation of which had driven them into revolt; and even this might have proved insufficient were it not that the war was commenced before he ascended the throne, and that his youth and inexperience at the time led the people to attribute the severities in question to his advisers, rather than to the Emperor himself. The case of Ireland is in some respects similar to that of Hungary; but though a much longer period has elapsed since the

last considerable rebellion and the suppression of the Irish Parliament, the concessions of England can hardly be said to have produced a general feeling of loyalty among the Irish people. In many quarters England is still looked upon as an enemy, and her concessions are regarded as the result of timidity on her part, or else as the product of the competition of English political parties for the Irish vote. And the opinion is now becoming prevalent that England will ultimately abandon her friends to the tender mercies of her enemies in Ireland as well as in South Africa, provided that a sufficient amount of pressure is brought to bear. It should be stated, however, that this condition of things by no means dates from the Rebellion of 1798, or from the Union Act of 1800. Ireland is, in fact, the most conspicuous example of the evils resulting from the system of warfare which, in a somewhat modified form, Mr. Fawcett advocated. The Irish people were made to feel the full horrors of war on every possible occasion, and the result has been that their hatred (I speak of the native Irish, not the descendants of recent English and Scotch settlers) of the English race still continues, though all reasonable cause for it has long since disappeared. This hatred is working evil to England already, and ere long it is not unlikely that the balance of political power in the Kingdom will depend on an Irish party which, unless heavily bribed, will always range itself on the side which it believes to be most disadvantageous to England. 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity'; and Ireland will not forego her opportunity,

even on the concession of local self-government. She will insist on having a voice in the Imperial Legislature also, and that voice (so far as the majority of votes is concerned) will still be raised in favour of the enemies of England whoever they may be.* How to put an end to this state of things is a problem well worthy of the consideration of English statesmen; but under the present system of government by party, no one seems disposd to attend to it for any other purpose than that of making political capital out of it. Our party leaders buy the Irish vote if they can. If they cannot, they appeal to the English people for support, on account of the firmness with which they have sustained the cause of law and order in Ireland, and resisted unreasonable popular agitation.

It is no doubt true that the person who causes a civil war commits a great crime, and merits severe punishment; but is not the same thing true of the person who causes any war? And again, who is it that causes the outbreak? The king and his advisers, I believe, in the great majority of instances. Civil war is like schism in

* Yet some politicians are so anxious to purchase the Irish vote for the time being, that they decline to apply the principle of population to the representation of the three portions of the Kingdom. That principle would be unduly favourable to Ireland, inasmuch as her population is steadily decreasing, while those of England and Scotland are steadily advancing. It is likewise unduly favourable to her because her people do not possess the same qualifications for the calm and deliberate exercise of the franchise which the English and Scotch people possess, and because she contributes less than her proper proportion (as measured by population) to the public revenue, which it is the duty of the Legislature to assess and distribute. But though the population principle is thus unduly favourable to Ireland, it would seem that it is not favourable enough for the intended purchasers of the Irish vote.

the Church. The seceders are abused, anathematized, and perhaps put to death; but the cause of the secession is generally to be found in the obstinacy and bigotry of the rulers of the original body, who are the real schismatics —the authors of schism—in the case. No single individual could induce a large number of the people to rise in arms against a Government which was doing no wrong. Before every insurrection which attains serious proportions there must be a wide-spread feeling of dissatisfaction, and for this dissatisfaction there is always a reason. It may no doubt be a bad reason. In the American civil war the cause seems to have been that after their long unbroken rule, the Democrats could not, with complacency, see the government of the country pass from their hands into those of the Republicans; and the former majority, which had been converted into a minority, fought for the power which it could no longer retain by the constitutional methods hitherto adopted.* And if party feeling should continue to become more intense in this country, the time may come when, after a long unbroken rule, the Liberals will fight rather than suffer the Conservatives to take advantage of the final turn of the tide.† But the cause of civil war is always

* Or rather the Southern Democrats did so. The Northern Democrats, for the most part, adhered to the Constitution.

† This was written before the late riots in Birmingham, which seem to indicate that the period in question may not be very remote. The doubtful chance of returning a Conservative for the city proved sufficient to produce a riot of formidable dimensions, with apparently some very discreditable concomitants. So much for freedom of speech and freedom of election in any place where a 'tyrant majority' has once been established. Had this tyrant majority been Conservative, the result would probably have been the same in case of a Liberal invasion.

to be found in some widely-extended feeling—some sentiment which, if not felt by the majority, at all events is felt by a large minority, and which always has some rational grounds. This sentiment will not be extinguished by massacres, executions, confiscations, banishments, or other pains and penalties. Queen Mary could not kill all the heretics in England, nor could Philip kill all the heretics in the Netherlands; and in both countries the oppressed heretics ultimately became the dominant party. The cruel suppression of Wallace's revolt in Scotland was followed by the victories of Bruce, and produced an animosity between the English and Scotch which lasted long afterwards. Small bodies of reformers or fanatics may be stamped out by such methods; but where their system was one calculated to gain a hold on the public mind, some one else is pretty certain, ere long, to revive it; and where this is not the case, it could equally have been extinguished by less violent means. What did the slaveholders of the Southern States gain by the execution of John Brown and his few brave, but somewhat fanatical, followers at Harper's Ferry? Brown became a popular hero, and the object at which he aimed was effected almost before he was cold in his grave.

The duty of preserving the lives of soldiers from other dangers than those of the battle is generally acknowledged, but it is very frequently neglected. Red-tape-ism, peculation, jobbery, want of proper foresight, ignorance, and indolence, have hurried more soldiers to an untimely grave than the shot and steel of the

enemy. Persons guilty of these defaults should be severely punished. The Ministers to whom any portion of the conduct of the war is entrusted should have a practical knowledge of military matters. Jobbery should be made, if not a criminal offence, a ground for excluding the jobber from all official employments in future.* Contracts should not be taken at the lowest figure, or from unknown men, but from men of wealth and reputation, who should be strictly bound to their fulfilment; and the Minister who shirked any important preparation with a view of saving expense, on the chance that it might not be ultimately required, should receive his final dismissal. England, as the wealthiest nation in the world, with an army proportionately much smaller than that of any of her neighbours, should not merely expect, but insist, that everything should be in apple-pie order at the opening of the campaign—that the sick-lists of her army should be kept at the lowest possible figure, and that the general should never be impeded in his plans for want of provisions, ammunition, or means of transport. Yet few countries have proved themselves more deficient in this respect than England. Pounds, shillings, and pence, are usually a matter of more importance to an English Minister than to any other public financier, not because money

* I do not think there would be any great difficulty in detecting and proving jobbery where it existed. Evidence might be taken on oath before a public Commission as to the qualifications and testimonials of the person who had been appointed to some important post, of those of the other applicants, and of the means taken to procure applications from qualified persons; also as to any reasons for the appointment other than the qualifications of the selected individual.

is more difficult to raise, but because he is liable to be questioned more closely about it. In carrying on war with civilized countries we have hitherto usually supplied a comparatively small force, which operated only in conjunction with our allies; so that though the gaps in its ranks were proportionally large, it was not difficult to fill them up. And the courage and endurance of the British soldier often brought us victoriously through difficulties that few others would have surmounted. But this is now changed. We are less likely to fight in the company of allies than before, and if we again embark in an European war, we must place larger armies in the field. The improvements in the manufacture of firearms have rendered the hand-to-hand struggle, in which we excelled, of less importance in warfare, and I think there is no doubt that our troops have also deteriorated. This may be in part the consequence of the short service system; but another cause, I believe, is the growth of the urban and manufacturing population, from the lowest portion of which most of our recruits seem to be drawn. These men are, I believe, inferior to the rural population in health, strength, and spirit. I do not believe that those who lost the fights of Maiwand, Isandlwana, Laing's Nek, and Majuba Hill, would have conquered at Waterloo, Sobraon, or Inkermann. Most Englishmen are brave enough; but our present troops must be brought into battle in good condition, and their endurance in the battle-field must not be too severely tested, if we mean them to come out victorious. It will not do to keep them without food from morning till night, waiting during a part

of the time for ammunition or artillery to reply to the enemy's fire, without the old resource of a bayonet-charge. Whatever *may* be required should be in readiness. It is better to waste money and stores than to sacrifice men, and jeopardize the success of the campaign. Men suffering from cold, starvation, and disease, cannot be expected to present a bold front to the enemy. Even in the Crimea they could hardly have done so but for the strength of their position, and the miserable plight of the Russians.

The sacrifice of lives or even property in proceedings which cannot affect the result of the campaign, or the terms of peace, is evidently unjustifiable; but it is by no means uncommon. No doubt a good deal of strategy is often displayed in holding a larger force in check, and preventing it from striking at a really vital quarter. But there is often a good deal of bloodshed which cannot be brought under this head. During the Crimean War (as it has been termed) the Allied fleets in the Chinese waters attacked the Russian fort of Petropaulovski, situated at the eastern extremity of the Russian possessions in Asia. I have no doubt that the Allied commanders in the Crimea never counselled this proceeding, or even heard that it was in contemplation. The attack was repulsed; but does anyone imagine that the final treaty of peace would have differed by a single word if it had succeeded (unless perhaps by a provision that the Allies should give back the fort of Petropaulovski to Russia)? Or suppose we had captured the fort and kept it on the conclusion of peace, what would we have gained? Again, how was our victory at Bomarsund

more profitable to us than our defeat at Petropaulovski? What, indeed, was the value of all our naval operations in the Baltic? We injured Russia, it may be said. We did so to a certain extent, and to a smaller extent we injured ourselves; but what did we or anyone else gain? Who would now be the better or the worse if the fort at Bomarsund was still in the exact condition in which Sir Charles Napier found it?

This leads me to suggest another rule which rather belongs to treaties of peace than to war, viz., that the victors should not take advantage of a peculiar combination of circumstances to impose severe and dishonourable terms upon a powerful adversary. Such terms, from the very nature of the case, cannot be permanent, and such a peace lays the basis of another war. When the Russian army, foiled at Silistria and threatened by the Austrians, retired from the Turkish territory, there can be little doubt that peace might have been concluded on fair and reasonable terms. But it was not every day that England, France, Turkey, and Sardinia, could be found united against a common enemy, and it was determined (somewhat on Mr. Fawcett's principles) to give Russia a severe lesson, which might deter her from future aggression on the Turks.* The Allies tried this plan, accordingly, at a great sacrifice of men and money,

* Or rather, I believe, which might remove out of the path of the French Emperor one of his great military rivals in Europe. In this he succeeded partially; and he then tried the same plan on another military rival with the same partial success. There remained a third military rival to be crushed before French ascendancy was complete. The Emperor tried it, and we know the result. The first Napoleon lowered the pride of Austria and Prussia, but

and for the time they succeeded. But diplomacy soon made large breaches in their Treaty, and then the sword of Skobeleff, of Gourko, and of Melikoff cut it to fragments. A British Minister brought us back 'Peace with Honour,' by accepting terms which would probably have satisfied the Emperor Nicholas when Silistria seemed on the point of falling into his hands, and when he thought he could reckon on the gratitude of Austria. And the leader of the other great English political party, who had been a Cabinet Minister during the Crimean War, blamed Lord Beaconsfield, not for permitting his Treaty to be torn up, but for endeavouring to save the smallest fragment of it. Twenty-five thousand British soldiers had been sent to their graves in order to procure a document which one of those who sent them there would have burned to the last spark. We had, moreover, added one hundred millions to our national debt, and the only result of our labours which was left at the end of a quarter of a century consisted of the names of Alma, Balaklava, and Inkermann. Prudence itself might well recommend moderation in victory. But the present century affords a more startling illustration of the same fact—Prussia after the battle of Jena, and Prussia after the battle of Sedan.

In carrying on war with semi-civilized or barbarous races these rules of warfare must occasionally be varied.

Russia crushed him. His successor lowered the pride of Russia and Austria, but Prussia crushed him. The two Napoleons had no such guiding idea as the Unity of Germany, which fired the ambition of Bismarck. They merely sought the military ascendancy of France—or rather of themselves as Emperors of France—and they had their reward.

In the first place, all the able-bodied men of the tribe are frequently belligerents, and they sometimes will not cease fighting, or at least trying to damage the enemy, when wounded or otherwise rendered incapable of effective resistance. Possibly, however, the reason why a wounded Arab or Zulu still attempts to kill or injure the British soldier is that, from his experience of savage warfare, he expects no mercy; and if satisfied that we carried on war after a different fashion, he would quietly lay aside his weapons. Our own wounded would, no doubt, act in the same manner if they expected no quarter from a victorious enemy. Unless the object is to exterminate a savage tribe, simply killing them in numbers does no good whatever. They are too well accustomed to see massacres on a large scale in their own wars (or even when no war is in progress) to be much influenced by another scene of the same kind. And this observation is applicable to the majority of semi-barbarous races also. The famous Governor Yeh probably executed as many men in a month at Canton as the French killed in their late operations at Foochow, and this without exciting any open ebullition of discontent. The French attack has been compared to a battue, and it probably had as much effect on the Chinese as the battue has on the pheasants that are not under fire; while our Gallic neighbours might repeat the operation every day in the year without seriously diminishing the number of fighting men which China could put into the field. A sudden and startling destruction of men may produce an effect on savages; such, for instance, as that

caused by the explosion of a mine, or by a cavalry charge, or artillery fire at close range, where cavalry and artillery were previously unknown ; but mere butchery is as objectionable in wars against savages as in wars against civilized nations. Owing to their familiarity with it, less hatred and resentment may be produced by it among savages, but the deterrent effects are weaker in a still greater proportion. No one would probably advocate killing the women and children of savage races, but it is sometimes done directly, and more frequently indirectly. This should be put a stop to. We should give the natives an example of superior humanity, as well as of superior skill, and show them that warfare may be carried on effectively without resorting to the barbarous methods which they have hitherto practised. If we mean to establish ourselves permanently in an uncivilized country without exterminating the natives, we must make them contented with our rule ; and excessive slaughter and damage to property at the outset will place serious obstacles in the way of rendering them contented subjects afterwards.

In such cases we are often placed in difficulties by the conduct of European settlers. They covet the lands or the cattle of the natives, and either endeavour to take them by force—thus leading to a collision—or else try to involve the natives in a quarrel which will end in war and confiscation. We must, no doubt, protect the lives of settlers against the unprovoked attacks of the natives, and also maintain the former in their fairly-acquired property ; but all rapacity on their part should be sternly

discouraged. When settlers commit crimes we should show the natives that there is a power that can and will inflict punishment, and thus render it unnecessary for them to take the law into their own hands.* The greatest care should be taken to prevent those who have provoked a quarrel with the natives from gaining anything by it, and I think it would be reasonable to make them contribute towards the expenses of the military and police, whose presence is required for their protection. Cattle-stealing seems to be a recognized military operation in South Africa. The object appears to be to reduce the natives to starvation, and thus to submission. This is rather more than an indirect method of making war on women and children, for they will undoubtedly be the greatest sufferers by the famine which is thus produced. When submission follows, moreover, the stolen goods are not restored, nor I believe is anything done to alleviate the famine. The cattle, indeed, have been already disposed of on terms which afford a profit to the settlers, and as the latter usually gain in the matter of land also, they have thus the strongest motives for provoking a new quarrel with the natives, and obtaining a new division of the spoil. The advancement of the latter in civilization is thus retarded, and the prospect of converting the natives to Christianity diminished. Indeed, the settlers have no wish to

* And if this requires any modification of our home system of administering justice, we should make this modification. If, for instance, the class which supplies jurors sympathizes with the criminals, we should modify our system of trial by jury, in order to obtain justice. Substance should always be preferred to form.

see them improved in either respect. The progress of the natives in civilization and religion would make them more dangerous adversaries in war, and would render the English people more disposed to sympathize with them; and to the English people the settlers still look for the men and money required to secure to them their ill-gotten gains. The promotion of civilization among the natives who are subject to our rule, or under our protection, is the great remedy for the 'small wars,' from which England is hardly ever free; and these wars, when necessary, should be conducted in such a manner as to promote, rather than to retard, the progress of civilization, morality, and religion. How can we expect to teach honesty and regard for property to tribes whom we have just been plundering under the pretext of warfare, and with whom we should never have gone to war if there was no plunder to be had? Nor are these observations applicable to South Africa only. Unless the great Russian Empire breaks to pieces from some internal convulsion, the Czar will sooner or later endeavour to wrest from us our possessions in India. What chance would we have of retaining these, if, when the invader reached the frontier, the people of India still entertained the same sentiments towards us that they did at the outbreak of the mutiny in 1857? Nor did the mode of suppressing that outbreak tend to insure us the aid of the natives against Russia in case of an invasion. We have since then, however, had an opportunity of trying to gain their good-will, and this opportunity

will, no doubt, be extended for some years longer. On the manner in which we make use of it, the future of India—and, to a considerable extent, that of England—will probably depend. Two hundred millions of loyal subjects, fairly advanced in civilization, would be an adequate defence against any expedition which Russia could send against us.

Clemency in victory, however, is a different thing from confessed weakness or submission to defeat. Peace concluded with a semi-civilized people like the Boers, when the victory rested with them, could hardly have led to any other results than those which have followed it—the violation of treaty-obligations, the punishment of the natives who were friendly to us, and insults offered to our own people, culminating in the murder of an English officer and lawless violence and rapacity on every hand. After a severe defeat of the Boers, the Transvaal might, perhaps, have been left its independence, with adequate provisions for the protection of the natives. As it is, we shall probably be compelled to reannex it at a great expenditure of blood and treasure, and with an intermediate history which no Englishman (outside of the Cabinet) can regard without shame. We fell into a similar error in Egypt, though fortunately for us a less serious one. After crushing the forces of Osman Digna in two successive battles, we abandoned the whole fruits of our victories, and retired without even concluding a treaty. If our object had been to restore the confidence of the natives in their defeated general, and to withdraw it from ourselves, we could hardly have adopted

a better method. The lieutenant of the Mahdi could point to the captured towns still in his possession, and the besieged towns still unrelieved. The English troops had killed more of his men than the Egyptians had done, and he had killed fewer of theirs in return; but for all other purposes it was merely Baker Pasha's expedition over again. It was not Rescue and Retire, but Retire without rescuing.*

Another rule which ought to be observed in this kind of warfare is not to set natives fighting against each other; and if we do employ native auxiliaries to require them to carry on the war according to civilized methods. The employment of native allies on every possible occasion, and the permission of plunder and slaughter by them, may save money and European lives, but it is not the way to obtain civilized, contented, and loyal subjects; nor is it a course to which a civilized and moral (to say nothing of a religious) nation should give its sanction. If we would use our best exertions to bring about an amicable settlement of the differences between different native tribes or chieftains, and if, whenever we brought native auxiliaries to aid us in our wars, we required them to observe the same rules of warfare with ourselves, we would effect a good deal

* Blunders of this character are not peculiar to any Government or any political party. I have merely selected those which are freshest in the public mind, and the ill-effects of which are probably still in part future. Both in Egypt and South Africa there are symptoms of improvement in our policy since the text was written, but as regards the former I may say that I have no faith in epigrammatic policies of any kind. A really good policy in complicated cases can seldom, if ever, be comprised in an epigram. I fear we have not yet learned to distinguish between oratory and statesmanship.

towards the promotion of civilization among them. And I think it would be desirable at the close of every 'little war,' as it has been termed, to have a public inquiry into the manner in which the campaign had been conducted, and the sufferings inflicted on the natives. Sworn evidence on this point before a Commission of Inquiry would effect much more than the reports of nameless newspaper correspondents—though probably the presence even of the latter has tended to humanise the system of warfare adopted. Few officers would wish to be named in the report of such a Commission as having contributed, either actively or by connivance, to the slaughter of non-belligerents, or the production of a famine in the invaded country. Indeed I think every war might be usefully followed by a public inquiry as to the conduct of the parties engaged in it, by which means the shortcomings of contractors, Government officials, &c., might be brought to light, and the general and his principal officers might not impossibly be relieved from unjust censures on the part of the public. A competent and impartial Commission might be difficult to procure, but the publication of the evidence would probably accomplish more than the report. I think it may be safely predicted that the modes adopted in suppressing the last outbreak in Jamaica will not again be resorted to, though no punishment was inflicted on the Governor except that of quietly placing him on the shelf. Had our proceedings elsewhere obtained the same publicity, the results might also have proved of permanent use. No doubt war cannot be waged in kid gloves; but if the

English people or any other civilized nation goes to war, it ought to know exactly what its emissaries are doing, and if it finds that more suffering is being inflicted on others than it desires to inflict, it should stay their hands accordingly. No one would advocate torture in our prisons on condition that it was to be inflicted in private, and that the sufferer was bound to secrecy, so that the public would not be troubled with heart-rending accounts of the severity of the infliction. But it is pretty much the same thing to enter upon a distant war with semi-civilized races with no accurate information as to the proceedings taken against them (except so far as they are of a purely strategic character), or of the amount of suffering inflicted thereby, and to pass lightly over the accounts of these sufferings which reach us, on the ground that they are furnished by ill-informed, prejudiced, incompetent, and irresponsible persons. Our 'little wars' would, I believe, be carried on with much greater regard to humanity, and with more benefit to this country (I do not say with more benefit to certain rapacious settlers) if accurate reports of what has been done were, in all cases, laid before the public as soon as possible after the operations; and Commissioners might, I think, often be usefully attached to our expeditions with the object of keeping the public accurately informed by a responsible official of matters not coming within the ordinary scope of the commanding officer's despatches.

Note on Government by Party in relation to Foreign Policy.

The evils of government by party are so numerous that I doubt whether, on the whole, its advantages or its disadvantages preponderate. But in reference to our foreign policy, and more especially when barbarous or semi-barbarous races are concerned, its effects have, of recent years, been most disastrous. With such races a steady and consistent policy, even if in some respects objectionable, is far preferable to a policy which changes from day to day with the exigencies of party. But the two political maxims which seem to be at present acted upon by the Opposition are, first—Find fault with everything that your political opponents do while in power; and secondly—Throw every obstacle in the way of carrying out their projects with effect (and if you succeed in defeating them, take credit to yourself for predicting their defeat), while the corresponding Ministerial maxims are, first—Reverse the policy of your predecessors on every possible occasion; and, secondly—When your policy fails, allege that they left affairs in such a condition that failure was inevitable; to which may, perhaps, be added a third maxim, viz. When your blunders are beginning to excite public indignation, allege that the outcry is all the result of party spirit, and a mere device for drawing away the attention of the public from the important measures of home legislation which you have in hand. When a Minister's majority is small, however, there is some limit to the extent to which he

can sacrifice British interests abroad to party interests at home. When the alienation of a few followers may turn the scale he must proceed with caution, but it would seem that a majority of 100 or 150, instead of rendering him strong, renders him reckless. In the present state of party organization, no amount of blundering at a distance from home will convert that majority into a minority before the next General Election—by which time he will probably have concocted some Election Cry more likely to catch the ear of the populace than anything relating to our dependencies in Africa or India. 'It is a far cry to Loch Awe,' says the Scotch adage, but it is a farther cry to Zululand or to the territory of the Bechuanas—especially if there is no official or thoroughly-reliable report of the real state of affairs to refer to. The Minister, of course, takes good care that there *is* no such report until the General Election is over; and then his majority will not desert him even if the report is adverse. Party politics are, in fact, fast degenerating into political trickery—the object being to hoodwink the nation until it has returned pledged representatives whom it cannot afterwards displace.*

* This political demoralization is very wide-spread. Neither political party feels any scruple in depriving of the franchise persons who are entitled to it under the existing law, or in obtaining it for persons who are not entitled. Indeed they often boast of their success in establishing claims and objections when they know perfectly well that many of the claims are shams and many of the objections unfounded, if the person objected to could only spare the time to attend and displace them. It is not long since the writer of this essay was objected to by the agents of both political parties, and as he did not attend, both probably scored one for the service of a notice for which there was no ground whatever.

Members of Parliament, when once returned, do not represent their constituencies. They are mere tools in the hands of some local organization consisting of extreme party men, who continue to dictate to their member when the majority of the electors have espoused the opposite side. When a General Election has given a Minister a large majority, he can almost always secure a majority on a particular question by simply threatening to resign in case he is defeated.* If the question is not regarded as one of very great importance and party feeling runs high, the Ministry may thus escape censure, when three-fourths of their own supporters and all their opponents are satisfied that they are in the wrong. Were this not so, I believe the uninterrupted series of blunders which we have committed in South Africa during the last ten years would have been impossible. The annexation of the Transvaal may have been a mistake; the Zulu war and the terms of settlement in which it ended were undoubted errors; but nothing but the extreme anxiety of the new Administration to undo everything that their predecessors had done, can account for what followed. In this policy they have succeeded with a vengeance. Even the memory of the Conservative errors is likely to be effaced by the gigantic blunders of the Liberals. We have sold our

* Not that this threat alone, perhaps, would have much effect, for if the majority is large enough it is evident that, after a resignation, he must almost immediately return to power again. But then there may be a Dissolution, at which every one who voted against the Minister will be denounced as a traitor, and will probably lose his seat. The member, therefore, either votes against his convictions or does not vote at all.

birthright in South Africa to the Boers without even getting a mess of pottage in return. When they smote us on the one cheek we quietly turned to them the other. It may be safely asserted that no English Minister would have adopted such a policy with any other object than that of discrediting the policy of his predecessors, nor would he have ventured to carry it out had his majority been a narrow one. But the present Administration has overshot the mark, and its conduct will, in all probability, restore the credit of the Beaconsfield policy as a whole instead of leading the public to discriminate between its merits and its defects. It is Cromwell and Charles the Second over again. The former nearly swept the seas clear of the Dutch, and the latter reversed his policy until the citizens of London heard the sound of the enemy's cannon. Had the Loyalists not been so strong as they were, the monarch's reign would have been a short one.

It is impossible for us to occupy our proper position in Continental politics while this process is allowed to continue. One year we take a prominent part in the settlement of some Continental question, and are ready to support our demands with an excellent navy and an army which, if not very large, is at least fully equipped and ready for action. A few years later the same question is again mooted; but so far from being ready for offensive warfare, we are not even prepared for self-defence, and our Foreign Minister is, moreover, a political Gallio who 'cares for none of these things.'—whose only object in fact is to discredit the policy of his prede-

cessors. How, under such circumstances, can we exert the same influence on the councils of the Continent with a power that keeps its object steadily in view, and is always in a tolerable state of preparation? But with the Colonies it is worse. Distant and barbarous or semi-civilized races understand nothing of our party changes, and the result of our tergiversation is that no one knows on what trivial pretext war may be declared (or an invasion commenced without any declaration of war), or, on the other hand, what amount of insult and injury may be inflicted on us without provoking any retaliation on our part. No one knows whether we will or will not defend our friends, and whether we will or will not punish our enemies. We are at present acting the part of the sleeping dog, who allows diminutive curs to carry away bones from under his very nose with impunity. No one knows indeed how long this will continue, or when he may rouse up and snap; but the chance apparently is that, when he does so, it will be to snap at the wrong cur. In such a Government there can be no confidence, and if some little fear may still exist, it is inoperative in restraining lawless violence for the simple reason that no one can predict on whom our vengeance will fall—perhaps on Montsioa for transferring his allegiance from us to the Boers, instead of the Boers who compelled him to do so. It may not be easy to point out how evils of this kind could be removed; but the public should declare firmly that our Colonies must no longer be converted into arenas for a political game of battledore and shuttlecock—that as regards them at

least, our own interests and the interests of our subjects, whether British-born or native, should be preferred to the interests of party, and that the statesman who fails to bear this in mind must expect nothing but perpetual exclusion from office. Law and order should be established throughout our dominions. Our subjects and our allies should be protected. Treaty obligations should be enforced, and evasions of them should receive no more favour than open breaches; while land pirates when taken in the act should be hanged with as little ceremony as sea pirates. We are under special obligations, too, to those whom we have deprived of the means of offering effectual resistance to these piracies—more especially if the wars by which we rendered them powerless were unjust. But under our present system almost any obligation which one Administration undertakes, whether expressly or impliedly, is disowned by its successor, and consequently every step is sinking us deeper in the mire. We are, in fact, doing our utmost to make the natives regard our presence as unmixed evil, and our efforts in this direction seem likely to be crowned ere long with complete success.* Withdrawal from the worst scene of blundering is, in fact, a suggestion that is beginning to be thrown out as the best method of freeing us from the

* On the latest revision of the Boer Treaty, the Transvaal representatives desired to annex Montsioa's territory. This demand our Minister manfully resisted. The Boers yielded, and signed a treaty excluding it from their dominions. They then annexed it, murdering the only English official whom they could lay hands on. The proclamation of annexation has since been withdrawn, but apparently the Boers who took possession of Montsioa's lands have not withdrawn. Whether they will be compelled to withdraw, or treated with summary justice on the spot, remains to be seen.

consequences of our fatuity and misconduct. And, perhaps, if we retired, France or Germany might step in. They might do better than we have done. They could not do worse. But nothing but the utter want of patriotism and public spirit on the part of Ministers could justify such a withdrawal. If we mean to retain them in office at all hazards and to allow them to continue their present course,* the sooner we withdraw the better, for the longer we remain the greater will be the injury to the natives, and the greater will be our own disgrace. But there are very few statesmen who would not alter their policy in deference to public opinion strongly and clearly expressed; and till that remedy for Ministerial blundering has been tried, we should not make a public confession of our unfitness to govern, and hand over our native subjects to the tender mercies of those who would make them hewers of wood and drawers of water.

* Perhaps I should not say 'their present course,' since Sir Charles Warren's expedition was decided on. But what that expedition is intended to accomplish is not yet clear.

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THE END.