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A Retrogression in Civilization

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treated her as if she were civilized (which she was not), and to-day she stands in the forefront. Does any man believe that if when Perry opened the ports of Japan, England (and I mention her because she is the one country that has best learned how to colonize) — does any one suppose that if England had been asked to take possession of that island, Japan to-day would be the ally of England? No. We carried to those people the best, and we appealed to the highest motive, and see the result.

Now, brethren, I will not dwell upon it, but I do ask you, because you form public opinion, because the future is dependent upon you, not to attribute evil motives to those whose methods you do not approve of, but believe that the Anglo-Saxon race is to-day actuated by the highest and the noblest motives. But remember that it is possible for us, as for the Son of God, to be tempted to throw ourselves into hell.

A Retrogression in Civilization.

The following passage is taken from an address delivered at the recent annual meeting of the British Peace Society by Rev. John Hunter, D.D., one of the most eminent Nonconformist preachers of London:

"The day of war, alas, is not past, but morally it is an anachronism and retrogression in civilization. It ought not to be necessary now between civilized and Christian nations. It is a method and device of a barbarous period of social progress, and wherever practised, by modern nations, in some period of critical strain, it ought to be regarded like capital punishment as a horrible and tragical thing, not to be welcomed, not to be rejoiced at, but to be lamented, as a crime against humanity and a sin against God. For how it reverses all the natural and moral relations of men, and it decides nothing as to the right or wrong of the questions at issue — only which is the stronger of two military forces. A mere physical conquest can confer no moral right. Might cannot be right [applause], and the successes brought by violation of, or compromises with, moral law, are the most dangerous successes that can be won by men or nations. The true strength of nations rests in their allegiance to the highest ideal, and law, which they see and know. This, which is the teaching of religion, is the verdict of history. There never was a bolder and braver prediction than the third beatitude, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Though the word "meek" has been spoiled for us by its association with weakness and want of spirit, yet we know well what it meant. Jesus meant that the coming race would not be a coarse and brutal and arrogant people, but a race strong in all the higher qualities, strong in justice, strong in truth, strong in love and sympathy and self-sacrifice and religion; chivalrous, gentle, friendly, brotherly people. It is a bold prophecy, I say; but to an extent which few realize, it has become true, and will become more and more true as years and days go by. The progress of civilization so far has actually consisted in the gradual ascendancy in communities of the higher human qualities and of the unselfish virtues. And all noble development is in this direction, in leaving behind us our animalism, brutalism and barbarism, and all the methods and ways

born of them. In the lower and ruder stages of life, the survival of the fittest seems a merciless law, but by and by it takes on a new expression; it takes the weak under its protection, by summoning to their aid those human sympathies which render it necessary for the strong to help and defend the weak, if they themselves would come off conquerors in the struggle and vindicate their own fitness to live. Let us not turn our faces away, then, from the possibility of universal peace. Let us keep the ideal of Christian civilization steadily before us — the nations of the world bound in the bonds of brotherhood. We are no longer at the brutal and barbarous stage of social evolution; and it is no longer right to think and speak about war as men used in less enlightened times, praising and glorifying, as did Tennyson in "Maud," that worthless and, even then, antiquated barbarism — the Crimean war — because it broke in upon a state of things at home that was full of wrong and shame. If war is to be encouraged on the ground that without it the noble passions and heroic virtues grow cold and die, why do we not return to the savage state when every man was a fighter? But "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war"; and the manly and heroic qualities need have no difficulty in finding, as they have found, other fields for their exercise and display than the battlefield. Think of the great moral and social reforms which were carried forward during the reign of Queen Victoria without shedding a drop of blood. Let us do the fullest justice to the courage that is shown in battle, but let us also remember the courage, the moral and Christian courage that is shown in the service of truth and charity. It is time that war was seen in its true colors, stripped of the trappings with which it is usually adorned. No matter how righteous or unavoidable it may seem to be, its actual facts are ever unspeakably horrible, its methods brutal and morally vulgar. Few of us have imagination enough to realize the enormous costliness of the war-system as it is in Europe, even in times of peace. All that is annually spent on libraries, art galleries, and on public education is more than swallowed up by a few days of war. That is part of the cost which civilization pays to barbarism. And to all this we have to add the diversion of the mental and moral energies of a people from the ennobling arts of peace with all their fruits.

New Books.

THE INFLUENCE OF EMERSON. By Edwin D. Mead. Boston: The American Unitarian Association. 304 pages. Price, \$1.20 net.

Students of Emerson, this, his centennial year, will find this book a most valuable aid in their studies. It blazes the way in the Emersonian forest and shows how to proceed in order to a just and adequate comprehension of the character and remarkable influence of Emerson on American literature, thought and religion. Mr. Mead has been a patient, painstaking, sympathetic, and even enthusiastic student and interpreter of the Concord thinker and philosopher for a full quarter of a century. The three chapters of this book, "The Philosophy of Emerson," "Emerson and Theodore Parker," and "Emerson and Carlyle," portray the salient features of Emer-