

and yet they had many arts and customs which it were well for civilization to know to-day. We have now no peace keeping appliance similar to the sacred order of Fetiales in Rome. These priests acted as a court or board to whom must be submitted all international quarrels, and whose duty it was to use every effort to bring about a peaceable solution of difficulties. Failing in that, they, as a last resort, declared war and only then could Rome begin hostilities. Earlier yet we read that Sparta and Argos, in making a treaty of alliance, inserted the clause, "In case a difference arises between the two contracting nations, the parties shall have recourse to the arbitration of a neutral city according to the custom of their ancestors." Thucydides declares it to be a crime to treat as an enemy one who is willing to arbitrate.

To-day, as an eminent Russian statesman has well expressed it, nations are like rowdies in a mining camp. Two men quarrel and *that* one is justified who can soonest draw his revolver and shoot his opponent.

Some statesmen tell us that war is necessary; that it has a civilizing and an enlightening influence; that it arouses the slumbering energies of a nation, and gives to it new life and vigor. It seems true that war has at times seemed to bring a nation out of a wilderness of sin, to wash away some national crime, or to unite some disintegrating nation. The bigotry and intolerance of the middle ages needed its thirty years war before anything like freedom of conscience could prevail. Our own country had to go through four years of awful agony before the curse of slavery could be fully eradicated and the perpetuity of the union assured.

What is war? Ask the battle scarred veteran who has passed through blood and fire; who has stood in the thick of the fight and, amid the awful carnage, has seen his comrades falling on all sides, has heard the groans and cries of the wounded and dying, and has, perhaps, become the bearer of last sad messages from dying lips to dear ones at home. Ask the widow, the orphan, the mother, who parted with dear ones when war called, and who have waited and watched and hoped and prayed through long weary years only to learn that the next meeting must be in another world, or perhaps to see that loved form which departed so full of life and vigor return shattered and torn and bleeding