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The Things that Make for Peace.

By WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

Address before the Universal Peace Union, at Mystic, Conn., August 22, 1895.

It happened to me to be born in the centre of the great moral struggle of the century, culminating in the bloodiest civil war in history, and yet into an atmosphere of peace. For, while throughout the country there raged a conflict of violence, within the walls of home I heard from infancy only inculcations of non-resistance. Not that non-resistance which implies cowardice, the surrender of right for the sake of personal safety, or from motives of policy, but that ideal and self-forgetful gospel which reaches the loftiest limit of courage.

I know of no word more misunderstood. Men use it with contempt who fail to understand its faintest spirit. The few who catch its high inspiration marvel at the strength of character which dares exemplify it. Abject? Were ever reformers more righteously defiant than the non-resistants? Passive? They were the embodiment of activity. Did their religion—for it was their religion before Tolstoi called it his religion—include subservience, suppression of conviction or curbing of speech? History preserves the story of no body of men and women more devoted or courageous. In their ranks there was no room for cowards.

Does it require great courage to resent an injury, to return blow for blow? The brute and the bully deal in such coin. Indeed, cowardice is the inability to suffer wrong without retaliation. When I would seek for the ideal types of chivalry and moral courage I turn to the non-resistant abolitionists. For, literally following the injunctions of Jesus, they were the scoff of a nation calling itself Christian.

There is a wide distinction between the non-resistants and the so-called peace men. When the occasion arrived for putting the precept into practice the first held to their professions in spite of consequences. The second, by a mental process, were able to suspend their principles for the time being, and find excuse for bending to the popular breeze. Hence, he who would countenance no deviation from the moral law was held to be an impracticable fanatic. The man who could fold and put away his creed, like

an umbrella, when its prominence was uncomfortable, was esteemed sensible and practical.

In the Boston Pro-slavery mob of 1835 the Liberator office was besieged, and the editor, whom the rioters sought, was inside. He was a non-resistant. "At this juncture," he says, "an abolition brother, whose mind had not been previously settled on the peace question, in his anguish and alarm for my safety, and in view of the helplessness of the civil authority, said I must henceforth repudiate the principle of non-resistance. When the civil arm is powerless, my own rights are trodden in the dust and the lives of my friends are put in imminent peril by ruffians, I will hereafter stand ready to defend myself and them at all hazards!" Putting my hand upon his shoulder, I said: "Hold, my dear brother! you know not what spirit you are of. Of what value or utility are the principles of peace and forgiveness if we may repudiate them in the hour of peril and suffering? Do you wish to become like one of those violent and bloodthirsty men who are seeking my life? Shall we give blow for blow and array sword against sword? God forbid! I will perish sooner than raise my hand against any man, even in self-defense, and let none of my friends resort to violence for my protection. If my life be taken the cause of emancipation will not suffer."

Surely such a spirit is the farthest removed from cowardice. If Jesus, in his hour of trial, had drawn a sword upon his persecutors or knocked them down with his fists it is safe to say he would never have been capable of preaching the Sermon on the Mount, or have been the Messiah of the Christian faith. Yet so illogical are we that no surprise is occasioned, when, after nineteen centuries of Christianity, the clergyman exchanges his surplice for the chaplain's uniform. One would think that the rapid transition from a sermon inculcating the return of good for evil to the martial prayer invoking Divine assistance for men seeking "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" would dislocate the logical process.

There is a recent picture by a French

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artist, a copy of which should hang in every household where peace is exalted. It is the pathetic figure of the Christ upon the cross with bleeding hands and feet, and beneath him a lifeless soldier and his steed, slain in battle. The artist has chosen for his pictorial sermon these efficient words: "For Humanity—for Country." The cross ever towers above the sword.

When the civil war broke out the sympathies of the abolitionists were of course with the North. It was therefore in order to taunt the non-resistants with inconsistency. As though a thorough peace man must not rejoice when the outraged party triumphs, even by the use of arms. Between the oppressors of Italy and Garibaldi, who that believes in freedom would not sympathize with the latter, whatever his opinion regarding carnal weapons? Nor would this in any way affect his own convictions or make it possible for him to use the instruments of slaughter. If there should be a violent insurrection of the downtrodden people of Russia against the despotism of the Czar, would Tolstoi not hope for the despot's overthrow? This he must logically do, without the least impairing his testimony against force. No military soldier reaches the nobler and higher plane of this soldier of peace.

The rebellion, however, brought clearer to the minds of the non-resistants the uselessness of expecting peace when the conditions of peace do not prevail. "First pure and then peaceable," is the inevitable law. It is waste of time to preach the gospel of health while the defective sewer is breeding typhus and diphtheria. And one may talk peace till doomsday if he is blind to the wrongs that make it impossible. The civil war was as much the natural result of the slave auction-block and the bloodhound as disease is the sequel of physical abuse.

Another truth was developed in the light of the great struggle. Peace is not merely a cessation from what we term war. Germany and France are not at peace while their enormous standing armies glare at each other across the frontier. Russia is in a state of chronic war, although nominally peace prevails in the Empire. When "order reigns in Warsaw," it is more deplorable than the fiercest war for human rights. It is a great gain when a people wakes, as Tennyson so admirably expresses it:—

"—to the higher aims
Of a land that has lost for a little her
lust for gold,
And love of a peace that was full of
wrongs and shames,
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be
told."

And in the manner of one who rejoices that the suppressed disease has at last manifested itself, and the false

semblance of health disappeared, the poet hails "the banner of battle unrolled," "For the peace, that I deemed no peace, is over and done." And in this philosophy all ultra peace men can join, without altering one jot their consistent attitude or their belief in the wrongfulness of taking human life. If the North had been imbued with the true non-resistant feeling, its uprising and appeal to arms would have been a violation of principle and, in theological phrase, "a falling from grace." But the North was not imbued with the peace spirit and made no profession of such. It gloried in Bunker Hill and Saratoga, and not to have responded at the fall of Sumter to the President's call, would have been despicable. All this a non-resistant, whose principles forbade him to respond, could, without cowardice or inconsistency, rejoice over as a step toward a true peace.

At this distance from the bloody struggle we are able to see clearly the trail of evil that such methods necessitate. In driving out the devil of slavery the body was badly rended. Moreover, lives may be taken in thousands and yet convictions be little changed in consequence. What hinders a true Union now is the old spirit of slavery and caste which bullets are powerless to kill. It is surely time that a better method than slaughter should be found to rectify the present evils that threaten us with violence to-day. It is upon that head that my discourse shall center.

Conventions of this kind may have great power for good or they may waste themselves in sentimental platitudes. The abstract inculcation of peace principles amounts to no more than the minister's glorification of abstract truth and virtue to a congregation, without specification or arraignment. This is the opportunity to consider what present conditions are mimical to peace, and what can be done to change them in time to evade the otherwise impending violent punishment. That which is settled through enlightenment and persuasion stays settled. Unlike war the remedy has not to be recovered from after the disease is checked.

No one can contemplate the present phase of our social organization without perceiving its threatening cloud, full of explosive possibilities. Shall they be drawn off harmlessly by the lightning rod of justice, or strike with devastating force? The question concerns ourselves, and is not addressed to sinners of other congregations. Are we doing what we should to secure peace through purity? Or are we simply talking peace while conniving at wrongs that make for war? This is a pregnant self-interrogation.

For instance, how many of my neighbors are sustaining a protective tariff? Are attempting for selfish motives to injure fellow-workers who are by accident of a different nationality? If any such there are, they are actively

contributing to the hatred of nations, practically denying the sentiment of brotherly love, promoting jealousies and race hatreds, encouraging the support of armies and navies, and doing everything to foster strife and war. A thousand peace conventions will be less to the cause of peace than one edict of free trade.

"Free trade," to borrow Richard Cobden's noble phrase, "is the international law of God." Conversely it may be truthfully said that Protection is the international law of the Devil. Trade is the civilizer of the world, the shuttle that weaves the thread of human brotherhood, the reciprocal service which one man owes to another, the equitable exchange which "blesseth him that gives and him that takes." Armies, navies, forts, arsenals, revenue cutters, expensive custom houses, spies, perjurers, useless law suits, special privileges, political corruption, all these are the necessary attributes of Protection. Free Trade asks not such aid or such defenders. The heavy burden which these iniquities have placed upon the shoulders of the people, grinding them down by unjustifiable taxation, widening the gulf between wealth and poverty, limiting opportunity, restricting wages, fostering class distinctions, these are but a part of the evil brood which comes from trade restrictions. How can a consistent peace man support such legislation for an instant? No wonder that the term peace has become as much degraded as the word charity, which has been wrested from its true meaning and made a cover for injustice and an apology for ill-gotten wealth. Peace men of all others should do their utmost to wipe out the infamy of protective tariffs.

Richard Cobden is a name that belongs not alone to the list of England's benefactors, but to the world's. As a young man of 37 he saw the close relation between peace and free trade. He wrote to a friend—Mr. Ashworth: "It has struck me that it would be well to try to engraft our Free Trade agitation upon the Peace movement. They are one and the same cause. It has often been to me a matter of the greatest surprise that the Friends have not taken up the question of Free Trade as the means—and I believe the only human means—of effecting universal and permanent peace. The efforts of the peace societies, however laudable, can never be successful so long as the nations maintain their present system of isolation. * * * * *

"Free Trade, by perfecting the intercourse and securing the dependence of countries, one upon another, must inevitably snatch the power from the governments to plunge their people into wars."

How many of this audience have awakened to the wrongfulness of the present monopoly of land? How many comprehend the threatening consequences of this appropriation of God's bounty to all by a few of his children? In the

present system lies concealed the germ of poverty, of social inequality, of discontent that threatens peace and civilization. A great reform has arisen, aiming to restore to mankind the heritage of the earth and all natural opportunity, the robbery of which makes earth groan.

Are you alive to its gravity or are you sneering at its impracticability and pitying the mistaken enthusiasts who are urging the remedy of the Single Tax? Never more than now are Lowell's oft-quoted lines in order:

"Once to every man and nation comes
The moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood,
For the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah,
Offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and
The sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt
That darkness and that light."

I specify the Single Tax and Free Trade movements, because in their success the cause of peace will most surely be subserved. The right of mankind to the use of the earth, which can be secured only by the abolition of that privilege which permits individuals to claim as private property what was manifestly intended for the use of all, is the fundamental reform of the present generation, as slavery was of the past. It underlies the question of poverty, of intemperance, of the Indian and negro problems and others which command attention, but are merely symptoms of the social disease of which land monopoly is the unrecognized cause. And the right hand of this basic wrong is trade restriction, mis-called Protection. Permit all men free access to unused natural opportunity, which is included in the definition of land, with absolute freedom to exchange without hindrance the product of their labor, and war would be a nightmare of the past. I am unable to conceive the possibility of international warfare when these conditions of equality are attained.

Consider for a moment the domestic and foreign complications which create apprehension among all lovers of peace, and which they would fain heal with the soothing syrup of arbitration. The Indian question is a simple one of land. No matter what reservations Government may bestow upon the various tribes, guarded though they be by solemn treaties, eventually the white man's greed for the Indian's land causes the bloody collision. Holding the land in severalty affords no safeguard. With the single tax the trade of the border thief is gone. Then the Indian holds the same tenure as the white man and the motive of his assailants exists no more. Until the philanthropists discern the sole reason for recurrent Indian slaughters and governmental bad faith, the agitation fails to rise above the region of sentiment.

The negro problem is also a land prob-

lem. While the vast unused area of the South, with its agricultural, mineral, and forest wealth, is controlled by white men, the negro will continue to occupy a servile place. For he who owns the opportunity which the worker is obliged to use, is arbiter of the worker's life and fortune. Where black men own the soil they achieve a new emancipation, but the Single Tax equalizes the opportunities of both races and breaks the sceptre of oppression. Peace will follow, as the night the day, and lynchings and race murders cease for want of fuel.

Across the water, the true independence and prosperity of Ireland will come only through the abolition of landlordism, which the single tax would effect. Enact it in Asia Minor and Turkey can no more harass the Armenians, who would then live in neighborly peace with the now cruel Kurds. With the Single Tax and Free Trade there could be no pretext for a standing army in any country of Europe.

There is no time to elaborate the arguments of either of these great and kindred movements, or I might rather say of this great movement, for Free Trade is but a segment or corollary of the Single Tax. Under true freedom, when the right of labor to the use of the earth is achieved, the right to free exchange of its products naturally follows.

The Hawaiian complication proceeds from the old land disease, mixed with the tariff curse. The shrewd sons of the missionaries have possessed themselves of the valuable land of the islands. Otherwise the little handful of oligarchs, who now pose as representatives of a republic, would have no more power to make laws and assume to have the right of offering the islands as a gift to the United States than they would of ruling the winds. The plain truth of the revolution concerns not the character of the native Queen but the sugar bounty which the McKinley bill destroyed. The ardor for annexation is inspired by the hope that when the new administration comes into power the sugar bounty will be restored and the Sandwich Islands, as a territory or state, will share in the robbery. For all bounties are robberies.

The labor question is essentially the land question. By land monopoly labor is bound hand and foot. Unions, strikes and boycotts are vain efforts to counteract it. Pullman owns the land upon which his workmen live, and consequently possesses the power to make them accept his terms. Obedience is the price of living and working upon his territory. The Single Tax would liberate and lift them to the level of their employer's rights. Until then a chronic, although it may be a passive, war exists, ready on occasion to flame out and call for the military to suppress it. There can be

no real peace with land fenced in by speculation and made inaccessible to labor. Given the Single Tax and legislation to protect labor or shorten its hours would be as useless as Noah's Ark.

As peace men we deplore the growing military spirit of the nation. We protest against the waste of money expended for vessels of enormous cost, each one of which represents the hard earnings wrung from impoverished people. We deprecate the extravagance of coast fortifications to defend us from nothing but our own provoked aggressions; for, with a just government and equal laws foreign nations have no more reason to attack the United States than to attack the moon. The army and State militia are especial subjects of favor at present, not for defense against outside attack, but for the suppression of internal uprisings, each one of which is rooted in transparent and easily removed wrongs. Instead of addressing ourselves to their removal, we are fostering the spirit of war in the breasts of our school children, drilling them in battalions and teaching them the art of human slaughter. It is a monstrous anomaly in a nation professing to be free, yet nurturing the methods of Russia and Turkey. Every boy taught to drill, every glorification of our citizen troops is a preparation for future strife and not for true national or civic defense. Our costly white squadrons that go swaggering over the globe looking for some weak nation to attack, some bloody conflict that shall offer chances of promotion to ambitious officers, are the active allies of protection. When attention is drawn too plainly to cruel and indefensible taxes levied for private interest, then a diversion is made by favored monopolists. To divert the eyes of the victims of privilege a hue and cry is raised against some neighboring nation. A fancied affront of Chile, a stray shot fired by a drunken Spanish captain, and to the disgust of our jingo politicians, disavowed before the retaliatory shot can be returned, a conspiracy to overthrow the friendly government of the Sandwich Islands—all these are but the natural devices of the cuttle fish of monopoly, to muddy the waters of public sentiment and escape in the darkness and confusion. And the saddest part of the whole thing is that men who are making loud professions of peace aid and abet the scandal. How many of you in the next Presidential campaign will lend your votes to this national self-stultification, this conspiracy to hold the people in chains?

It would be a delight, if time permitted, to elaborate the arguments for Free Trade and the Single Tax, showing them to be the chiefest factors in the establishment of national and universal peace. For those who are agitating the peace movement to turn their backs upon the effective instruments which I have named, and think by soft and sentimental speeches to placate the tiger

of war, is simply "dropping buckets into empty wells, and growing old in drawing nothing out."

It does not excuse one to say, "I cannot understand these new ideas." To him the words of Job are commended, "The cause which I knew not I searched out." When the young pioneer of abolition endeavored to interest Dr. Lyman Beecher in the anti-slavery cause, the popular divine answered: "I have already more irons in the fire than I can keep from burning." The advice of the earnest reformer was: "It would be better to take some of those out and put this one in." If the great preacher's daughter, Harriet, had not been wiser than her father and made atonement in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," it is doubtful whether his memory would have far outlived him. Fortune was kind to make him, as has been said, "the father of more brains than any man in America."

But what a type is this of the world's present methods! Here are men and women to-day with the burning irons of Associated Charities, of tenement houses, of asylums for unfortunates who are produced faster than they can be sheltered; of missions, of solvents for Indian wrong, of paternal interference, of arbitration, of temperance, of bureaus of employment, of societies to save the victims of prostitution, of the thousand and one other superficial and palliative attempts to reform the world by fixing attention on the branches of evil and turning blind eyes to its deadly roots. There seems to be no room for the iron that shall burn out the heart of the social cancer.

Fortunately, early light is breaking in on earnest minds, like Frances B. Willard's, who perceives that instead of intemperance being the cause of poverty it is poverty that breeds drunkards. And what is prostitution but the direful resource of women who are often forced to choose between it and want? These things bespeak a state of domestic war, and peace is impossible until we are wise enough to aim our arrows at the vulnerable points of the trouble.

The friends of peace are to be judged by something more than testimonies in Friends' meetings. It is their attitude toward the questions of the hour, which are of the hour because in the world's progress they are ripe. Wendell Phillips once said reverently, when it was the fashion to ridicule all manifestations claiming to be of spirit origin, although unconvinced himself, "It may be the refraction of some great truth yet below the horizon." So every new and earnest movement for reform, although strange and uncomprehended, is entitled to reverent treatment. Who knows of what benefit to humanity it is the forerunner? Henry George once said to me: "While slavery existed the Single Tax movement would have been impossible. Its abolition cleared the way for the great land question. Who knows what grander reform may show its fair proportions when our work is done?" Until each pressing reform is dealt with the next one bides its time.

"—I have no dread of what
Is called for by the instinct of mankind,"

was Lowell's fine expression of faith.

The efforts of these great souls which I have quoted, dreaded and denounced in their season, are now seen to be in the interest of humanity and peace. Whoever helps to uproot a wrong helps to establish a right. Only wrongs create human strife. Conceded rights bring amity and brotherly love.

A cessation of the overworked sentiment of patriotism and blind worship of the flag will mark a solid advance towards peace. If patriotism be not the refuge of scoundrels, as Dr. Johnson said, it surely is the abiding place for demagogues and "buncombe." It is made to cover such multitudinous pension frauds that posterity, in contemplating the vast sums exacted from labor to pay the unblushing claims of conscienceless soldiers, may naturally infer that the Northern army was composed of Hessians. How little they will understand the spirit of the real soldier who fought for principle!

And the flag! It is an emblem only, and respect for it depends upon the civilization it represents. The poet Campbell, in his day, characterized it with stinging truth:

"Your standard's constellation types
White freedom by its stars;
But what's the meaning of your stripes?
They mean your negroes' scars."

I shall thrill at the sight of the bunting when it protects the accused but untried negro from lynchers; when a good Indian may still be a live one; when Chinamen can have their rights in California and in Massachusetts; when it means welcome to the persecuted and down-trodden of all lands; when half its citizens are not disfranchised on account of sex; when the government depends on justice and not on brute force to settle the grievances of labor; when it stands for equal opportunity and unhampered trade. Then I shall take off my hat to it. Meantime its reminder of tolerated shames makes one blush and bang his head. I do not care to see it flaunted over schoolhouses, and think there are nobler emblems with which to stimulate in youth the love of right and humanity.

I spurn with contempt the cheap and selfish maxim that one's first duty is to himself. The great Master inculcated the forgetfulness of self. I deny that national prosperity can come from profiting by the loss of other nations. I hold with the exalted sentiment of Fenelon, "I prefer my family to myself, my country to my family, and the human race to my country." Accept this and tariffs die. Make this a reality and the appropriation of God's bounty by landlords in order to abstract labor's earnings without equivalent, would be outlawed by civilization. If we mean

peace, let us work for the things that make for peace.

What poets sing and dream, humanity one day will realize. The ideal beckons on the real. But never poet sings of peace and tariffs. The free trade thought leaps into expression at the name of peace. Let me close with an illustration from Tennyson's Golden Year. The first verse invokes free trade:—

"Fly, happy, happy sails and bear the
Press;
Fly happy with the mission of the
Cross;
Knit land to land, and blowing heaven-
ward
With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear
of toll,
Enrich the market of the Golden Year."

The next typifies the Single Tax:—

"When wealth no more shall rest in
mounded heaps,
But smit with freer light shall slowly
melt
In many streams to fatten lower lands,
And light shall spread, and man be
liker man
Thro' all the season of the golden
year."

And, finally, the sigh and aspiration for the arrival of the natural result of such justice:—

"But we grow old. Ah! when shall all
men's good
Be each man's rule, and universal
Peace
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the
sea,
Thro' all the circle of the golden year?"

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