

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

Christianity Not As A Mystical Teaching But As A New
Concept of Life

by Leo Tolstoy

[Podcast 2 of 13]

[Dear Soul, This book has been edited to begin with Chapter Five instead of the Author's original Preface and Chapters One through Four. Chapters One through Four are essentially a defense of Tolstoy's previous book on Christianity, entitled My Religion, a fascinating book which emphasizes the importance of adhering to the teachings of Jesus Christ. For one who is already familiar with that previous book, the Author's original order is not — in the view of the editor — most effective. Tolstoy's opening chapters, which are still good to read, are included after Chapter Twelve.

Peace be with you, Alan Lewis Silva, editor]

CHAPTER SIX The removal of the contradiction between life and consciousness is possible in two ways — by a change of life or by a change of consciousness, and in the choice of one of the two there can be no doubt. A man may stop doing what he considers bad, but he cannot stop considering bad what is bad. Even so the whole of humanity may stop doing what it considers bad, but is powerless, not only to change, but even for a time to retard the all-elucidating and expanding consciousness of what is

bad and what, therefore, ought not to be. It would seem that the choice between the change of life and that of the consciousness ought to be clear and above doubt. And so, it would seem, it is indispensable for the Christian humanity of our time to renounce the pagan forms of life, which it condemns, and to build up its life on the Christian foundations, which it professes. But so it would be, if there did not exist the law of inertia, which is as invariable in the lives of men and nations as in inanimate bodies, and which is for men expressed by the psychological law, so well stated in the Gospel with the words, "men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." This law consists in this, that the majority of men do not think in order to know the truth, but in order to assure themselves that the life which they lead, and which is agreeable and habitual to them, is the one which coincides with the truth. Slavery was contrary to all the moral principles which were preached by Plato and Aristotle, and yet neither the one nor the other saw this, because the negation of slavery destroyed all that life which they lived. The same happens in our world. The division of men into two castes, like the violence of the state and of the army, is repugnant to all those moral principles by which our world lives, and at the same time the leading men of culture of our time do not seem to see it. The majority, if not all, of the cultured people of our time unconsciously try to maintain the previous social concept of life which justifies their position, and to conceal from themselves and from men its inadequacy, and, above all, the necessity of the condition of the Christian life-conception, which destroys the whole structure of the existing life. They strive to maintain the orders that are based on the social life-conception, but themselves do not believe in it, because it is obsolete, and it is impossible to believe in it any longer. All literature, the philosophic, the political, and that of the belles-lettres, of our time is striking in this respect. What a wealth of ideas,

forms, colors, what erudition, elegance, abundance of thoughts, and what total absence of serious contents, and even what fear of every definiteness of thought and of its expression! Circumlocutions, allegories, jests, general, extremely broad reflections, and nothing simple, clear, pertinent to the matter, that is, to the question of life. But it is not enough that they write and say graceful vapidities; they even write and say abominable, vile things, they in the most refined manner adduce reflections which take men back to primeval savagery, to the foundations, not only of pagan, but even of animal life, which we outlived as far back as five thousand years ago. It can, indeed, not be otherwise. In keeping shy of the Christian life-conception, which for some impairs only the habitual order, and for others both the habitual and the advantageous order, men cannot help but return to the pagan concept of life, and to the teachings which are based on them. In our time they not only preach patriotism and aristocratism, as it was preached two thousand years ago, but they even preach the coarsest epicureanism, animality, with this one difference, that the men who then preached it believed in what they preached, while now the preachers themselves do not believe in what they say, and they cannot believe, because what they preach no longer has any meaning. It is impossible to remain in one place, when the soil is in motion. If you do not go ahead, you fall behind. And, though it is strange and terrible to say so, the cultured people of our time, the leaders, with their refined reflections, in reality are dragging society back, not even to the pagan state, but to the state of primeval savagery. In nothing may this direction of the activity of the leading men of our time be seen so clearly as in their relation to the phenomenon in which in our time the whole inadequacy of the social concept of life has been expressed in a concentrated form — in their relation to war, to universal armaments, and to universal military service. The indefiniteness, if not the

insincerity, of the relation of the cultured men of our time to this phenomenon is striking. The relation to this matter in our cultured society is threefold: some look upon this phenomenon as something accidental, which arose from the peculiar political condition of Europe, and consider it corrigible, without the change of the whole structure of life, by means of external, diplomatic, international measures; others look upon this phenomenon as upon something terrible and cruel, but inevitable and fatal, like a disease or death; others again calmly and coolly look upon war as an indispensable, beneficent, and therefore desirable phenomenon. These people look differently at the matter, but all of them discuss war as an incident which is quite independent of the will of men who take part in it, and so do not even admit that natural question, which presents itself to every simple man, "Must I take part in it?"

According to the opinion of all these men, these questions do not even exist, and every person, no matter how he himself may look upon war, must in this respect slavishly submit to the demands of the government. The relation of the first, of those who see a salvation from wars in diplomatic, international measures, is beautifully expressed in the result of the last Congress of Peace in London, and in an article and letters concerning war by prominent authors in No. 8 of the *Revue des Revues* for 1891. Here are the results of the Congress: having collected the personal or written opinions from learned men all over the world, the Congress began by a *Te Deum* in the Cathedral, and ended with a dinner with speeches, having for the period of five days listened to a large number of speeches, and having arrived at the following resolutions: 1. The Congress affirms its belief that the brotherhood of man involves as a necessary consequence a brotherhood of nations, in which the true interests of all are acknowledged to be identical... 2. The Congress recognises the important influence which Christianity exercises upon the moral and political progress

of mankind, and earnestly urges upon ministers of the Gospel, and other teachers of religion and morality, the duty of setting forth those principles of Peace and Goodwill... and recommends that the third Sunday in December in each year be set apart for that purpose. 3. This Congress expresses its opinion that all teachers of history should call the attention of the young to the grave evils inflicted on mankind in all ages by war, and to the fact that such war has been waged, as a rule, for most inadequate causes. 4. The Congress protests against the use of military exercises in connection with the physical exercises of school, and suggests the formation of brigades for saving life rather than any of a quasi-military character; and it urges the desirability of impressing on the Board of Examiners, who formulate the questions for examination, the propriety of guiding the minds of children into the principles of Peace. 5. The Congress holds that the doctrine of the universal rights of man requires that aboriginal and weaker races shall be guarded from injustice and fraud when brought into contact with civilized peoples, alike as to their territories, their liberties, and their property, and that they shall be shielded from the vices which are so prevalent among the so-called advanced races of men. It further expresses its conviction that there should be concert of action among the nations for the accomplishment of these ends. The Congress desires to express its hearty appreciation of the conclusions arrived at by the late Anti-Slavery Conference, held in Brussels, for the amelioration of the condition of the peoples of Africa. 6. The Congress believes that the warlike prejudices and traditions which are still fostered in the various nationalities, and the misrepresentations by leaders of public opinion in legislative assemblies, or through the press, are not infrequently indirect causes of war. The Congress is therefore of opinion that these evils should be counteracted by the publication of accurate statements and information

that would tend to the removal of misunderstanding among nations, and recommends to the Inter-Parliamentary Committee the importance of considering the question of commencing an international newspaper, which should have such a purpose as one of its primary objects. 7. The Congress proposes to the Inter-Parliamentary Conference that the utmost support should be given to every project for the unification of weights and measures, of coinage, tariffs, postal and telegraphic arrangements, means of transport, etcetera, which would assist in constituting a commercial, industrial, and scientific union of the peoples. 8. The Congress, in view of the vast moral and social influence of woman, urges upon every woman throughout the world to sustain... the things that make for peace; as otherwise she incurs grave responsibilities for the continuance of the systems of war and militarism... 9. [T]his Congress expresses the hope that the Financial Reform Association, and other similar Societies in Europe and America, should unite in convoking at an early date a Conference to consider the best means of establishing equitable commercial relations between states by the reduction of import duties.... The Congress feels that it can affirm that the whole of Europe desires Peace, and is impatiently waiting for the moment when it shall see the end of those crushing armaments which, under the plea of defence, become in their turn a danger, by keeping alive mutual distrust, and are, at the same time the cause of that economic disturbance which stands in the way of settling in a satisfactory manner the problems of labor and poverty, which should take precedence of all others. 10. The Congress, recognising that a general disarmament would be the best guarantee of Peace, and would lead to the solution, in the general interest, of those questions which must now divide states, expresses the wish that a Congress of Representatives of all the states of Europe may be assembled as soon as possible, to consider the means of

accepting a gradual general disarmament.... 11. The Congress, considering the timidity of a single Power or other causes might delay indefinitely the convocation of the above-mentioned Congress, is of opinion that the Government which should first dismiss any considerable number of soldiers would confer a signal benefit on Europe and mankind, because it would oblige other Governments, urged on by public opinion, to follow its example, and by the moral force of this accomplished fact, would have increased rather than diminished the condition of its national defence. 12. This Congress, considering the question of disarmament as well as the Peace question generally, depends upon public opinion, recommends the Peace Societies here represented, and all friends of Peace, to carry on an active propaganda among the people, especially at the time of Parliamentary elections, in order that the electors should give their votes to those candidates who have included in their programme, Peace, Disarmament, and Arbitration. 13. The Congress congratulates the friends of peace on the resolution adopted by the International American Conference... at Washington in April last, by which it was recommended that arbitration should be obligatory in all controversies concerning diplomatic and consular privileges, boundaries, territories, indemnities, right of navigation, and the validity, construction, and enforcement of treaties, and in all other cases, whatever their origin, nature, or occasion, except only those which, in the judgment of any of the nations involved in the controversy, may imperil its independence. 14. The Congress respectfully recommends this resolution to the attention of the statesmen of Europe, and expresses the ardent desire that treaties in similar terms be speedily entered into between the other nations of the world. 15. The Congress expresses its satisfaction at the adoption by the Spanish Senate, on June 16th last, of a project of law authorizing the Government to negotiate

general or special treaties of arbitration for the settlement of all disputes, except those relating to the independence and internal government of the States affected; also at the adoption of resolutions to a like effect by the Norwegian Storting... and by the Italian Chamber, on July 11th. 16. [The Congress addresses official communications] to the principal religious, political, commercial, labor, and peace organisations in civilised countries, requesting them to send petitions to governmental authorities of their respective countries, praying that measures be taken for the formation of suitable tribunals for the adjudication of international questions, so as to avoid the resort to war. 17. Seeing (a) that the object pursued by all Peace Societies is the establishment of juridical order between nations; (b) that neutralization by international treaties constitutes a step toward this juridical state, and lessens the number of districts in which war can be carried on; the Congress recommends a larger extension of the rule of neutralization, and expresses the wish: (a) that all treaties which at present assure to certain States the benefit of neutrality remain in force, or, if necessary, be amended in a manner to render the neutrality more effective, either by extending neutralization to the whole of the state, of which a part only may be neutralized, or by ordering the demolition of fortresses which constitute rather a peril than a guarantee of neutrality; (b) that new treaties — provided they are in harmony with the wishes of the population — be concluded for establishing the neutralization of other States. 18. [The Sub-Committee of the Congress recommends:] 1. That the next Congress be held immediately before or immediately after the next session of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference, and at the same place. 2. That the question of an international Peace Emblem be postponed sine die. 3. The adoption of the following resolution: 1. Resolved, that we express our satisfaction at the formal and official overtures of the Presbyterian Church

in the United States of America, addressed to the highest representatives of each church organization in Christendom, inviting the same to unite with itself in a general conference, the object of which shall be to promote the substitution of international arbitration for war 2. That this Congress, assembled in London from the 14th to the 19th July, desires to express its profound reverence for the memory of Aurelio Saffi, the great Italian jurist, a member of the Committee of the International League of Peace and Liberty. 4. That the Memorial to the various Heads of Civilised States adopted by this Congress and signed by the President should so far as practicable be presented to each power, by an influential deputation. 5. That the Organisation Committee be empowered to make the needful verbal emendations in the papers and resolutions presented. 6. That the following resolutions be adopted: 1. A resolution of thanks to the Presidents of the various sittings of the Congress; 2. A resolution of thanks to the Chairman, the Secretaries, and the Members of the Bureau of the Congress; 3. A resolution of thanks to the conveners and members of the Sectional Committees; 4. a resolution of thanks to Rev. Cannon Scott Holland, Rev. Doctor Reuen, and Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon, for their pulpit addresses before the Congress, and that they be requested to furnish copies of the same for publication; and also to the Authorities of St. Paul's Cathedral, the City Temple, and Stamford Hill Congregational Church for the use of those buildings for public services; 5. a letter of thanks to Her Majesty for permission to visit Windsor Castle; 6. and also a resolution of thanks to the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, to Mr. Passmore Edwards, and other friends, who had extended their hospitality to the members of the Congress. 19. This Congress places on record a heart-felt expression of gratitude to Almighty God for the remarkable harmony and concord which have characterised the meetings of the Assembly, in which so many men and women of varied

nations, creeds, tongues, and races have gathered in closest cooperation, and in the conclusion of the labors of the Congress; it expresses its firm and unshaken belief in the ultimate triumph of the cause of Peace and of the principles which have been advocated at these meetings....

The fundamental idea of the Congress is this, that it is necessary, in the first place, to diffuse by all means possible the conviction among men that war is very unprofitable for people and that peace is a great good, and in the second, to act upon the governments, impressing them with the superiority of the international tribunal over wars, and, therefore, the advantages and the necessity of disarmament. To attain the first end, the Congress turns to the teachers of history, to the women, and to the clergy with the advice that the evil of war and the good of peace be preached to men on every third Sunday in December; to attain the second end, the Congress addresses the governments, proposing that they disarm and substitute arbitration for war. To preach the evil of war and the good of peace to men! But the evil of war and the good of peace are so well known to men that, so long as we have known men, the best greeting has been, "Peace be with you." What need is there, then, in preaching? Not only the Christians, but all the pagans thousands of years ago knew the evil of war and the good of peace — consequently the advice given to the preachers of the Gospel to preach on the evil of war and the good of peace on every third Sunday in December is quite superfluous. A Christian cannot help but preach this at all times, on all the days of his life. If Christians and preachers of Christianity do not do so, there must be causes for this, and so long as these causes are not removed, no advice will be effective. Still less effective can be the advice given to the governments, to dismiss the armies and substitute international tribunals for them. The governments themselves know very well all the difficulty

and burdensomeness of collecting and maintaining armies, and if, in spite of it, they continue with terrible efforts and tension to collect and maintain armies, they obviously cannot do otherwise, and the advice of the Congress cannot change anything. But the learned do not want to see this, and all hope to find a combination by which the governments, who produce the wars, will limit themselves. "Is it possible to be freed from war?" writes a learned man in the *Revue des Revues*. "All admit that when it breaks loose in Europe, its consequences will be like a great incursion of the barbarians. In a forthcoming war the existence of whole nationalities will be at stake, and so it will be sanguinary, desperate, cruel. It is these considerations, combined with those terrible implements of war which are at the disposal of modern science, that are retarding the moment of the declaration of war and are maintaining the existing temporary order of things, which might be prolonged for an indefinite time, if it were not for those terrible expenses that oppress the European nations and threaten to bring them to no lesser calamities than those which are produced by war. Startled by this idea, the men of the various countries have sought for a means for stopping or at least mitigating the consequences of the terrible slaughter which is menacing us. Such are the questions that are propounded by the Congress soon to be held in Rome and in pamphlets dealing with disarmament. Unfortunately it is certain that with the present structure of the majority of the European states, which are removed from one another and are guided by various interests, the complete cessation of war is a dream with which it would be dangerous to console ourselves. Still, some more reasonable laws and regulations, accepted by all, in these duels of the nations might considerably reduce the horrors of war. Similarly Utopian would be the hope of disarmament, which is almost impossible, from considerations of a national character, which are

intelligible to our readers. (This, no doubt, means that France cannot disarm previous to avenging its wrongs.) Public opinion is not prepared for the adoption of projects of disarmament, and, besides, the international relations are not such as to make their adoption possible.

Disarmament, demanded by one nation of another, is tantamount to a declaration of war. It must, however, be admitted that the exchange of views between the interested nations will to a certain extent aid in the international agreement and will make possible a considerable diminution of the military expenses, which now oppress the European nations at the expense of the solution of social questions, the necessity of which is felt by every state individually, threatening to provoke an internal war in the effort to avert one from without. It is possible at least to assume a diminution of the enormous expenses which are needed in connection with the present business of war, which aims at the possibility of seizing the adversary's possessions within twenty-four hours and giving a decisive battle a week after the declaration of war. What is needed is, that states should not be able to attack other states and in twenty-four hours to seize the possessions of others. This practical idea was expressed by Maxime du Camp, and to this the conclusion of the article is reduced. M. du Camp's propositions are these:

1. A diplomatic congress ought to meet every year.
2. No war can be declared sooner than two months after the incident provoking it. (The difficulty will be to determine which incident it is that provokes the war, because with every war there are a very large number of such incidents, and it would be necessary to decide from which incident the two months are to be counted.)
3. War cannot be declared before it is submitted to the vote of the nations preparing for it.

Military action cannot begin sooner than a month after the declaration of war. War cannot be begun... must... ...and so forth. But who will see to it that war cannot be begun? Who will see to it that men must do so and so? Who will compel the power to wait until the proper time? All the other powers need just as much to be moderated and placed within bounds and compelled. Who will do the compelling? and how? — Public opinion. — But if there is a public opinion which can compel a power to wait for a given time, the same public opinion can compel the power not to begin the war at all. But, they reply to all this, we can have such a balance of forces, ponderation des forces, that the powers will support one another. This has been tried and is being tried even now. Such were the Holy Alliance, the League of Peace, and so forth. “But if all should agree to it?” we are told. If all should agree to it, there would be no war, and there would be no need for supreme tribunals and courts of arbitration. “Arbitration will take the place of war. The questions will be decided by a court of arbitration. The Alabama question was decided by a court of arbitration, it was proposed to have the question about the Caroline Islands submitted to the arbitration of the Pope. Switzerland, and Belgium, and Denmark, and Holland — all have declared that they prefer the decisions of a court of arbitration to war.” Monaco, it seems, also declared itself in this way. What is a pity is, that Germany, Russia, Austria, France have not yet made such declarations. It is wonderful how men can deceive themselves. The governments will decide to submit their differences to a court of arbitration and so will disband their armies. The differences between Russia and Poland, between England and Ireland, between Austria and Bohemia, between Turkey and the Slavs, between France and Germany will be decided by voluntary consent. This is the same as though it should be proposed that merchants and bankers should not sell anything at a higher price than at what they have bought the articles,

should busy themselves with the distribution of wealth without profit, and should abolish the money which has thus become useless. But commerce and the banking industry consist in nothing but selling at a higher price than that at which the purchases are made, and so the proposition that articles should not be sold except at a purchase price, and that money should be abolished, is tantamount to a proposition that they should abolish themselves. The same is true of the governments. The proposition made to the governments that no violence be used, and that the differences be decided on their merits, is a proposition that the government as such should abolish itself, and to this no government can consent. Learned men gather in societies (there are many such societies, more than a hundred of them), congresses are called (lately such met at Paris and London, and one will soon meet at Rome), speeches are made, people dine, make toasts, publish periodicals, which are devoted to the cause, and in all of them it is proved that the tension of the nations, who are compelled to support millions of troops, has reached the utmost limit, and that this armament contradicts all the aims, properties, and desires of all the nations, but that, if a lot of paper is covered with writing, and a lot of speeches are made, it is possible to make all people agree and to cause them not to have any opposing interests, and then there will be no war. When I was a little fellow, I was assured that to catch a bird it was just necessary to pour some salt on its tail. I went out with the salt to the birds, and immediately convinced myself that, if I could get near enough to pour the salt on a bird's tail, I could catch it, and I understood that they were making fun of me. It is the same that must be understood by those who read books and pamphlets on courts of arbitration and disarmament. If it is possible to pour salt on a bird's tail, this means that it does not fly, and that there is no need of catching it. But if a bird has wings and does not want to be caught, it does

not allow any one to pour salt on its tail, because it is the property of a bird to fly. Even so the property of a government does not consist in being subjected, but in subjecting, and a government is a government only in so far as it is able, not to be subjected, but to subject, and so it strives to do so, and can never voluntarily renounce its power; but the power gives it the army, and so it will never give up the army and its use for purposes of war. The mistake is based on this, that learned jurists, deceiving themselves and others, assert in their books that the government is not what it is — a collection of one set of men, doing violence to another — but, as science makes it out to be, a representation of the aggregate of citizens. The learned have for so long a time assured others of this fact that they have come themselves to believe in it, and they often think seriously that justice can be obligatory for the governments. But history shows that from Cæsar to Napoleon, both the first and the third, and Bismarck, the government has by its essence always been a justice-impairing force, as, indeed, it cannot be otherwise. Justice cannot be obligatory for a man or for men, who keep in hand deceived men, drilled for violence — the soldiers — and by means of them rule others. And so the governments cannot agree to the diminution of the number of these drilled men, who obey them and who form all their strength and significance. Such is the relation of one set of learned men to the contradiction which weighs heavily on our world, and such are the means for its solution. Tell these men that the question is only in the personal relation of every man to the moral, religious question, now standing before all, of the legitimacy and illegitimacy of his participation in the universal military service, and these savants will only shrug their shoulders, and will not even deign to give you an answer, or pay attention to you. The solution of the question for them consists in reading addresses, writing books, choosing presidents, vice-

presidents, secretaries, and meeting and talking, now in this city, and now in that. From these talks and writings there will, in their opinion, come this result, that the governments will cease drafting soldiers, on whom their whole power is based, but will listen to their speeches and will dismiss their soldiers, will remain defenceless, not only against their neighbors, but even against their subjects — like robbers who, having bound defenceless men, for the purpose of robbing them, upon hearing speeches about the pain caused to the bound men by the rope, should immediately set them free. But there are people who believe in it, who busy themselves with peace congresses, deliver addresses, write little books; and the governments, of course, express their sympathy with this, let it appear that they are supporting this, just as they make it appear that they are supporting a temperance society, whereas they for the most part live by the drunkenness of the masses; just as they make it appear that they are supporting education, whereas their strength is based on ignorance; just as they make it appear that they are supporting the liberty of the constitution, whereas their strength is based only on the absence of a constitution; just as they make it appear that they are concerned about the betterment of the laboring classes, whereas it is on the oppression of the laborer that their existence is; just as they make it appear that they are supporting Christianity, whereas Christianity destroys every government. To be able to do this, they have long ago worked out such provisions for temperance, that drunkenness is not impaired; such provisions for education, that ignorance is not only not interfered with, but is even strengthened; such provisions for liberty and for the constitution, that despotism is not impeded; such provisions for the laborers, that they are not freed from slavery; such Christianity as does not destroy, but maintains the governments. Now they have also added their concern about peace. The

governments, simply the kings, who travel about with their ministers, of their own accord deciding the questions as to whether they shall begin the slaughter of millions this year or next, know full well that their talks about peace will not keep them, whenever they feel like it, from sending millions to slaughter. The kings even listen with pleasure to these talks, encourage them, and take part in them. All this is not only harmless, but even useful to the governments, in that it takes people's minds away from the most essential question, as to whether each individual man, who is called to become a soldier, should perform the universal military service or not. "Peace will soon be established, thanks to alliances and congresses and in consequence of books and pamphlets, but in the meantime go, put on uniforms, and be prepared to oppress and torture yourselves for our advantage," say the governments. And the learned authors of congresses and of writings fully agree to this. This is one relation, the most advantageous one for the governments, and so it is encouraged by all wise governments. Another relation is the tragic relation of the men who assert that the contradiction between the striving and love for peace and the necessity of war is terrible, but that such is the fate of men. These for the most part sensitive, gifted men see and comprehend the whole terror and the whole madness and cruelty of war, but by some strange turn of mind do not see and do not look for any issue from this condition, and, as though irritating their wound, enjoy the desperate plight of humanity. Here is a remarkable specimen of such a relation to war, by a famous French author (Maupassant). As he looks from his yacht at the exercises and target-shooting of the French soldiers, the following ideas come to him: War! When I but think of this word, I feel bewildered, as though they were speaking to me of sorcery, of the Inquisition, of a distant, finished, abominable, monstrous, unnatural thing. When they speak to us of cannibals, we smile proudly, as we proclaim our superiority to these savages. Who are the

savages, the real savages? Those who struggle in order to eat those whom they vanquish, or those who struggle to kill, merely to kill? The little soldiers of the rank and file who are running down there are destined for death, like flocks of sheep, whom a butcher drives before him on the highway. They will fall in a plain, their heads cut open by a sword-stroke, or their chests pierced by bullets; and these are young men who might have worked, produced, been useful. Their fathers are old and poor; their mothers, who have loved them for twenty years and adored them as only mothers can, will learn in six months or, perhaps, in a year that their son, their child, their grandchild, who had been reared with so much love, was thrown into a hole, like a dead dog, after he had been eviscerated by a ball, trampled underfoot, crushed, mashed into pulp by the charges of cavalry. Why did they kill her boy, her fine boy, her only hope, her pride, her life? She does not know. Yes, why? War! To fight! To butcher! To massacre people! And today, at our period of the world, with our civilization, with the expansion of science and the degree of philosophy which we deem the human genius to have attained, we have schools in which they teach how to kill; to kill at a great distance, with perfection, a lot of people at the same time — to kill poor innocent fellows, who have the care of a family and are under no judicial sentence. And what is most startling is the fact that the people do not rise against the governments! What difference is there really between the monarchies and the republics? It is most startling that society does not rise in a body and revolt at the very mention of the word “war.” Oh, we shall always live under the burden of the ancient and odious customs, criminal prejudices, and savage ideas of our barbarous ancestors, because we are beasts, and shall remain beasts, who are dominated by instinct and do not change. Would not any other man than Victor Hugo have been disgraced, if he sent forth this cry of deliverance and truth? Today force is called

violence and is about to be judged; war is summoned to court. Civilization, at the instigation of the human race, institutes proceedings and prepares the great criminal brief of the conquerors and captains. The nations are coming to understand that the increase of an offence cannot be its diminution; that if it is a crime to kill, killing much cannot be an extenuating circumstance; that if stealing is a disgrace, forcible seizing cannot be a glory. Oh, let us proclaim these absolute verities — let us disgrace war! Vain fury and indignation of a poet! War is honored more than ever. A versatile artist in these matters, a gifted butcher of men, Mr. von Moltke, one day spoke the following words to some delegates of peace: War is sacred and divinely instituted; it is one of the sacred laws of the world; it nurtures in men all the great and noble sentiments — honor, disinterestedness, virtue, courage — and, to be short, keeps men from falling into the most hideous materialism. Thus, uniting into herds of four hundred thousand men, marching day and night without any rest, not thinking of anything, nor studying anything, nor learning anything, nor reading anything, not being useful to a single person, rotting from dirt, sleeping in the mire, living like the brutes in a constant stupor, pillaging cities, burning villages, ruining peoples, then meeting another conglomeration of human flesh, rushing against it, making lakes of blood and fields of battered flesh, mingled with muddy and blood-stained earth and mounds of corpses, being deprived of arms or legs, or having the skull crushed without profit to any one, and dying in the corner of a field, while your old parents, your wife, and your children are starving — that's what is called not to fall into the most hideous materialism. The men of war are the scourges of the world. We struggle against Nature, against ignorance, against obstacles of every sort, in order to make our miserable life less hard. Men, benefactors, savants use their existence in order to work, to find what may help, may

succor, may ease their brothers. They go with vim about their useful business, accumulate discovery upon discovery, increasing the human spirit, expanding science, giving every day a sum of new knowledge to the intelligence of man, giving every day well-being, ease, and force to their country. War arrives. In six months the generals destroy twenty years of effort, of patience, and of genius. This is what is called not to fall into the most hideous materialism. We have seen what war is. We have seen men turned into brutes, maddened, killing for the sake of pleasure, of terror, of bravado, of ostentation. Then, when law no longer exists, when law is dead, when every notion of right has disappeared, we have seen men shoot innocent people who are found on the road and who have roused suspicion only because they showed fear. We have seen dogs chained near the doors of their masters killed, just to try new revolvers on them; we have, seen cows lying in the field shot to pieces, for the sake of pleasure, only to try a gun on them, to have something to laugh at. This is what is called not to fall into the most hideous materialism. To enter a country, to kill a man who is defending his home, simply because he wears a blouse and has no cap on his head, to burn the habitations of wretched people who have no bread, to smash the furniture, to steal some of it, to drink the wine which is found in the cellars, to rape the women who are found in the streets, to burn millions of dollars' worth of powder, and to leave behind them misery and the cholera — this is what is called not to fall into the most hideous materialism. What have the men of war done to give evidence of even a little intelligence? Nothing. What have they invented? Cannon and guns. That is all. What has Greece left to us? Books, marbles. Is she great because she has conquered, or because she has produced? Is it the invasion of the Persians that kept her from falling into the most hideous materialism? Is it the invasions of the barbarians that saved Rome and regenerated her? Was it

Napoleon I. who continued the great intellectual movement which was begun by the philosophers at the end of the last century? Oh, well, if the governments arrogate to themselves the right to kill the nations, there is nothing surprising in the fact that the nations now and then take upon themselves the right to do away with the governments. They defend themselves. They are right. Nobody has the absolute right to govern others. This can be done only for the good of the governed. Whoever rules is as much obliged to avoid war as a captain of a boat is obliged to avoid a shipwreck. When a captain, has lost his boat, he is judged and condemned, if he is found guilty of negligence or even of incapacity. Why should not the governments be judged after the declaration of a war? If the nations understood this, if they themselves sat in judgment over the death-dealing powers, if they refused to allow themselves to be killed without reason, if they made use of their weapons against those who gave them to them for the purpose of massacring, war would be dead at once! But this day will not come! (Sur l'Eau, pages 71 — 80.) The author sees all the horror of war; he sees that its cause is in this, that the governments, deceiving people, compel them to go out to kill and die without any need; he sees also that the men composing the armies might turn their weapons against the governments and demand accounts from them. But the author thinks that this will never happen, and that, therefore, there is no way out of this situation. He thinks that the business of war is terrible, but that it is inevitable and that the demands of the governments that the soldiers shall go and fight are as inevitable as death, and that, since the governments will always demand it, there will always exist wars. Thus writes a talented, sincere author, who is endowed with that penetration into the essence of the matter which forms the essence of the poetical genius. He presents to us all the cruelty of the contradiction between men's conscience and their activity, and, without solving it,

seems to recognize that this contradiction must exist and that in it consists the tragedy of life. Another, not less gifted author (E. Rod), describes the cruelty and madness of the present situation in still more glaring colors, and similarly, recognizing the tragical element in it, does not offer or foresee any way out of it: What good is there in doing anything? What good is there in undertaking anything? How can we love men in these troubled times, when the morrow is but a menace? Everything we have begun, our maturing ideas, our incepted works, the little good which we shall have been able to do — will it not all be carried away by the coming hurricane? Everywhere the earth is trembling under our feet, and the clouds that are gathering upon our horizon will not pass by us. Oh, if it were only the Revolution, with which we are frightened, that we had to fear! As I am incapable of imagining a more detestable society than is ours, I have more mistrust than fear for the one which will succeed it. If I were to suffer from the transformation, I should console myself with the thought that the executioners of today are the victims of yesterday, and the expectation of what is better would make me put up with what is worse. But it is not this distant peril that frightens me — I see another, nearer, above all, a more cruel peril, more cruel, because it has no excuse, because it is absurd, because no good can result from it. Every day men weigh the chances of war for the morrow, and every day they are more merciless. Thought staggers before the catastrophe which appears at the end of the century as the limit of the progress of our era — but we must get used to it: for twenty years all the forces of science have been exhausting themselves to invent engines of destruction, and soon a few cannonshots will suffice to annihilate a whole army; they no longer arm, as formerly, a few thousands of poor devils, whose blood was paid for, but whole nations, who go out to cut each others' throats; they steal their time, in order later more surely to steal their

lives; to prepare them for the massacre, their hatred is fanned, by pretending that they are hated. And good people are tricked, and we shall see furious masses of peaceful citizens, into whose hands the guns will be placed by a stupid order, rush against one another with the ferocity of wild animals, God knows for the sake of what ridiculous incident of the border or of what mercantile colonial interests! They will march, like sheep, to the slaughter — but knowing whither they are going, knowing that they are leaving their wives, knowing that their children will be hungry, and they will go with anxious fear, but none the less intoxicated by the sonorous, deceptive words that will be trumpeted into their ears. They will go without revolt, passive and resigned, though they are the mass and the force, and could be the power, if they wished and if they knew how to establish common sense and brotherhood in the place of the savage trickeries of diplomacy. They will go, so deceived, so duped, that they will believe the carnage to be a duty, and will ask God to bless their sanguinary appetites. They will go, trampling on the crops which they have sown, burning the cities which they have built, with enthusiastic songs, joyous cries, and festive music. And their sons will erect statues to those who shall have massacred them better than any one else! The fate of a whole generation depends on the hour at which some sombre politician will give the signal, which will be followed. We know that the best among us will be mowed down and that our work will be destroyed in the germ. We know this, and we tremble from anger, and we are unable to do anything. We are caught in the net of offices and red tape, which it would take too violent an effort to break. We belong to the laws which we have called into life to protect us, but which oppress us. We are only things of this Antinomian abstraction, the state, which makes every individual a slave in the name of the will of all, who, taken separately, would want the very opposite of what they are

compelled to do. If it were only one generation that is to be sacrificed! But there are other interests as well. All these salaried shouters, these ambitious exploiters of the evil passions of the masses and the poor in spirit, who are deceived by the sonority of words, have to such an extent envenomed the national hatreds that the war of tomorrow will stake the existence of a race: one of the elements which have constituted the modern world is menaced — he who will be vanquished must disappear morally — and, whatever it be, we shall see a force annihilated, as if there were one too many for the good! We shall see a new Europe formed, on bases that are so unjust, so brutal, so bloody, so soiled with a monstrous blotch, that it cannot help but be worse than that of today — more iniquitous, more barbarous, more violent. One feels oneself oppressed by a terrible discouragement. We are tossing about in a blind alley, with guns trained on us from all the roofs. Our work is that of sailors going through their last exercise before the ship goes down. Our pleasures are those of the condemned criminal, who fifteen minutes before his execution is offered a choice morsel. Anguish paralyzes our thought, and the best effort of which it is capable is to calculate — by spelling out the vague discourses of ministers, by twisting the sense of the words uttered by sovereigns, by contorting the words ascribed to diplomats and reported by the newspapers at the uncertain risk of their information — whether it is tomorrow or the day after, this year or next year, that we shall be crushed. We should, indeed, seek in vain in history for a more uncertain epoch, one which is so full of anxieties. (E. Kod, *Le Sens de la Vie*, pages 208 — 213). It is pointed out that the power is in the hands of those who are ruining themselves, in the hands of the separate individuals forming the mass; it is pointed out that the source of evil is in the state. It would seem clear that the contradiction of the consciousness and of life has reached the limit beyond which it is impossible to go and

after which its solution must ensue. But the author does not think so. He sees in this the tragedy of human life, and, having pointed out all the terror of the situation, concludes that human life must take place in this terror. Such is the second relation to war of those men who see something fatal and tragical in it. The third relation is that of men who have lost their conscience, and so their common sense and human feeling. To this class belong Moltke, whose opinion is quoted by Maupassant, and the majority of military men, who are educated in this cruel superstition, who live by it, and so are often naively convinced that war is not only an inevitable, but even a useful matter. Thus, judge also nonmilitary, so-called learned, cultured, refined people. Here is what the famous Academician, Doucet, writes in the number of the *Revue des Revues* in which the letters about war are collected, in reply to the editor's inquiry as to his views on war: Dear Sir: — When you ask the most peaceable of Academicians whether he is an advocate of war, his answer is ready in advance: unfortunately, dear sir, you yourself regard as a dream the peaceful thoughts which at the present time inspire our magnanimous countrymen. Ever since I have been living in the world, I have heard many private people express their indignation against this terrifying habit of international slaughter. All men recognize and deplore this evil; but how is it to be mended? People have very often tried to abolish duels — this seemed so easy! But no! All the efforts made for the attainment of this end have done no good and never will do any good. No matter how much may be said against war and against duelling at all the congresses of the world, above all arbitrations, above all treaties, above all legislations, will eternally stand man's honor, which has ever demanded duelling, and the national advantages, which will eternally demand war. I none the less with all my heart hope that the Congress of Universal Peace will succeed in its very grave and very honorable problem.

Receive the assurance, etcetera. C. Doucet The meaning is this, that men's honor demands that people should fight, and the advantages of the nations demand that they should ruin and destroy one another, and that the attempts at stopping war are only worthy of smiles. Similar is the opinion of another famous man, Jules Claretie: Dear Sir: — For an intelligent man there can exist but one opinion in respect to the question of peace and war. Humanity was created that it should live, being free to perfect and better (its fate) its condition by means of peaceful labor. The universal agreement, for which the Universal Congress of Peace is asking and which it preaches, may present but a beautiful dream, but it is in any case the most beautiful dream of all. Man has always before him the promised land of the future — the harvest will mature, without fear of harm from grenades and cannonwheels. But... Yes, but! Since the world is not ruled by philosophers and benefactors, it is fortunate that our soldiers protect our borders and our hearths, and that their arms, correctly aimed, appear to us, perhaps, as the very best guarantee of this peace, which is so fervently loved by all of us. Peace is given only to the strong and the determined. Receive the assurance, etcetera. J. Claretie. The meaning of this is, that it does no harm to talk of what no one intends to do, and what ought not to be done at all. But when it comes to business, we must fight. Here is another recent expression of opinion concerning war, by the most popular novelist of Europe, E. Zola: I consider war a fatal necessity, which appears inevitable to us in view of its close connection with human nature and the whole world-structure. I wish war could be removed for the longest possible time; none the less the moment will arrive when we shall be compelled to fight. I, at the present moment, am placing myself on the universal point of view, and in no way have any reference to our difference with Germany, which presents itself only as an insignificant incident in the history of humanity. I say

that war is indispensable and useful, because it appears to humanity as one of the conditions of its existence. We everywhere meet with war, not only among various tribes and nations, but also in domestic and private life. It appears as one of the chief elements of progress, and every step forward, which humanity has taken, has been accompanied by bloodshed. People used to speak, and even now speak, of disarmament, but disarmament is something impossible, and even if it were possible, we should be obliged to reject it. Only an armed nation appears powerful and great. I am convinced that a universal disarmament would bring with it something like a moral fall, which would find its expression in universal impotence, and would be in the way of a progressive advancement of humanity. A martial nation has always enjoyed virile strength. Military art has brought with it the development of all the other arts. History testifies to that. Thus, in Athens and in Rome, commerce, industry, and literature never reached such development as at the time when these cities ruled over the then known world by force of arms. To take an example from times nearer to us, let us recall the age of Louis the Fourteenth. The wars of the great king not only did not retard the progress of the arts and sciences, but, on the contrary, seemed to aid and foster their development. War is a useful thing! But best of all in this sense is the opinion of the most talented writer of this camp, the opinion of the Academician Vogüé. Here is what he writes in an article about the exhibition, in visiting the military department: In the Esplanade des Invalides, amidst exotic and colonial buildings, one structure of a more severe style rises in the picturesque bazaar; all these representatives of the terrestrial globe adjoin the Palace of War. A superb subject of antitheses for humanitarian rhetorics! Indeed, it does not let pass an occasion for deploring such juxtaposition and for asserting that this will kill that (*ceci tuera cela*), that the union of the nations through science and labor will

conquer the martial instincts. We shall not keep it from fondling the hope of the chimera of a golden age, which, if it should be realized, would soon become an age of mire. All history teaches us that blood is needed to speed and confirm the union of the nations. The natural sciences have in our time confirmed the mysterious law which was revealed to Joseph de Maistre by the inspiration of his genius and the consideration of primitive dogmas; he saw how the world redeems its hereditary falls by a sacrifice; the sciences show us how the world is perfected by struggle and by compulsory selection; this is the assertion from two sides of the same decree, written out in different expressions. The assertion is naturally not a pleasant one; but the laws of the world are not established for our pleasure — they are established for our perfection. Let us, then, enter into this unavoidable, indispensable Palace of War; and we shall have occasion to observe in what manner the most stubborn of our instincts, without losing anything of its force, is transformed, in submitting to the different demands of historic moments. This idea, that the proof of the necessity of war is to be found in two expressions of Maistre and Darwin, two great thinkers according to his opinion, pleases Vogüé so much that he repeats it. “Dear Sir,” he writes to the editor of the *Revue des Revues*: You ask for my opinion in regard to the success of the Universal Congress of Peace. I believe, with Darwin, that a violent struggle is a law of Nature, by which all beings are ruled. Like Joseph de Maistre, I believe that it is a divine law — two different appellations for one and the same thing. If, past all expectation, some particle of humanity, say the whole civilized West, succeeded in arresting the action of this law, other, more primitive nations would apply it against us. In these nations the voice of Nature would vanquish the voice of human reason, and they would act with success, because the assurance of peace — I do not say “peace” itself, but the “full assurance of peace” —

would evoke in men corruption and fall, which act more destructively than the most terrible war. I find that for that criminal law, war, it is necessary to do the same as for all the other criminal laws — to mitigate them, to try to make them unnecessary, and to apply them as rarely as possible. But the whole of history teaches us that it is impossible to abolish these laws, so long as there are left in the world two men, money, and a woman between them. I should be very happy, if the Congress could prove the contrary to me. But I doubt whether it will be able to overthrow history, the law of Nature, and the law of God. Accept the assurance, etcetera. E.M. Vogüé The idea is this, that history, man's nature, and God show us that, so long as there shall be two men and between them bread, money, and a woman, there will be war; that is, that no progress will bring men to get away from the one conception of life, where it is impossible without quarrelling to divide the bread, the money (the money is very good here), and the woman. How strange the people are that assemble in congresses, to talk about how to catch birds by throwing salt on their tails, though they cannot help but know that it is impossible to do so; queer are those who, like Maupassant, Rod, and many others, see clearly the whole horror of war, the whole contradiction which arises from this, that men do not do what they ought to do, what is advantageous and necessary for them to do, deplore the tragedy of life, and do not see that all this tragedy will stop as soon as men will cease to discuss what they ought not to discuss, and will begin not to do what is painful for them to do, what displeases and disgusts them. These people are queer, but those who, like Vogüé and others, professing the law of evolution, recognize war not only as unavoidable, but even as useful, and so as desirable, are strange and terrible with their moral perversion. The others at least say that they hate the evil and love the good, but these simply recognize that there is no good and no evil. All the talk about establishing peace,

in the place of eternal war, is a harmful sentimental boast of babblers. There is a law of evolution, from which it follows that I must live and act badly. What is to be done? I am an educated man, and I know the law of evolution, and so I will act badly. "Entrons au palais de la guerre" [Let's enter the Palace of War]. There is a law of evolution, and so there is nothing bad, nor good, and we must live for nothing but our personal life, leaving everything else to the law of evolution. This is the last expression of refined culture, and at the same time of that obscuring of consciousness with which all the cultured classes of our time are occupied. The desire of the cultured classes in one way or another to maintain their favorite ideas and their life, which is based upon them, has reached its utmost limits. They lie, deceive themselves and others in the most refined way, if only they can in some way obscure and drown their consciences. Instead of changing the life in accord with the consciousness, they try in every manner possible to obscure and drown their consciousness. But the light shines even in the dark, and so it is beginning to shine in our time.

