

**THE SWORD OR THE
CROSS: WHICH SHOULD
BE THE WEAPON OF THE
CHRISTIAN MILITANT?**

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The Sword or the Cross: Which Should be the Weapon of the Christian Militant? by Kirby Page

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KIRBY PAGE

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The Sword or The Cross

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*Which Should be the Weapon
of the Christian Militant?*

By
KIRBY PAGE



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*To
an intimate friend
who for Christ's sake
served a term in the
Federal Prison at Leavenworth*

INTRODUCTION

THE war which was to end war has left the world with more fighting and more expenditures for armaments than before it started. The Assembly of the League of Nations is unable to adopt even the slightest practical step in disarmament. Naval authorities now tell us that the submarine is essential and military authorities proclaim that poison gas is humane. New and more deadly conflicts have swung within our horizon. That this nation may become involved in war in any one of three different directions is more of a possibility than it was in 1914. Yet the one American social worker who has assessed the human costs of the recent struggle soberly declares, after he has footed the totals, that war is the negation of civilization.

What then is to be the Christian teaching concerning war? Is it going to declare judgment on the basis of the principles set forth in the gospels or will it be only the expedient servant of nationalism and continue to exhort

INTRODUCTION

its followers to internecine slaughter? Is the American pulpit going to continue denouncing war in general and supporting wars in particular? This question must be fairly faced and answered, one way or the other. And time presses. Mr. Page has faced the issue and has found an answer that satisfies his soul. What he has written therefore deserves the thoughtful consideration of all those whose duty it is to teach the people concerning the moral and spiritual validity of modern war.

HARRY F. WARD,
Professor of Christian Ethics,
Union Theological Seminary,
New York City.

FOREWORD

STRUGGLES between nations and struggles between classes we shall surely have during the coming decades. All indications point to further wars between nations. The struggle between capital and labor is daily growing in intensity. It is utterly impossible to predict the course of events during the lifetime of the present generation. It may be that we shall witness scenes surpassing in horror even those of the recent war.

Ideals as to what should be the attitude of different nations and different classes toward each other, Christian people already have. Surely it is high time that we should also have definite ideas as to the weapons we are justified in using in seeking to bring about conditions that seem to us to be desirable.

Shall we use the weapons of violence and bloodshed, or is there a more effective weapon available?

Upon the answer to this question, the fate of classes, nations and even civilization itself may depend. To the end that the utmost light may be obtained concerning the ethics of war and violence, there should be the widest possible discussion of this vital theme in the religious press, in the pulpit, in the class room, and in the private conversations of Christian people.

The hope of the present writer is that the following chapters may, in some small way, stimulate discussion of this important subject. He admits freely that it is possible he may be mistaken in some of his conclusions. The convictions herein recorded are, however, the result of several years continuous thought and study and represent an almost complete reversal of opinions held prior to his experience overseas.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

KIRBY PAGE.