

**FROM WHENCE
CAME WARS?**

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From whence came wars? by E. T. Bromfield

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E. T. BROMFIELD

**FROM WHENCE
CAME WARS?**

FROM
WHENCE COME WARS?

A BRIEF

Argumentative Treatise

ON THE

NATURE OF WAR,

AND THE

MEANS NECESSARY FOR PREVENTING ITS
OCCURRENCE.

BY E. T. BROMFIELD.

LONDON:

W. & F. G. CASH, 5, BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT.

1855.

270. C. 58.

TO HANDEL COSSHAM, Esq.,

OF

SHORTWOOD LODGE,

NEAR BRISTOL.

MY DEAR SIR,

Allow me, in inscribing to you this little treatise, to express my sincere admiration, not only of your consistent and courageous advocacy of peace principles, which must entitle you to the respect, even of your opponents, but of those generous and sterling qualities of mind and heart, which endear you to all true friends of enlightened knowledge, who have the pleasure of your acquaintance.

I trust your life will be one of continued usefulness and happiness.

Believe me, My dear Sir,

to remain,

Very sincerely yours,

THE AUTHOR.

London, June, 1855.

PREFACE.

In the following treatise the author has purposely refrained from entering into the argument as to defensive warfare. He has dealt with war as with a great evil, sometimes permitted by the Almighty to afflict mankind, but always resulting from human depravity, in one form or other, and demanding the serious consideration of Christian people as to how it may be remedied; nor does he think, that because God overrules war, and causes, in his mercy, good results, more or less remotely, to spring from it, that the duty of Christians is hereby lessened to endeavour to remove the occasion for its occurrence from their midst.

It is just possible he may be charged with dealing too much in abstractions, and with giving less space than he ought to have done to a consideration of the particular modes in which Christians may exert themselves in spreading their sacred cause. In defence, he would urge the narrow limits at his disposal, and the impression on his mind that when

once Christian hearts are deeply convinced of their duty, it is not difficult for them to devise ways and means of performing it.

After all, it may be said, he has proved nothing *new*; that, in fact, every Christian is quite convinced of the *truth* of the conclusions at which he arrives. It may be so; at any rate, homely truths stand in great danger of being forgotten or despised amidst the variety of novelties with which our generation abounds, and the author would humbly remind his readers that the present aspect of Christendom goes far to contradict the assertion that the Church is fully awake to the "truth," the "old truth" if you please, here enforced.

With regard to the general style and arrangement of the pamphlet, the author has nothing more to say than to request the kind *indulgence* of his friends. His aim has been usefulness; if he fail in this, the loss of favour will add but little weight to his disappointment. If he succeed in this, his best wishes will be fully realized.

London, June, 1855.

FROM WHENCE COME WARS ?

THE spirit of war is now abroad, and every eye is turned anxiously towards the scene of conflict. Our thoughts are with the brave soldiers in the Crimea, patiently and sternly waiting for victory or death, and our hearts beat quickly with the expectation of decisive news.

And who are the warriors? For the most part they are sent from lands nominally Christian; for their success prayers are offered to God in the holy name of Jesus; the giddy infatuation of the conflict is shared, with few exceptions, by all sects of Christians, who regard it as a grand struggle between truth and error, liberty and despotism, right and wrong.

Need we go through the long catalogue of evils which war, in its most favourable aspects, inflicts on the human race? Lives there a man in Christendom, capable of reading his mother tongue, whose heart has not been sickened and grieved by the daily list of horrors with which the last winter campaign has been fraught, or who can contemplate without a shudder the consequences to the nations of Europe, to morality and to happiness, which a continuation of the struggle will entail? We should sigh for the humanity of our species if the evil effects of war were regarded as of little moment. No man of sense, of reason, of religion, needs to be told afresh of its miserable consequences; nor will he require to be asked twice to pray, in the language of the liturgy of the English church, "*from battle, murder, and sudden death, good Lord deliver us!*"

The question may be asked, with great propriety, "where is the power of Christianity to subdue the hearts of men, and to turn hatred into love?" Are not four of the five countries

actually engaged in the conflict, viz. England, France, Sardinia, and Russia, nominally Christian? And if so, can they not find in the sacred archives of their faith, precepts and commands, bidding them to love one another, and as far as possible to live at peace with all men? If so (and it cannot be doubted for an instant) these nations, or some of them, are not *really* Christian, or they are sadly disobeying the tenets of their religion, in going to war.

We desire, for the present, to keep clear of the origin of the dispute. That may or may not appear to be a religious quarrel, according as it is viewed.

We see before us, however, a confessedly sad spectacle, and it prompts the question—How does it happen that Christianity has not been more successful in promoting peace and national love than it appears to have been, when four nations, all worshipping the same God and the same Christ, can, as each professes, believe it to be its duty flagrantly to deny one of the sublimest verities of their religion, viz. that Christianity brings with it “love, joy, and peace?”

We reply—it is a lamentable fact that the character of Christianity is lost in the system. The latter has frequently been made a pretence for all kinds of cruelties and immoralities. The name has spread farther than the reality. Its adherents, for the most part, in their zeal to make proselytes, have overlooked the necessity for making converts; and in their haste to become ‘established’ as the religion of nations, have ceased to regard with so much importance the scriptural doctrine of the necessity for individual regeneration.

This is a great and important fact. The ranks of the Greek church are filled chiefly by men sadly ignorant of the simplest truths of the ‘gospel’ on which the Greek church professes to be built. Perhaps a few pious patriarchs in the south, and a few honest priests in the north, may be devoutly impressed with the truth as it is in Jesus, but throughout the vast empire which it influences, superstition, falsehood, and moral darkness reign in almost undisturbed sovereignty. The *Romish church* has substituted its own traditions and observances for

the sublimer truths which Christ taught, and pants for universal temporal dominion. The Lutheran church has to a great extent lost that lifelike earnestness which distinguished its great founder. "If the church of Prussia," says a distinguished writer in *Evangelical Christendom*, "or of any land, were so constituted that all the children of God could find a home in it, then no doubt it would not be Christian to separate from it. But this is not so, and till it is, Christian men should, I submit, rejoice that their countrymen, to whom the gospel is not preached in the Lutheran church, prefer a reality to a name—Christianity to a church." And again he writes—"to what an extent the churches of Germany are becoming rationalist in their clergy, and unbelieving in their members!" This he believes to be true. And is not the Anglican church open to the charge of formality and deadness? Even amongst evangelical dissenters, should we be right in estimating the number of pious adherents to their sects by the number of those who stately worship in their chapels?

Christianity among nations has become sadly different from the Christianity taught by its founder. Men are naturally disposed to attach too much importance to externals and forms of belief, and a hierarchy, wherever established, is liable to fall into the danger of demanding implicit obedience in the "lesser matters" of the law, while they overlook the weightier; and to recognise as members of "the church" only those who conform to *their* rule. Spiritual truths are then neglected, or the reception of them into the heart is supposed to be indicated by the degree of exactness with which the outward ceremonies are performed; and hence different "churches" are formed, occasion is given for jealousies and envyings to arise, and in their haste for supremacy they are disposed to grasp at worldly power, and even enlist the sword on their side. Therefore, in all great *moral* questions, Christianity, so understood, is powerless. It no longer speaks with the gentle loving voice of the gospel—"Be ye reconciled to God," but it vociferates, from its gilded throne or carved pulpit, "Return ye to the bosom of the church;" and while proselytes are