

**MOTIVES OF WARS: AN ESSAY:  
READ BEFORE THE BATH ROYAL  
LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC  
INSTITUTION. WITH ADDITIONAL  
FACTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS**

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Motives of Wars: An Essay: Read Before the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution.  
With Additional Facts and Illustrations by P. B. Duncan

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**P. B. DUNCAN**

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# MOTIVES OF WARS:

AN ESSAY

Read before the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific  
Institution.

WITH ADDITIONAL FACTS AND  
ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY

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KEEPER OF THE ANTIQUE MUSEUM, &c. &c.

"I AM FOR PEACE."—O. T. Psalm cxx. 7.

"HAVE PEACE ONE WITH ANOTHER."—Mark ix. 50.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE following Essay was read some years ago at the Literary Institution in Bath, and printed, with some others, (which were also read there,) for the amusement of my friends. Having, since that time, in the course of my reading about War, met with many curious illustrations of this subject, I commit them to the Press for the consideration of those who may condescend to give these pages a perusal.

All Europe was so much exhausted by the last wars with France under its Republic and Emperor Napoleon Buona-  
parte, and it has had so long a peace, with leisure for reflection on the folly, as

well as miseries, of war, that some are sanguine enough to think that men now entertain such wise opinions upon the impiety and impolicy of this evil and of duelling, as to hope we shall never see a recurrence of either.

It is to be feared that this is too flattering an opinion, in the present unequal state of civilization of different nations; as the ambition of the most barbarous and warlike may in a moment disturb the present harmony of the Continent, and bring on a renewal of such destructive conflicts as deluged it with blood in past years.

The large armies, also, which are kept up and regularly disciplined by all the great States, may operate like the powder in the hands of the Flat-head savages, which they thought would be spoiled if not immediately used, and, therefore, consi-



dered this a good justification of war without delay against their enemies, the Black-feet!

In a casual conversation in a railroad carriage on the horrors and follies of war, with one of the most eminent statesmen, lawyers, and authors, of the day, I said, "The foolish origin of wars is as curious a subject of consideration as their horrible effects." I added, "*The multis utile bellum* will account for many of them." "Yes," said he, "and the *usura vorax* of money speculators who fan the flame of war in newspapers and pamphlets. I have lately been in France, and, from what I have seen, the voracious appetite for war is considerably abated. The soldiers are absorbed into civil society, and the agriculturists and citizens have no wish for war. There are still some needy, noisy, unoccupied officers, who prate about national glory,

from want of pay and employment; but it is impossible to conceive that, in the present advanced state of civilization, Governments can be long blind to the absolute insanity of war."

This Essay and Illustrations will at least fully show how many condemnations of War have been strongly felt and strongly expressed by divines, moralists, and historians.

## MOTIVES OF WARS.

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I am well aware that, by a very prudent rule of our Society, we are precluded from political as well as theological discussions. I shall therefore endeavour to avoid any investigation of warfare that may infringe on the spirit of this rule, in the following Essay, by confining my views to a general consideration of the subject, and to illustrations chiefly from past ages.

No one can appreciate more highly than I do many of the virtues called forth in warfare, in compensation for the dreadful evils, physical and moral, which it produces. I know full well the many instances of heroic valour that it displays; of patriotism, of intellectual energy, of prudence, of ingenuity, of generosity, of philanthropy, even amidst scenes of carnage;—of chivalry, and that high sense of honour, which has polished the manners of mankind, and of which we may see so many instances in our own and other countries. I am well aware that as long