

**WAR**

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War by W. Douglas Newton

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**W. DOUGLAS NEWTON**

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BY

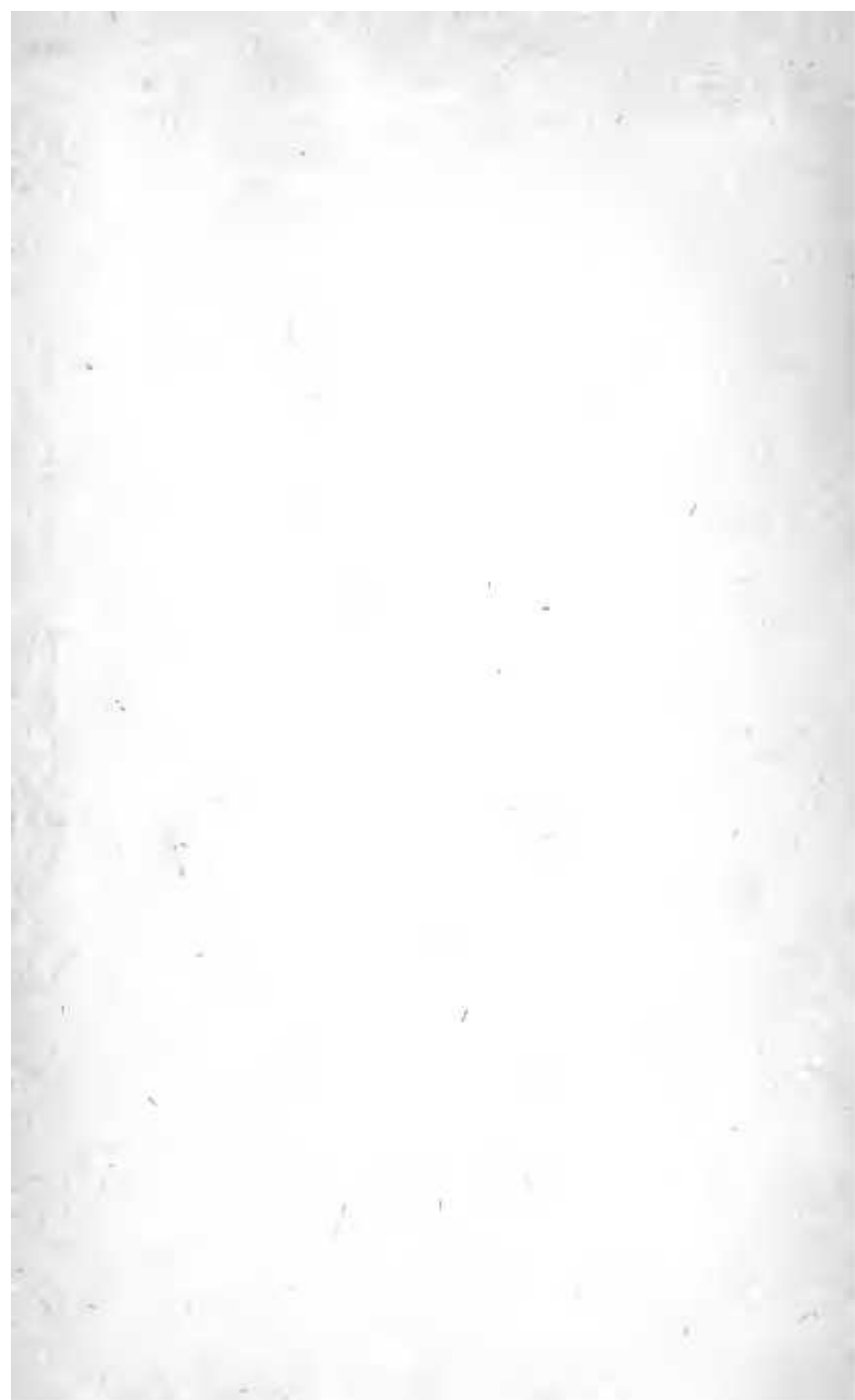
W. DOUGLAS NEWTON

NEW YORK

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1914

TO  
MY MOTHER AND FATHER



## PREFACE

BY FATHER R. H. BENSON

THIS book will be called sensational and disgusting. That is precisely what it is, because it is an account of the sensational and disgusting thing called *War*; at least it is an account of a few such incidents as any single individual, with reasonable powers of activity and observation, might easily see and experience should his country be invaded by another of the same degree of civilization as his own. It does not pretend to give statistics of the general ruin and devastation which must fall upon such a country; or of the death-roll; or of the years of misery and poverty that must follow: it does not describe the purely internal horrors that would certainly take place in our larger towns; it merely pictures the kind of thing which we should all witness, so long as we survived ourselves, in the familiar lanes and fields and



villages of our deep country-side—in the lanes and villages, where the passing of one of our own good-tempered, well-behaved soldiers now causes something of a sensation.

Next, it must be observed that the commanding officer of the invading army is represented as being, on the whole, a restrained and disciplined gentleman, with his full share of compassion and humanity. He is not personally vindictive or tyrannical. He is merely doing what we should all—in parallel circumstances—consider to be his duty : his misfortune lies in having, for the performance of that duty, the instrument called *War*. There are, of course, other instruments at the disposal of the human race for the adjusting of differences : one is diplomacy ; another is self-restraint ; another is preparedness ; a fourth is religion. But if these fail, there appears to be only War left. Now it is impossible to say that religion has failed, since the exact effect of it upon civilization generally is not capable of being codified ; but it is certainly true to say that Christianity,

as a whole, is not playing that overt part in pacification which might have been expected of it. Attempts, indeed, are being made to organize its forces ; but these, owing largely to the lamentable divisions amongst Christians, are greatly nullified. Again, with regard to diplomacy, it is equally impossible to judge accurately : it is a force that must work, inevitably, behind the scenes. Yet such glimpses of its energy as we have seen in the last thirty years, are not very reassuring. . . . There remain self-restraint and preparedness. As regards the former, we cannot very cordially congratulate ourselves. It is said, of course, that the Jingo Press is responsible ; but who is responsible for the Jingo Press ? Certainly not its directors. Men do not make their fortunes by journalism, unless they reflect the minds of their clients. It is, indeed, actually their duty to do so. As regards preparedness—well, I suppose no man, unless he be actually insane with party politics, or some other form of blind and complacent egotism, could describe the

English nation as being prepared for war, in any single department of that savage service. It is not in the least a question of this War Minister or that, of the Government or the Opposition ; for Cabinets and War Ministers, like directors of newspapers, are not nearly so much the leaders as the humble camp-followers of the nation. The fact is that nations, which have real personalities as well as characters of their own, are ultimately responsible for their own destinies ; and our own nation, at present, appears to be more interested in cinemas and art-balls and land campaigns than in any final destiny whatever.

Well, then, War is left, in the last resort ; and War will certainly come ; not because any other nation is particularly jealous or overbearing, or because we are, but because civilized Europe at present will not take the pains to secure that those adjustments, necessary from time to time between all nations, shall be arranged by gentler methods. It cannot possibly do us any harm, then, to understand what War