

**THE PEACE  
MANUAL: OR, WAR  
AND ITS REMEDIES.**

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The peace manual: or, War and its remedies. by Geo. C. Beckwith

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**GEO. C. BECKWITH**

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BY GEO. C. BECKWITH.  
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1847.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THIS little work is designed to furnish the most important facts, arguments and explanations, on the main topics embraced in the cause of peace. I hope it will suffice for the satisfaction of most minds; and those who wish for something fuller or more thorough, can resort to the larger publications on Peace by the American Peace Society, such as its *Prize Essays on a Congress of Nations*, a splendid octavo of more than 700 pages, and its *Book of Peace*, containing in smaller compass still more matter from some of the ablest pens that ever wrote, and altogether the best thesaurus or encyclopedia of information on Peace that can be found in the English or any other language.

I flatter myself that nearly every position taken in these pages, will secure the concurrence of all fair minds. I have sought with special care to present those aspects of the subject which I think best fitted to awaken a practical interest in the cause I plead, and to unite all good men in efforts for the abolition of war. For extracts from others, due credit is given, but none of course for anything taken from my own writings.

The cause of peace aims solely to do away the custom of international war; and I trust there will be found in this book nothing that does not bear on this object, nor anything that interferes with the legitimate authority of government. As a friend of peace, I am of course a supporter of civil government, with all the powers requisite for the condign punishment of wrong-doers, the enforcement of law, and the preservation of social order. I deem government, in spite of its worst abuses, an ordinance of God for the good of mankind; nor can I, as a peace man, hold any doctrines incompatible in my view with its just and necessary powers over its own subjects. I condemn *only* THE GREAT DUEL OF NATIONS.

G. C. B.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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PEACE is no new theme. Ancient prophets foretold it as one of the peculiar glories of Messiah's reign; and the angels, sent to announce his advent, sang over his manger-cradle, *Gloria to God in the highest and on earth PEACE, good will to men!* Peace was thus the birth-song of Christianity; and its principles, fully embodied by our Saviour in his sermon on the mount, and thickly scattered through the New Testament, were so strictly put in practice by the early Christians, that not a few of them went to the stake rather than bear arms. The church, however, relapsed into a deep, protracted degeneracy on this subject, as on many others; and for more than a thousand years after her fatal union with the state under Constantine in the fourth century, did she lend her sanction to the custom of war with scarce a thought of its glaring contrariety to her religion of peace. Still she was not entirely without witnesses on this point; for the Waldenses bore their testimony in the very midnight of the dark ages, and Erasmus, the day-star of the Reformation and of Modern Literature, wrote in behalf of peace with an eloquence worthy of the first scholar of the world. We know too well how little his voice was heeded by the warring Christians of



that age; but the seed sown by his hand has begun, in the present century, to spring up more or less among Christians of every name, and to promise in due time a rich and glorious harvest.

Every one knows the noble testimonies borne against war, by George Fox, William Penn, and their followers for the last two centuries; but it was not till near the downfall of Napoleon, and the consequent pacification of Europe, that any general or effective efforts were made for the specific purpose of abolishing this custom. DAVID L. DODGE, a pious, philanthropic merchant of New-York, was the real pioneer of these efforts in America. He began his labors before the commencement, in 1812, of our last war with England, but delayed any formal public organization until several months after the close of that war, when in August, 1815, there was formed in the city of New-York the first Peace Society of modern times. The first effectual appeal to the public at large, however, was made by NOAH WORCESTER in his *Solemn Review of the Custom of War*, published in December, 1814, and followed the next December by the Massachusetts Peace Society, and by the London Peace Society in June, 1816; societies that ever since have in one form or another sustained the cause through the world. This concert among the friends of peace in the two hemispheres, was without any knowledge at the time of each other's movements or designs, and thus gave striking proof that the hand of an all-controlling providence was at work to call forth and concentrate the benevolent energies of Christendom for the removal of this terrible scourge. Similar societies were in time multiplied. The American Peace Society, as a bond of union among the friends of peace through the United States, was organized in 1828 under the auspices of its venerable founder,

WILLIAM LADD; and kindred efforts have been made, not only in various parts of the British empire, but in France, Switzerland, and other portions of Christendom.

The object of this movement should be distinctly understood at the outset. It aims merely to *abolish the specific, well-defined custom of international war*. All the relations among men may be resolved into the relation of individuals to one another, the relation of individuals to society or government, and the relation of one society or government to another. The principles of peace may be applicable, more or less, to all these relations; but the cause of peace is restricted to the latter class, those between governments alone, and aims solely at such an application of the gospel to the intercourse of nations, as shall put an end to the practice of settling their disputes by the sword. When this shall have been accomplished, a vast deal more will doubtless remain to be done; but the associated friends of peace will then have fulfilled their specific mission.

This view of peace relieves it from a variety of extraneous questions. If our only province is the intercourse of nations, and our sole object the abolition of war between them, then have we nothing to do with capital punishments, or the right of personal self-defence, or the strict inviolability of human life, or the question whether the gospel allows the application of physical force to the government of states, schools and families. All these are grave questions, but come not within our province. We go merely against war; and war is defined by our best lexicographers to be "a contest by force between nations." It is such a conflict between governments alone; and hence, neither a parent chastising his child, nor a teacher punishing his pupil, nor a father

defending his family against a midnight assassin, nor a traveller resisting by force a highway robber, nor a ruler inflicting the penalties of law upon a sentenced criminal, can properly be called war, because the parties are not nations alone, but either individuals, or individuals and government. The cause of peace is not encumbered with such cases, but confines itself to the single purpose of abolishing the custom of war.

For the accomplishment of this purpose, there is *need of specific, associated efforts*. The object itself is sufficiently distinct; as much so as that of temperance, or missions, or any other benevolent enterprise. It is, also, important enough to justify and require such efforts. It is tributary to the highest interests of mankind, fraught with the weal or the woe of our whole race for time and eternity. It is difficult to conceive an enterprise aiming to prevent more evil, or to secure a greater amount of good; and surely an object so immeasurably important may rightly demand the special, associated efforts of good men. In no other way can it ever be accomplished; for the evil will no more cure itself than would the slave-trade, or intemperance, or paganism, or any other evil wrought into the web and woof of a world's habits for five thousand years. A delusion so long cherished, and fortified by so many and so powerful influences, can be dislodged from the general mind only by specific, concentrated and long-continued efforts. The evil itself is specific; Christianity has provided a specific remedy; and of this remedy, Christians must make a direct, specific application, before they can expect a thorough cure of the war-gangrene festering for so many ages on the bosom of universal humanity. We need this reform, also, to clear the skirts of Christians themselves from the guilt of war, to exhibit our religion