

### A WOMAN'S PROTEST AGAINST WAR.

A Congress *Extraordinaire* of the "International League of Peace and Liberty" was held in Basel July 24th, 1870, in which France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Switzerland and England were represented.

From the excellent addresses we select that of our friend Mad. Marie Goegg, of Geneva, Switzerland:

GENTLEMEN AND LADIES: **War! Such is the horrible cry with which the very air is filled! This cry has brought us together and united us in a common sentiment of indignation, making it our duty to protest earnestly against it, its consequences, and, above all, its authors.**

We are here, on the frontier of two countries, the people of which stand ready for mutual slaughter. This spectacle, all the greater shame to humanity when we consider its causes, really makes one doubt the *age* of our present era.

The manifesto of the Central Committee of our League has already proved that outside the principles by which it is governed there is no security of peace for man. It has shown that war, menacing and hideous, will be always at our door so long as a throne exists and nations have the burden of sustaining rival dynasties.

In harmony with this manifesto, eloquent voices are to-day showing us the necessity of attaching ourselves more positively to the principles of this League; showing us the great importance of spreading these principles more and more among the masses, that every man may fully comprehend their agency; for it is only through the conviction and conversion of individuals that we can gain the moral force which the accomplishment of this work demands.

For the present I leave this point, and waive also the question of woman's rights, although this occasion be the most striking of all others of the inadequacy of the laws that have denied to women, to these human beings *par excellence*, the right of voting on questions which concern their deepest interests, which are dearer to them than life.

Men love and desire war; they know that women, on the contrary, desire peace. This reason alone, had there been no other, would have sufficed to make them impose their authority; and it has, indeed, sufficed to create a factitious state, profitable only to kings and the ambitions of all kinds who surround them. It is, then, the lack of woman's co-operation which has retarded the progress of civilization, and rendered possible, at this age, the renewal of an act which must result in the demoralization and ruin, the mangling and slaughter of the best of two nations.

Reflections press at this point, but I doubt not that all the members of this League, as well as this audience, in sympathy with our great aim, are convinced to-day that up to this time the cause of humanity has been deprived of a most precious aid, and that you will take upon yourselves the duty of repairing this fault by working energetically to secure to woman, in future deliberations, her right in the balance.

It is not a year since I said in the Lausanne Convention, "The work of this League has

been made fruitful by the tears of woman." But I did not think then, pleading woman's suffering and resignation as her part in the work of peace, that only a few months later, from the fact of two nations equally sympathetic, equally brave and generous, thrown with rage one upon the other on a false pretext, I should have the sad duty of demonstrating the idea which I then uttered as a simple truth.

The heart overflows with sadness in thinking of all those who weep, who suffer, and who will suffer for a long time, far into the future, in consequence of this human butchery, coolly decided by court intrigues.

Do you see those poor mothers who have borne and cradled their children; who have watched over them and have for years forgotten themselves for their sake; do you see them anxiously, eagerly waiting news from the battle-field, trembling at the slightest noise, and in anguish saying to themselves, "My son will never return!" Do you see these desolate wives, separated violently from the arms of their husbands, knowing that a single shot from those guns, which *work so admirably*, may seal their wretchedness forever? And these young children, left orphans with the hardships of poverty, the famine which proceeds and follows armies, the disease which results from war, and the increased taxes which complete a nation's ruin—do you see? Do you hear all the groans which come from the battle-field—the cries of the wounded and dying?

Ah! speech is powerless to portray the sufferings, the horrors, which come from war, and all this might have been avoided!

Oh, that these two nations were two republics, instead of two monarchies, and that the roaring of cannon might be exchanged for songs of joy! Oh, that these two nations were their own masters, and that the millions and tens of millions spent in their mutual destruction were devoted to industry and education, to all that honors life and promotes happiness!

But as this blow cannot now be averted, as, in consequence of the repeated faults of generations, ancient and modern nations are still the victims of passion which a little foresight might have spared them, let us on this solemn day make a resolution which shall guard us against a recurrence of such evils, which shall be as a boundary line between the past and future.

A great lesson is given to us all—a terrible lesson. I conjure women to give it their attention. I address myself to them particularly, because I wish to speak of a special duty which they have utterly ignored, believing it of no importance, or outside the material mission—the duty of inculcating in their children true political principles.

Mothers treat lightly all that belongs to public and political life. I do not blame them. Laws and customs are responsible for this culpable indifference. Women cannot speak of that which they hardly comprehend, cannot interest themselves when they are suffered to take no part; and yet, poor, weeping mothers, your indifference, excusable and legitimate as it appears, brings bitter fruit.

If, instead of having excited in your children military ardor, you had early taught them to dread the insignia of war as emblems of slaughter; if, instead of pointing out to them, under the name of heroes, the great cap-

tains who distinguished themselves on the battle-field, you had given that title to some great benefactor of humanity; if, instead of constantly preaching to your children or before them the love of military decorations, you had but taught them to love work for the good it brings to the human family; if, instead of talking to them of titles, promotions, political and military favors; if, instead of exciting their ambition, cupidity, their *servility* in speaking with admiration and envy of men of questionable character loaded with princely favors, you had spoken to your children of the dignity of man, of his moral independence, of his real worth, and not of external distinctions; if, instead of speaking to them of high positions in court and state, you had shown them the happiness of the republican, living modestly and honestly in a republic, choosing and electing his own rulers, having neither *liste civile* to pay, vexations to fear, nor war of dynasties to dread; if you had spoken to them of fraternity between nations and races, you would have prevented the destruction which has fallen upon us.

The great lack in the soldier is that he fails to understand that he is, above all things, a man—that he belongs to himself, that his life is sacred, and, that if it is his duty to repel foreign invasion, he is never to fight for the caprice or ambition of a king; and when soldiers shall comprehend this truth; when, thanks to their mothers, they shall have learned to regard as brothers men of all nations and all tongues; when they shall really understand what is worthy and just, then they will throw down their arms, and, in mutual embrace, exclaim, "Why should we shed our blood? Life is sweet to those who love one another."

At this time we can count as many women who weep as there are men who fight. Ah, well! Mothers, wives, daughters, since we must drink this cup even to the dregs, let us labor most earnestly that a happy future may spring from our desolation. **Let us write, as one heart, to protest with indignation against this infamous war, striving, at the same time, by earnest attention to duty, to render impossible the recurrence of so mighty an evil.**

### AN ENGLISH PEERESS ON THE WOMAN QUESTION.

The following extracts are from a letter received from an English Peeress by a member of the Woman Suffrage Society in England. The readers of THE REVOLUTION may like to have a view of the woman question from a stand-point within the British aristocracy:

I will forward my annual subscription to the Women's Suffrage Society at the end of October. Alas! that I can do no more in the aid of the righteous cause; but having been robbed and swindled down to starvation point by my legal slave-owner, it is a sort of squeezing blood out of a stone process to do even this much. I heartily wish you and all other good women and true God speed through the rocks and quicksands of ridicule and opprobrium in leading this forlorn hope of justice to women; truly a forlorn hope, seeing that "Su colé de la barbe est la toute puissance," a power which for another leash of centuries the bearded autocrats are not likely to resign;