

Men of our Christian world and of our time are like a man who, having missed the right turning, the further he goes the more he becomes convinced that he is going the wrong way. Yet the greater his doubts, the quicker and the more desperately does he hurry on, consoling himself with the thought that he will arrive somewhere. But the time comes when it becomes quite clear that the way along which he is going will lead to nothing but a precipice, which he is already beginning to discern before him.

In such a position stands the Christian humanity of our time. It is perfectly evident that, if we continue to live as we are now living, guided in our private lives, as well as in the life of separate States, by the sole desire of welfare for ourselves and for our State, and will, as we do now, think to ensure this welfare by violence, then, inevitably increasing the means of violence of one against the other and of State against State, we shall, first, keep subjecting ourselves more and more, transferring the major portion of our productiveness to armaments; and, secondly, by killing in mutual wars the best physically developed men, we must become more and more degenerate and morally depraved.

That this will be the case if we do not alter our life is as certain as it is mathematically certain that two non-parallel straight lines must meet. But not only is this theoretically certain in our time; it is

becoming certain not only to thought, but also to the consciousness. The precipice which we approach is already becoming apparent to us, and the most simple, non-philosophizing, and uneducated men cannot but see that, by arming ourselves more and more against each other and slaughtering each other in war, we, like spiders in a jar, can come to nothing else but the destruction of each other.

A sincere, serious, rational man can no longer console himself by the thought that matters can be mended, as was formerly supposed, by a universal empire such as that of Rome or of Charles the Great, or Napoleon, or by the mediæval spiritual power of the Pope, or by Holy Alliances, by the political balance of the European Concert, and by peaceful international tribunals, or, as some have thought, by the increase of military strength and the newly discovered powerful weapons of destruction.

It is impossible to organize a universal empire or republic, consisting of European States, as different nationalities will never desire to unite into one State. To organize international tribunals for the solution of international disputes? But who will impose obedience to the decision of the tribunal upon a contending party who has an organized army of millions of men? To disarm? No one desires it or will begin it. To invent yet more dreadful means of destruction--balloons with bombs filled with suffocating gases, shells, which men will shower upon each other from above? Whatever may be invented, all States will furnish themselves with similar weapons of destruction. And cannon's flesh, as after cold weapons

it submitted to bullets, and meekly exposed itself to shells, bombs, far-reaching guns, mitrailleuses, mines, so it will also submit to bombs charged with suffocating gases scattered down upon it from balloons.

Nothing shows more evidently than the speeches of M. Muravieff and Professor Martens about the Japanese war not contradicting The Hague Peace Conference--nothing shows more obviously than these speeches to what an extent, amongst the men of our time, the means for the transmission of thought--speech--is distorted, and how the capacity for clear, rational thinking is completely lost. Thought and speech are used for the purpose, not of serving as a guide for human activity, but of justifying any activity, however criminal it may be. The late Boer war and the present Japanese war, which can at any moment pass into a universal slaughter, have proved this beyond all doubt. All anti-military discussions can as little contribute to the cessation of war as the most eloquent and persuasive considerations addressed to fighting dogs as to its being more advantageous to divide the piece of meat over which they are struggling than to mutilate each other and lose the piece of meat, which will be carried away by some passing dog not joining in the fight. We are dashing on toward the precipice, cannot stop, and we are approaching its edge.

For every rational man who reflects upon the position in which humanity is now placed and upon that which it is inevitably approaching, it cannot but be obvious that there is no practical issue out of this position, that one cannot devise any combination or organization which would save

us from the destruction toward which we are inevitably rushing. Not to mention the economical problems which become more and more complex, those mutual relations between the States arming themselves against each other and at any moment ready to break out into wars clearly point to the certain destruction toward which all so-called civilized humanity is being carried. Then what is to be done?