

as belonging of course, to the war party. Notwithstanding, therefore, I am a missionary, I have determined to make whatever efforts are necessary to comply with the dictates of conscience, and wash my hands of the blood that is shed in war. I regret that I have so long delayed to enter my protest against this practice by some overt act—a measure which appears, in the present state of things, the indispensable duty of every Christian."

Jeremy Taylor says: "If men be subjects of Christ's law, they can never go to war with each other." Bishop Watson exclaims: "Would to God that the spirit of the Christian religion would exert its influence over the hearts of individuals in their public capacity, as much as we trust it does over their conduct in private life; then there would be no war."

We might add testimonies from Cecil, Robert Hall, Chalmers, Wesley, and many others.

Even Gibbon bears his sneering testimony to the pacific scruples of the early Christians. He says: "The defence of our persons and property, they know not how to reconcile with the patient doctrine which enjoined an unlimited forgiveness of past injuries; nor could their humane ignorance be convinced that it was lawful, on any occasion, to shed the blood of our fellow creatures, by the sword either of justice or of war, though their criminal or hostile attempts should threaten the peace or safety of the whole community. The Christians felt and confessed, that such institutions might be necessary for the present system of the world, and they cheerfully submitted to the authority of their pagan governors; but while they inculcated the maxims of passive obedience,—submission, a very different thing,—they refused to take any active part in the civil administration or military defence of the empire."

The above testimonies are all in accordance with the prophecies of the Old, and the precepts of the New Testament.

Isaiah and Malachi, almost in the same words, prophecy of our Saviour: "He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." David, in his last charge to Solomon, says: "The word of the Lord come to me saying thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight." Chron. 22. 8. Again, in reference to Christ, Psalms 46th ch. 9th v.: "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth, he breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire."

The advent of our blessed Saviour to the earth was announced, as Luke declares, 2d ch. 13-14 vs., "by a multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the high-

est, and on earth peace, good will toward men;" and He, in his memorable sermon on the mount, Mathew 5th ch., 38-39th vs., repealed the old law, of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, by the declaration, "I say unto you that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Again, verse 44th, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." And to Peter he said, Mathew 26. 57, "put up thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

For the badge of discipleship which he has left us—see John 13th ch., 35th v.—"by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

We have thus endeavored, in meekness, to render a reason of the hope that is in us, and trust that the honorable Legislature of Virginia will not in charity, be behind the Roman Government, which, under several consuls, allowed exemption to the Jews from military duty on account of their religious scruples, and seeing that we are a peaceable people, ever desiring to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, we pray that we may be allowed the privilege, under the government of this noble old Commonwealth, which we honor and love, as loyal and true citizens should, to render unto God the things that are God's, according to the convictions of our consciences, and therefore pray that we may be required to perform no military duty; for we consider the throwing up of a battery, or the driving of an ammunition or other team, as much an act of war as fighting in the ranks.

We own no God but the God of Love, Truth, Peace, Mercy and Judgment, whose blessings we invoke, and whose wisdom we implore to be with you in your legislative deliberations.

Signed on behalf and by direction of Virginia Half Years' Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, held at Richmond, the 5th day of the 10th Month, 1863.

JOHN B. CRENSHAW, Clerk.