

**AN INQUIRY INTO THE ACCORDANCY OF  
WAR WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY,  
AND AN EXAMINATION OF THE  
PHILOSOPHICAL REASONING BY WHICH IT IS  
DEFENDED, WITH  
OBSERVATIONS ON SOME OF THE CAUSES OF  
WAR AND ON SOME OF ITS EFFECTS**

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An Inquiry into the Accordancy of War with the Principles of Christianity, and an Examination of the Philosophical Reasoning by Which It Is Defended, with Observations on Some of the Causes of War and on Some of Its Effects by Jonathan Dymond

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**JONATHAN DYMOND**

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# AN INQUIRY

INTO

## The Accordancy of War

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BY JONATHAN DYMOND.

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Contempt prior to examination, however comfortable to the mind which entertains it, or however natural to great parts, is extremely dangerous; and more apt than almost any other disposition, to produce erroneous judgments both of persons and opinions.—PALEY.

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Clinton Rogers Woodruff, Esq.

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## PREFACE.

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THE object of the following pages is, to give a view of the principal arguments which maintain the indefensibility and impolicy of war, and to examine the reasoning which is advanced in its favor.

The author has not found, either in those works which treat exclusively of war, or in those which refer to it as part of a general system, any examination of the question that embraced it in all its bearings. In these pages, therefore, he has attempted, not only to inquire into its accordancy with Christian principles, and to enforce the obligation of these principles, but to discuss those objections to the advocate of peace which are advanced by philosophy, and to examine into the authority of those which are enforced by the power of habit, and by popular opinion.

Perhaps no other apology is necessary for the intrusion of this essay upon the public, than that its subject is, in a very high degree, important. Upon such a subject as the slaughter of mankind, if there be a doubt, however indeterminate, whether Christianity does not prohibit it—if there be a possibility, however remote, that the happiness and security of a nation can be maintained without it, an examination of such possibility or doubt, may reasonably obtain our attention.—The advocate of peace is, however,

not obliged to avail himself of such considerations: at least if the author had not believed that much more than doubt and possibility can be advanced in support of his opinions, this inquiry would not have been offered to the public.

He is far from amusing himself with the expectation of a general assent to the truth of his conclusions. Some will probably dispute the rectitude of the principles of decision, and some will dissent from the legitimacy of their application. Nevertheless, he believes that the number of those whose opinions will accord with his own is increasing, and will yet much more increase; and this belief is sufficiently confident to induce him to publish an essay which will probably be the subject of contempt to some men, and of ridicule to others. But ridicule and contempt are not potent reasoners.

"Christianity can only operate as an alterative. By the mild diffusion of its light and influence, the minds of men are insensibly prepared to perceive and correct the enormities, which folly, or wickedness, or accident have introduced into their public establishments."\* It is in the hope of contributing, in a degree however unimportant or remote, to the diffusion of this light and influence, that the following pages have been written.

For the principles of this little volume, or for its conclusions, no one is responsible but the writer: they are unconnected with any society, benevolent or religious. He has not written it for a present occasion, or with any view to the present political state of Europe. A question like this does not concern itself with the quarrels of the day.

\*Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy.

It will, perhaps, be thought by some readers, that there is contained in the following pages, greater severity of animadversion than becomes an advocate of peace. But, "let it be remembered, that to bestow good names on bad things, is to give them a passport in the world under a delusive disguise."\* The writer believes that wars are often supported, because the system itself, and the actions of its agents, are veiled in glittering fictions. He has therefore attempted to exhibit the nature of these fictions and of that which they conceal; and to state, freely and honestly, both what they are not, and what they are. In this attempt it has been difficult—perhaps it has not been possible—to avoid some appearance of severity: but he would beg the reader always to bear in his recollection, that if he speaks with censure of any class of men, he speaks of them only as a class. He is far from giving to such censure an individual application: Such an application would be an outrage of all candor and all justice. If again he speaks of war as *criminal*, he does not attach guilt, necessarily, to the profession of arms. He can suppose that many who engage in the dreadful work of human destruction, may do it without a consciousness of impropriety, or with a belief of its virtue. But truth itself is unalterable: whatever be our conduct, and whatever our opinions, and whether we perceive its principles or not, those principles are immutable; and the illustration of truth, so far as he has the power of discovering it, is the object of the Inquiry which he now offers to the public.

\* Knox's Essays, No. 34.