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CAN WE LIMIT WAR?





# CAN WE LIMIT WAR?

BY  
HOFFMAN NICKERSON



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## DEDICATION TO HILAIRE BELLOC

MY DEAR MASTER,

This book is a study of the limitation of war, of war as an inseparable part of any social order, and of the relation between social and military forms. It seeks to answer the questions: Why has our democratic era been the bloodiest in history? And why, notwithstanding our exhaustion, must we still fear renewed and vast conflicts?

No one who knows us both, and especially no one who has heard us hotly debating a thousand topics, from the development of the Papacy to the relative importance of seventeenth-century infantry and cavalry, will expect our judgements of men and things always to coincide. The following pages must stand on their own merits. If I have harshly criticized even the greatest soldiers of the nineteenth century and of 1914-18, it is only because I come after them; according to the proverb that any pigmy, standing on the shoulders of a giant, may claim to be the taller.

It is now twenty years since I first heard the great organ-roll of prose with which your *Marie Antoinette* opens, and since then I have never ceased to admire your achievements, your style, your amazing power of work—half your productive labour would have killed anyone else I can think of, over a hundred books published in thirty years! It is a pleasure to acknowledge your gift for illuminating so many varied subjects; when the scholar-specialists of the next generation gather like vultures to pick the bones of the Whig

historians—a job long overdue—they will find your arrows deeply driven between the ribs of each carcass.

One word more. During the late war certain men thought it clever to belittle your articles on German man-power. When it was my fortune to be assigned to duty with the Second Section of the American General Staff in France I soon discovered that your figures had nothing personal about them ; the public did not know that you were merely doing your duty as a loyal citizen by popularizing the calculations of both the French and British Intelligence Departments. Those calculations proved to be very near to reality when the full figures of German losses were at last arrived at, though it must be admitted that the Allied General Staffs leaned towards the optimistic side.

HOFFMAN NICKERSON.

*October, 1933.*

## PREFACE

ALTHOUGH the world is still under the shadow of 1918, the intimate relation between war and our social order has hardly been studied. As yet we encounter half-truths, our ears ring with hysterical denunciations of armed conflict, and our flesh is made to creep with blood-curdling prophecies of the next outbreak. We are half-blinded in a snowstorm of unreal, paper plans for abolishing armed strife altogether. Worse still, we meet with deliberate lies, such as the statement that the new weapons must make the next war more barbarous and destructive than the last, or that democracies are peaceful. As against all these, this book seeks to estimate the future of war in terms of the social forces recently active, together with military methods recent and proposed, putting events into perspective by comparing our own with other centuries.

Its thesis is that war—the use of organized force between human groups—is inevitable because men are imperfect, because any social order demands armed police-power; and finally, because an individual or group determined to attack another can be restrained only by superior force. War cannot be intelligently considered apart from peace, for the quarrels, competitions and rivalries of peace are its source, and a better peace is its object; both peace and war are only forms of political intercourse between groups. Although force can never be abolished, on the other hand war has always been limited morally, politically, economically and technically, so that when military writers speak of “unlimited”

war they are merely using a short-hand phrase for its imperfectly limited forms. The degree of limitation has risen and fallen throughout long cycles of time; a civilization full of discontent will have a high potential of conflict, one which enjoys moral unity will have a low potential. The amount of actual war will depend upon the potential plus the time and effort required to achieve a true decision, either by reconciliation of the defeated group or by its destruction either actual or political. An age afflicted like our own suffers chiefly from ideals which divide men instead of reconciling them, secondly from incompetent military methods; happily other ideals and methods are beginning to appear, and upon them depends the hope for limiting war. If we can establish a true moral unity, backed by effective police forces, we shall succeed; if we cannot do so we shall fail—leaving the problem to the diminished remnant of our descendants.

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MUCH of the following material has been printed in the *American Mercury*, *Army Ordnance*, the *New York Times*, and the *Harvard Advocate*, to the Editors of which my thanks are due.

In the teeth of the romantic-naturalist affectation of the "original genius" who owes nothing to anyone, it is particularly pleasant to follow the courteous and honest custom of citing those from whom one has learned. Foremost among these is Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, of the British Army. In France General Arthur Boucher, whose *Lois Éternelles de la Guerre* contrasts modern errors with classical experience, dealing harshly with the conscript hordes of 1914 and the shortcomings of Neo-Napoleonic strategy. The Italian historian Ferrero has given us *La Fin des Aventures* as well as several all too brief studies of the transformations of war from the seventeenth century until to-day. Much light is thrown on the ancient cycle of war by Professor Toynbee's article on "History" in *The Legacy of Greece*, and the French Admiral Castex in his *Théories Stratégiques* has given us the sanest and most lucid discussion of air-warfare yet seen by the present writer.



PART I

*WAR AND THE SOCIAL ORDER*



# CAN WE LIMIT WAR ?

## CHAPTER I

### THE INEVITABILITY OF WAR

BATTLES are brutal and bloody. War is destructive. In itself, and if we take the world as a whole, it does not pay. Wars give occasion to many sins and crimes which would not otherwise have been committed. Not a few religious teachers have held all war to be sinful, and certainly many wars have been wickedly declared and still more wickedly waged. Ever since the sixteenth and especially since the middle eighteenth century men have fought more and more for merely "national interests," unjustifiable by any common morality. Meanwhile, certain developments throughout the civilized world have helped to increase the strain of war upon society. Some might add that the degeneracy of the human intelligence through the democratic theory has also contributed to this result. At all events, the crescendo of strain reached such a point in the recent war against Germany that in 1917 one whole province of Christendom, Russia, collapsed, and most of the belligerents were threatened with a like disaster. Everywhere to-day we hear of efforts to abolish war altogether.

Is this possible? No, it is an unreal folly. Indeed, its unreality is such that belief in it may well recoil upon its authors and upon all of us if we permit it to continue. Wars will continue as long as man is man.

To say this is by no means to condemn efforts to limit war, to avoid or reduce causes for conflict, and to

persuade people to peaceable courses. Obviously such efforts are both wise and timely. Only when it is proposed not merely to limit, diminish, or postpone wars, but to abolish them altogether, does the unreality and therefore the danger begin.

The unreality of pacifism does not stand alone ; it is part of a general worship or cult of unreality to be seen all around us. To expect a permanently war-less world is no sillier than to hope for religion without authority, civilization without inequality, beautiful art without culture and tradition, good manners without tedious training, society without conventions, and so on, to weariness. An "Anatomy of Modernism" is much needed to trace the connection between the various kinds of contemporary monkey chatter.

Turning now to the various arguments against war ; if battles are bloody so are slaughter-houses and surgical operating-rooms. That surgery or the Chicago stock-yards are in themselves attractive to sensitive people no one will maintain ; the argument in their favour is that they serve good and useful purposes which outweigh the unattractiveness of the means used.

The term brutal is hard to define. It is sometimes used of anything the user does not like ; in Mexico a slight and unintentional breach of courtesy may be called a *brutalidad*. If used accurately, it would seem to cover everything we share with the brutes, the physical life, primitive emotions, etc. But in this sense it is not condemnatory ; to tell a man that he is as brutal as a good dog is not a formidable insult. To condemn physical things in themselves is to land plump in the detestable error known to theologians as the Manichean heresy, which involves the condemnation of all human life on this earth. Logically, it leads to suicide, as actually practised by the Albigensians, a medieval sect once studied and described by the present

writer at some length. Again, if we condemn any act performed in a state of violent emotion, temporarily blotting out much of the contemplative or reasoning faculty, then we must condemn not only combat, but also the act of generation to which we owe our existence.

Sometimes the term brutality is used to express dislike of the soldier as a type. Traders and men dedicated to gain value him only as a policeman or servant to protect them; when he achieves power he hinders their operations. The intolerant cult of honour with which he seeks to fortify the courage necessary to his trade fosters a temper alien to that of bargaining. Thus, written as it was from the mercantile atmosphere of nineteenth-century Boston, Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic* delights in the final triumph of the Dutch traders over the Spanish soldiers. The astonishing victories won again and again by the handful of Spaniards against overwhelming numbers of Dutch leave him cold! As the business man has more and more come to dominate society, his rise has perhaps caused, and certainly been followed by, that of the subversive or "social revolutionary," who is essentially a barbarian desirous of enjoying the fruits of civilization without submitting to the discipline all civilization must impose. Therefore he too dislikes soldiers because they police society—and for that matter he also dislikes priests (or, if you prefer, "ministers of religion") because they maintain the moral order on which physical order must repose. Thus, when business men or subversives speak against soldiership it is well to remember that they may be moved by envy of men better than themselves.

The argument that war is destructive, that it doesn't pay, is not always true, and would not be conclusive if it were. Few sports or pleasures can be said to "pay" those who indulge in them. Nor do all virtuous actions. A man who did only that which he thought would pay

him would be an unthinkable monster. Even he who approaches this goal is certainly a bore and often a scoundrel. Answering H. G. Wells, Chesterton once remarked that if it were true that war did not pay, then that would be the only certainly good thing about it. In any event, many wars have paid and will, doubtless, continue to do so. Take, for instance, wars between civilized men and barbarians; the latter are usually beaten, and when civilized men afterwards occupy and organize formerly barbaric countries these become vastly more productive than before. For instance, will anyone say that the destruction of life and property in the Indian wars of the United States has not been many thousandfold repaid by the development of what is now our own territory? Between civilized men, too, wars have certainly seemed to pay. The Prussian wars of 1864, 1866, and 1870-71, if, indeed, they did not themselves enrich Prussia and the countries finally included in the Reich, certainly did not prevent the rapid enrichment of the districts we have come to call Germany. The writer has even heard it darkly hinted that the war of 1914-18 did not completely impoverish the United States.

The most sweeping form of religious and moral argument against war is that the use of force is sinful in itself. Some Oriental sects are said to refuse to kill any living creature, however harmful or annoying, still less for food. The Christian tradition of the Western world has never gone as far as that. Certain sayings of our Lord, as reported in the Gospels, are often quoted by pacifists: ". . . Resist not evil," "Turn the other cheek," "Love your enemies . . .," "All that take the sword shall perish by the sword." St. Thomas Aquinas comments that while these precepts should be borne in mind, nevertheless it is sometimes necessary to act otherwise for the common good or for the good of those

against whom one fights, since nothing is more hopeless than the happiness of unpunished and triumphant sinners. He then very sensibly argues that the magistrates of a community cannot be said to "take" the sword, since they have it by nature as a part of their office of securing the public peace and safety. Even rebellion, he continues, may be justified by tyranny; the sin of it is upon the unjust ruler, not upon the rebels. Further, there are other texts of a very different sort, such as: "I came not to bring peace, but a sword." We are told that our Lord drove the money-changers from the temple with a whip.

Although there was much pacifist opinion in the early Church, one looks in vain for any defined dogma on the subject. Pacifism has often cropped out here and there in Christendom. It has even appeared in the Roman obedience; recently a certain Father Stratmann, Monk of the Dominican Order, published a book advocating the condemnation by the Pope of all wars. Since that would imply the condemnation of the many previous popes who incited to war and even—in their capacity as temporal princes—waged it themselves, we may safely assume that nothing of the sort will be done. In her Sixteenth Century Articles of Religion the Church of England laid down that "it is lawful for Christian men, at the command of the magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars." Of all Christian bodies only a few sects—local and all but one obscure—are pacifist.

The one notable group of pacifist Christians is the Society of Friends, better known as the Quakers. First of all, let it be noted that they are not seldom of a commercialist, acquisitive type. If the writer correctly understands their doctrine, their objection to war is not the absolute pacifism which holds any use of force immoral; when they controlled Pennsylvania they had

constables, although no organized militia. Their theory is simply that since war is both the effect and cause of evil, ambition, pride, greed and hatred, it is, therefore, contrary to the mind of Christ, and not to be indulged in for any cause however good.

To do them justice, they do not primarily object to the risks of war. During the late unpleasantness, when Quaker opinion in England decided mine-sweeping to be a form of life-saving, young male Quakers—although exempt by law from all military service—volunteered and vigorously engaged in that dangerous and uncomfortable duty. Even as to actual combatant service some Quakers have wavered. During the American Civil War not a few of them are said to have been sufficiently impressed with the holiness of negro emancipation as to fight for it, especially against Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania in 1863. In China our Quaker President, Hoover, once had much reason for gratitude to the Cossacks and other European troops who defended his wife and himself from the none too amiable treatment the Boxers were giving such Europeans as they could catch, and to date there seems to have been no attempt to put him out of Meeting for recommending considerable naval and military expenditures.

Having thus briefly reviewed the argument from sensibility, based upon the ugliness of war, the economic argument based upon its wastefulness, and the religious-moral argument based upon its alleged sinfulness, let us now consider what may be called the historical argument, based chiefly on an interpretation of the admitted facts of the recent war against Germany.

Although akin to the economic argument, the historical argument is not identical with it. It is, briefly, that the strain of the last war was such that its repetition would endanger the political and economic structure of the whole civilized world, with painful



consequences to practically everyone. Furthermore, it is pointed out that the existing instruments of destruction are already more efficient than those used in 1918. All of which is true. It is only when these undoubted truths are stretched to justify the claim that all warfare can and should be abolished that one is compelled to dissent.

Another and lesser form of the historical argument is that individual duelling, once a recognized institution, is now abolished. This can be countered with the fact that duelling has been abolished only over a part of the world, long and securely abolished only in England and in parts of the United States. To say that it has everywhere disappeared is mere provincial ignorance. Also it may be questioned whether the limited extent to which it has been abolished has been an unmixed gain. While the abolition has certainly lowered the general standard of good manners (one remembers Owen Wister's cowboy in *The Virginian* and his "When you call me that, smile"), it has not certainly raised the standard of public morals, because gunmen find an enlarged field of operations when no other considerable number of citizens go armed and pride themselves on a readiness to engage in combat. If duelling was indeed murder, then it was obviously murder of a far less despicable sort than that practised wholesale to-day.

The permanent human fact which makes an endlessly unbroken peace impossible is that large sections of the human race have never been, are not now, and presumably never will be, convinced that war is an unmixed evil. On the contrary, many have always insisted, and do insist, on a certain amount of it as a positive good. The most absolute of such statements are those of Nietzsche who, if impotent as a system-builder, was nevertheless a man whose mind worked very vividly in flashes. Nietzsche says: "They have said unto you that a good cause makes any war good; but I say unto you that a

good war makes any cause good." And again: "Let man be formed for war and women for the recreation of the warrior, everything else is foolishness." From Homer down those sad dogs the poets have obstinately persisted in glorifying warriors, and Homer added:

"Oh, my friend, if indeed, but once this battle avoided,  
 We were forever to live without growing old and immortal,  
 Neither would I myself go forth to fight with the foremost,  
 Nor would I urge thee on to enter the glorious battle,  
 But—for a thousand fates of death stand close to us always—  
 Let us go forward . . ."

An Elizabethan—I think it may have been one William Shakespeare, an author of some reputation in the pre-Shavian era, at any rate an Elizabethan—calls war the

". . . great corrector of enormous times . . .  
 That cures the earth of the pleurisy of people."

Nor is this opinion confined to versifying fellows and others who have not smelt powder. Quite the contrary. One of the kindest men the writer ever knew, Mike Donovan, the pugilist, who had served in the Civil War, used to be fond of saying: "Ah, what's the good of a man if he won't fight?" During the same war—to be exact, on the morning of Fredericksburg—a certain Virginian gentleman, one Robert E. Lee, also a conspicuously kindly man, is reported to have said: "Longstreet, it is well that war is so terrible—if it were not, we would grow too fond of it!"

When Europe mobilized in 1914 every people did so with an exaltation like that of some supreme religious service. The soldiers themselves went off singing and shouting. Talented Jews, like Maurice Samuel, the author of *You Gentiles*, looking on with the detachment of that ancient people, found themselves bemused and bewildered. The resulting war proved exceptionally

disagreeable, even among wars, and yet its opening delight in battle was not lost by all the participants. A professional kicker like Shaw notes with a sour honesty that not a few of his war-hating young friends, described by him as "brilliant" and "creative," having volunteered, were rapidly promoted, and found themselves actually becoming artists in war, with a growing relish for it.

The present writer, sitting a few years ago in a group of half a dozen peaceable New Yorkers, nearly all of whom had been in action, heard the question raised: "If you could live over again one year of your life, which would it be?" The unanimous answer was: "Nineteen-eighteen!"

Apparently the explanation is that everyone likes excitement. The amount emotionally appetizing to each individual varies with age, sex, state of health and other characteristics, but the appetite is always there. Henry Adams remarked in *Mont St. Michel and Chârtres* that the wealthy laymen of the eleventh century, fighting men all, seem to have troubled about pain and death about as much as healthy bears do in the mountains. Most young men are not only willing, but eager, to purchase excitement at the cost of physical risk, often a high degree of risk. War supplies not only excitement, but also the great boon of comradeship, combined with greater variety than that usually accompanying the comradeship of a monastery or the fore-castle of a ship. If the risk is so high that one's chances of life are obviously slim, then, of course, there is no fun in the proceedings. In such cases man must be nerved up by other motives, of which more anon.

Further, people almost cease to notice accustomed dangers. In our automobile-infested streets we are an inch or so from death every day of our lives. How many of us care? Any city can show elderly women skipping like mountain goats from before these destroyers with

the same bored adaptability probably displayed by their remote ancestresses in fleeing from the sabre-toothed tiger. And why? To save half a minute's time. So slight a thing is enough to persuade people into dangers that have become familiar.

Besides danger, war has the further drawback of hardship, physical discomfort, which men have always found harder to bear than the chance of wounds or violent death. This point has not gone unnoticed. If the present age will pardon another Shakespearean quotation, when the poet Octavius praises Antony's soldiership, he speaks not of his battles, but of his endurance of hardship :

“ . . . at thy heel  
 Did famine follow ; whom thou fought'st against  
 Though daintily brought up, with patience more  
 Than savages could suffer . . .  
 On the Alps  
 It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh  
 Which some did die to look on ; and all this . . .  
 Was borne so like a soldier that thy cheek  
 So much as lank'd not . . . ”

One of Washington's papers expresses the same thought that endurance of hardship, rather than danger, is the chief test of a soldier.

That unmilitary populations are deterred from soldiering more through shrinking from discomfort than through fear of danger is proved by an amusing historical example. The later Roman Empire had many barbarian troops. They were cheaper to hire than civilized men ; they were accustomed to roughing it without baggage and were, therefore, more mobile. Their primitive cult of personal loyalty made them more faithful than provincials in the continental civil wars. Thus in A.D. 400 a large part of the garrison of Constantinople was recruited from the little-known tribes called Goths, who

were Arian in religion, whereas the inhabitants of the imperial city were zealous orthodox Catholics. Therefore the populace, who would not have dreamed of enlisting to face the hardships of campaigning, fell upon the wretched barbarians in anger at the attempted murder of an old woman by a Gothic soldier, and massacred some seven thousand of them.

Settled populations, and especially city populations, accustomed to abundant shelter, recoil from discomforts which would be second nature to pioneers or to more primitive folk. Thus in winter the A.E.F. used to jest that it was no wonder that the French had fought so many wars, for their houses were so cold and short of plumbing that they suffered little out of the ordinary when they took the field. And yet those same comfort-loving Americans would charge recklessly again and again against intact German machine-guns, with a dash of which four years of trench fighting had robbed the nineteen-eighteen French. Men who walked over our fresh battle-fields around Château-Thierry say they found three rows of American dead in front of most German machine-guns; the survivors of the third rush had seldom failed to get the gunner.

When danger can be had without previous discomfort, for instance, in driving a car faster than one should, many women, and especially young women, enjoy it as do young men. Some Frenchman is, indeed, reported to have said: "You shall be young as long as you love the risk of death." Although the writer has quoted in another place the bit of Hergesheimer's admirable *Quiet Cities* that follows, nevertheless it shall again be quoted here, for it so aptly meets the point.

"I found myself, lately, in a small and very swift automobile at night; . . . the charming young person driving was in her appropriate and most relieving element. She drove inattentively, with one knee swinging over the

other, and a cigarette in an often otherwise unengaged hand. I said at last resentfully that a needless risk was mere folly and she smiled at me with a candid charm. You couldn't, she pointed out, live for ever."

All of which brings us back again to Homer.

As to women in general, you will hear it said that many of them are pacifists without use for soldiers and soldiering, *per contra* devoutly hoping that there will never be another war. Plenty of women say so. But in that case how about the notorious and well-nigh universal female admiration for the wearers of uniforms? In war-time can anyone remember an occasion when any woman paid the slightest attention to a male in civilian clothes when she might have been talking to one "garbed in the horrid livery of war"? If so, the thing was a nine days' wonder, a miracle of staggering proportions and, therefore, not to be believed except on the strongest evidence.

But what about the timid youth, and the comfortable middle-aged man represented by Hergesheimer in the passage above? Certainly no one in their senses will maintain that all men have an equal appetite for excitement via danger. And that the blood cools as we grow older few will deny. But can the most timid man honestly say that he dislikes even the suggestion of risk? He may, of course, get his enjoyment at second hand by contemplating the perils and gallantry of others. Even after this pale and distant fashion, however, his enjoyment shows a spark of the old fire smouldering within him.

All told, therefore, it is obvious truth that great masses of people refuse to think war altogether evil.

But the abolitionist must contend not only that mankind believes or will believe war an unmixed evil; he must also maintain that they can be made to believe it the greatest of evils. He must say either that human groups already are or will become collectively so amiable

and righteous that they will never wrong other groups, or else he must say that to endure no matter what collective wrong will seem better than to resist in arms. In its crudest form this argument was often put in the form of a war-time question: Would you stand calmly by while another man raped your sister?

The writer well knows that even so personal a proposition might admit certain shadings. For instance, one might see that the man who proposed to wrong one's sister was far bigger and better armed than oneself. Then the only chance of success would be in case he was for the moment so occupied with the lady that one might overcome him by surprise in a sudden and unexpected attack. Failing this, some might argue that an attempted relief of the sister would not save her, and would merely involve the would-be rescuer in evils he might otherwise escape. The trouble with such reasoning would be that most men might be just a little ashamed of it later.

If anyone says that secular virtues such as courage have no standing before the Christian virtue of charity or love, let him be answered in the words of Boswell's Dr. Johnson: "Courage, sir, is not, strictly speaking, a Christian virtue, but without it a man is in danger of losing all the others." And again, in Cardinal Mercier's remark when the Germans invaded Belgium, that charity has greater scope after justice has been done than before.

The mention of Mercier and Belgium puts the matter on a political footing, so that personal arguments, such as the endangered sister, no longer fully apply. If resistance is hopeless, then in the immediate military sense it may be permissible to yield unless the time gained by unsuccessful resistance is of value. But even if one cannot make the enemy lose valuable time, still the resistance may be morally of enormous significance. Thus on 17th December, 1688, James II of England,

himself a soldier and believing firmly in his own right, refused to let his guards fire on overwhelming Dutch numbers come to assault his palace. And yet, as his biographer, Belloc, observes, so honourable an incident might have proved symbolic and thus have influenced the future. Certainly in 1914 the resistance of Belgium, even though it delayed the first German rush little if at all, had great symbolic effect.

However, to refute the absolute pacifist argument, we have no need of such desperate examples. The more usual case is that of a state which sees some other state threatening its citizens with what seems intolerable wrong, for instance with armed invasion looking towards wholesale robbery. The first state can, if it choose, prevent this by armed resistance, but in no other way. Will either the spiritual condition of its own citizens or of those of the invading state be improved by passiveness on the part of the invaded? It seems difficult to answer yes.

The universal judgement of mankind is against the proposition that war, even if an evil, is the greatest of evils. Only the constant repetition of such nonsense makes refutation worth while. Nor are the steps in the use of organized force by a human community difficult to trace. Obviously if all men always perfectly obeyed the same moral code then crimes would not be committed nor disputes arise. Unfortunately, moral codes differ, crimes are committed and disputes do arise. From immemorial antiquity all communities have always tried to discourage crime by the use of force—that is by police. We have seen that even the early Quakers in Pennsylvania found they had to have constables. When total disarmament is proposed the immortal French reply is always ready: “*Que Messieurs les assassins commencent*” —“let the gentlemen-gunmen begin.”

If it be objected that war is different from policing,



that amounts to saying that a community has the right to protect itself against individual criminals, but not against numbers, which is absurd. Superficially policemen and soldiers seem different: policemen exist to preserve civic order, whereas we think of soldiers as fighting against other countries. But at bottom the function of both is the same, both are armed to maintain the authority of government. The invasion of many a city by a foreign army has resulted in less disorder than that which took place in the Boston of 1919 after the police walked out and before the militia came in; crowds of respectable-looking people plundered the shops right and left; some sat on the curb-stones in front of shoe stores calmly trying on one pair of stolen shoes after another until they found a pair that fitted them. Who can say when rioting becomes civil war? Just when did the British police operation of 1768-75 against the Colonies turn into war? In April of 1775 at Lexington and Concord? In June at Bunker Hill? Or in March of 1776 when Boston was evacuated and a strategic reconquest was attempted from New York? If any valid distinction between war and police work has ever been drawn, then the writer after diligent search has failed to find it.

If we say that defensive war is not sinful but aggressive war is, then we are faced with the difficulty of defining aggression. The Carnegie Foundation for International Peace has recently put out a pamphlet on the matter which is a masterpiece of confusion and futility. In it a French international lawyer is quoted as saying in despair: "One must, all the same, leave words their sense." To exaggerate such difficulties of definition is to aid the sham philosophers who try to bewilder us with riddling questions instead of working on at least a few answers. In most cases it is reasonably clear who is the aggressor. The writer merely notes that so far

no workable rule-of-thumb definition of aggression has been framed. And even if such a rule could be framed, it would remain true that if force be permissible at all, then action perfectly aggressive in form must sometimes be justly taken when the intention is to promote some object admitted to be good, or to put down serious evils.

Thus the matter glides from the sphere of law into that of equity or morals, thereby approaching the still more difficult sphere of religion. And since nationalism is chief among contemporary religions, with communism looming in the offing, no tribunal or central body clothed with moral—that is religious or quasi-religious—authority superior to patriotism seems likely soon to appear. Nor can such authority be manufactured to order. As Talleyrand remarked to Robespierre over the failure of the latter's highly liberal and rational new religion: "Just work some miracles, that is if you can possibly manage it. Then get yourself crucified and rise again on the third day and your success will be assured." Lacking moral authority, our World Courts or Leagues of Nations must either do nothing or impose their decisions upon patriots or worshippers of proletarian humanity by force—which is not exactly a peaceful solution.

At this point someone may object: Granted that by no means all mankind will agree that war in itself is altogether evil, and granted further that it is certainly not the greatest of evils, even so, is not the pacifist delusion both amiable and harmless?

No, reader, it is not. It is an acid jest of Irving Babbitt's in his *Democracy and Leadership* that "one might without being too fanciful establish a sort of synchronism between the prevalence of pacifistic schemes and the actual outbreak of war. The propaganda of the Abbé de Saint-Pierre was followed by the wars of Frederick the Great. The humanitarian movement of

the end of the eighteenth century, which found expression in Kant's treatise on *Perpetual Peace*, was followed and attended by twenty years of the bloodiest fighting the world has ever known. The pacifist agitation of the early twentieth century, that found outer expression in the Peace Palace at the Hague, was succeeded by battle-lines hundreds of miles long." To-day, with the dead of 1918 barely twelve years in their graves, with Kellogg Pacts and with pacifist novels on the horrors of war high on the list of best sellers, the temper of Europe seems not ideally peaceful. Certainly most European nations are armed to the teeth. And of those comparatively disarmed most are so by compulsion which they would prefer to escape.

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Not only man but all living things contend after their fashion. In thick woods one tree kills another by growing above it and so cutting it off from light and sunshine. Other plants are defensively armed, such as the thorn-bearers or the poison ivy. A few actually entrap and kill insects. All animals must find and seize food, if necessary disputing it with others, and must get the better of their enemies; most highly-organized species are continually using or threatening to use force. Fuller has noted that even herb-eating animals attack each other "economically," driving each other out of desirable pasture-lands. Males of many sorts fight for possession of the females. Still others, like the game-cock, the African buffalo and the domestic bull fight constantly for the mere love of fighting. Most sea creatures and many birds, together with the flesh-eating land animals, must live by killing. Man himself lives only by taking the lives of animals or of plants; even a man who deliberately starves himself to death may be said to practise a certain cannibalism, for from the time he

stops eating until he dies he is consuming his own tissues. So one of the greatest early Greek thinkers, Heraclitus, observing only the external world and neglecting both the pure intellect and the religious instinct in man, said: "War is father and king of all, some he made gods and some men, some slaves and some free."

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There seems no more reason for believing that man will ever lose the fighting instinct than that he will lose any other basic instinct. His desire to live and therefore to eat, drink and beget children, is no more and no less firmly rooted than the desire to resist and at need to destroy other lives which threaten his. Not only is the fighting instinct permanent; the causes which provoke it are equally permanent and unchangeable. Our world has no record of a time when men did not quarrel over food and women, and no prospect of a race so regenerate that all would share their last crust with any chance comer. Nor can we imagine women who would not be pleased to see men contending—in one form or another—for their possession or protection. When boys cease to boast and tussle men will cease to contend for power and for riches as a form of power. So with religious and moral differences: Christendom shows few signs of peaceably accepting polygamy or the new religion of communism. Further still, many peoples have made religious practices of human sacrifice or cannibalism; when these are no longer forcibly resisted the end of religious wars may be nearer. Even then there would remain the possibility of sects like the medieval Assassins or the Thugs of modern India, who make a religious cult of murder; if one agreed to tolerate them, why should they not continue to war against the rest of mankind? If the reader thinks these suggestions mere clowning, let him remember that human sacrifice,

cannibalism, the Assassins and the Thugs are matters of sober history. If anyone says they will never return, so a Russian of 1916, reading of former Communist massacres, say at Munster in sixteenth-century Germany, might have said that such things would never be again.

To insist that war of some sort is sooner or later inevitable is by no means to say that the world will soon set about repeating 1914-18. The experience of the race proves that war is always limited in various ways. Often the cause of some threatening conflict can be removed. Within reason something can be done to spread peaceable habits of mind. Although the imperfections of individuals and societies make a certain amount of quarrelling certain, the question is "How much?" Only when sensible efforts to decrease the quantity and destructiveness of war become mixed with the lie of absolute pacifism does danger appear, because it is always dangerous to believe a lie.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PERMANENT LIMITATIONS OF WAR

IF enlarged for greater clearness at the expense of brevity, the title of this book should read, "Can We Limit War Strictly?" for although war is inevitable, it is always more or less limited, because the forces which beget and nourish it—the moral, political, economic, and technical—are themselves limited.

This truth is, indeed, contrary to first impressions. Snap judgement on proposals for limiting war is likely to follow that of the abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, on the measures proposed a century ago for gradually freeing the slaves: "Say to a man whose house is burning that he must sound a moderate alarm. Say to a man that he shall tear his wife from the hands of thieves with moderation. Say to the mother that she shall gradually pull her child out of the fire into which it has fallen." Moreover, "absolute" war has been taught by most military writers for over a century, and it seems rash to oppose the long list of authorities beginning with Clausewitz and ending with Foch. Organized violence means death, and death is an absolute without shading or relativity.

But has war ever been completely unlimited? If so, history would record the extermination of considerable human groups, as wolves have been exterminated over large areas. In fact, it seems to contain not a single instance. If one could be found it would seem inhuman in the truest sense—that is, contrary to the whole nature of man. At least the women of the defeated side are

assets too valuable to be destroyed by the most ferocious conqueror; they are valuable for their labour, their reproductive power, and usually through sentiment and natural affection. In the vast literature of hatred the writer can remember only one recorded approval of child killing: in the one hundred and thirty-seventh psalm the Jewish poet of vengeance says of the daughter of Babylon: "Blessed shall he be that taketh thy children and throweth them against the stones." The Prophet Samuel did, indeed, command King Saul and the Israelites, in reprisal for an Amalekite ambush of the Jewish trek from Egypt to Palestine, to "go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass," and the Jews are said to have obeyed, except that they took the Amalekite king alive and saved certain live stock for sacrifice, whereat Samuel murdered the prisoner in cold blood and afterwards deposed Saul (I Samuel xv.). But even between bodies of armed men the extermination of either side is exceptional; notwithstanding the many instances of prisoner-killing, mercy is usually shown to those who surrender. Battles between undisciplined men not on fire for some cause or other are hardly more than cat-fights—much cry, a very little wool, and a total absence of corpses. In every war certain moral restraints are observed; for instance, in 1914-18 no country, however hard up for meat and fats, either ate its prisoners or boiled them for explosives. The story that the Germans were boiling down corpses for fat seemed to have arisen because during an allied advance the heads of two German cooks who had been stirring a large cauldron of stew were taken off by a shell and landed in the pot where they were afterwards found along with the other ingredients.

Accordingly the acts of organized violence known as wars are always limited by human nature with its

indestructible minimum of moral restraint. They are limited politically because the object of all wars is a better peace, economically by the resources on which the community can draw, technically by the extent of its peace-time knowledge of and preparation for war and by the degree in which it can and will transform itself during the struggle.

At the other end of the scale we saw in the first chapter that no society can completely lay aside arms. No matter how peaceable and well agreed among themselves almost all its members may be, they must have armed police to discourage possible thieves, murderers and rioters. And since communities and their governments cannot reach ideal purity and saintliness any more than the individuals which compose them, there will always be a minimum of warfare, some of it just and some unjust in motive, some for material wealth and some through conflicts of moral and religious passion. Accordingly the practical problem is not that of abolishing war, which is impossible, but that of keeping its destructive effects within bounds.

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Let us briefly examine each of the war-making and war-limiting forces. Of the four the moral is chief. If anyone doubts its supremacy, let him ask himself whether the Crusades would have been undertaken by a pagan society. Put as high as you like the commercial interest of the sea-going Italian republics and the ambition of princes to rule Eastern lands, still the Crusaders fought to recover the tomb of our Lord from unbelievers. To the Middle Ages that was a "moral issue." We may contrast their time with our own, which saw hardly a man in Christendom volunteer to fight the Bolshevik oppressors of the Russian Church. Great as was the exhaustion of 1919, it does not fully explain so striking a moral change. Again, a medieval would have been



amazed to see the religion of nationalism inspire millions to accept the sacrifices and sufferings of our Great War. The consent of whole populations to be drafted and held in service under siege conditions, not to speak of the unquestioned payment of taxes on such a scale, would have seemed to him out of nature.

Although the moral factor in war begins with the combative instinct, the inborn love of danger and risk, in practically all men this instinct is soon satisfied. Ardant du Picq, whose monumental *Étude sur le Combat* is the point of departure of the present-day French cult of morale, begins: "Man fights not for the sake of the struggle but for victory. He does all he can to do away with the first and assure the second." The passage continues by showing that the tactics of savages are those of ambush and surprise; the natural man seeks not a stand-up fight against an opponent but a victim who can be assassinated. Since this is so, real fighting demands some real loyalty in the fighters. Their effectiveness may be increased by armament and training, but without loyalty on which to build little more than a cat-fight will result. Thus hired soldiers interested only in their pay are usually worthless; the classic instance is that of the Renaissance Italian mercenaries so justly scorned by Machiavelli for fighting battles against each other without a single man killed. Loyalty, however, takes many forms. It may be a strong interest in a particular quarrel, or enthusiasm for an individual leader. It may be that little patriotism of a military unit within itself which the French call *esprit de corps*—"The Old Guard dies but never surrenders," or the Tenth Legion, or the British Grenadiers. It was astonishing how quickly divisional spirit grew in the A.E.F., beginning, of course, with such crack divisions as the First and Second. Usually the loyalty that makes men fight is patriotism for a city or state, or for some

form of government or religion. This last is the ultimate loyalty. To rise beyond a certain point patriotism must have something of religion in it ; the citizen must feel that his national ideal is of supreme importance—a sort of god. Like authority, loyalty cannot be made to order.

Although all four factors are closely intertwined, with the moral factor running through the other three, nevertheless the political, economic and technical elements are all necessary to war. The political factor must be present, because in order to have a war there must be two groups each with an end to gain by fighting. Group A must say to B : “ If you go on as you have been doing, or refuse to make good the damage you have already done, I will fight you.” And B must reply : “ I will fight rather than make reparation or give up my policy.” The offence may be women-stealing as in the case of Helen of Troy, a slave-raid as in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, or cattle-lifting as in the old Irish epics ; at the other end of the scale it may be the proposal of a great state to conquer or impoverish another ; the principle is the same because each group is trying to impose its will upon the other. In any case the moral factor dominates the political, because each must have enough cohesion to persuade its individuals to co-operate. No community will begin a war without the certainty of some active consent by the governed ; people must be willing to pay and to serve, for governments can deal with considerable amounts of slackness or rebellion but are powerless when these go beyond a certain point. In war the loyalty of the citizens is strained because of the conflict between their individual interests and the public interest ; every man, once his natural combativeness has been satisfied, increasingly dislikes the dangers, hardships, and losses of the affair. If the general loyalty be overstrained the social order dissolves. Authority breaks

down; either the armies melt by desertion or the government is overthrown by revolution.

The economic force making for wars is obvious; it takes the moral—or, if you prefer, the immoral—form of greed for and jealousy of other peoples' goods. On the other hand, the economic limitation is absolute: primitive hunters are physically unable to pursue their enemies long after the food in their own pouches is gone; they must then turn aside to kill game, gather nuts and fruit, or seize some accumulated supply. Soldiers in training or on active service cannot support themselves by farming or in any other way; their upkeep and munitionment are therefore a charge against the capital and productive labour which the community can command, although successful wars can be made to pay for themselves either wholly or in part by seizing the enemy's possessions. Not only the amount of wealth in the community matters, but also the extent to which it can be made available for supporting war; commercial wealth is more liquid than agricultural. The economic factor modifies the political, since communities are slow to begin wars likely to exhaust their resources; in August, 1914, everyone expected a short war, especially the Prussians, who remembered their rapid victories over Austria in 1866 and over France in 1870-71. Morale determines the amount of sacrifice and hardship a community will stand.

The third factor, the technical, includes the design, manufacture and supply of weapons and instruments of war, the organization of the armed forces, their training, and the generalship with which they are handled. In part the technical blends with the economic, for the same command over physical nature which serves to produce wealth serves also to produce weapons. Indeed, no small share of the grim irony of material progress springs from the fact that so many of its achievements are

potential weapons, from simple devices like the knife and the axe to the merchant-ship convertible into a war-ship—of a sort, the aeroplane, the caterpillar tractor convertible into a tank, or the chemical knowledge which makes possible explosives and poison gas. Economics limit military technique in the matter of strategy, that is the way in which armies are disposed in a theatre of war and led to the battle-field, for all strategy depends upon transport and supply, which in turn depend upon the economic organization of the country where the fighting is, its density of population, the amount of food and shelter available, the extent to which its communications are organized by means of roads, bridges, and so on. Among the reasons for the crucial defeat of Napoleon in 1812 were the emptiness of Russia and its lack of made roads. Economics also limit military technique as regards tactics, the disposition of troops for combat and the method of fighting, for tactics are designed to fit certain sorts of ground, and ground is modified by human action. For example, the highly-specialized eighteenth-century tactics—with their rigid formations in line and their shoulder-to-shoulder volleys—suited cleared land, especially the unfenced fields of continental Europe, but did not suit the woods of revolutionary America. On the other hand, terrain is only one condition of tactics; the American method of skirmishing soon came into fashion in Europe in the Revolutionary-Napoleonic wars there.

Tactics are independent of economics in so far as they are governed by army organization; those of a long-service professional body will differ from those of lower-grade troops. Thus in the 1914 retreat from Mons the British regulars, thanks to their high training in musketry, were able again and again to break off an action and retire in safety from before greater numbers of short-service German conscripts. The Germans seem to have

believed the Old Contemptibles to have been heavily armed with machine-guns, not imagining that such volume and accuracy of fire was possible from shoulder rifles. It is true that a community must have reached a certain moderate economic level before it can support a professional army, but once this has been achieved it has its choice between professionals, short-term troops, or mixed forces. The reasons for this choice are complex ; at bottom it is determined by the social organization and political motives, in short the morals, of the community in question. A state intent on holding distant and exposed possessions is almost compelled to do so by professional troops, whereas most primitive folk expect all their able-bodied free males to be warriors—on part time. States insistent on repose prefer either long-term professionals or wholly improvised troops. Everyone knows the weakness of these last in proportion to the effort put into them ; they can solve only the easiest military problems, and that wastefully. On the other hand, professional armies too have their limitations ; being expensive per man, they must be small. Further, the training of their recruits takes a long time ; accordingly, whatever their spirit of sacrifice and ability to stand heavy loss without breaking, their generals must think twice before throwing them away lavishly. That which cannot easily be replaced must be used cautiously ; we may compare Jellicoe's reluctance to risk his huge, costly and irreplaceable mastodon battleships at Jutland : he was the only man on either side who could have lost the war in a single afternoon. So on land, only commanders supplied with abundant and cheap recruitment can be prodigal of blood. For some jobs you must have numbers, for instance to defend very long lines or to occupy and hold down large areas densely populated with high-spirited folk of a civilization not much below one's own. Accordingly those rare civilized states which

have prepared for the greatest military effort and have put forth their entire fighting power have always tended to armies of mixed type in which a considerable professional element leavens an enormous mass possessing some training and recruited under universal compulsory service laws. We are all too familiar to-day with the terrible reaction from such efforts when prolonged. In unusual crises the entire adult community tends to be drawn in ; in certain besieged cities and other rare cases of desperation even women have fought. Thus the nature and purposes of a community are closely intertwined with the type of armed force it chooses, each having its advantages and disadvantages.

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At this point a possible objection must be met. Materially-minded people, while admitting the increased savagery and destructiveness of recent wars, sometimes say that these evils are due chiefly to the new weapons and consequent increased power of destruction possessed by man through the late advances in the physical sciences. It is, indeed, unhappily true that the possession of new mechanical devices often encourages their possessors to disregard old moral restraints. Thus in the World War we saw naval officers who, had they been acting from surface ships, would not have dreamed of sinking merchantmen without first putting those on board in a place of safety as required by the universally accepted rules of war, ruthlessly doing so from submarines. Again, take the use of poison. Savages have always used it on arrows. Over and over again throughout history it would have been advantageous for retreating armies to have poisoned the wells they left behind them. And yet it was not done, whereas poison gases were freely used by both sides from 1915 to 1918.

On a smaller scale the same principle may be daily

seen at work. People who would be ashamed of screaming or beating drums to the annoyance of their neighbours think nothing of doing so with radios and outboard motor-boats. And so with the careless or deliberate use of speed-boats, aeroplanes and automobiles.

But when all this has been granted, the materialists must in their turn admit that the essential point is not the existence of the new devices but the willingness or unwillingness of people to use them in certain ways. It is true that morals depend much upon traditional habit, whereas new devices have no tradition of restraint in their use. On the other hand, there are equally familiar instances of rapid moral conquest over new machinery. Twenty years ago automobiles had muffler cut-outs, and with his the writer in his hot youth used to delight in making a hellish din, especially in the quiet hour just before dark. But the automobile manufacturers soon saw the light, and their present products do not permit this foolish amusement. The motor-cycle, the outboard motor and even the aeroplane may soon, please God ! follow the automobile engine into comparative noiselessness.

In the matter of killing people one is just as dead if finished by a club or stone as if one's exit is accompanied by the full devil's orchestra of the most modern science. For that matter, hands and feet are often deadly enough. In my boyhood a certain weaponless Irish coachman once killed a far more dangerous foe than the average unarmed man, to wit, a great Dane dog which attacked him. He choked it insensible and then jumped upon it until he had smashed all its ribs. Death cannot be made more terrible by complex instruments. Moreover, as a certain poet named Homer, not unknown to the pre-jazz age, remarked in the *Odyssey* :

“For an enduring heart have the destinies given the children of men.”

In other words, the race has a considerable power of standing up to things. Even outside of death in battle, in the matter of torture the Bolshevik has probably improved but little on the Red Indian. So much, then, for the general refutation of the materialist argument.

So common is the materialist muddle of many modern minds that it is necessary to insist as strongly as possible that the degree of limitation in war has nothing to do with the deadliness and destructive power of weapons, but is a moral question. Later in this book this point will unavoidably appear and reappear, for in every discussion of the present danger of the civilized world one finds numbed intelligences wearily droning out variations of the same fallacy which all military history combines to condemn. Therefore at this point in our analysis let us fix firmly in our minds that the exhausting wars of the later Roman Republic were fought with the same swords, spears and javelins as the strictly limited wars of the Roman Empire. Just so the colossal Revolutionary-Napoleonic wars were waged with cannon and muskets precisely like those used in the strictly limited eighteenth-century wars between kings. As regards destruction, Rome needed no high explosives to blot out Carthage and Jerusalem ; fire, human muscle, and her white-man's hatred of the Semitic soul were enough. As civilization advances on its material side, increased power to destroy is more or less balanced by increased power to protect and build. Again, the cat-fight shows that the deadliness of weapons has nothing to do with the amount of killing, for as regards each other two cats are formidably armed. As far as weapons go, battles fought hand to hand or at the shortest ranges seem to have been more deadly, at least to the defeated side, than modern combats of the same size and duration. Raise from two bitterly hostile populations two armies, discipline them and train them to fight with sticks and



stones, and there is nothing to prevent their killing each other off to the last man—if they choose. The strict limitation of war is not a technical but a permanent human problem successfully solved again and again in the past. What matters is first the will to fight, second the extent to which the community is involved in the struggle, third the amount of damage inflicted before a decision is reached. The first is a moral question ; the second and third are divided between morals and military technique.

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Returning to our analysis, since we have seen that all four limitations of war are permanent, the reader may ask what so many intelligent men have meant by “unlimited” or “absolute” war? The answer is that they used the term “unlimited” either as shorthand for “strictly limited”—which shorthand use is followed in the title of this book, or else they understood it in a restricted sense and only with regard to the political object sought. Whatever the errors of Clausewitz’s commentators, the great Prussian military philosopher himself was clear on this point: when he spoke of unlimited or absolute war he meant that in which the political object is the complete overthrow of the entire hostile group. For him limited wars were those in which the political objective is limited, that is, when the force used is intended to injure the enemy and persuade him to terms but not totally to conquer or disarm him. The Spanish-American and Russo-Japanese conflicts are good examples of wars limited by political objective. In 1898 the American objective was to drive Spain from Cuba ; secondarily to strengthen the United States, in the Caribbean by occupying Porto Rico, in the Far East by conquering the Philippines ; there was no intention to invade Spain itself ; the object could be obtained without such an operation. Nor did the

Spaniards try to invade the United States ; their object was merely to retain their colonies, and when these had been captured they did not think it worth while going on. So in 1904 and 1905 neither Russia nor Japan intended the complete overthrow of the other ; the ambitions of both sides were limited to Korea and Manchuria. When the Japanese had occupied these territorial objectives, and when the Russians found that the strain of war was telling upon their own flimsy social structure, both were ready for peace.

When your political object is "unlimited," that is when you mean to conquer your enemy altogether, either to destroy his independence by annexing all his territory or to disarm him completely and dictate peace on your own terms, then it is true that all the permanent limitations are lessened. The enemy, seeing that you mean to injure him greatly, will make more effort than if the intended injury were slight. If he be powerful, then you, in turn, must make a greater moral, political, economic and technical effort. How great your effort will be—within the limits of what is economically and technically possible—will depend on the morale of your people. Accordingly most great wars have been fought for "unlimited" political objects. Nevertheless, Clausewitz's distinction between limited and "unlimited" objects, however valuable, does not explain why certain societies have limited war so much more successfully than others.

The answer seems to be that the amount of war within a society depends upon the degree of moral disunion and consequent discontent within that society. We have seen that an ideally virtuous world would need no weapons at all, and that in practice armed police work against an occasional criminal is the irreducible minimum of soldiering necessary to any human group. While a certain amount of violence may be a mere expression of

energy, in a well unified society the fighting instinct goes into police work, since practically everyone accepts the ideas of right and wrong prevailing in that community. But if crime increases, that means an increasing minority hostile to the accepted standards ; or suppose that there is more and more angry debate as to the justice of this or that law or social arrangement ; in either case moral disunion is causing social strain. If the criminals go on increasing, or if the disputes cannot be reconciled, then there will be civil war. The more discontent the more strife.

As with civil, so with foreign war. In a sense all mankind constitute a single society to which lesser units belong. Every war is as much a conflict of moral ideas as of weapons ; that which seems right to one side seems wrong to the other. Take the simplest cases. A must in effect say to B : " You have no right to this or that which you possess, at least no better right than myself." Or : " You have so injured or shocked me by your conduct that I will compel you to change your ways." In the graver cases A says : " You have no right to your independence. I will make a better world by compelling you to pay me tribute, or to be my subjects, or my slaves." To carry through a great military effort the citizens of A must believe that the men of B are either wicked or inferior, that is they must feel themselves morally divided from the B men. Or else the A men must be discontented ; otherwise they would say : " Why should we cross the border in arms when our own land already gives us enough and to spare ? "

Thus discontent and moral disunion are the causes of strife. Without diminishing them, to try to diminish war is futile. Fuller has well said that to say, " Stop all wars " without removing their causes is to say, " Let there be no more tides " without abolishing the moon. He has also added to Sherman's epigram : " The legitimate

object of war is a more perfect peace," the equally pregnant words: "The legitimate object of peace is a more perfect man."

Alas! what might constitute a perfect man is a philosophical and religious question on which mankind is not yet agreed. We may note, however, that the harm done by war is only partly physical—the destruction of wealth and the loss of life. Still more important is the moral damage: should a war lower the accumulated spiritual values so that men say, "We are baser than we were," then the replacement of the incidental physical destruction by no means ends the injury. On the other hand, when the community continues to agree that the war was just, then moral force is not so much lowered. Indeed, some wars, even great wars, are not spiritually destructive but fruitful, raising the spirit of the group so that the physical destruction is presently swallowed up in a prosperity greater than before.

Again, just as healthy men, organically and functionally sound, may risk a strain which would kill others who carry even a hidden trace of disease, so a morally united group is capable of military efforts which would dissolve a divided community.

Whether any given great war may result in physical and moral destruction so serious as to threaten disaster to society depends greatly on the time it takes to get a decision. (Although the causes which start hostilities are moral, and although a breakdown of morale on either side will end the struggle; when once the fighting begins technique and chance determine the course of events. A long and great war without a decision makes the blind combative instinct prevail over the original and reasonable desire for a better peace than that which went before, until both sides feel the approach of calamity and both continue to fight only to avoid the greater evils sure to follow defeat. Moreover, great wars make a true peace

almost impossible without the permanent political destruction of the defeated group; on both sides the bitterness is enormous, and the conqueror is tempted to abuse his temporary omnipotence by so humiliating and injuring the conquered that they refuse to be reconciled to his conditions and merely bide their time for revenge. If one or more of the permanent limitations did not interpose a check, and if the war were indefinitely prolonged, then the fighting groups would risk extermination. Happily this, at least, has never happened in history. The extreme penalty of social dissolution is bad enough. Although great wars are in themselves calamities, they are Nature's (or God's) instrument for ridding the earth of diseased societies which can find no remedy for their evils.

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If this analysis be sound, one would expect to find in history, first, that the civilizations which have suffered greatly from war have been those in which grave moral disunion existed; second, that all reasonably stable civilizations have owed their security to their degree of religious and moral unity which has enabled them strictly to limit war by putting force behind agreed and admitted right.

Let us look at the historical record.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ANCIENT CYCLE OF WAR

THE idea of the business cycle is to-day all too familiar. Without discussing here how far the savage to and fro of our time between economic booms and slumps might be moderated, all the works of man follow a certain rhythm. If we apply this to the relation between war and society, history shows that wars have always run in cycles between a strictly limited form and one which may be conveniently called unlimited, rising toward the war of complete extermination, but, happily, never reaching that unattainable absolute, then falling back toward an equally unattainable minimum of mere police work.

The first known cycle of war, that of the Greco-Roman world, begins with the failure of the Greeks to limit war strictly and continues with the similar failure of the Roman Republic. The Roman Empire, however, succeeded in limiting it more strictly than any society before or since.

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Confining ourselves to the Mediterranean and European origins of our own civilization, we find all ancient war politically limited by slavery. All ancient societies owned slaves. Often the majority of men were compelled by law to work for masters, and for a slave to be a soldier was exceptional. Sometimes a besieged city in its last extremity would arm slaves, and these would fight for

their masters against the enemy. But normally slaves were considered unworthy of arms.

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History, in the full sense of continuous written record, begins with the Greeks. Monuments and inscriptions have taught us much concerning the very old civilizations of Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean area ; in Egypt and Mesopotamia we find large, regularly-organized, monarchical states, civilized and industrious populations and considerable cities several miles in circumference, the Mesopotamian cities highly fortified with double or triple walls studded with towers. We find also highly-organized armies. At first these are of infantry alone ; among the earlier Mesopotamian reliefs is one of warriors in close formation with spears, helmets, and large shields ; in Egypt considerable bodies of spearmen and bowmen are shown marching in regular formation and in step. Later the domestication of the horse modified warfare ; at first horses were used for drawing chariots rather than for riding ; about 1700 B.C. they seem to have contributed largely to the conquest of Egypt by an Asiatic tribe. Later still the Assyrians had not only chariots but also cavalry, siege machinery, including battering-rams, movable towers and crude catapults. The early Orient had the idea of Empire by means of military conquest. The Assyrians inflicted the greatest cruelties upon the vanquished ; in their case, at least, war seems to have approached its unlimited form. On the other hand, we know little of the recruitment and composition of the early Oriental armies, and still less of the social aspect of their wars. There may have been a tacit convention that only conquered kings and very high nobles were to be tortured and killed ; it may have been the custom to spare the masses and at most to deport them to new homes.

The dawn of history finds the coasts of the Mediterranean covered with city states fully possessed of the arts, letters, laws and developed military institutions proper to a high civilization. East and south-east of the inland sea were civilized Oriental states much larger than a single city. Among the city-states those of the Syrian coast and of North Africa were of Oriental blood and civilization, following religions either bestial or else deeply concerned with the mystery of evil, sometimes horribly so. Most of the city-states, however, were European in race and culture, and among the cities of European men the great majority were Greek.

In the beginning we find the highly-gifted Greek people full of energy ; increasing in numbers, expanding on the material side extensively by means of colonies, intensively through trade and manufacture. Their wars were partly fruitful in that they were almost always better fighters than the Orientals ; their repulse of the Persians inspired the first triumphs of their civilization, and Alexander's conquest of the East led to a second successful phase. Nevertheless, their first great period was dragged down by a century of ruinous civil wars within the Greek culture, beginning with the first and worst, the Peloponnesian War ; and Alexander's conquests were followed by further dissension. To the end the intense patriotism of a Greek was for his own city ; his sanctities were more local than universally Greek, still less universally human.

The typical Greek army was a universal-service militia into which all free citizens might be drafted ; financial reasons usually prevented all being called out at once unless the city itself were besieged. Since most manual work was done by slaves, and much commerce was in the hands of non-naturalized resident aliens, the city militias were fairly well practised in arms ; also the Greek cult of athletics favoured physical fitness.



The typical armed man, the "hoplite," was the armoured foot-soldier, fighting chiefly with a thrusting spear and equipped with metal helmet, cuirass, shin-guards and shield. The combination of a highly-energetic and gifted people with a barren country—all islands and peninsulas, with small, moderately fertile plains, shut in by mountains of bare rock—helped to produce food-wars, largely decided by sea power. Indeed, navies were more highly developed than armies in that a specialized type of warship, useless for peace purposes, was developed; a long and narrow row-galley fitted with a ram and incapable of carrying cargo. Since siege machinery was at first unknown, whereas stone fortification was well advanced, sieges were long and difficult, and the usual object of a campaign was to destroy the enemy's standing crops; armies, therefore, took the field in summer, not in winter when there was nothing to destroy. The short campaigns, in turn, suited the city militia system.

The first Greek wars of the historic period were scuffles between individual city-states. On the other hand, the repulse of the vast Persian Empire was a real feat of arms. Better equipment, and especially metal armour, played a part in the victory; the Orientals relied much upon the bow and were comparatively unprotected. Probably the Greek superiority in armour indicates an economic development more intensive than that of the Orient, for armour costs money. Material, however, is not everything in war, indeed much of the decisive fighting was on the water, where the Greeks seem to have had no superiority in equipment. The Greeks must, therefore, have been better seamen and land fighters than the Orientals. They may have been racially superior, and their constant athletic competition must have counted for something. Although first they had feared the Persians, yet after their success the

Greeks themselves said that free citizens were better men than the subjects of an Oriental despot. At this point we should note that the Greeks were politically active; their cities showed a wide and shifting variety of political type; they are sometimes monarchies, sometimes oligarchies, sometimes democracies ruled by all free citizens without distinction of class, although always based upon slavery and unwilling to naturalize resident foreigners. The Persian wars were not exhausting but fruitful; their episodes were widely separated in time, and each was short; the greatest—Xerxes' invasion of Greece—lasted through only two campaigning seasons.

The importance of moral and spiritual values in war is shown by the fact that Athens, having gained most of the glory of the Persian defeats, now became the leading power in Greece, although she had been the only important city devastated by the invaders. She became the chief member of a confederacy including the Ægean Islanders and the Greeks of the western coast of Asia Minor. Soon her democratic statesmen altered the arrangement to a tribute-paying empire of which she was the head. Athens, however, used her new position ruthlessly, and her prosperity roused the jealousy of those Greek trading cities who would not come in under her, also of Sparta, a Peloponnesian city which had long been the chief Greek land power. To this day the name of Spartan stands for heroic endurance; they were citizens of an agricultural state, contemptuous of commerce and concentrated upon valour and military drill, whereas Athens was the chief manufacturing and trading city of Greece, with the greatest wealth, the largest merchant fleet and the strongest navy.

The war of Sparta and her Allies against the Athenian Empire, known as the Peloponnesian War, went on with intervals of peace for twenty-seven years, and resulted

in the eclipse of the first great phase of Greek civilization. Neither party was able to strike for a decision; the Peloponnesians systematically devastated Attica, but did not attack Athens, which was connected with her ports by means of "long walls"; while the Athenians, with their superior navy, were able to raid the Peloponnesian coast and hamper the commerce of the trading cities allied with Sparta. In the long run the more complex and brittle economic organization of Athens weakened under the strain; not being self-supporting in food, she had to pay her soldiers and especially the sailors of her war fleet, and this ended by destroying her initial superiority in wealth. Toward the end the Persians, seeing in Athens a more dangerous enemy than Sparta, supported the Spartans with money; moreover, the Athenian democrats were willing to tax only the richest of their countrymen. Since navies are expensive, the Spartan alliance finally became stronger than Athens at sea, and this ended the war. It is worth noting that just before the Peloponnesian War the Athenians had unsuccessfully disputed with the Persians the important grain area of Egypt; midway in the Peloponnesian struggle the Athenian expedition to Sicily, had it won, would have opened up another grain area; finally, the last Athenian fleet was sent to the Dardanelles—the water gateway to the fertile plains north and west of the Black Sea.

Accompaniments of the struggle were plague within the walls of Athens among the overcrowded refugees from the devastated Attic country side. Food became scarce, prices rose, almost everyone was in debt. So many young men had been killed or were absent on service that comic authors began to play with ideas of what the women might do if they stood together. Aristophanes' imaginary heroine, *Lysistrata*—"The Releaser of Armies"—organizes a general sex-strike of

all wives and mistresses, both in Athens and in Sparta. It is true that few Athenian citizens were executed or judicially murdered, but the Athenians were ready enough to massacre revolted allies and sometimes even neutrals. The Athenian democrats, after pillaging the wealthy class in their own allied cities, turned to confiscating the property of rich Athenians suspected of insufficient zeal for the war. Political office fell into the hands of low-born, unscrupulous and violent rogues. Spy-mania went hand in hand with war-fever. We hear of war-hungry profiteers and munition makers. The greatness of Athens, the intellectual and artistic capital of the ancient world, died no clean death, but basely in the foul mud of evil deeds.

For our purpose the interest of the Peloponnesian War is the social degeneration it brought. Thucydides writes (III, 82) :

“ So the class-war at Korkyra grew more and more savage, and it made a particular impression because it was the first outbreak of an upheaval that spread in time through almost the whole of Greek society. In every state there were conflicts of class, and the leaders of the respective parties now procured the intervention of the Athenians or the Lacedæmonians on their side. In peace-time they would have had neither the opportunity nor the inclination to call in the foreigner, but now there was the war, and it was easy for any party of violence to get their opponents crushed and themselves into power by an alliance with one of the belligerents. This recrudescence of class war brought one calamity after another upon the states of Greece—calamities that occur and will continue to occur as long as human nature remains what it is, however they may be modified or occasionally mitigated by changes of circumstances. Under the favourable conditions of peace-time communities and individuals do not have

their hands forced by the logic of events, and can, therefore, act up to a higher standard. But war strips away all the margins of ordinary life and breaks-in character to circumstance by its brutal training. So the states were torn by the class-war, and the sensation made by each outbreak had a sinister effect on the next—in fact, there was something like a competition in perfecting the fine art of conspiracies and atrocities. . . .”

(III, 83): “Thus the class-war plunged Greek society into every kind of moral evil, and honesty, which is the chief constituent of idealism, was laughed out of existence in the prevailing atmosphere of hostility and suspicion. No argument was cogent enough and no pledge solemn enough to reconcile opponents. The only argument that appealed to the party momentarily in power was the unlikelihood of their remaining there long and the consequent advisability of taking no risks with their enemies. And the stupider the combatants the greater their chances of survival, just because they were terrified at their deficiencies, expected to be outwitted and out-manceuvred and, therefore, plunged recklessly into action, while their superiors in intellect, who trusted to their wits to protect them and disdained practical precautions, were often caught defenceless and brought to destruction.”

Nor were the conquering Spartans able to organize Greece; indeed, in the long run they were even less successful than the Athenians in persuading other cities to follow them. After the Spartans the Thebans did no better. Of the second great Theban victory, at Mantinea, Xenophon—a professional soldier and an author who had gained fame by writing of wars, but also a father who had lost his son in the action—sadly says:

“The result of the battle disappointed everyone’s expectations. Almost the whole of Greece had mobilized

on one side or the other, and it was taken for granted that if it came to an action the victors would be able to do what they liked and the vanquished would be at their mercy. But Providence so disposed it that both sides . . . claimed the victory, and yet neither had gained a foot of territory, a single city or a particle of power beyond what they had possessed before the battle. On the contrary, there was more unsettlement and disorder in Greece after the battle than before it. But I do not propose to carry my narrative farther, and will leave the sequel to any other historian who cares to record it." (*Hellenica*, VII, 5 fin.)

After about a century of wars between the Greek cities the population and wealth of Greece seem to have declined. Of this decline war was not the only cause; infanticide, abortion, and unnatural vice played their parts; nevertheless, war was the important cause. Certainly the buoyant hope of the first great days had gone.

Macedonia, a state on the border of the Greek culture, now became the chief power in Greece, in part because of technical military superiority, in part because Macedonia was on a larger scale than the city state, and had the military advantage of strong monarchical government. Next, Alexander of Macedonia rapidly conquered the entire Persian Empire; three years' campaigning were enough to increase nearly a hundred-fold the area subject to rulers of the Greek culture, and thus to begin another great period in Greek history. Although Alexander's empire promptly broke up, new experiments in federation were attempted; but still equilibrium was not achieved; if none of the frequent wars troubled the bases of social order like the Peloponnesian War, on the other hand the disturbances were now on a greater scale and were fought with more expensive weapons.

In the later Greek period mercenaries became more prominent. Nevertheless, the citizen-soldier idea did not die out ; in an emergency third-century Greek cities would still put citizen forces into the field, and a large part of Alexander's army were native Macedonians. Among Alexander's successors, the Seleucid Dynasty in Asia followed with some success a regular policy of stimulating the loyalty of their mercenaries by land grants on discharge, veterans' colonies, etc. Other technical developments were an increased use of light infantry armed with missile weapons, and occasional signs of increased flexibility and manœuvring power in the deep formations of the heavy infantry. The Macedonians lengthened the heavy infantryman's pike. They also made great use of cavalry, so much so that for a moment after Alexander's death cavalry and not infantry seems to have been the decisive arm—a development which, could it be fully known, might reveal important technical and social facts. It was, however, short lived, and the heavy infantry soon regained their traditional superiority. Together with the increased wealth of the Greek world, warships greatly increased in size, and siege machinery, especially catapult-artillery, became complex, abundant and powerful. Alexander used it for position warfare in the open as well as for sieges, and later there are traces of its use as field-artillery.

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So matters stood when a new, great power, Rome, appeared. The future mistress of the world began as a city state of the familiar type, but soon became superior to other existing states not only in military technique but also in political wisdom. Technically she continued to rely chiefly on armoured infantry, but used it more flexibly both in the individual fighting and in the general formation for battle. The sword, which had been

secondary in Greek fighting, was made the chief weapon of the Roman legionary. For the thrusting spear which the Greeks had used Rome substituted a heavy javelin intended to encumber an enemy by piercing his shield. But the chief technical discovery of Rome was in the disposition of reserves. The Greeks (although with traces of variation toward the end) were accustomed to form a single, deep and massive line—the phalanx. If the first “push of pike” failed to decide matters, the fight would develop into a series of individual combats, each man being able to drop back when wounded or severely fatigued and be replaced by his next in file. Thus there was little killing until at last the morale and formation of one side broke, after which the victors, if they chose, could massacre such fugitives as they could catch. The weakness of the phalanx was that the men immediately behind the fighting front rank were under the severe moral strain of watching more or less passively and at close quarters the bloody game in which they must soon share. Thus there was a tendency of the rear ranks to give way; they were subjected to a far worse variety of the sinking feeling known to all boxers as they sit in their corners looking across the ring at the opponent just before the call of time for the first round. Indeed, panic often begins in the rear ranks or even in the rear areas, so that the rear gives way in war while the front is still firm. Napier noted this of the rear of the deep French columns of the Napoleonic time, and just before the Armistice in 1918 it was the German troops in the rear areas who mutinied and fought with their officers while the front line troops remained loyal. The Romans solved the problem by a three line formation in which most of the reserves were spared the anguish of witnessing at the closest quarters the fighting in which they could not yet share. When wanted, they could be brought up with the impetus of a charge, the former fighting-line



retiring rapidly through intervals which were closed behind it, and the manœuvre taking place too rapidly for the enemy to interfere with it, especially as he himself must keep in some sort of formation.

Although Rome's technical military superiority was a great part of her strength, it was by no means the whole. Without her political wisdom she might have stopped almost where Sparta stopped; instead, she made wise policy support her courage quite as much as her courage advanced her policy. Thus, although her rich were often quarrelling with large factions of her poorer citizens, neither side ever called in the foreigner in the ruinous Greek fashion, and for centuries neither party to a quarrel would push a temporary success so far as to endanger the unity of the state. In her relations with non-citizens her naturalization policy was broader than that of the Greek cities. She made it worth while for outsiders to become citizens, and she cautiously but steadily allowed them to do so. So with those of her allies who were not—at least not yet—citizens; she made it worth while to be her ally. Indeed, it was afterwards said that she had conquered the world by coming to the aid of her allies. Shortly after 300 B.C. she was the loyally-followed master of a well-knit federated state including the entire Italian peninsula except for the Po Valley.

At this point Rome entered upon the greatest military struggle of her history, her contest with Carthage. The latter, a North African city of Asiatic blood, was constituted as an aristocratic republic. The Carthaginians were of the familiar Semitic commercial type; they were also great sailors. Unequaled in sea power and in wealth, they ruled an empire including North Africa, much of Spain, and all the islands of the Western Mediterranean except a small part of Sicily. They disliked soldiering, however, and for land fighting relied upon a professional army chiefly of foreign mercenaries.

The critical episode of Rome's long struggle with Carthage was the second Punic War, in which for the first and last time in eight centuries the future mistress of the world had to fight for her life as an independent state. Under a great military genius, Hannibal, the Carthaginians invaded Italy, beat the Romans repeatedly, destroyed several Roman armies, and maintained themselves for fifteen years on Italian soil. Even after a century and a half—the same interval of time as that which separates us from the American Revolution—the Roman poet Lucretius is still full of the unique horror of Hannibal's war. Arguing against the immortality of the soul, he writes (III, 830, etc.) :—

“ So death is nothing to us and matters nothing to us, since we have proved that the soul is not immortal. And as in time past we felt no ill, when the Phœnicians were pouring in to battle on every front, when the world rocked with the shock and tumult of war and shivered from centre to firmament, when all mankind on sea and land must fall under the victor's empire and victory was doubt—so, when we have ceased to be, when body and soul, in whose union is our being, have been parted, then nothing can touch us—we shall not be—and nothing can make us feel, no, not if earth is confounded with sea and sea with heaven.”

Plenty of modern people were in much the same state of mind in 1917-18.

Over and above the determination of the Romans, Hannibal was beaten because hardly any of the Italian cities were willing to come over to him, notwithstanding his victories. They must have felt the Semitic Carthaginians, with their gloomy and horrible religion of human sacrifice, to be profoundly alien and hateful.

The final defeat of Carthage made Rome supreme throughout the Western Mediterranean; a few more campaigns made her preponderant in the Eastern half.

A man born in 202 B.C., the year of the crowning victory over Hannibal, dying at seventy-five, would have lived to see Rome ruling from Atlantic Spain to Central Asia Minor. Another two long lifetimes saw Gaul conquered to the Rhine and the entire Mediterranean area divided into Roman provinces.

These vast new conquests were carried on with the old Roman skill and accompanied by the old Roman power to assimilate conquered and allied people. In the Eastern, now the Greek, half of the Mediterranean world the immemorial city patriotisms were burnt out, and there were no lasting protests against Roman rule. Nor was Rome in a hurry to stamp out the last embers of Greek liberty ; occasional cities remained independent for centuries before they were at last painlessly absorbed. In the West the barbarous and semi-civilized tribes, once conquered, were well content with their new conditions. But the pace was too fast, the economic and the political changes too great, for society to remain stable. Too many of those at the top of society were half-drunk with sudden wealth and power. Too many humbler Romans when, for instance, as private soldiers, they saw a chance to grab a share of the swag, gulped with an equal appetite. In the chaos the unrest at the bottom of society equalled the unrestraint at the top. Throughout much of the Greek world the period of Roman conquest saw the old curse of class-war blaze up fiercely again. For the first time in history there were slave insurrections. Later, when our Lord said : " The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head," He seems to have been using a common popular saying or proverb found nearly two centuries earlier in the reformist political speeches of Tiberius Gracchus at Rome.

In Rome, too, the new chaos of unrestraint set class against class and faction against faction. For a long

lifetime faction and class hatred boiled over in civil war after civil war, each spasm usually followed by a great massacre of prominent members of the losing side. A man born shortly after 100 B.C. would have heard from his father of the fierce agitation, the riots and the political murders stirred up by the attempted reforms of the Gracchus brothers. His babyhood would have coincided with the "social war," when for the first time a large group of the Italian allies of Rome turned against her. As a boy he would have seen the ten years of war between Marius and Sulla and their fearful massacres; he might have just been old enough to fight in Sulla's last campaign. As a mature man he might have served in the four years of strife between Cæsar and Pompey. His early sixties would have been contemporary with Cæsar's assassination and another civil war fought between Brutus and Cassius factions on one side, Octavius and Antony on the other. Before he was seventy the two victors, Antony and Octavius, would have quarrelled and would have fought still another civil war until Octavius had crushed Antony and had become the master of the Roman state. By this time no living man could remember a time of political stability or of peace.

A passage in Vergil's *Georgics* (I, 489, etc.) gives us vividly the despairing horror with which men saw the Roman civil wars:

"Therefore Philippi saw Roman armies turn their swords against each other a second time in battle, and the gods felt no pity that Emathia and the broad plains of Hæmus should twice be fattened with our blood. . . .

"Gods of our fathers, gods of our country, god of our city, goddess of our hearths who watchest over Tuscan Tiber and Roman Palatine, forbid not this last saviour to succour our fallen generation. Our blood has flowed too long. We have paid in full for the sins of our forefathers—the broken faith of ancient Troy. . . .

“The bonds are broken between neighbour cities and they meet in arms. Ungodly war rages the world over. The chariots launched on the race gather speed as they go ; vainly dragging on the reins, the driver is swept away by his steeds and the team heeds not the bridle.”

No society suffering from a prolonged overdose of war can fail to understand the last sentence ; all men so afflicted have felt that events had escaped from human control. The passage also shows why statesmen capable of establishing a genuine peace are popular at such times.

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Under the name of Augustus, Octavius now reorganized the Roman state, and in so doing established the first and strictest limitation of war in history. On the political side his chief innovation was to have himself elected “Imperator” (Commander-in-Chief of the army) for life. On the technical military side, although armament and tactics remained much what they had been, the civil war and especially the distant conquests had changed the Roman army from a universal service militia of conscript citizens to a volunteer professional army serving for pay—and plunder. Militiamen long kept in the field must be paid or their families become a public charge ; distant expeditions against enemies weaker than one’s own state are best conducted by long-service volunteers. Thus there had appeared the beginning of a separation between the army and the general citizen body. Just before 100 B.C., under Marius, an important step had been taken : whereas formerly each soldier on enlistment had been required to swear fidelity to the state, since Marius’ time the men had been made to swear fidelity to their “Imperator,” *i.e.* their Commander-in-Chief. A generation later Cæsar had been able to quell a mutiny by addressing his soldiers as “citizens,” instead of “comrades.” The shift from republic to empire was

accomplished by making permanent over the whole army the magistracy which had been temporary and local.

Augustus continued the professional army but cut its numbers almost in half. Finding forty-five legions of heavy infantry in existence, he reduced them to twenty-five. If one figures a legion at six thousand men, this left a possible maximum of one hundred and fifty thousand legionaries; the legion has been figured as low as three thousand. For cavalry and light infantry the Romans had come to depend on "auxiliary" units raised by their allies; normally an army would contain about an equal number of legionaries and auxiliaries. Augustus continued the auxiliary system and seems to have continued the proportion between the two sorts of troops. Thus the entire Mediterranean world was policed by an army of not much over three hundred thousand men; in the recent war against Germany little Serbia alone mobilized over seven hundred thousand.

Of course, no such tiny force could have met grave military liabilities. Dangerous civilized opposition was to be feared only along the short Euphrates sector between the Armenian and the Syrian desert. There formidable foes, the Parthians and later the Persians, were to be found. But elsewhere beyond Rome's vast frontiers there were only deserts, or northern forests thinly peopled with shifting tribes whose small numbers, lack of organization, and total lack of national or racial solidarity made them contemptible antagonists. The only pressure to be expected from them was that of mere raiding parties intent upon enjoying the fruits of civilization without submitting to the discipline which civilization must necessarily impose. An occasional defeat at the hands of the northern tribesmen in no way threatened the Roman state. To Rome such defeats were little more than the Custer massacre to the United States or the fall of

Khartoum and the death of Gordon to England. Manpower was economized by resting the frontiers on natural obstacles where these could be found, by an elaborate network of roads over which intelligence could be quickly transmitted and troops easily moved, later by lavish frontier fortification as well.

Again, the little imperial army, stationed almost entirely along the frontiers, could not have policed so vast a state had that state been morally divided. In a negative sense the empire was unified by the absence of strong local feeling. The old city loyalties had disappeared with time, and only little Judæa had anything like a modern nationalist spirit. Elsewhere the populace was content to call the emperor a god. Indeed, one cannot read poets like Vergil and Horace without appreciating that even educated men saw something godlike in the new peace of the world. Notwithstanding the excesses of the later republic, Roman administrators were not essentially oppressors—any more than British civil servants in India or French magistrates in North Africa; the Roman law was inspired by a fine sense of equity and fairness. Augustus' work bore fruit in the moral unity of the Roman world.

Moreover, on the technical side insurrection was less and less to be feared as time went on because the professional army system permitted the disarmament of the great mass of citizens, who grew more and more unsoldierly as the Roman peace became the habit of civilized mankind.

The Roman world continued the professional army system for no less than eight centuries; in the provinces still subject to New Rome, *i.e.* Constantinople, it went on for four centuries more. In the third century, however, the old plague of civil war broke out again in a milder form. The mass of men had now grown so unwarlike that any local commander whose troops would follow

him had a chance to make himself emperor ; the soldiers were now almost the only " active citizens " whose support was necessary to authority. The new civil wars were not as destructive as the old ; usually they were fought " over the heads " of the civilians, who were harmed only incidentally and almost by accident. At the same time the need of emperors to conciliate the troops led to the first signs of weakening of the iron Roman discipline. Worse still, the distraction of the army by civil strife would now and then give the northern barbarians a chance to raid a province. Although these looters would have to run or be cut to pieces as soon as the little difficulty as to the imperial succession was cleared up, still as something of Roman civilization spread to them their pressure slightly increased. Accordingly, more troops had to be raised, until about the year 400 the total number in service almost certainly exceeded half a million, and may have reached three quarters of a million. Even that, however, would not be a large army for the entire Roman world.

By this time the Roman army was not altogether what it had been under Augustus. By an interesting process of interaction between social and technical military factors cavalry were becoming more important than infantry. In the first place, for four centuries the service had been chiefly a constabulary. For hunting brigands and raiders or against any sort of irregular opposition mobility is needed. The United States found mounted troops better than foot in fighting the plains Indians, and the same general law is seen at work in most colonial armies. At the same time the slight lowering of discipline had been enough to lessen the effectiveness of the legions ; only well-disciplined infantry will stand the moral effect of a cavalry charge at close quarters—the experience is like being on a railroad track as a train comes on. To get fifth-century Roman foot to hold firm



against a mounted charge it was necessary to mass them closely and arm them with spears to keep the horsemen at a distance. In turn the close formations and the use of the spear showed a lessening of the offensive spirit. Cavalry, therefore, became the offensive arm.

The second change was an increase in the importance of barbarian recruitment. We have seen that the cavalry of the imperial armies were "Auxiliaries" recruited among non-citizens; the rise of cavalry, therefore, meant a greater relative strength of the barbarian or "irregular" element in the Roman service as compared with the heavy legionary foot. The light-armed auxiliary infantry were also more mobile than legionaries. Further, barbarians were cheaper to hire than civilized men; their standard of living was lower. They had something of the schoolboy personal loyalty to a leader, so that they were apt to be faithful to their original employer in case of civil war. Finally, the legionaries, but not the auxiliaries, were expected to build roads, drain marshes, etc.; therefore as public spirit declined the latter attracted recruits. The distinction between citizen and non-citizen recruitment seems never to have been strictly enforced.

Cavalry and barbarian recruitment increased in importance only gradually; meanwhile the Roman army remained professional, and until after A.D. 400 continued successfully to defend the frontiers.

In the fifth century centralized administration was lost throughout the western half of the empire, but not through defeat of the Roman forces. There were great barbarian invasions, like that of Attila, which must have been highly organized, but they were turned back. Except for the southern and eastern coasts of England and a belt south of the upper Danube, no savages from the outer darkness ever permanently appropriated Roman land. The leaders of the Goths, Vandals, Franks, etc., whose states appear in our historical geographies, were

simply hereditary commanders of auxiliary units in the Roman service. Except the Vandal, and except for Alaric the Goth during his brief and somewhat pardonable mutiny, no fifth-century auxiliary commander ever made war against an emperor; all the others took and held their power as deputies more or less vaguely dependent upon the emperors in Rome or in Constantinople. They and their units were as ready to join the Roman regulars against barbarian invaders as are the native troops of the French and British armies to-day. Most of them, for instance men like Alaric or Clovis the Frank, were no more barbarian than an American of to-day whose grandfather immigrated from Europe is European. The old tribal names of their units had become mere labels, as those units had been moved to and fro across the empire filling up their losses by replacements first from one district and then from another. Their assumption of local government, together with the breakdown of centralized administration in the West, were only steps, although important steps, in a long and very gradual process of the internal decay of civilization. Even when Alaric's mutinous auxiliaries sacked Rome itself, although St. Jerome far away in Jerusalem did write, "I am at a loss for words," no other contemporary writer seems to have been greatly shocked. If we ask the reasons for this decline we find only a general fatigue; apparently the slave-owners were no longer able to get a full day's work out of their slaves, just as the capitalist to-day—most of all in the older capitalist countries, such as England—cannot get full measure out of his proletarians.

At this point a question suggests itself: we have seen that the Roman world state with its drastic limitation of war involved the disarmament of the great mass of free citizens. As century followed century this mass had grown increasingly unwarlike. In the fifth and sixth centuries, notwithstanding the general insecurity which

had necessitated the fortification of every city, it was difficult to get the inhabitants of a town even to mount guard on their own walls. For instance, an edict of an Emperor, Valentinian III, is headed—"On the recall of General-dealers [wholesale merchants ?] to the city," and says, "We have determined that all anxiety or fear shall be removed from your minds, that the public shall know . . . that no citizen of Rome and no member of a guild is to be compelled to serve as a soldier, but only on guard duty on the walls and gates, as often as custom may demand . . . ." Is it possible that the inevitable absence of patriotism in a world state, together with the long-continued exemption from military service of almost everyone in the Roman world, helped to cause the general slackening of energy? Such exemption would be complete among the upper class and the industrious middle class, for a professional army always tends to recruit itself from the cheapest human material to be found. Does the vitality, at least of white peoples, flag when they are too long and too completely divorced from arms? Did the too great perfection of the Roman peace help to cause the decline of ancient civilization and the descent to the Dark Ages?



PART II  
*THE CHRISTIAN CYCLE OF WAR*



## CHAPTER IV

### THE MEDIEVAL LIMITATION OF WAR

DURING the Dark Ages the moral centre of the Roman world shifted from the emperor to the Catholic, that is Universal, Christian Church, from which body—either directly or at second-hand—the moral forces of Western civilization have since come.

Shortly before the year 200 the Catholic Church first appears in the full light of history, and after a little more than a century the conversion of the imperial government prevented the emperors being longer saluted as gods ; moreover, the Christian ethics finally came to have greater force than those of any legal code. The Church claimed to have been founded by a Man who had also been God ; His teaching was held to be perfectly true, and from the beginnings of clear record concerning His followers they were a strictly organized body, passionately devoted to unity, both of doctrine and of organization. The imperial idea long retained enormous power, but as century followed century men gradually came to think of themselves more as Christians than as subjects of the emperors.

The Christian cycle of war begins with the breakdown of the technical limitation within which the Roman Empire had confined war and its replacement by a new technical limitation, the medieval, built upon the new moral unity furnished by the Church.

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In the year A.D. 632, as a certain former camel-driver named Mohammed lay dying in an obscure Arabian town

the Roman world was still intact. Its population, arts, culture and energy had indeed declined, but—with the doubtful and partial exception of Britain—its civilization and social habit were everywhere still Roman, most of it was still directly administered by the emperor at Constantinople, and all of it was united by the omnipresent Catholic Church which had become its chief institution. Both the emperor and the new local rulers in the West relied upon professional armies, and everywhere the masses, having now been systematically disarmed for nearly seven centuries, had become completely unwarlike. Within a single long lifetime the fanatical Moslems had overrun Syria, Egypt, North Africa and Spain, had twice besieged Constantinople, and were preparing to attack what is to-day Central France. When at last their armies were repulsed and they were no longer able to advance their borders, they remained none the less hostile, merely turning from conquest to plunder. Presently they were joined by another and even worse sort of raiders: the heathen Vikings from Scandinavia began to attack the West—apparently enough civilization had at last reached the distant north to permit the building of sea-going boats. The skilfully-handled Viking ships entered every harbour and ascended every navigable river. Moreover, the Vikings understood the importance of mobility and surprise; whenever they left their boats they began by rounding up horses from the country-side. They were horribly cruel, killing and torturing for pleasure, hating the weakened Roman world and especially the Catholic Church. The Christians despised them as much as they hated them, but in that impoverished time with its bad communications the professional army system inherited from Augustus eight centuries before could no longer protect the West. So sheep-like had the mass of men become that we read of tiny Viking bands pillaging populous districts almost unopposed until the tardy



arrival of troops. Mere thieves though they were, it seemed as if they would sting the debased Roman society of the West to death.

Just in time a remedy was found by reorganizing all Western Christendom for local defence. The decisive phase of the change seems to have come in the ninth century between the years 800 and 900. Unlike the imperial system of Augustus, the new arrangements were not deliberately planned; they arose more or less uniformly everywhere as makeshifts to fit the universal need of the rude time. At the base of society every free man must arm himself at his own expense; there must be no more unarmed country-sides to tempt heathen pillagers. The ancient universal liability for service, which had never disappeared from legal theory, was again enforced. Society was knit together by the arrangement known as feudalism. All government offices became hereditary possessions; in every village the local rich man was recognized as almost a little king. Every free man became the "vassal" of his local lord, swearing to defend the lord and his lands if attacked, and receiving the promise of protection in return. In the same way the local lord took a similar oath to a greater overlord and the overlord to a king. After a dim fashion, kings were supposed to depend upon the emperor.

The head and heart of the new system was a fighting aristocracy. The remaining wealth of the age, in so far as it was not in the hands of the Church, was held chiefly by a landed class, whose predecessors had been the landed magnates of the high imperial time. The men of this class now turned soldiers. Much of their incomes, derived from the rents of their free tenants and from the dues of their serfs, they spent on households of armed men. They fortified their country houses; just as our word village is derived from the Roman "villa," so our word castle is the Latin "castellum"—a little fort. They themselves spent

much of their time in practising with weapons. Over and above the obligations of religion, the code by which they lived was that of military honour.

The medieval gentleman preferred to fight on horseback. As the old Greek word "hoplite," originally "an armed man," had come to mean an armoured infantryman, so in the early Middle Ages the Latin word "miles," a soldier, was translated into the new local languages as "knight," cavalier, chevalier, or caballero, meaning a cavalryman, and particularly an armoured cavalryman, who was now the soldier *par excellence*. Chivalry was conduct becoming a mounted warrior. Each knight had at least two armed attendants, a "squire" to help him on and off with his armour and a "groom" to care for the horses. In an offensive action the fully-armoured knights were expected to do most of the work by mounted charges, thus continuing the tactical tradition of the armies of the later Roman Empire. On the defensive the knights would dismount and form the front rank, with the poorer freemen, unable to afford full armour or a horse, drawn up in a dense mass behind them. The men of a few poverty-stricken districts like Ireland or Scotland fought on foot, and elsewhere the larger cities had steady militias capable of a solid defensive, but the armoured cavalryman was the typical soldier.

The feudal horsemen broke the Saracen raiders. They turned back the great Viking harry, the worst peril our civilization has ever known, convincing those sea thieves who wished to remain in Christian lands that it was better to accept baptism and be digested into the body of Christendom. Shortly after the crisis of the Viking raids the reorganized West repulsed a third attack, that of the heathen Magyars, cruel Mongol horse-bowmen of an amazing mobility. These successes won, energy came back to Christendom like a great flood-tide. About the year 1000, after so many centuries of exhaustion, our

European culture shot up in a happy hopefulness like that of the Greeks fifteen centuries ago.

Much of the new vigour of Christendom was due to the success with which the early Middle Ages limited war. It is true that every freeman was armed, every gentleman not in Holy Orders thought of himself as a soldier, and the independence of the feudal lords led to plenty of local scuffles. Also the want of good communications and an organized police system permitted occasional banditry and disorder. The best-known early medieval poem, *The Song of Roland*, is all about fighting and the loyalty or occasional treachery of vassals. Still the happy result was obtained. Politically and technically wars were limited in time by the nature of the feudal obligation. A lord whose lands were attacked had a right to hold his vassals under arms until the invaders should be repulsed, but one bent on an offensive campaign in someone else's lands could keep his vassals in the field for only forty days in the year. After that he had to pay them, and medieval social and economic arrangements made this very difficult. In common with almost all ancient peoples, except the Romans of the later republic and empire, medieval men forbade as usury the charging of any interest on an economically unproductive loan. Accordingly wars had to be financed from taxes. In turn, custom made taxes difficult to raise, for while vassals were theoretically taxable "at the mercy" of their lord, it was thought an outrage which only a man of monstrous wickedness would commit to raise the moderate dues demanded of the serfs who had replaced the ancient slaves at the base of the social pyramid. Just so, between the greater vassals and their overlords or kings there was a strong feeling that "the king should live of his own," that is he should find money for his ordinary undertakings out of the rents and servile dues of the lands which he directly owned as a private individual and out of the

customary feudal dues owed him by his vassals. Any additional moneys paid him from time to time on extraordinary occasions by his vassals were considered as free grants which might be given or withheld at the vassal's will. All told, therefore, the shortness of feudal service and the difficulty of raising money made it almost impossible to wage offensive war on a large scale or for any length of time. To undertake a short campaign was hardly worth while, for in the absence of disciplined infantry trained in siege work each of the innumerable castles could stand a long siege. Still another technical and economic limitation was the high cost of full armour; a suit of it was worth a small farm. Accordingly the fully-armoured horsemen, whom we have seen to have been the medieval soldiers *par excellence*, could not be indefinitely increased in numbers. For centuries their superiority to unarmoured men was enormous; although they could not break a determined infantry defensive in close formation, as the modern tank—to which they have often been likened since 1916—can break infantry in the open and without artillery, still they were formidable enough to justify the comparison. We have seen that they were expected to furnish the chief strength of an attacking force. Besides the restrictions on numbers and length of service, another economic arrangement limiting the intensity of medieval war was that of ransom. If you killed a hostile knight his son owed you nothing but hatred. If you captured him he would buy his liberty with as large a sum as he could possibly raise. Accordingly it paid better to take prisoners than to kill.

The moral forces limiting war among Christian men drew their strength from the religious unity of the time. Christendom was one country, the difference between the men of one district and another was nothing to that of infidel and Christian. It is true that about A.D. 1050

the Church was divided between East and West, leaving the Western Patriarchate under the Pope of Rome out of communion with the three Eastern Patriarchates ; but a feeling of separation between the rank and file of the Orthodox or Greek Church on one side and the Latin or Roman Church on the other was slow to develop. West of the Adriatic religious unity prevailed. Accordingly religious influence was able to do much to lessen the destructive effect of war upon society. Sometimes this was done by arrangements such as the Truce of God, which forbade fighting on or near church property, and all attacks on clerics, pilgrims, merchants, women, peasants, cattle and agricultural implements. Throughout most of Christendom the truce extended from Wednesday evening to Monday morning in every week, leaving only three days and two nights for war between nobles. Even these three days were ruled out during Lent, Advent, the three great feasts of Our Lady, the Apostles, and certain other Saints. Further, in a society acknowledging Christian morals, bandits and robber barons were working against the grain ; everyone agreed that their deeds were evil, and their brutalities were denounced so that they were morally always on the defensive. We may compare medieval Europe with ancient Carthage or Aztec Mexico, where no one seems to have denounced human sacrifice. The moral unity of the Middle Ages also limited territorial quarrels between governments ; no right of conquest was admitted between Christian men, and disputes as to who should govern a given district arose only when it was doubtful which claimant had the better hereditary right. Men being what they are, such claims might now and again be false and hypocritical, but they were by no means negligible ; unless an aggressor could show some solid appearance of right on his side he was at a grave disadvantage.

Great wars were rare because they had to be fought by

volunteer armies, and a good moral cause was needed to attract large numbers of volunteers.

One such great war was William the Conqueror's campaign of 1066. William, Duke of Normandy, had been designed by the childless King Edward the Confessor of England to succeed him, and William's claim had been solemnly acknowledged by Harold, who nevertheless seized the crown on Edward's death. William was therefore morally able to raise a considerable army by putting himself at the head of a sort of vast partnership or stock company formed to enforce his right to the English crown, he promising English lands to those who would support him. This he would have a right to do, because in feudal theory all land was owned by the king, who could grant parts of it to whomsoever he might choose as vassals, the great vassals in turn sub-granting it to smaller men. Supporting a usurper was good reason for confiscation whenever a king saw fit. Sailing from Normandy at the end of September, William landed in England, defeated and killed Harold in a general action at Hastings in mid-October. The battle was hard fought and included about fifty thousand men on a side. But it finished the business, making William King of England and leaving him with no more than a few years of local uprisings, chiefly against the occasional misconduct of some of his officials and soldiers. The time being completely without national feeling, the country presently settled down under his government.

The chief military work of the Middle Ages was against the infidel. Through their earlier centuries men were continually volunteering to help the Spanish Christians reconquer Spain from the Moors. *The Song of Roland* tells of a Spanish campaign of Charlemagne's. Next came the Crusades to recover Jerusalem, some of them on a great scale; the First Crusade is said to have mustered from six to three hundred thousand men. Even

if one shares the old-fashioned and now diminishing contempt of nineteenth-century scholars for medieval historians, still such figures from such a time indicate the great military effort. Moreover, the intensity of the struggle was that of "unlimited" war; the priests with the First Crusade asked leave to fight, and when the higher clergy of the army denied them this pleasure they said in effect: "At least give us knives so that we can go out and cut the throats of the Mohammedan wounded!" Evidently they felt that mopping up after an attack could not fairly be called fighting. Also the earlier crusading time saw frequent massacres. Nevertheless, just as the Greek wars against Orientals and the great Roman campaigns of conquest were fruitful wars, leaving civilization higher and society stronger than before, so in their own way the Crusades were not destructive but fruitful. Their great effort was put forth in accordance with the moral feeling of Christendom. Although the tragic religious separation of Eastern from Western Christendom helped to cause the final defeat of the Crusades to Palestine which ended in the loss of Jerusalem and failure to reconquer the Holy City, nevertheless these Palestinian Crusades helped to knit Europe together, gave new energy to our race, and taught the West new arts, stimulating both commerce and the intelligence. In Spain, where Christian energies were undivided, the Christians won, and later in the Middle Ages a third successful crusading theatre was opened up, heathen Prussia and Lithuania.

The professional soldier, typical of war throughout the first eight Christian centuries, did not entirely disappear. Byzantine armies remained professional until the thirteenth century, they even maintained the high organization of the old Roman service and kept its tactical tradition until the loss of Asia Minor in 1071. In the West hired soldiers were limited in numbers,

thanks to the economic arrangements of the time. A few were to be found in the military households or body-guards of the kings. Also the military inconvenience of the short feudal service was such that there was a small floating class of cosmopolitan mercenaries ready to hire out to any prince who would pay—sad dogs, cordially hated, for they were largely bandits when in service and bandits pure and simple when unemployed. Occasionally they would decide a campaign; in 1215 King John of England checked his rebellious nobles and saved his dynasty by the use of such forces. For centuries, however, they were altogether subordinate to feudal troops.

The best testimony to the success of the medieval limitation of war is the great increase in the population and wealth of Christendom in the three hundred and fifty years between 1000 and about the middle of the fourteenth century, an increase which cannot be accounted for by any advance in physical science comparable to that of the modern world. No such achievements as the glorious Gothic churches of the thirteenth century, unequalled throughout human history for the variety and vividness of their sculpture, nor the majestic order and serenity of St. Thomas Aquinas' philosophy could have appeared in an age exhausted by war or any other cause.

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The medieval scheme declined. In 1188 the loss of Jerusalem struck its confidence a heavy blow. In 1204 the crusading enthusiasm was perverted to the capture of Christian Constantinople, perpetuating the quarrel between the Latin and Greek Churches. Soon after 1300 the Papacy, the organ of moral unity and moral authority in the West, having reduced to a shadow the Holy Roman Empire which had stood for unity in secular governments, over-reached itself in its claim to supremacy over



all lay governments, was humiliated and, in a sense, captured by the French Crown. These things, however, were but preliminaries. Shortly before 1350 there began the Hundred Years' War between the Kings of France and the French-speaking Plantagenet House who were already Kings of England, and now claimed the right to rule in France as well.

The Hundred Years' War shows clearly how far the Middle Ages had weakened and yet how much of their limitation of war remained. First the claim of the Plantagenet Edward III, although by no means an empty, trumped-up thing like Frederick of Prussia's claim to Silesia in 1740 or similar aggressions since then, was nevertheless far-fetched, and the armies which supported it were no longer feudal; they were volunteer forces raised under royal "Commissions of Array," and their wages could be found for considerable periods, thanks to an increasing development of royal finance. Money economy was developing, and vassals were more and more willing to pay their overlords for exemption from armed feudal service. The soldier's rate of pay was high, especially toward the end; in the campaign of Agincourt Henry V's archers were getting three times the wages of a skilled labourer. Much of the Plantagenet strength consisted of middle class infantry armed with a new and powerful weapon, the long-bow. Not only organization but also strategy showed a new spirit. With paid troops at their command the Plantagenets—unable to conquer France—were content to harass those over whom they claimed to rule, making war pay by raiding and pillage, ransoming towns and captured individuals. At the same time the new day surrounded the miserable business with a theatrical atmosphere of chivalry, typified by grotesque exaggerations of costume and the pageantry of arms. Toward the end of the long affair still another degradation appears: a systematic

and cold-blooded cruelty morally baser than the mere brutality of the Dark and early Middle Ages. Thus at Agincourt Henry V's success at the beginning of the battle left him with a great number of prisoners, including many of the noblest blood of France. Fearing lest his prisoners might be tempted to rise in aid of a possible renewal of the French attack, he ordered them all to be killed. When, partly from pity and partly from unwillingness to lose the rich ransom of so many noble captives, the English hesitated, Henry had the helpless men systematically knocked on the head by archers of his own body-guard. The continued fighting naturally produced distress; in Paris toward the end of the long struggle men starved and wolves approached the city.

And yet, notwithstanding the long agony of the Hundred Years' War, it by no means marked a complete breakdown of the medieval limitations. The armies were not large; although Edward III at Crécy had twenty-six thousand, the Black Prince at Poitiers had no more than seven to eight thousand, and Henry V at Agincourt only eleven thousand. On the moral side the Papacy was continually trying to arrange a peace. Nor did the three generations of medieval fighting cause any such lasting social disturbance as the far shorter great wars of ancient and modern times. In the thirty-five years' interval of peace between 1380 and 1415 France quickly became prosperous again; and when the English were finally driven out the single reign of Louis XI again made her immensely rich—as the innumerable churches built in the flamboyant Gothic, with their wealth of carved stone-work, abundantly testify.

About the middle of the fourteenth century, shortly after the beginning of the Hundred Years' War, there occurred the Black Death, a plague which carried off millions—half of the adult population in many districts of Europe. Under the strain naturally following such a

disaster the peasants—for by this time most of the former serfs were in social fact, although not yet in legal theory, free peasants—rose against the feudal landed gentry. A flash of the “all men are equal” idea, with its inevitable accompaniment of class hatred, appears in these revolts, for instance in the couplet sung by the English rebels:—

“When Adam delved and Eve span  
Who was then the gentleman?”

It is striking testimony to the strength of medieval social and military arrangements that, notwithstanding a disaster on a scale calculated to dissolve the most civilized communities, the rebellions were soon ended. We have seen that, unlike the commercial rich of to-day, the medieval gentleman was a soldier, that he and his retainers with their specialized equipment—great war horses, complete armour, etc—were immensely superior to undisciplined and loosely-organized peasants. In France, where the revolt was known as the “Jacquerie,” the feudal gentry were particularly successful in putting it down by arms. Meanwhile, the underlying moral unity of the time remained, so that (after the suppression of the various local rebellions) enough of the peasants’ grievances were redressed so that there were no more peasants’ revolts in Europe for more than four hundred years.

The Hundred Years’ War and the Black Death with its subsequent peasant risings were not the only great disasters of the later Middle Ages. Other misfortunes, not directly military, weakened the moral and social system on which the medieval limitations of war reposed. There was a long division between rival claimants for the central organ of moral authority, the Papacy, which fell into a corruption shared in varying degrees by the body of the Church throughout Europe. The upper classes became increasingly wicked and cynical. Where

individuals remained pious their piety was of a twisted sort, so tainted by superstition that able men like the cruel soldier Henry V of England and the prudent and cunning Louis XI of France were not quite sane. Cruelty continued to increase. In the New York Metropolitan Art Museum there is a magnificently worked fifteenth-century tapestry representing soldiers and prisoners. One soldier, having bound a wretch hand and foot and forced him to kneel, is deliberately disembowelling him ! Several other disembowelled corpses are shown. The scene is thought to show the Roman capture of Jerusalem, at which Roman soldiers cut open certain wealthy Jews thought to have swallowed valuable jewels. But certainly a time in which such an artist would choose such a scene took a perverted delight in horrors. No wonder that the note of the fifteenth century is one of gloom. Late medieval society felt itself borne down by many calamities.

Meanwhile, the trading class gained ground, more and more claiming the right to enrich themselves as they chose, irrespective of the effect of their trafficking upon society. Backed by the middle class traders or business men, the kings also increased in power at the expense of the priests and nobles. In part the rise of royalty corresponded to the greater complexity of civilization ; we have seen that the change from a customary to a money economy increased the financial strength of the central governments ; in part the new reverence paid to kings came because here and there the monarchies incarnated a new moral force, national sentiment. In so far as men gradually forgot the old ideal of a united Christendom and prided themselves on being Englishmen, Frenchmen, or Spaniards, they came to reverence the old royal houses which had been for centuries chief among the nobles and now were beginning to stand for the administrative and moral unity of whole provinces.

In the fifteenth century, toward the end of the Hundred Years' War, the French Crown took the important step of raising a standing army among their own subjects. The new national force, the "Ordonnance Companies" was not large, only nine thousand at full strength. It contained a large noble element, like any typical medieval unit. But it was permanent and regularly paid by the kings, and the principle it embodied was to determine the future. At the other end of Europe, under very different conditions, the new Mohammedan power of the Ottoman Turks also raised a small but formidable standing army, the Janissaries.

The social and spiritual changes naturally had their effects on warfare. The weakening of moral unity, based upon religion, began to cause faint but unmistakable signs of exasperating the quarrels between kings into quarrels between peoples as well. The Hundred Years' War which had begun as a dispute between two French-speaking families over a feudal inheritance ended in something remotely like a national war. The new financial power of governments, based on the taxes levied upon the traders, gave an increased ability to hire mercenaries. Of these some were armoured cavalry of the old type, but towards the end of the fifteenth century we also begin to find trained infantry such as had not been since the decline of Rome, well able to manoeuvre and capable of attacking feudal horse.

We have seen that medieval armies on the defensive in the open were accustomed to dismount. The English long-bowmen were always used in connection with mounted or dismounted knights. Also the Middle Ages had seen occasional victories won by true infantry, by Scotchmen too poor to afford horses or Flemish town militia, but these battles—Bannockburn, Courtrai—had been gained by short counter-attacks after the feudal cavalry had exhausted itself in persistent and unsuccessful

offensives. True attacking infantry now reappeared in Switzerland. The Swiss, by a persistence in drill equalled only by their persistence in rifle-shooting to-day, actually taught themselves to move regularly and rapidly in large, deep formations, although armed with one of the clumsiest of weapons, the long two-handed pike. This accomplishment, together with the natural combativeness of the mountaineers, enabled them first to free themselves from their feudal lords and then to become the chief reservoir of mercenaries in Europe. Before 1500 there were also trained Spanish foot, with a different tactic based on the sword and buckler like Roman legionaries, and soon afterwards units of German mercenary foot are found copying the Swiss method.

The rise of infantry had been preceded by a decline in armoured cavalry; these last had lost the art of manœuvre before the foot re-discovered it. In the Dark and Early Middle Ages armour had been of chain-mail backed by leather or wadding, the whole flexible and light enough to permit of long marches and rapid battle movements. The early medieval cavalry could not only make astonishing marches, like John of England's eighty-mile dash from Le Mans to Mirebeau in forty-eight hours in 1202—with relays of horses, but even so, what riding! They were also capable of rapid and precise drill movements like de Montfort's at Muret in 1213. The replacement of chain-mail by plate-armour for men and horse so overloaded the mount that manœuvring became impossible; the over-weighted beasts could not so much as turn at a canter without grave risk of falling. Even with such a weight of metal you could not armour the horse as completely as his rider; the beast's legs and belly had to be left unprotected. Accordingly the man-at-arms, who had always been accustomed to dismount for a defensive, would now often dismount for an attack—a practice for which his new and heavier

equipment unfitted him. At Agincourt the English, to make their French prisoners helpless, had only to take the helmets off them. There was no need to tie them to prevent their escape, for the mud had already so tired them that they could not move. The desire for safety had produced clumsiness ; in the same fifteenth century we begin to hear of men smothered or dying of heart failure under the mere weight of their own armour. Nevertheless, it was the rise of true infantry, well trained and disciplined, which depressed cavalry rather than the decline of the latter.

The rise of infantry was even more important to the social and military changes of the time than the discovery of gunpowder, as keen observers like Machiavelli clearly saw. Even without gunpowder numbers of trained foot capable of siege work, like that of the Greeks and Romans and backed by governments wealthier than those of the Middle Ages, would in any case have shortened the long medieval sieges. It is true that cannon revolutionized siege warfare ; there was a moment late in the fifteenth century when sieges were matters of days rather than of weeks or months. However, when permanent works were made capable of mounting cannon for counter-battery work against the besieger's guns sieges again lengthened. These new works had to be of considerable area in order to prevent severe converging fire by the assailant ; accordingly the comparatively small highly-fortified point, the castle, lost its value, and the fortified area had to be at least as large as a small town. At the same time cannon and the musket (so called because of the noise of the bullet, from the Italian "moschetto," a little fly, also the source of our word "mosquito") altered open warfare ; armour of a useful thickness became too heavy to carry. It was symbolic when the Chevalier Bayard, a man typical of the older time, was killed by a musket-ball.

All told, gunpowder hastened the technical change from medieval war which trained infantry and richer governments would in any case have brought about.

The nobles remained warlike ; the earliest Spanish and French musketeer units were aristocratic ; even as late as the French seventeenth century readers of Dumas will remember D'Artagnan and the Three Musketeers. But as the sixteenth century opened the typical armed man was no longer a vassal summoned to armed service by a feudal superior, he was paid by the king. Complex infantry drill by command had made fighting much more of a skilled trade than before, the technical superiority of the professional soldier over the feudal militiaman was now far greater. Only kings could afford the new artillery, which greatly strengthened them in suppressing rebellion, for the moral effect of the early cannon, crude though they seem to us, was enormous. Author after author of the sixteenth century, Rabelais, for instance, and Shakespeare, abundantly testify to it. Shakespeare marvelled at the soldier's courage in " seeking the bubble reputation even at the cannon's mouth " ; Rabelais makes his daredevil Friar John say : " Ha ! Ha ! I fear nought but the great ordnance."

No thinking man of to-day, caught as we are in national and class divisions, will wonder to hear that the medieval ideal of a universal Christendom died hard. In the fourteenth century Chaucer had fought creditably in the Hundred Years' War against France, but when in the *Canterbury Tales* he imagined a good knight he said nothing of wars between Christians, but took care to tell his readers that his hero had crusaded against the heathen Prussians. In the fifteenth century Joan of Arc, the incarnation of French patriotism, proposed that English and French should stop fighting each other and join to recover Jerusalem. Even in the sixteenth century Francis I of France talked of crusading to the



Holy Land. Nevertheless, the old ideal did die ; Francis himself in the heat of his quarrel with the Emperor Charles V was not ashamed to ally himself with the Turk.

The names of Francis and Charles bring up the early sixteenth-century Italian wars. Around the year 1500, while the moral unity of Europe was still doubtfully holding together under the corrupt Papacy, Italy was the cockpit of Europe. For more than three decades a series of wars developed the new technique of arms and intensified cruelty. The fighting was chiefly between the French and Spanish, who were both trying to conquer the rich peninsula, but both sides hired mercenaries—Swiss, Germans, etc.—wherever they could get them. At the beginning of the business, when the French had beaten the Venetians at Fornovo, the chronicler Commines tells how the captured Venetian men-at-arms, when knocked down and unable to rise unaided in their heavy armour, were butchered by the French servants and camp-followers with hatchets, three or four collecting about each prostrate victim and beating in the vizor of his helmet with repeated hatchet blows, “ for otherwise they could hardly have been slain, they were so strongly armoured.” There was no peculiarly bitter quarrel between the parties, it was merely good fun for such a rabble to kill helpless men. Nor did any French gentleman see fit to intervene. In these wars we hear of great cruelties inflicted on the peasantry, considerable numbers of whom were hanged in mere savagery. When fortresses were stormed their garrisons were usually massacred. Towns taken by assault were mercilessly sacked with every sort of outrage ; on one such occasion it was thought extremely noble of Bayard to have protected certain young ladies from rape. The medieval limitations of war, already so weakened, were about to collapse as Augustus’s professional army system had finally collapsed in the ninth century.

## CHAPTER V

### THE WARS OF RELIGION

AFTER more than fifteen hundred years of strict limits, imperfectly limited war approaching that of extermination returned to Christendom when the religious movement known as the Reformation destroyed the moral unity of Western Europe on which the medieval scheme had reposed. For more than a hundred years, until the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648, Europe busied itself with savage and destructive religious wars.

At first the full military consequences of the new religious movement did not appear. Grave social disturbances soon broke out and were savagely repressed both in the Germanies and in England, but for some time there was no heavy fighting on the religious issue. It was significant that the governments which had broken with the Papacy began to avow new principles; at the coronation of Edward VI of England it was proclaimed that the boy prince held his power from God alone and owed no moral duty whatsoever to anyone on earth—which sounded much like Machiavelli. Nevertheless, the morally disruptive power of the religious cleavage was not immediately felt. The Catholic Emperor Charles V stood for religious unity and for the defence of Christendom against the Turk; when in 1527 an army of his sacked Rome, threatened the Pope, and murdered priests and cardinals right and left, the one rivalry between those of the cosmopolitan mercenary ruffians who happened to be German Lutherans and those who were Catholic Spaniards, or Catholics of other nations,

was to see who could grab the most loot and commit the greatest atrocities. Such doings were still within the framework of late medieval war: comparatively small armies of savage hired brutes under leaders of whom many were cynically ambitious, some as cruel as their men, and even the best unwilling or unable to prevent wholesale orgies of destruction and crime.

Great writers began to damn governments and their wars after a fashion unheard since the peace of Augustus fifteen centuries before. On the eve of the Reformation Erasmus, seeing so many princely coats of arms displaying eagles, remarked: "Of all birds the eagle alone has seemed to wise men the type of royalty—not beautiful, not musical, not fit for food, but carnivorous, greedy, hateful to all, the curse of all and, with its great powers of doing harm, surpassing them in its desire of doing it." Rabelais makes his good King Grangousier willing to go to almost any length of concession before taking up arms against the unjust aggression of the foolish Picrochole. Shakespeare, although willing enough to do a patriotic battle-piece like *Henry V*, savagely caricatured the generals of his time in the black and cynical tragedy of *Troilus and Cressida*.

Toward the middle of the sixteenth century, however, a powerful new element of popular passion was added to the witches' cauldron. Throughout Europe, for the first time since Augustus, princes, nobles, scholars and religious leaders began dragging the common people into their faction fights, stirring them up by the spoken and written word, so that the masses came to believe it a sacred duty to kill their enemies for the purification or preservation of true religion as the case might be. The first civil wars between Protestant and Catholic were in Germany. Dying down there, they began to break out in France; next it was the turn of Holland, which revolted from Spain, and after thirty-seven years

of fighting made good its independence. It was the Calvinism of the Hollanders, together with their desire for local independence from Spain, that inspired the desperate resistance of the Dutch towns besieged by the Spaniards. The few Spaniards could beat any number of Dutchmen in the open, but it is a military axiom that in position warfare, where there is no opportunity for manœuvre, numerous and enthusiastic troops of low military quality can often make a showing against high quality units. On the other hand, it was the catholicism of the Parisian populace together with their desire for French national unity, which avenged earlier massacres of Catholic nobles in the south by the great Massacre of St. Bartholomew.

Naval warfare again became important. Outside of the Mediterranean its instrument was the ocean-going sailing ship in which the coasts of three-quarters of the globe had been discovered within a single long life-time. Armed with cannon on the broadside, the victories of the sailing fleets not only helped assure Dutch independence from Spain and repulsed the Spanish attack upon England, they also affected land warfare because overseas trade became a chief source of the wealth by which armies could be supported. This was especially true of Spain, whose vast stream of bullion from Mexico and Peru financed her armies and was as important as the high quality of her infantry in her domination of Europe. Toward the end of the century, however, although her decline was at first unperceived, the dominant military power and Catholic champion, Spain, was weakening; and no wonder, for she had at the same time been defending Christendom against the Turk in the Mediterranean, discovering and colonizing half the world, and fighting for the Catholic cause in half the provinces of Europe, opposing alternately the Protestant Germans, the French, the English and the Dutch.

In 1593 the French civil wars ended. In just over thirty years no less than eight had been fought, most of them short, but the eighth lasting ten years, including a desperate resistance of Catholic Paris to Henry IV while he remained Protestant. The armies on both sides were largely of cosmopolitan mercenaries. They were always small, usually under twenty thousand; Henry at his strongest commanded only twenty-five thousand; it was not the scale but the duration and intensity of the fighting that so shocked contemporaries.

After such a nightmare opinion naturally hardened in favour of order; a very passion for order flames in Malherbe's polished lines to Louis XIII, setting out to besiege the Huguenot city of La Rochelle in 1627. The poet calls upon the king to exterminate the faction like vipers.

"A hundred Decembers have tarnished the plains,  
And a hundred Aprils painted them with flowers,  
Since their brutal madness has caused among us  
Nothing but tears."

Rochelle surrendered only when nearly two-thirds of its twenty-eight thousand souls were dead, and the survivors of its fighting men too weak from starvation to use their weapons.

In 1618, when the long agony of the religious wars had already lasted for nearly a century, the Thirty Years' War began. On the Catholic side the leader was the Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor of Austria, helped by his Hapsburg cousin the King of Spain, and by the Catholic German states. On the Protestant side there were at first only the Protestant German states, but later Sweden intervened under her King Gustavus Adolphus, one of the great captains of history. Some help was received from England and Holland, and more important still—both as deciding the issue and as a landmark in European affairs—Catholic France under

Cardinal Richelieu preferred nationalism to religion as a political motive, and financed the Protestants from a desire to strengthen herself against the Hapsburgs.

The armies of the Thirty Years' War, although larger than those of the French religious wars, were seldom very large; the peace footing of the French standing army was only fifteen thousand; on a war footing Sweden could recruit and keep up only the same number. Usually the entire forces of both sides were nearer fifty than a hundred thousand. The imperialists may once have reached a hundred and seventy thousand, a greater number than any force since the First Crusade, but that figure represented an effort impossible to maintain. To concentrate sixty thousand men for battle was an extraordinary feat; Gustavus's first great fight was between forces of forty and forty-five thousand, his second between twenty and thirty thousand.

What made the war so terrible was its ferocity. Massacres on such a scale and so long continued had never been seen in Christendom. The Catholic General Tilly, who fought until mortally wounded in action at seventy-two, was a devout and greatly respected man; an enemy once called him "The honourable old Tilly, whose acts were so heroic that after his death they were his everlasting monuments making his name eternal." Yet when someone complained of the crimes of his troops he answered only, "Do you think my men are nuns?" Apparently he thought it was to be expected that soldiers should steal, rape, and kill. In fact, it was the army under his command which at the taking of Magdeburg behaved more wickedly than any savage tribe, killing every man, woman and child they could find. They also worked hard at destroying the place—except the cathedral, to which Tilly went in state for a solemn Te Deum! He seems to have made no effort to check the slaughter. Perhaps forty thousand may have fallen.

Although the forces of the other great imperialist commander, Wallenstein, never achieved any single mass production of atrocities to compare with Magdeburg, they were equally cruel. Once Wallenstein, summoning a town to surrender, announced that he would not leave alive so much as a child in its mother's womb if not admitted. Gustavus had some success in preventing his well-disciplined troops from killing non-combatants, but both sides made it a practice to massacre the garrison of a besieged place when taken by assault. Oddly enough to our thinking, many of the survivors of a beaten force, when they happened to be captured and not massacred, would enlist in the victorious army, like the survivors of the Sudanese who enlisted under their British conquerors. What the cosmopolitan mercenary of the religious wars really enjoyed, that is unless his ferocity was devout in motive, was loot and butchery in whatever cause. Scott's character of Dugald Dalgetty in the *Legend of Montrose* is a sympathetic portrait of the type. Since they were seldom regularly rationed and paid, they usually had to live off the country. Moreover, the armies were followed by great trains of camp-followers of both sexes; it is said that one imperialist force of forty thousand had a hundred thousand of them, and these vast swarms helped to devour the country like locusts.

The destruction caused by the thirty years of unlimited war exceed anything in European history; three-quarters of the entire German population died. In one not especially exposed group of twenty villages the loss was eighty-five in the hundred. Careful German writers say that certain agricultural districts did not regain their former productivity for two centuries. Cannibalism was frequent; the dead bodies of condemned criminals were eaten. Once, in Alsace, prisoners were actually killed for food.

Notwithstanding the frequent popular commotions which had accompanied the beginning of the Protestant movement, the religious wars bred no social revolts. On the contrary, governments continued to strengthen their hold on their peoples. For instance, Cromwell with his army at his back was absolute master of England as no king had ever been. With a large and strongly-commanded regular army at its orders, an executive is more secure against insurrection than under any other military system, because long-service professional soldiers form a sort of corporation or guild with a separate public opinion of their own. Again, unlimited war is the natural result of popular passions, so that the savagery of the religious wars merely reflected the intensity of feeling stirred up by the religious quarrel. After the horror had gone beyond a certain point society was numbed.

Nevertheless, as the Thirty Years' War ended in 1648 with no decision in favour of either of the two parties which had so long divided Europe, tired men might well have despaired as they despair to-day. As such men now see no end to the devouring curse of democratic war, so they might then have said: "Religious war must go on until Europe is destroyed. The question at stake is so important and the two sides so evenly balanced, especially now that Catholic France has inexplicably decided to side with the German Protestants, that no limitation of war is possible. There is no remedy, and our civilization must continue tearing itself in pieces."

Nothing of the sort happened. Our ancestors, seeing that they were approaching a precipice, sharply faced about. By an unspoken but real agreement they stopped fighting unlimited wars.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LIMITATION

SINCE the beginning of the romantic-naturalist movement which has given us modern democracy, red-hot nationalism, and communism, every scribbling mucker in Christendom has been pleased to spit on the eighteenth century, but at no time in history was war successfully limited against greater obstacles than in the era which began in 1648, sickened in 1775, and died in 1793.

The chief obstacle with which Europe had to contend was the loss of religious unity; the end of the Thirty Years' War had left the boundaries between the Protestant and Catholic cultures where they are to-day. The shining hope of a re-united Christendom had vanished in the long nightmare of the indecisive struggle, so that there remained no chance of recasting the medieval scheme. The second obstacle was nationalism; local loyalties had naturally increased as international religious loyalty declined; in France and England patriotism already had a tradition of over two centuries, Spain was not far behind, and there were nationalist indications in Central and Eastern Europe. Accordingly there could be no universal government like that of the Roman Empire. Henry IV of France had indeed proposed a European federation, but his scheme had been laughed down as a pro-French trick against the Austrian and Spanish Hapsburgs.

However, although the medieval limitations of war had so fearfully broken down, that thirty years in the seventeenth century had produced a vaster nightmare

than the Hundred Years' War of the fourteenth and fifteenth, much of the medieval social order still remained. Government was still hereditary, indeed the divine right of kings was more vehemently preached as religious unity receded. Although the old "economic morality" restricting competition and thereby preventing the impoverishment of the small by the great was everywhere weakened, nevertheless enough of it was left to lessen economic oppression. Everyone still professed belief in a definite morality and a divine judgement after death.

Making use of these considerable remnants, the unspoken agreement of all sane men had its way, and war was restricted after a fashion recalling in part the Middle Ages, in part the ancient Empire. Moral bases for unity were found in the aristocracy and in the higher education. Everywhere the gentry, especially those of the Courts and of Diplomacy, were still of one kind. During the religious wars many of them had used the passionate loyalties of the people merely as pawns played in a game for personal advantage—somewhat as cosmopolitan financiers indifferent to England pushed that country into the Boer War. In 1648, when the Thirty Years' War was over, all were sick of so nasty and ruinous a contest. The classical culture was shared not only by the gentry but also by the professional classes everywhere: the learned were international as the medieval clergy had been, a seventeenth-century Puritan like Milton found himself not entirely a stranger in the cultivated Rome of the counter-reformation. Everywhere, fearing that all Europe, like the swine in the Gospel, might follow the Germans over a precipice, learning allied itself with aristocracy to build on the ripe wisdom of antiquity a law of measure, decorum and moderation.

A third element of moral unity was legalism: during

the Thirty Years' War the founder of international law, Grotius, wrote his book, *On the Law of War and Peace*. His thought centred in no world court and had no international army to enforce it, but although it lacked these sanctions it nevertheless created a certain law-abiding sentiment in favour of making war tolerable for neutrals and non-combatants. General opinion backed his insistence that all wanton killing and destruction not necessary for victory were both crimes and serious blunders. The moral anarchy of the religious wars had made even the cruel soldiers of the time feel the need of some recognized code of behaviour ; not a few of them wrote little manuals on the ethics of war, discussing such points as whether one should permit oneself to burn a building into which one's enemy had fled, whether one should poison wells, and so on.

To-day international law rings hollow. If not only legalism but also good manners and humanist learning seem slight enough bases for moral unity, let us remember that in the seventeenth century the word gentleman had not yet been emptied of meaning. Nor had education been dulled into intellectual near-sightedness by physical science and specialized research ; unlike our pragmatists, behaviourists and relativists, the generation of Descartes could still reason broadly, clearly and forcibly. At all events, the fact remains that Europe changed direction. Fearing, as many fear to-day, that another smash would come soon and would destroy civilization, men fought no more great religious wars—the English and Irish civil strife centring about James II included only a single real battle, the Boyne, and that not very bloody. Instead we find kings pitting their navies and little professional armies against the similar forces of their neighbours much in the spirit of a cock-fight, almost in that of an adventurous and dangerous sport.

Politically these wars were fought for limited

objectives. That is, as we saw in the second chapter, governments made war not to conquer their enemies altogether, but merely to exercise pressure for the sake of colonial advantages or of conquests along the frontiers. Consequently, defeated states seldom had to fear disaster; at most they might expect a supportable diminution of wealth and power.

Technically the era of Louis XIV and the eighteenth century continued the professional armies, but saw to it that they should harm society but little. Although numbers were increased as compared with the religious wars, still they remained small in proportion to population, usually far below one per cent. A few examples will suffice. In 1700 France with about nineteen million souls was the first military power in Europe. Now a fully conscript country can mobilize about a tenth of its total numbers. Therefore, had France then suffered from or enjoyed a universal service army on the democratic plan, a general mobilization would have given her nearly two million trained or partly-trained men. By the greatest efforts she raised three hundred thousand, roughly one and a half per cent. In 1738, with about twenty-two million souls, a full conscript mobilization would have furnished over two million. She actually had a hundred and eighty thousand on a peace footing, of whom sixty thousand were militia, and the English Government estimated that for war these numbers could not be more than doubled. The contemporary English army was small, even when compared with the other armies of the time; in 1776, at the height of the effort to reconquer the Thirteen Colonies, intensive recruiting among the nine million inhabitants of the British Isles furnished only thirty-three thousand regulars available for American service. It is true that eighteenth-century strengths are usually given in terms of "rank and file," omitting commissioned

officers, sergeants and company musicians; none the less, the foregoing figures tell their own story.

The little eighteenth-century armies were handled and fought after a fashion that minimized injury and inconvenience to civilians. Although their rank and file were still recruited from the dregs of the population, every effort was made to keep them under control. Since unpaid or ill-fed troops are tempted to pillage and thus get out of hand, every effort was made to pay them regularly and to feed them from magazines even when in campaign. Since conquered territory was valuable only when populous and prosperous, these methods also served the interest of the conqueror by sparing the inhabitants and their wealth. Accordingly, foraging and living off the country were discouraged, and the troops were held in the closest formation, not only in battle but also in camp and on the march. In 1709, when an allied army under Marlborough, having taken the town of Tournai in northern France, was besieging its citadel, an understanding was reached between besieger and besieged that there should be no gun-fire by either party on the side of the citadel which faced the town. The active operations all took place on the side which faced the open country. In the same way plundering was severely put down; General Gage, commanding for George III in Boston in 1775, promptly hung some of his own soldiers merely for breaking and entering a colonist's shop.

On the other hand, the most brutal punishment did not cow the tough customers of the eighteenth-century rank and file; their discipline, their spirit of sacrifice, and the perfection of their highly-specialized tactics were remarkable. At Bunker Hill about half, certainly over two-fifths, and perhaps more than half of the assaulting troops were killed and wounded. After such butchery they returned to the charge and carried the position.

And yet Burgoyne, an experienced soldier who saw the operation, spoke of them as “. . . ill-grounded in the great points of discipline,” and went on: “. . . it will require some training under such Generals as Howe and Clinton before they can be prudently intrusted in many exploits!” So high was the standard of quality demanded of the eighteenth-century regular, and such was his just pride, that in the same letter Burgoyne could write: “. . . in most states of the world, as well as our own, the respect and control and subordination of government at this day in great measure depends upon the idea that trained troops are invincible against any number or any position of undisciplined rabble.” Events were to prove the colonists not altogether a rabble.

Nor were the eighteenth-century limited wars as artificial as sometimes has been made out. For instance, the British officer who at Fontenoy bowed ceremoniously to the French troops and invited them to fire first was by no means playing the fool. Behind his bravado was the soundest of tactical principles, because with the muzzle-loading smooth-bore musket the essence of the art was to receive, not to give, the first volley. Then you closed with your enemy while he was reloading and delivered your own volley at murderously close range.

For that matter we saw in the second chapter that all wars are to some extent artificial in that they are limited by certain moral restraints.

The high military quality which compensated for the small numbers of the little eighteenth-century armies was achieved only by years of training. The length of time required for this training, together with the moral atmosphere which with the small scale finance of the age made recruitment scanty, compelled eighteenth-century commanders to be economical of blood; they

could not escape from the universal rule that a valuable instrument difficult to replace must be used with caution, like that of Jellicoe at Jutland. Accordingly they preferred to manœuvre, and since the prohibition of plundering and foraging necessitated large depots or magazines of supplies, they usually manœuvred against the enemy's communications with his depots. A skilful general would avoid battle until he had put the chances well on his side, and a masterpiece of troop leading was to out-manœuvre the enemy so completely that you won without any heavy fighting. The all-important magazines were protected, and at the same time the dangers, hardships, and fatigue of the soldiers were lessened by a liberal use of fortification, both in the shape of permanent works and of temporary trenches. In his manual of siege warfare, or as we should say to-day "trench warfare," the great Vauban—a hard-headed, practical soldier if there ever was one—is continually advising against haste and heavy risks. Make your approaches, he says, in such fashion that your men are covered whereas the enemy must expose himself in order to resist you; should he sally out, seize part of your front line, and begin destroying the works there by no means hasten to put him out, but let your fire play upon the good target he presents as long as he is foolish enough to remain exposed.

Finally, various limitations of eighteenth-century war converged upon the rational end of obtaining peace. All wars are fought to compel an opposing group to do as it would not have done without being defeated; on the other hand, all wars must end in peace, and all except those of extermination in peace by agreement. But all ethical systems agree that agreements made under compulsion do not bind the conscience of the signer. How then can a treaty become morally binding upon a conquered people? Politically limited war, since it

does not aim at the total overthrow of the entire hostile group, allows a certain liberty to the conquered. The defeated government, beaten but by no means completely crushed, still enjoys a certain freedom of negotiation, and that liberty gives the treaty its moral force. The defeated side can resign themselves to moderate concessions in order to avoid the greater evils almost certain to follow prolonged resistance. The eighteenth-century diplomat Vattel formulated the ideal of his time when he recommended moderation even in the moral claims made by a fighting government. A sovereign, he says, should never make war without fully satisfying his conscience as to the justice of his cause; not to do so is to commit brigandage. On the other hand, every sovereign is, under God, the keeper of his own conscience; for others to take it upon themselves to judge him will merely embitter the quarrel and postpone peace. So that quarrels—inevitable among independent states—may end quickly for the general good each sovereign must assume that his enemy is acting in accordance with that enemy's conscience, must refrain from all unnecessarily cruel acts, and must not be too quick to complain of the conduct of his opponent. He must be moderate even in his assertion of his own righteousness and treaties must never morally condemn the defeated foe. What we call "propaganda" was happily unnecessary; you did not have to persuade the grenadiers of Frederick to fight by telling them that the Empress Maria Theresa was a cannibal or the Austrian guards that Frederick was a pervert.

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Although the imperial Roman limitation of war lasted eight centuries and the medieval limitation six, that of the eighteenth century remained only from 1648 to 1793. To-day the weaknesses of the scheme



are obvious: its aristocratic and learned moral unity offered little to the imagination and could inspire no strong loyalty. Especially the populace were unaffected. To control them their masters made use of traditions in which those masters themselves no longer believed—religion and the divine right of kings. To adapt a great phrase of Belloc which recalls the ancient tombstones fitted hastily into so many city walls of the Dark Ages, the cynics built themselves ramparts of sacred tombs and sheltered themselves behind the people's memories.

Man being man, it was not to be expected that the humanist cult of moderation could perfect even the upper classes directly affected by it. Indeed, it was the fashion of the time, with its distaste and contempt for "enthusiasm," to make itself out worse than it was. When an eighteenth-century writer like Fielding in *Tom Jones* makes his political lady from London say of her country brother, Squire Western: "Brother . . . as you are so excellent a politician I may expect you will keep your leagues, like the French, till your interest calls upon you to break them," he is abusing a diplomacy which under Louis XIV and XV was more scrupulous and far less rapacious than that of our own time. It is true that throughout the period economic competition was sharpening both between individuals and between nations; eighteenth-century states frequently fought to advance their commercial interests, chiefly at sea and in distant colonies. In 1740, when Frederick of Prussia grabbed Silesia, he was making European territory the object of mere naked conquest for the first time in centuries. Still worse was the partition of Poland which he began in 1772. He even persuaded the devout Empress Maria Theresa to share his loot. In his blasphemous phrase, "I invited her to partake with me of the eucharistic body of Poland. She wept, but she took." The moral unity of the time

was weakening. Nevertheless, we must not refuse the eighteenth century its due honour. So effective was its limitation of war that it could fight long wars without straining the social order. From 1739 to 1748 first England and then England and Austria fought against Spain, who was later joined by France and Prussia—and all without appalling distress anywhere. The same thing was true when England and Prussia opposed a continental coalition for seven years from 1756 to 1763. The men who lived between the religious and the democratic butcheries have at least the melancholy distinction of being the last on the planet successfully to limit war.

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All moral changes are gradual. Between 1775 and 1781 Christendom had a foretaste of what was to follow. The American revolutionary movement—including as it did both Washington and Hamilton—was by no means purely democratic; nor did the war which it fought reach the perfect type of democratic warfare. At the same time that war did greatly differ from the limited hostilities to which pre-democratic Europe had become accustomed.

First, as to the point of numbers: the colonists had a military tradition of service in the militia, into which, in theory, every man was liable to be drafted. There was neither political authority nor financial strength sufficient to keep large numbers long with the colours, so that most of the real work had to be done by a permanent force, the continentals, of whom the rebel leaders tried to make regulars on the European model. But for short periods militia did appear in such numbers that the final result owed much to them. Thus in March, 1776, militia played an essential part in the skilful operation by which Washington hastened the British evacuation of Boston. Late in February he applied

to have all the nearby militia sent to his camp for three days' service. While his continentals hastily entrenched Dorchester Heights, from which the main ship channel into Boston could be taken under long-range artillery fire, these militia-men were held on the Cambridge side of the shallow Charles River, ready to embark in boats to attack the north end of Boston should the British send most of their available troops against Dorchester. Unable to face both fronts at the same time in sufficient strength, the British commander, Howe, wisely gave up the game and evacuated. So it was with the surrender of Burgoyne, the turning-point of the entire struggle, since it encouraged the French to come in. Just at the end of Burgoyne's campaign New England and New York militia-men came swarming out against him. His little army, reduced below five thousand effectives, surrendered to some five thousand continentals supported by over twelve thousand militia. In other words, Burgoyne's isolated and ill-provisioned men were mobbed. We need not here discuss how far the vastness and bad roads of the remote and empty continent made the problem of transport and supply insoluble to the British generals. Nor need we consider how unsuited to woods fighting were the rigid shoulder to shoulder tactics developed on the unfenced, open fields of continental Europe. Without these handicaps and under better leaders the British regulars would doubtless have won. In the event they nearly won, and lost only thanks to French aid. Nevertheless, certain phases of the struggle were decided by victories of quantity over quality of troops.

Nor was the American Revolution fought within the conventions characteristic of eighteenth-century limited warfare. The same popular passions which produced the temporary mustering of what were in the circumstances large numbers produced also a corresponding

intensity, not to say savagery, in the fighting. At the first American volley of the war, fired near Concord Bridge in April '75, two red-coats fell, one dead, the other badly wounded. The troops of both sides having moved off, the wounded man started to crawl away. Whereat a young American who had been working on a nearby woodpile came and brained the helpless hireling of tyranny with his axe. The practice of sniping, long thought unsportsmanlike, gained ground. Toward the end of the contest the southern campaigns were marked on both sides by prisoner killings such as Europe had not seen since the wars of religion. At the surrender of Yorktown, Cornwallis's chief of cavalry, Tarleton, had such reason to fear that he might be lynched in revenge for his barbarities that he asked Washington for a special guard to protect him.

Within ten years of the treaty establishing the independence of the United States popular passion had returned to Europe, bringing with it the old curse of slaughter.

## CHAPTER VII

### DEMOCRACY AND MASS MASSACRE

WE now approach the disastrous cycle of democratic wars upon which the world appears to be still engaged.

Among the impudent claims made for democracy perhaps the most impudent is that it is a peaceful form of government. In the matter of civil strife educated democrats will usually admit that the record is not conspicuously in their favour, that popular revolutions have seldom been bloodless. But they cling to the idea that democracies are less likely than monarchies or aristocracies to get their citizens and other people killed off in foreign wars. This idea I propose to examine.

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The ancient and medieval periods may be briefly passed over. Like most of our political terms and ideas, that of democracy comes to us from ancient Greece. Since the Roman Republic was never of pure democratic type because of its aristocratic senate, the most notable of ancient democracies was Athens. In the third chapter we saw that, having been elected by the Ægean Islands as commander-in-chief for the naval war against Persia, the Athenian democracy promptly transformed the confederacy into an empire and their allies into subjects. They then began bullying their smaller neighbours so aggressively that a second confederacy

came together to resist them under the leadership of Sparta.

The war which followed lasted twenty-seven years, and was destructive beyond any civil or foreign war previously fought in Greece. The Athenian democrats led in atrocities throughout. The high point of these was their invasion of Melos. Without a shadow of provocation they attacked this little neutral island, killed all the men of military age and enslaved the other inhabitants. Professor J. B. Bury says in his history of Greece: "The conquest of Melos is remarkable, not for the rigorous treatment of the Melians, which is merely another example of the inhumanity which we have already met in the cases of . . . Mytilene and Scione, but for the unprovoked aggression of Athens without any tolerable pretext." The Athenians merely said that it was a law of nature that the strong should rule the weak.

Meanwhile, the peace party in Athens was composed of precisely those who had their doubts of the wisdom and virtue of the mob. To this party belonged Aristophanes, the writer of comedies, whose peace propaganda play *Lysistrata* was recently seen on the American stage. He and his friends clung to the regrettable and reactionary notion that to have been well educated and well born, that is to descend from people of proved ability beyond the average, had something to do with fitness for government.

But it may be said that the ancient democracies are not typical because all ancient pagan societies were based upon slavery. Let us therefore glance at Switzerland, the one medieval stronghold of political democracy. Does history show the medieval Swiss to have been peaceful? We find their country not only warlike on its own account, but actually the chief

European reservoir and source of mercenaries ready to fight for anyone who would pay them. The late medieval and sixteenth-century wars were rather unusually savage. Do we find the Swiss democrats more chivalrous or more merciful than other soldiers of the time? The standard book on the subject, Sir Charles Oman's *Art of War in the Middle Ages*, says: "In the Swiss . . . we find . . . an appalling ferocity, and a cynical disregard for the rights of all neighbours. . . . As enemies . . . 'they' . . . were distinguished for their deliberate and cold-blooded cruelty. The resolution to give no quarter, which appears almost pardonable in patriots defending their own native soil, becomes brutal when retained in wars of aggression, but reaches a climax of disgusting inhumanity when the slayer is a mere mercenary, fighting for a cause in which he has no national interest. Repulsive as was the callous bloodthirstiness of the soldiers of Sulla or Cæsar, it was less in moral guilt than the needless ferocity displayed by the hired Swiss soldiery on many a battle-field of the sixteenth century. After Novara, for example, they put to death several hundred German prisoners—both slayers and slain being mere hired mercenaries."

And this is the nation of which that ardent democrat Francis Hackett in his *Henry VIII* recently wrote: "Save for Switzerland (sixteenth-century) Europe . . . was politically imbecile," imbecile to his mind because of its consent to be governed by hereditary monarchs or—more rarely—by aristocracies.

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Turning now to the modern democratic era of the last century and a half, we find a steady increase in the scale and destructiveness of war; due first to that typically democratic instrument the universal-

service conscript army, and secondly to the chief by-product of democracy, the fanaticizing of national patriotism.

At this point, so that the reader may feel the full force of the indictment, it will be well to repeat certain truths set forth in previous chapters. The wear and tear of war upon society has nothing to do with the destructiveness of weapons; the limited wars of the Roman Empire were fought with the same swords and javelins as the unlimited wars of the later Roman Republic, the eighteenth-century limited wars with the same cannon and muskets as the great struggles of the French Revolution and Napoleon. No civilization in history has ever abolished war, and presumably none ever will, but all stable civilizations have strictly limited it. The job has been successfully done by precisely those times at which democrats are accustomed to sneer, the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages, and the eighteenth century. The early Roman Empire—so hated by a man like H. G. Wells—policed the entire Mediterranean world with an army of about three hundred thousand; in 1914 a single poor province, Serbia, put in the field over twice as many. The “benighted” and “superstitious” Middle Ages restricted armed feudal service outside of one’s immediate locality to forty days; from 1914 to 1918 millions of men, the survivors of those originally mobilized, were held with the colours for over four years.

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The independence of the United States was recognized in 1783, and by 1793, after their American adolescence, the democratic movement and the mass massacres of democratic war appeared full grown in the French Revolution. As we saw in Chapter VI, the eighteenth-century armies were so small that they were



hardly more than constabularies. Under Louis XVI, although the population of France had increased to twenty-six million, the peace footing of the army was about a hundred and seventy thousand regulars and sixty thousand militia. When one of the first effects of democracy was the disintegration of the old army, revolutionary France first tried to achieve numbers by volunteering; through the chaos of the administrative paper-work it appears that eight hundred thousand should have been with the colours late in 1792, and about half that number actually were so. Before the Republic was six months old conscription and a levy *en masse* were voted. One remembers with a melancholy amusement the lyrical enthusiasm of certain nineteenth-century poets, for instance Walt Whitman's line:

"I utter the word democratic, I utter the word *en masse*."

The sentiment certainly fits the case; for twenty-two years the French marched in mass to the slaughter-house, first under the Republic and then under Napoleon, the "Soldier of the Revolution," who continued its work, altering that work only to stabilize it. Of course, this was done from the loftiest motives; the French war songs from the republican *Chant du Départ* to *Veillons Au Salut De L'Empire* agreed perfectly in telling the world that the French made war only against kings, loved all other peoples, and sought only to bestow on them liberty and peace.

This they proposed to do by waging war on a scale which the world had never known and with a fury which Europe had long been happy to forget.

Let us look at a few of the figures. For the campaign of 1793 the conscription increased French armed forces by nearly half a million men. Notwithstanding casualties, the following January saw more than three-quarters of

a million under arms. Losses were in proportion. In the days of the old "tyrant kings" England had withdrawn from the war against Louis XIV in horror at the butchery of Malplaquet, which hard-fought battle cost the British contingent about six hundred men killed. The wounded were, of course, in proportion. In the eight years from 1793 to the victory of Marengo in 1800 the French Republic lost more than seven hundred thousand men, killed or wounded—about ninety thousand a year. In 1805 Napoleon boasted to Metternich: "I can afford to expend thirty thousand men per month." In 1812 he took an army of four hundred and sixty thousand men, of whom less than half were French, into Russia and brought back less than thirty thousand.

It needs no argument to show that such doings transformed war as a social phenomenon. Whereas the little armies of the old kings had acted as sponges to soak up undesirable elements among the dregs of society, or as filters preventing these undesirables from doing harm, the new hordes were a different matter. The harm they did was increased by the new intensity with which they were used, which intensity has been the commonplace of military writers from Clausewitz and Jomini to Foch. They were encouraged to live off the country. "Don't talk to me of supplies," said Napoleon; "a hundred thousand men can live in a desert." To which it might be observed that the districts through which they passed were far more like deserts afterward than before.

As early as 1794 the democratic politicians of the French Directory ordered their cruiser captains to take no prisoners, directed the order to be posted so that the crews might know it, and made disobedience punishable by death. Fortunately for the honour of France, most of her sea-officers and sailors refused to imitate the

calculated ferocity of the recent German submarine campaign.

\* \* \* \* \*

Between 1793 and 1815 the opposition between democracy and the older loyalties was only secondarily the moral force which sustained alike the opposition between the French crusade and the increasing resistance to it. The primary force was nationalism. The democratic movement did not invent the idea ; in France and England national feeling had already existed for over three centuries, and traces of it had appeared even earlier. But whereas the pre-democratic conception had been that of a king ruling his various peoples, republicanism demanded a human group strongly conscious of unity. Thus, notwithstanding their façade of internationalism, the French democrats were vehement nationalists, and as time went on their nationalism was increasingly reflected among the other peoples of Europe. Indeed, nationalism became the chief political by-product of the democratic era, and soon commanded a wider allegiance than the democratic theory itself.

This explains how after the fall of Napoleon the universal-service conscript army, the typical military product and instrument of democracy, was preserved by the country which was to become the chief opponent of political democracy in Europe, namely Prussia. After overthrowing the old Prussian professional army at Jena in 1806, Napoleon imposed upon Prussia a treaty which, among other humiliations, limited her army to forty-three thousand men. The treaty, however, was so bitterly resented by the average Prussian that it proved possible to use the officers and non-coms of this little force as instructors for successive batches of privates. These last were called up under a universal-

service law. They enthusiastically turned out for a short period of intensive training, and then went back to civil life as trained reserves, giving place to a fresh lot which was intensively trained in its turn. All were available for call in war. In 1815 the restored French Bourbons abolished both conscription and the heavy taxes needed to support the conscript masses; indeed, their promise to do so was the most popular plank in the platform on which they returned to power. But for over a century after Waterloo the military history of the world was determined by Prussia's retention of the system.

Alone among the soldiers of post-Napoleonic Europe the Prussians carried on the democratic preference for quantity over quality. Their army also served as a vehicle for another typically democratic idea, that of universal education; for decades it was their boast that its educational value far outweighed its cost. Finally, since their short-service conscripts had to be fanaticized in order to make them fight, the Prussian State deliberately intoxicated them with national patriotism as vehement as that of the revolutionary French.

For the moment the Prussian copying of these democratic derivatives did no great harm; for fifty years no wars on the Revolutionary-Napoleonic scale were fought in Europe—precisely because this precious interval of comparative peace marked an ebb of democratic dogma. Whereas all the smashing victories of the Republic and of Bonaparte could not bring peace because the sweeping French annexations so alarmed the other powers that their signatures were worthless and at the first opportunity they combined to pull Napoleon down, after Waterloo the “reactionaries” of 1815 were wise enough to reject the Prussian proposals for partitioning conquered France. Putting

aside the romantic-naturalist crusading temper, the restored sovereigns preferred the less exciting but more real charms of precedent and prescriptive right. The ghost of the eighteenth century rose for a moment from its grave and after twenty years of bloody convulsions moderation restored tranquillity. It is true that the time asked nothing better than peace. Byron's *Devil's Drive* reflected the prevailing mood :

“ ‘ And what shall I ride in ? ’ quoth Lucifer then—  
 ‘ If I follow’d my taste, indeed,  
 I should mount in a waggon of wounded men,  
 And smile to see them bleed.  
 But these will be furnish’d again and again,  
 And at present my purpose is speed.’ ”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ But first as he flew, I forgot to say,  
 That he hover’d a moment upon his way  
 To look upon Leipsic plain ;  
 And so sweet to his eye was its sulphury glare,  
 And so soft to his ear was the cry of despair,  
 That he perch’d on a mountain of slain ;  
 And he gazed with delight from its growing height,  
 Nor often on earth had he seen such a sight,  
 Nor his work done half as well :  
 For the field ran so red with the blood of the dead,  
 That it blush’d like the waves of hell !  
 Then loudly, and wildly, and long laugh’d he :  
 ‘ Methinks they have here little need of me ! ’ ”

On the other hand, peaceful sentiments alone would not have been enough to establish a true peace, as we have learned to our cost since 1918. To get rid of the tides means abolishing the moon ; to diminish strife means diminishing the causes which provoke it as surely as the moon makes the seas ebb and flow. It was because the kings and aristocrats of 1815, with all their imperfections, worked

intelligently for reconciliation that their treaty was fruitful.

It is also true that the Napoleonic Empire, had it maintained its overwhelming power, might have pacified Europe in a new empire like that of old Rome. Had Napoleon not been beaten in Russia Europe might to-day be enjoying both unity and happiness. The fact remains that Roman results are achieved only by Roman successes.

Let us note in passing that after Napoleon's fall there was established a "Holy Alliance," a short-lived international federation not unlike the present League of Nations. The sovereigns might have done better to avoid such rigidity and stick to eighteenth-century moderation between independent states. When in 1830 a French army was besieging a Dutch garrison in the citadel of Antwerp a convention of the eighteenth-century type spared the town and confined the cannon fire of both sides to that side of the citadel which faced the open country. Even as late as 1859, when Francis Joseph of Austria, his armies beaten at Solferino, was able to resign himself to the result, saying calmly in the eighteenth-century manner, "I have lost a battle, I pay with a province," his moderation saved Europe from a general war.

Already, however, a new flood-tide of democracy had begun to flow; the European insurrections of 1848 showed the demon of democratic war to be not dead but sleeping, and in 1861 it woke with a vengeance in the United States.

In the American Civil War first the South and then the North went to the draft; taken together the armies of the two sides, drawn from a population of only thirty-two millions, reached the astonishing figure of nearly four million. Including men dead from wounds and disease, the loss in the four years' fighting has been

estimated at a million. In the Union forces alone 359,528 were killed in action.

In 1866 the Prussians overthrew the Austrians in seven weeks, in 1870 they defeated the French regular army in five weeks; they were wise enough to annex no Austrian territory, but foolish in taking from France not only Alsace but also Lorraine, including Metz—an error destined to cost both Prussia and the world very dear. Meanwhile, seeing these rapid and sweeping successes, first the other nations of continental Europe and then Japan took up universal service. The French Republic was particularly rigid in refusing exemptions; far more so than Prussia had ever been. When the autocracies of Russia and Japan, both possessing universal-service laws, tried to use against each other the ponderous weapon forged by the French Revolution, neither could bring its full weight to bear. Japan had trained only a small fraction, about a fifth, of her annual conscript classes, while Russia was handicapped throughout by bad communications and later by internal strife. Thus in 1914, after a century of unparalleled material development during which democratic ideas had steadily gained ground, few in Europe imagined what a general and prolonged universal-service war would be like. By the end of 1918 all were wiser, and only fear of the commonplace restrains my pen from remarking that they were also sadder.

Obviously the advance of democracy had not been as regular nor its success as complete as that of its children—conscription and vehement nationalism. Although all the original protagonists except England entered the war fully conscript, yet in Russia, Austria, and Germany government was still largely hereditary. Nor is this the place to discuss how far, if at all, parliamentarism and democracy are the same. Suffice it that the popular mind identified the two; that

even in the autocratic countries democratic ideas were rife and were haloed as "progressive," and that every country, even Russia, had an elected parliament. Enormous majorities in each elected parliament were vehement for their own side in the war. The Russian parliamentarians' chief complaint was that the Czar's advisers were insufficiently warlike. The German Liebknecht seems to have been the one elected legislator in Europe to speak publicly for peace. The unanimous enthusiasm—not to say ferocity—with which the United States at last came in is also to be remembered.

With the chances which combined with the technical predominance of the defensive over the offensive to prolong the war we shall deal in later chapters. For the moment it will be enough to glance at the way in which the struggle was conducted. Everyone knows that nationalist hatred and organized, patriotic lying had never before reached such a point. The Germans opened the ball by violating the neutrality of Belgium which their Government had sworn to protect, began the use of poison in the form of gas, and sent out submarines to sink merchantmen on sight. The Allies enforced with unprecedented rigour a naval blockade intended to starve the entire German people, tearing up their own treaty obligations (undertaken by the Declaration of Paris in 1856, and by that of London in 1909) in order to do so. From the air both sides dropped bombs freely on civilian objectives; indeed, the whole distinction between soldier and civilian became blurred. While serving in France the writer was told by an American staff colonel that certain Allied aviators, passing over a Rhineland city, saw an open-air circus to which the children of the place had crowded; flying low, they bombed and machine-gunned the innocents with great effect.



The butcher's bill is itemized in the following tables :

TABLE I.

(From Almanacs and *The Encyclopædia Britannica*.)

	<i>Population.</i>	<i>Total Mobilized.*</i>	<i>Soldiers Killed and Died of Wounds.</i>
Russia .. ..	150,000,000	12,000,000	1,700,000
France .. ..	39,000,000	8,410,000	1,363,000
Great Britain .. ..	41,000,000	8,904,000	908,000
Serbia .. ..	3,000,000	707,000	45,000
Belgium .. ..	7,000,000	267,000	14,000
Germany .. ..	63,000,000	11,000,000	1,774,000
Austria-Hungary .. ..	47,000,000	7,800,000	1,200,000
Total original belligerents	350,000,000	49,088,000	7,004,000
Turkey (Nov., 1914) ..	26,000,000	2,850,000	325,000
Italy (May, 1915) ..	33,000,000	5,615,000	650,000
Bulgaria (October, 1915)..	4,000,000	560,000	87,000
Rumania (August, 1916)..	7,000,000	750,000	336,000
United States (April, 1917)	92,000,000	4,355,000	126,000
Total of later belligerents	162,000,000	14,130,000	1,524,000
Grand Totals .. ..	512,000,000	63,218,000	8,528,000

TABLE II.

Losses in soldiers alone from Ploetz's *Manual of Universal History*.  
(Edited by Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes; Pub. Houghton Mifflin, 1925.)

	<i>Great Britain.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>United States.</i>	<i>Italy.</i>	<i>Russia.</i>	<i>Totals.</i>
Known dead ..	807,451	1,427,800	107,284	507,160	2,762,064	5,611,759
Seriously wounded	617,740	700,000	43,000	500,000	1,000,000	2,860,740
Otherwise wounded	1,441,394	2,344,000	148,000	462,196	3,950,000	8,345,590
Missing ..	64,907	453,500	4,912	1,359,000	2,500,000	4,382,319
	2,931,492	4,925,300	303,196	2,828,356	10,212,064	21,200,408

\* These figures represent those mobilized from beginning to end of the war ; those under arms at any one time were of course far fewer.

*Allied known and presumed soldier dead.*

Great Britain	..	..	..	..	938,904
France	..	..	..	..	1,654,550
United States	..	..	..	..	109,740
Italy	..	..	..	..	1,180,660
Russia	..	..	..	..	4,012,064
Belgium	..	..	..	..	272,000
Serbia	..	..	..	..	757,343
Rumania	..	..	..	..	391,117
Greece	..	..	..	..	37,500
Portugal	..	..	..	..	4,100
Japan	..	..	..	..	301
Total	..	..	..	..	9,358,279

TABLE III.

Losses in soldiers alone, from *National Defense*, by Kirby Page.  
(Pub. Farrar and Rinehart, New York, 1930.)

	<i>Known Dead.</i>	<i>Seriously Wounded.</i>	<i>Otherwise Wounded.</i>	<i>Prisoners or Missing.</i>	<i>Totals.</i>
Russia ..	2,762,064	1,000,000	3,950,000	2,500,000	10,212,064
Germany..	1,611,104	1,600,000	2,183,143	772,522	6,166,769
France ..	1,427,800	700,000	2,344,000	453,500	4,925,300
Austria- Hungary	911,000	850,000	2,150,000	443,000	4,365,000
Great Britain	807,451	617,740	1,441,394	64,907	2,931,492
Serbia ..	707,343	322,000	28,000	100,000	1,157,343
Italy ..	507,160	500,000	462,196	1,359,000	2,828,356
Turkey ..	436,924	107,772	300,000	103,731	948,427
Rumania..	339,117	200,000	—	116,000	655,117
Belgium ..	267,000	40,000	100,000	10,000	417,000
United States ..	107,284	43,000	148,000	4,912	303,196
Bulgaria ..	101,224	300,000	852,399	10,825	1,264,448
Greece ..	15,000	10,000	30,000	45,000	100,000
Portugal ..	4,000	5,000	12,000	200	21,200
Japan ..	300	—	907	3	1,210
	9,998,771	6,295,512	14,002,039	5,983,600	36,285,922

			<i>*Mobilized.</i>	† <i>Per cent.</i>
Russia	..	..	15,070,000	
Germany	..	..	13,250,000	66.1
Austria-Hungary	..	..	9,000,000	54.4
France	..	..	7,935,000	59.4
United Kingdom	..	..	5,704,000	39.2
Italy	..	..	5,615,000	46.3
United States	..	..	4,272,000	13.2

The above lists are not perfect. Table I gives only the populations of European France and of England plus Scotland, whereas the mobilized and dead are from the entire French and British Empire. It gives no figures for Portugal, Montenegro, Greece or Japan. Nor do the permanently disabled appear. Table II gives no details for the Central Powers, although Ploetz does give the totals which reappear in the last line of Table III. It is noteworthy that the known and presumed dead of the Allies alone—9,358,279—are within 640,000 of the known dead—9,998,771—of both sides together. Nor will the discrepancy between the given lists surprise anyone who has tried to handle statistics. For our purposes only the general effect matters.

So far we have been dealing only with the soldiers who fell in action or died from wounds or illness, excluding civilians killed, starved, or dead of disease. Kirby Page quotes an estimate by Professor Bogart: “. . . the loss of civilian life due directly to war equals, if indeed it does not exceed, that suffered by the armies in the field.” On this basis the human cost of 1914–18 is as follows:—

10,000,000 known dead soldiers.	3,000,000 prisoners.
3,000,000 presumed dead soldiers.	9,000,000 war orphans.
	5,000,000 war widows.
20,000,000 wounded.	10,000,000 refugees.
13,000,000 dead civilians.	

\* Figures from the International Labour Office. The grand total mobilized was 66,103,164; about 15,000,000 were at the front.

† Percentage of active male population mobilized.

Let us contrast our contemporary slaughter with the eighteenth century. The latest English historian of Queen Anne's Wars, G. M. Trevelyan, estimates that in the critical year of 1704, the year of Blenheim, the British Army and Navy decided the fate of Europe at a cost of less than five thousand dead, of whom about two thousand fell in the four major actions of that year. He goes on to say: "Between 1914 and 1918 the average loss of life in war to Great Britain per year was about two hundred thousand. The population of the Island had risen about seven times, and the cost of war in youthful life about forty times."

\* \* \* \* \*

It goes without saying that many democrats deny the responsibility of democracy for the butchery. Alas! the whole state of contemporary Europe gives them the lie. From end to end of that continent not one hereditary autocrat remains and (outside of Hungary) not one traditional aristocracy has the influence it had in 1914. It is true that the chaotic incompetence of self-government has produced an abundant crop of dictators, but not one of these has proclaimed himself king; all but the Hungarian are men of the people, all but the Italian maintain a republican façade, and all of them invite the people to legitimize government by their votes. In short, democracy has increased since 1918. But is there a corresponding increase in peacefulness? Do the European peoples love each other more than they did? Precisely the contrary is the case. The ablest American writer on foreign affairs, Frank H. Simonds, in his book *Can Europe Keep the Peace?* has recently shown how democracy exasperates conflicting nationalisms instead of reconciling them. The present writer suspects that the worst bunch of autocrats known to history—say Nero, Heliogabalus, Cæsar Borgia and

Louis XV—given the Europe of 1919, would long ago have mustered up enough collective intelligence and goodwill to make something of it.

Meanwhile, one reason why pacifists bleat so hopelessly is that they have not seen or dare not say that democracy itself is the source of much, if not most, of the evil they are attacking. Without democracy, although a certain amount of war will always be inevitable, nevertheless its ferocity and destruction might be kept within bounds by setting up governments independent of election and therefore not compelled alternately to rouse popular passion and to cringe before it.

It is perhaps a hopeful sign that democracy, at least for the moment, is under a cloud. It is vulnerable enough aside from its military record. Nevertheless, that record is peculiarly adapted to refute one of the most often heard democratic arguments. Among believers in the superior virtue of the unwashed and the superior wisdom of the ignorant, it has long been a favourite piece of democratic cant to say that the cure for the evils of democracy is more democracy. But after a glance at the wars of the democratic era this begins to sound a little too much like saying, "The cure for smallpox is more smallpox," or, "The cure for cannibalism is more cannibalism." In the *Action Française* (the French Royalist newspaper and one of the best written in Europe), Maurras, Leon Daudet and Bainville are fond of calling democracy "L'Anthropophage," the eater of men. It began and has continued in blood. If no better way can be found for ending it, then in the name of the peoples whom it devours by the million may it be ended in blood.



PART III  
*SINCE 1918*





## CHAPTER VIII

### NAPOLEON AND TWENTIETH-CENTURY DISARMAMENT

THE problem of disarmament is that of limiting Napoleonic war. For a century the Emperor has hypnotized the world, but especially he cast his spell upon soldiers, and ever since they have been content to build upon the foundations he laid; to a man the Generals of 1914-18 had been trained in his school. Therefore to understand twentieth-century war we must grasp the leading ideas of Bonaparte and the reasons for their survival.

First of all Napoleon at his height always aimed at the total overthrow of the hostile country. To us this seems natural enough. Accepting the truth that wars are not waged for their own sake, that they are only the continuation of peace-time policy and therefore always seek a political object, we think it a commonplace—almost a truism—that the political object should be unlimited. In reality the total overthrow of a hostile country is in no way essential to war, and in the foregoing chapters we have seen that it was seldom the military object of the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages, or the Eighteenth Century. We take it for granted only because of the Napoleonic hypnosis.

The means by which the Emperor was able to crush the great powers of Europe was the huge mass of his armies. Numbers had always been most important in war, but we have seen that eighteenth-century armies had been small because governments were then

accustomed to fight only for limited political objectives ; to put one and a half per cent. of the population under arms was an extraordinary effort. These small numbers were a working guarantee against large-scale wars, since no invader could occupy an entire country ; to enter a hostile capital was almost unheard of. Bonaparte, however, inherited from the French Revolution the system of compulsory universal service. Fully mobilized, a conscript country puts into the field no less than ten per cent. of its total inhabitants—nearly seven times the highest eighteenth-century proportion. This device, to which the Republic had been driven by the dissolution of the French Regular Army, suited the democratic ideas ; equality before the law implied equality of obligation. To destroy the specialization of the soldier, returning to the practice of simpler societies in which every man had been a warrior, fitted the romantic-naturalist desire for primitive simplicity, the stock-in-trade of the democratic philosophers. Primitivism, beginning in the cult of the shepherdess, logically reproduced the barbaric horde ! Napoleon, the soldier and inheritor of the Revolution (which in everything he sought to regularize and carry forward) continued the conscription.

It goes without saying that the Emperor's mind was anything but primitive. In his youth he had indeed been bitten by the fashionable folly of the Noble Savage ; his favourite reading had been the barbaric chants of Ossian, but the disgusting sight of the filthy Egyptian fellahin, with flies crawling unmolested on their eyelids, had cured him. So in the matter of generalship, the simple device of having a larger army than his enemy was by no means his only resource. When inferior in total numbers he would manoeuvre in the hope of making himself superior at least at the decisive point ; in his first and last campaigns, when circumstances reduced

his total numbers below those of his enemies, he often succeeded in so doing. But clearly it was easier to obtain local superiority through total superiority, so whenever he could—that is, in his middle period, as master of an unexhausted France—he tried to outnumber the armies he was to meet.

Bonaparte's method shows that he appreciated the possibilities of the enormous conscript armies which the Revolution had placed in his hands. "In war," he said, "I see only one thing, the masses. I try to destroy them, sure that the lesser things will fall of themselves."

We saw in the sixth chapter that the commanders of the little eighteenth-century armies tried to spare civilian lives and property, and in the second chapter that all professional armies must be used with discretion because their trained men cannot be easily replaced. I now repeat that the eighteenth-century tactics had depended upon a high training and discipline which could not quickly be drilled into men but were matters of years, so that campaigns had therefore resembled a modern French duel with rapiers, in which neither duellist will risk a headlong offensive for fear of laying himself open to a fatal counterstroke. The reader should also remember that the desire to economize life explains the importance of fortresses and entrenched lines in the eighteenth-century wars.

On the other hand Napoleon, at the head of conscript France, fighting against the professional armies of the legitimate sovereigns, was like a gambler whose purse is so full that he can afford to plunge. To aim at the total overthrow of an enemy implies boldness from the start. Conscription gave huge numbers, and up to a certain point the Emperor was able to combine numbers with rapidity. Disregarding territorial objectives, he would hurl his mass upon the enemy's main army,

perpetually attacking and always seeking a prompt decision by battle. In a suspiciously neat saying, revealing at once the schematic, over-logical mind of the Latin and the ascendancy of mathematical formulae over eighteenth-century thought, he said concerning rapidity that the strength of an army could be measured like the impact of a moving body in physics, you had only to multiply its mass by its velocity. The maxim neglects quality as opposed to quantity; in rating so high the importance of mere quantity, the Emperor was a true child of the democratic era.

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Because the nineteenth-century mind was in general sympathetic to Napoleon, his cult survived his fall. Such earth-shaking campaigns as his were impressive enough in themselves, but in addition his very weaknesses, his megalomania, self-intoxication and inability to check himself, were not mere personal defects. They were part of a vast intellectual and spiritual current which continued to flow. The most influential teachers of the democratic movement continued to proclaim such shortcomings to be the sum of virtue, exalting instinct over reason, "self-expression" over self-restraint, adventure over stability, personal whim over universal human experience—in which opinions the romantic movement of yesterday and the naturalism of to-day are one. We smile at the absurd phrase "Napoleons of industry" applied to successful merchants of corsets and lingerie. Nevertheless the spirit of unlimited competition which was until yesterday the soul of the business world continued in its own debased fashion the unlimited lust for power of the Corsican. Defeated, he continued to haunt the imagination.

Military thought partook of the spirit of the time. Because the dominant romantic-naturalist movement

loved speed, boldness, adventure, and excitement for their own sakes, therefore the nineteenth-century statesmen and soldiers insufficiently analysed the reasons for the Emperor's failure. The nineteenth-century time-spirit, combined with the intellectual insufficiency of that century's educated soldiers, is still the root-problem of peace and war. While the desire to make war for an unlimited political objective—that is, in the hope of completely crushing the hostile country—is a matter for peoples and governments, not for soldiers, still our dearly-bought experience shows us two pitfalls of which the latter, had they been wiser, might have given timely warning: exhaustion and fortification.

Napoleon's Empire had fallen through exhaustion; his methods had worn out both his armies and his country. In the first place the soldier became physically exhausted. Not only did the eighteenth-century permanent fortresses and entrenched lines play a great part in eighteenth-century war because generals were then compelled to economize life; this war of positions (which we have learned to call trench warfare) also limited the fatigue of the armies. The hardships of the fighting men were as carefully restricted as the numbers employed or the destruction inflicted upon the theatre of war. In the war of positions the soldier does not have to march long distances at top speed; he is fairly well sheltered, and such supplies as remain within the defended area reach him more or less regularly. Napoleon's rapid advances and retreats were exhausting in themselves; his soldiers almost always had to fight without shelter from the enemy, often they had to sleep without protection from the weather and eat what scraps they could find in villages already plundered. The writer would not suggest that these hardships were morally very terrible; physical deprivation, once over, fades

quickly from the memory. On the other hand, hardship carried beyond a certain point breaks down the physical resistance.

Besides being physically exhausting to his soldiers, the Emperor's kind of war was economically exhausting to his peoples. The support of a conscript horde strains a community. If you can advance into hostile territory, then the strain can be eased a little by having your men live off the enemy's country, but this has moral and therefore political disadvantages: it rouses ill-feeling and thus stiffens resistance. Moreover the absence of your mass of conscripts from productive effort increases the tasks of those left at home. For a time the revolutionary enthusiasm upheld the Napoleonic armies and peoples; the dream of a unified Europe, cleared of the dead lumber of outworn feudalism and reasonably governed, stirred men's blood. But as time went on and the strain of the vast campaigns continued, moral exhaustion began. The conscript who has seen class after class of his elders compelled to march away marches himself with lessened enthusiasm. The strain of continued losses begins to tell on the home front. The spirit of the Gallic Crusade died hard, but with time the French came to see the Emperor's battles less as the birth-pangs of a new world and more as interminable, useless butcheries. Napoleon's first great failure, in Russia, shook the foundations of his power; within three years the material side of his effort had collapsed and he was on his way to St. Helena.

The exhaustion of prolonged conscript war had borne only upon France. Except for Prussia, none of the Emperor's enemies had adopted compulsory universal service, and the Prussian conscripts had fought only three campaigns. Moreover, the revolutionary convulsion of society had roused such excitement and such violent passions that the new revolutionary-Napoleonic device,

the nation in arms, was not seen in due relation to the existence of settled peoples.

Looking back to-day upon Napoleon's era, one wonders whether the Emperor—before he was blinded by his own greatness—realized the brittleness of the huge instrument he was handling? He calculated so well the endurance of troops in terms of the one-day battle, exhausting his enemy with part of his forces while holding back large reserves to throw in late in the day, that one asks oneself whether he ever considered the problem in terms of national effort over a number of years? Ferrero has recently suggested that one reason why the Corsican was always eager for immediate battle was because he appreciated the danger he ran. In his secret thoughts he may have worked out the logical sequence from social convulsion through intense excitement and violent effort, to sudden fatigue and complete collapse. If so, one reason for his hurricane offensives may have been the knowledge that his peculiar type of war demanded an immediate decision.

If however, as Ferrero plausibly suggests, the Emperor did carry his study of exhaustion beyond the one-day battle into the analysis of a campaign and beyond that again into the field of prolonged national effort, he kept his thoughts to himself. Certainly none of his nineteenth-century followers understood the material with which they were dealing. All, intoxicated with quick decisions through rapid, violent and persistent offensives directed against the enemy's main army, neglected both exhaustion and fortification.

To the generation which followed 1815 exhaustion was as much a part of the air they breathed as the revolutionary-Napoleonic excitement had been to their fathers. Thus the military problem which occupied the old age of Napoleon's commentator Clausewitz was not the complete overthrow of France; he well knew

that no such colossal effort was within the scope of his time. His study was how to prevent France, still greatly superior in resources to his own Prussia, from further increasing her superiority by annexing Belgium. Throughout Europe the generation which followed Napoleon was as heartily sick of great wars as our own time; moreover, the governments were anti-democratic. Thus perhaps after 1815 the nineteenth-century soldiers did not stress the matter of exhaustion because they knew that while they lived great wars would remain morally impossible. They may well have said to each other that no government would ever risk a repetition of what they themselves had seen.

Besides neglecting the possibility of national exhaustion in war, the nineteenth-century soldiers underrated fortification. Because the prepared defensive had played little part in Napoleon's wars, most of his successors believed that it had been rendered obsolete by his masses, his sweeping offensives, and his great victories in the field. It is true that the masses changed the scale of everything in war, fortification included. A fortress capable of sheltering a garrison of a few thousand could not be neglected by a little eighteenth-century army; if the army advanced, leaving the place in its rear, the garrison could operate on its communications; if on the other hand a detachment large enough to "mask" the place and contain the garrison was left before the fortress, then the remainder of the field army was seriously crippled for operations elsewhere. The huge armies of the Emperor's time could mask the little eighteenth-century citadels "in their stride," and go on about their business. The trouble had not been with the principle of fortification but with the scale of the existing fortresses.

The object of fortification is to gain time. A defended area, if surrounded, must fall at last to mere blockade



through exhaustion of its resources, but by providing shelters for your own men and obstacles against an enemy you can compel him to great and prolonged effort. A besieged garrison, while it holds out, can count on forcing the besieger to use against it numbers greater than its own, and the besieger may tire of the game or become so weakened by his losses that he can be counter-attacked. Meanwhile fortification gives a smaller force the power to postpone a decision.

Now we have seen that a postponed decision was fatal to the success of Napoleon's methods; in the critical Russian campaign of 1812, postponement through retreat had turned the tide against him. Not one nineteenth-century soldier seems to have asked himself what would become of the Napoleonic masses if a decision could be postponed through fortification?

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For some time the cult of Napoleonic doctrine remained harmless, because the political circumstances of the middle nineteenth century forbade its practice; not until more than fifty years after Waterloo did any great European power aim to crush another. From 1815 until after 1870 France substantially abandoned conscription and was content with a professional army. Nevertheless a nucleus of the Napoleonic military system remained. Prussia continued conscript, adding universal training to the universal service of revolutionary-Napoleonic France.

The Emperor's doctrine of war continued congenial to the prevailing romantic-naturalist mood, and as time went on the Prussian soldiers began to plan the complete overthrow of this or that great power by mass offensives directed against the hostile armies in Napoleon's fashion. Their victory over France in 1870-71 carried the Napoleonic doctrine everywhere; it steadily became

more absolute and more extreme—although in every war from 1861 to 1914 the increasing defensive strength of modern weapons made fortification more and more valuable and cast deeper doubts upon the Napoleonic cult of the offensive.

Worse still, the Prussian treaty imposed upon France in 1871 had the same weakness as those which had followed the Corsican's victories over Austria and Prussia ; although it left France a great power, it so humiliated her as to make reconciliation almost impossible. Instead of a true peace it produced the armed strain which was to last until 1914.

The new allies of the defensive were industry and physical science. The American Civil War was the first war in which the infantry of both sides were armed with rifles ; it was Napoleonic in that both sides raised large armies, first by volunteering and then by conscription, and in that it was continued until the last armies of the South were on the edge of destruction ; it was anything but Napoleonic in its almost universal habit of entrenchment. The new hail of rifle bullets sent both sides to earth like rabbits ; out of every eight attempted assaults only one would succeed. By the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 the infantry rifle had become a breech-loader and practically every frontal attack failed. When the Russians fought the Turks in 1877-78 the lesson was the same ; being weaker, the Turks entrenched and beat off superior numbers of Russians again and again. The Turkish entrenched camp at Plevna surrendered only after blockade had cut off the supplies and broken the health of its garrison. In the Boer War of 1899-1902 the rifle had become a magazine rifle, and very thinly-held fronts proved impossible to pierce ; a decision was reached only by the wearing down of the Boers. When a few years later the machine-gun had been added to the magazine rifle,

the Japanese and Russians in Manchuria were equally compelled to entrench in order to live in the presence of the enemy. Russia made peace because of the danger of revolution at home. In the Balkan War the earth-work lines of Chatalja resisted every Bulgarian effort to break them.

To-day it seems astonishing that these repeated warnings had so little effect. The Prussians dismissed the experience of Americans, Russians, Turks and British on the ground that none of them had a command and staff trained with Prussian thoroughness; although 1870-71 had discounted frontal attacks, nevertheless the Prussian conscripts had beaten the regulars of Napoleon III in a few weeks, thanks to superior artillery and to the offensive spirit used in enveloping the flanks of the defence. Their pupils the Japanese, if not successful in destroying the Russian armies, had undeniably defeated them. The Prussian soldiers not only clung to their Napoleonic cult of the offensive at any cost, they actually pushed it farther than the Emperor's generation had done. Even in the smooth-bore musket days, the Napoleonic high priest Clausewitz had at least insisted that the defensive, although not so fruitful in results as successful attack, was after all the stronger form of war. But Von Der Goltz as late as 1883 could say in his *Nation In Arms*: "The idea of the greater strength of the defense is, in spite of all, a mere delusion. . . . To make war is to attack." The side of Clausewitz which continued to impress the new Prussian generation was that of such sayings as: "He who uses force unsparingly and regardless of bloodshed must gain his object, if his adversary does not do likewise"; they failed to consider, as Liddell Hart has recently remarked, that limitation might be due to political wisdom based upon self-interest. Instead the neo-Napoleonic Prussians took for granted that the

complete overthrow of a hostile country would necessarily leave the victor better off than before.

At the same time the Prussians were not altogether blind to the effect of the new weapons. Their doctrine of envelopment showed appreciation of the fact that adequately defended fronts could no longer be broken. After the Russo-Japanese war they raised their proportion of machine-guns and provided themselves with heavy field guns and howitzers. Partly perhaps to distract attention from their intended sweep through Belgium by making the world believe that they intended to attack the French fortresses, they prepared trench mortars, hand and rifle grenades, searchlights, illuminating pistols, and periscopes. Thus, although their prevailing doctrine remained that of the offensive at any cost, they tempered it a little.

On the French side there was even less qualification. Like all continental Europe, the Third Republic established conscription soon after the Prussian victories of 1870-71, thus returning to the system inherited by Napoleon from the First Republic. With Foch at their head, the new generation of French military thinkers were convinced that 1870 had established Clausewitz' theory of "unlimited," *i.e.* Napoleonic, war. The Prussians, they wrote, had beaten Louis Napoleon because—unlike his uncle—he had tried to use regulars to gain a limited political objective, whereas they had planned to crush him completely by a conscript "nation in arms" full of offensive spirit. As in Prussia, the ruling doctrine went from bad to worse. Although Foch did not appreciate the inviolability of a front adequately defended by modern weapons, and although he exaggerated the importance of morale as opposed to material factors, still as head of the French War College he did not abandon caution, but insisted on maintaining large reserves to be thrown in late in the game.

In the preface to the third edition of his *Principles of War*, he noted that in South Africa and Manchuria entrenchment had forced upon the attacker the job of breaking into a fortified position, so that the battle differed greatly from a Napoleonic combat in the open ; but he did not allow this important fact to change the main current of his thought. Worse still, Foch's successors, Maillard and Grandmaison, who formed the French war plan of 1914, were possessed by a veritable mania for the offensive. Will-power and aggressiveness, they said, could accomplish anything.

Meanwhile a few doubting voices had been raised in the wilderness of military thought. One of these was that of a certain Bloch, not a professional soldier, but a Jewish banker, living at Warsaw, then the capital of Russian Poland. In 1897, in *The War of the Future*—the English translation was called *Is War Impossible?*—he predicted that modern weapons would do such execution as to prevent decisive attacks in the Napoleonic fashion. Universal entrenchment, he went on, would then turn future conflicts into gigantic sieges in which the decision would be made not by arms but by famine, “. . . the bankruptcy of nations and the break-up of the whole social organization.” The General Staffs easily dismissed these theories of a civilian pacifist. After the Russo-Japanese war a few soldiers did suggest the possibility of general siege warfare ; in *The Royal Engineers' Journal* for January, 1907, the curious will find an article, “The Campaign of the Future,” by Captain (now Lieutenant-Colonel) C. E. P. Sankey, supporting Bloch's thesis. But everywhere the worshippers of Napoleon remained unshaken. Those who lifted their eyes from the technical to the social aspect of war, taking the wish for its fulfilment, assured the world that the condition of finance and industry would make future wars short. Everyone accepted

the Napoleonic idea of the knock-out, the total defeat of the hostile country. Every continental European power was conscript. Everyone proposed to achieve a prompt decision by Napoleonic offensives at any cost. Each of these offensives must be delivered by unarmoured men, with the same thin skin and fragile bones as their remote ancestors, the same limited speed and weight-carrying ability. Each would be met by such an arsenal of weapons as had never been used on earth; magazine rifles by the million, machine-guns by tens of thousands, these last playing to and fro streams of bullets like water from a hose.

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The first shots were fired on the Western Front early in August, 1914, and in six weeks Napoleon had been knocked off his pedestal of a hundred years and Bloch reigned in his stead. The French were the first to come to grief. Blinded by the destruction of their Intelligence Department after the Dreyfus case, they tested their mysticism of the offensive in headlong attacks against the German front in Lorraine—only to see their assaulting troops melt like wax in a fire. The German machine-gun defence was like a sausage machine; the more meat you fed into it the more sausages it turned out. Next the German offensive failed in its turn; their plan to turn the French western flank by coming through Belgium broke down. Instead of being enveloped, the French were able to counter-attack successfully on the Marne, and the Germans retired to the Aisne. On both sides the attempt at a Napoleonic opening had failed.

Meanwhile the first stage of Napoleonic exhaustion, the physical exhaustion of the soldier, had appeared. Week after week both sides had pushed forced marching to the limits of human endurance, so that the Battle of the Marne was fought between armies half dead from fatigue. On September 4th, just a month after the

crossing of the Belgian border, the German commander-in-chief told the German Foreign Minister: "We have hardly a horse in the army that can go faster than a walk." On the allied side the British army, in the path of the enveloping German right and on the outer edge of the great wheel which pivoted around Verdun, had been particularly hard pushed. In their retreat they had marched and fought constantly for thirteen days, on an average of four hours' sleep a night for infantry and three hours for mounted men. One of their officers said: "I would never have believed that men could be so tired and hungry and yet live."

After mid-September the stage of entrenched immobility was reached. Presently it extended from Switzerland to the North Sea. For all their love for entrenchment and permanent fortification, the generals of the eighteenth century had never witnessed such stagnation of an entire campaign. There were no more flanks to be turned and for four years the machine-guns riddled every frontal attack. Even when in 1918 the Germans three times broke the allied front, the all-powerful defensive promptly re-established itself farther back. The conscript mass had lost its power to attack. Thanks to the intellectual bankruptcy of generalship, the bankruptcy of every national treasury was approaching.

It is no pacifist, but the distinguished German General von Seeckt who asks in his book, *Thoughts of a Soldier*; "To what military success did this universal levy in mass, this gigantic parade of armies, lead? In spite of every effort the war did not end with the decisive destruction of the enemy on the field of battle; for the most part it resolved itself into a series of exhausting struggles for position until, in the face of an immense superiority of force, the springs which fed the resistance of one of the combatants, the sources of its personnel,

its material, and finally of its morale, dried up, although they were not exhausted. Has the victor really rejoiced in his victory? Do the results of the war bear any just relation to the sacrifice of national strength? Is it necessary for whole nations to hurl themselves upon one another whenever recourse to arms is unavoidable? The soldier must ask himself whether these giant armies can even be manœuvred in accordance with a strategy that seeks a decision, and whether it is possible for any future war between these masses to end, otherwise than in indecisive rigidity."

Before 1918, however, two new weapons, the plane and the tank, had escaped the curse of immobility. The plane, able to carry small numbers of men and small quantities of high explosives rapidly from place to place, showed a certain—very limited—power of annoying hostile cities. Toward the end of the war it also proved capable of doing something against ground troops. The tank, combining fire-power with armour and the ability to move over difficult ground, proved effective against the hitherto impregnable combination of machine-guns and barbed wire. On the other hand, neither plane nor tank is or can be a horde weapon. Cost alone would keep any nation from completely equipping its conscript masses as airmen or tankmen, just as it kept medieval states from fitting out every freeman liable to service with a war horse and a full suit of armour. Thus plane and tank are necessarily the weapons of an armed élite, like the medieval knights or the small eighteenth-century professional armies.

The war against Germany added a third new weapon previously ruled out by international law, poison gas. Once used and known by both sides, however, it proved only an auxiliary to the other arms and never by itself achieved decisive results.



Such, then, is the background of twentieth-century disarmament. The Napoleonic formula remains: everyone thinks of war in terms of the total defeat of the hostile country, the conscript mass, and the quick decision which will paralyze the enemy and shorten the war. An official Italian report recently quoted in *The New York Times* said: "Victory in future wars will go to the country best organized and able to carry an offensive rapidly to the heart of the hostile country." But although the formula remains, its unity has been destroyed, because one conscript mass is no longer capable of a decisive attack against another. Short wars, if they are to be achieved at all, must be attempted by other than conscript means. Thus the ghost of the Emperor still walks although divided, like the ghosts which carry their heads in their hands in the old stories. Our problem is to give rest to that uneasy spirit.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FUTURE OF FRIGHTFULNESS

NOWADAYS we hear much about the frightfulness of future wars. Our flesh is made to creep and our blood to curdle with prophecies of cities destroyed over-night by aeroplane bombs and of whole peoples wiped out by poison gas. It has become a familiar saying that in the next war the safest place will be the front line trenches. Nothing, we are told, will restrain the airmen. The Italian General Douhet and his followers, including General Mitchell, the former Chief of the U.S. Army Air Corps, insist that air attack against hostile cities will be the most effective form of future offensive. They predict such terrible results that wars will be over in a few days. General Douhet's book "*La Guerra de 19 . .*" imagines a Franco-German war finished within forty-eight hours.

Now it is true that the technical object of war is to convince the hostile community that it is not worth while going on. The destruction of the hostile armies may or may not be a necessary means to that end; just so a policeman may or may not have to kill a dangerous criminal in order to overpower him. In war, even if the political object be the total overthrow of the hostile group, still the less incidental destruction the better. To make destruction an end in itself, as so many neo-Napoleonic generals did, is merely part of the democratic twaddle; it is part of the gloomy melodrama of the romantic-naturalist movement which finds it easier to emotionalize than to think things out.

If then the will of a hostile country could be broken by air attack upon cities, then such attack, however barbarous, would be a technically effective instrument of war. Further, if Douhet and his followers are correct in anticipating very rapid decisions through the bombing and gassing of civilians, then it is possible to argue that even such savagery as this may be more merciful in the end than a longer war.

What then are the chances? I maintain that in so far as the facts in the case can be estimated they are dead against the frightfulness-mongers and prophets of doom.

The first of these facts is that the chief modern exponent of frightfulness was beaten. The term became a household word during the Great War. First used by the German Emperor in 1900, in a speech to his troops on their way to China to fight the Boxers, after 1914 it became a label for all violations of treaties and of the rules of war. The German invasion of Belgium in violation of a treaty they themselves had signed, their initiative in the use of poison in the form of gas, their sinking of merchantmen without putting those on board in safety, were the chief examples. That Germany led the way to frightfulness no one can deny; had she won the war then the case for its future would be stronger. Instead her frightfulness caused her defeat. Her invasion of Belgium brought England in against her, although the British Cabinet decided for war only by a majority of one; her unrestricted submarine campaign brought in the United States; her sinking of the *Lusitania* came just in time to help convince the Italians that they were fighting against barbarians; in short, her own acts increased the number and determination of her enemies. Since without frightfulness she would certainly have won, it is a little hard to prove from the record that such conduct pays.

It will not soon be forgotten that each time Germany

gambled neutral opinion against the hope of immediate victory she lost. Whenever some future violation of the laws of war is under discussion some realistic man will rise and say: "Remember Imperial Germany. Suppose your scheme doesn't work?" Frightfulness, unless it proves an immediate and overwhelming success, has shown itself the worst sort of boomerang.

It is true that when dealing with barbarians or helpless Chinese the political disadvantages of frightfulness are less. But even against barbarians the disadvantages are there. The great French Marshal Lyautey, the conqueror and organizer of Morocco, strictly limited the use of the aeroplane against the natives. In the long run, he said, he wanted them willingly to consent to French rule. Bombing villages from the air hindered rather than helped his purpose, because the aeroplane bomb is an indiscriminating weapon which might injure the best friends of the French in any given village. Furthermore, the Moroccans, having no planes themselves, thought their use unsportsmanlike. Lyautey, therefore, insisted that beating them in what they would consider a fairer fashion was more apt to persuade them to peace and contentment.

As between great powers the political disadvantages of frightfulness are enormous. Suppose that war breaks out to-morrow in Europe, and that one side, whom we will call belligerent A, opens the ball by bombing the capital of belligerent B. And suppose further that the first bomb lands in a group of Americans, among them the American Ambassador. Assuming that the other side had been wise enough not to go in for bombing cities, they would have reason to congratulate themselves on their self-restraint.

Certain recent English military writers admit that the political argument and the respect for treaties will prevent the bombing of cities promptly after a declaration

of war ; but say that later, as tales of hostile atrocities multiply and feeling rises, opinion will approve such measures. To this the answer is that by that time the enemy will be technically in far better shape to resist such attacks. In most of the cities which afford good targets, anti-aircraft batteries will have been mounted, shelters provided, and so on. For frightfulness to have its full effect it must go into action at once.

To speak of shelters and anti-aircraft guns brings up the technical side of the question. No matter how strong the political argument, future statesmen and soldiers may be tempted to forget the failure of Germany, should an up-to-date form of frightfulness promise large immediate results. It is true that the range of planes has increased. The bomber of to-day can travel about half as far again as good machines of similar type in 1918, but that is not a startling change. The effectiveness of bombs is about the same, and experts seem to agree that the near future has in store no great increase in the effectiveness of explosives or of poison gas. The eminent British chemist, J. B. S. Haldane, in his *Callinicus*, says it is most improbable that any new or more poisonous chemical will be found. The superiority of fighting planes over bombers is about what it was at the Armistice ; the former are faster, handier and able to climb more quickly.

On the other hand, the means of locating and dealing with bombing planes have been greatly improved. For night work sound-locators are available in combination with searchlights. Radio communication between planes and the ground is all to the advantage of the defence, because a plane is so much more easily seen from the earth than from another plane in the air. Such communication is not yet perfect, but it is improving. Whereas in 1918 the fighting planes of the defence, once in the air, had to look for the enemy attackers

themselves and often missed them, already the defenders on the ground can radio to their fighting planes the exact location and course of the oncoming bombers.

But the greatest disadvantage to future bombers will be the improvement in anti-aircraft gunnery. The gunners of 1918, although a little better than those of a year or two before, would blaze away salvo after salvo without coming near their flying targets, but future planes will not escape so easily. To-day there are fifty-calibre anti-aircraft machine-guns, mounted in fours, controlled by a single hand and spouting a quadruple stream of tracer bullets half an inch in diameter which can be played to and fro like the water from a hose; up to two thousand yards they are deadly. The three and five-inch guns which do the more distant shooting are sighted in accordance with new Directors, uncanny machines which need only to be seen at work for their deadliness to be appreciated. With their aid target after target can be riddled in quick succession.

Airmen object that peace-time targets, sleeves of cloth towed by planes, cannot dodge as free planes could because the towing plane must fly almost straight in order to keep a strain on the long tow-line. But so must a pilot fly in a straight line in order to bomb accurately. Furthermore, bombers must fly in formation to protect each other from the fighting planes of the defence; an isolated single bomber is easy meat for a fighter which gets above him "on his tail" and swoops on him like a falcon.- Planes which are continually changing height, direction and speed cannot keep in formation. Therefore, either the guns of the defence or its fighting planes should be able to operate effectively enough to make air raids costlier to the raiders than their results will be worth.

The one way for future planes to escape anti-aircraft guns altogether would be to fly at heights seldom if

ever reached to-day. A well-known transatlantic aviator recently suggested that future bombers would desert our atmosphere for the upper "stratosphere." But surely it is obvious that if planes are to climb higher, then they will be able to do so only by carrying lighter bombs, and equally obvious that accuracy of bombing must diminish as the height increases. Before a pilot rose very high in the stratosphere he would not have the least idea whether he was bombing Central Park, or the Hudson River, or the Jersey flats.

The whole rivalry of plane versus gun is an example of what seems to be a constant law of war, *i.e.* that to every new device a counter can in time be found. The new device, therefore, will be most effective when first made practicable. The counter when found limits the effectiveness of the original device and thereafter improvements offset one another. Thus there was a moment a little over four hundred years ago when gunpowder and the first competently cast cannon bowled over the medieval fortresses as promptly as the great howitzers bowled over Liège and Namur in 1914. But within a generation the sixteenth-century engineers learned how to build fortresses in which cannon could be effectively mounted for counter-battery work against the besieger. Whereupon sieges became long and costly affairs, and remained so as late as the defence of Port Arthur in 1904. Indeed, we see the experienced soldiers of France returning to permanent fortification to-day.

So it is with gas. As yet the most successful gas attack was the first—that clumsily launched from cylinders by the Germans at Ypres in April, 1915. Counter-measures were soon taken, and there seems no reason to believe that the chemistry of prophylactics and antidotes need lag far behind that of poisons.

The effect of the new device is seldom annulled by the counter. The change is merely that its original

sweeping successes can be repeated only against increasing obstacles.

Even before counter-measures were organized, bombing from the air never won any striking successes. It put no nation out of action; it never paralyzed a single city; as far as the writer knows, it never destroyed so much as a single city block. Although never in England during the war, the writer was in Paris from time to time and used to walk about looking for damage caused by the air raids. On the whole the damage was trifling. Once in a long while one could find a house with its top story a little knocked about. Much the same story is told by the records of the still more intense German air effort against England; about two hundred and eighty tons of bombs dropped in over a hundred raids killed 1,413 people and wounded 3,408, a flea-bite compared with battle casualties or even with American traffic accidents. One of the injured was an Anglican priest known to the writer: a German gas bomb burst close beside him, he was temporarily down and out, and eventually had to have some of the inner bone of his nose removed. But the one tangible result of the injury is that he is not allowed to dive when he goes swimming; he still swims vigorously and plays a game of tennis very creditable to a man over sixty. The actual damage done by the Allied bombing of the German cities was about equally unsatisfactory to the bombers. Everywhere, compared with the effort expended, the material result was almost nil.

It is true that on civilians the moral effect of air bombing was out of all proportion with the material; anyone who has been through an air raid will remember the sickeningly helpless fright of the first experience. But with most people this effect soon grew less. Although far from unusually courageous, and although very badly frightened in their first raids, plenty of people soon



preferred to stay in bed instead of going down to the cellar at an alarm merely because they convinced themselves that the risk was less than that of travelling by night in a Pullman. The most sensitive class seemed to be factory workers. While on duty with the American Staff in France the writer was concerned with certain surveys preliminary to the proposed bombing of German factories in 1919. He therefore studied at some length the moral effect of bombing upon Allied factory workers. This effect was considerable, had little to do with the actual damage caused, and did not wear off with time. Each raid resulted in a real interference with production through absences from work next day, sometimes amounting to fifty per cent of the workers in the plant. Even at that most of the absentees would voluntarily return to duty on the second day and practically all on the third.

As against the small results of bombing hostile civilians, planes in the last war accomplished much in co-operation with ground troops. Air superiority was a most valuable asset to a commander. As football captains think sluggers doubtful assets to their own team because the slugger's vendettas with individual opponents keep him from following the ball, just so future generals will certainly oppose distant bombing expeditions against the enemy's cities as wasteful diversions of force. They will try hard to keep every trained pilot available for use against the enemy's ground forces and against the airmen co-operating with them.

It is perhaps worth noting that the American skyscraper would be an almost ideal fortress against explosive bombs. A few good horizontal layers of sandbags on the upper floors would burst such bombs as might strike the roof, while a similar vertical barricade would protect the lower two or three stories from

explosions on the ground near the base. The people on the middle stories would enjoy both safety and comfort. They might be able to distinguish the performance from the usual back-firing of automobile engines in the nearby streets, but they would certainly have little to fear. The radius of demolition charges is known to every military engineer, and to cut a steel girder you must put the charge directly on it and tamp the explosive well down. If abnormally large bombs were used, that would reduce the number which could be carried and correspondingly shorten the period of bombardment, thus lowering the moral effect which has so far been the sole important result of air bombing.

As to gas, chemists in their franker moments admit the almost insuperable difficulties of using it effectively on any scale. No gas is more deadly or harder to detect than carbon monoxide, and the exhaust fumes from a running automobile engine will render deadly the air of a small closed garage within three minutes, but how many of us are a penny the worse for the tons of this deadly gas released daily in every city by automobiles? In February and again in April, 1932, Major-General Gilcrist, Chief of the U.S. Army Chemical Warfare Service, minced no words in saying that the common bugaboo of whole city populations instantly wiped out in the next war is ridiculous: "In the first place, a plane would have to fly at an altitude no greater than four hundred feet to cause even the slightest damage, and when you consider that many of Manhattan's buildings reach an altitude of a thousand feet and more, you begin to realize the impossibility of danger from gas attacks. I would have no fear at all in going into any second-story room of a building, closing the windows and doors, and without any gas defence at all I would watch through the window while the air currents and breezes wafted the fumes away."

Against the threat of air bombing, whether by explosives or gas, plenty of cheap and easily-constructed means of passive defence are available. The *New York Times* for August 7th, 1932, reproduced a photograph of a French device, a little cylindrical shelter of reinforced concrete, with a strong steel door. Inside, with gas masks and a tube of oxygen, several persons could live in safety during air raids. If it be objected that such preparations would be a great nuisance, the answer is that until recent times most cities were fortified as a matter of course; there seems no good reason why it should not be so again. Proportionately to the moneys once spent on fortification, to provide abundant anti-aircraft batteries, means for laying huge smoke-screens over cities, and large steel nets hung from captive balloons to entangle hostile propellers, would be cheap enough.

Incidentally, pacifists who oppose the building of abundant fighting planes seem to be among the best friends of future frightfulness, for the fighter is a check upon the bomber. Since commercial planes are easily converted into bombers, a diminution in the number of fighters would correspondingly increase the temptation to indiscriminate bombing.

The most certain means to diminish the effect of air bombing would be to spread the population of cities so as to make them less attractive targets; in military history most increases in fire power have been countered by increased dispersion. Every move to get people out of cities into the country would not only lessen the temptation to air bombing, it would also help to solve the grave social problem of our present unhappy tendency to jam into wildernesses of asphalt, bricks, and mortar. In connection with the partial clearing of Paris in 1918 under the German planes and long-range gun, the French Admiral Castex remarks that there was a double benefit: he and others who stayed enjoyed the town the more

for being less crowded, while those who left discovered new charms in the peace of the country-side.

But even irrespective of counter measures, those who have analysed and studied war will be slow to fear air frightfulness. Its preachers smell too much of that constantly recurring bait, the desire to win by some trick without real fighting. In football a game is sometimes won by a trick play, but most winning teams are those better drilled than their opponents in some new variety of straight football. It is true that the plane has a certain new power to attack either military or non-military objectives far behind the front. But so has the submarine, for naval warfare has fronts of a sort: the coasts or the areas held from time to time by the surface fleets. Moreover, from 1914 to 1917 the German submarines operated under conditions more favourable, both politically and technically, than any likely to recur: politically they disregarded neutral opinion to an extent which no future government—with the defeat of imperial Germany before her—is likely to repeat, technically the Allied counter measures were for three years laughably inadequate. Disregarding the experience of commerce protection in past wars, the French and British obstinately rejected the convoy system and made little effort to strengthen their flotilla of armed small craft, contenting themselves with “patrolling” the trade routes after a fashion condemned in advance by the factors of time and space. Since no one knew when or where along a route a submarine might appear, the patrollers were never on hand when wanted. At that the German submarines did little serious damage until 1917, when, indeed, they came near success, but even then the position was soon re-established when the Allies—at the eleventh hour—adapted the well-tried methods of the old wars to the new weapons of the day.

The general principle of trying to win by raiding and commerce-destroying, that is by evading instead of beating the enemy's organized force, is an old fallacy which experience has demolished over and over again. Those curious in the matter may read the debates on commerce-destroying in the Revolutionary French Assemblies; fervent orators eagerly promised to force Britain to her knees without the trouble of defeating her battle fleet. The French corsairs did indeed sink or capture much British shipping, but behind the cover afforded by the British battleships the British light craft were always able to keep the losses of their merchantmen well below the point of disaster. Again, take the cavalry raids of the American Civil War: certainly they impressed opinion and did damage, sometimes they really assisted the main fighting forces, but on other occasions they proved disastrous boomerangs. In April and May, 1863, the Federal cavalry raid under Stoneman on Richmond deprived Hooker of information and contributed heavily to his defeat at Chancellorsville. A few weeks later the absence of Jeb Stuart and much of the Confederate cavalry on a raid helped to cause the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg. On the contrary, the decisive cavalry work of the war was done in co-operation with the other arms; in the end Grant forced Lee's surrender at Appomattox by throwing Sheridan's cavalry corps behind the retreating Confederates, thus pinning them long enough for the main Federal force to come up. The idea of evasion blossomed again in naval thought during the 1890's with the appearance of the self-propelled torpedo; plenty of sea officers, and especially the so-called "young school" in the French service, hotly preached the possibilities of the fast torpedo boat. In the event the torpedo has altered both sea fighting and commerce-destroying without revolutionizing either.

To state the principle of the inherent supremacy of a superior organized force as against evasion is by no means to favour the neglect of defensive measures against raiding. Without appropriate counter-moves there is always a chance, however small, that raiding might become decisive; in 1917 the German submarines, after three years of failure, would certainly have gained a decision had the Allies not improved their anti-submarine tactics. So to-day European governments do well to prepare against air attack on their cities; even down to masks and gas-disinfection squads, such preparations make this base form of warfare less tempting to hot-heads whose lack of honour is equalled only by their lack of judgement and their ignorance of past wars. Finally, there is always this to be said in favour of raiding: however impotent in itself to gain a decision it may be useful as a diversion. That is, you may be able to make your enemy weaken his concentration against your main force by detachments sent against your raiders. It is a military axiom that detachments from your own concentration are always justifiable when they keep a force of the enemy larger than themselves out of the main battle, but that is no argument in favour of your raiders breaking the rules of war.

Wise men have invariably been slow to prophesy. But if one had to predict one way or the other, as against the claims of wholesale destruction from the air, it would be more reasonable to say that frightfulness has no future.

## CHAPTER X

### DISARMAMENT, POLICY AND POLITICS

ARMAMENTS exist only for the sake of some policy ; no human group would arm except for freedom to control its own affairs or to influence those of its neighbours, and armaments in excess of the needs of national security are danger-signals only because they indicate either muddle-headedness or aggressive intentions. The argument that armaments themselves cause war is itself an almost perfect example of muddled thinking : one might as well say that fire-engines caused fires. In 1861 the North and the South were both almost entirely disarmed, and yet their political collision resulted in a great war ; the amount of moral disunity, *i.e.* discontent, in any society will determine the amount of war in that society irrespective of armaments.

Besides policy in the high sense, disarmament is the football of politics in the low sense, that is of the personal ambitions of the different sorts of men who exercise power in our own time. In so far as these are political office-holders, they are supposed to be "responsible" because they are "elected" by the votes of millions with little intimate knowledge of those for whom they vote. In reality our politicians are far less responsible than hereditary monarchs or aristocracies, for these last expected to hand on their power to their children, and therefore had the strongest of all human reasons to cherish their respective countries as men do their personal possessions ; whereas our politicians enjoy the limelight and the other real or imaginary advantages

of power only like tenants on short leases. Accordingly as tenant farmers—unlike owners—are tempted to exhaust the land they temporarily hold, so politicians everywhere tend always to play a short-sighted game, looking only to the next election; not to be elected means returning to the obscurity from which most of them came. Even more obscure is the influence upon them of finance, for financiers have raised secrecy and anonymity to a fine art.

Before 1919 no disarmament treaties were in force; international conventions did indeed establish certain rules of war, forbidding poison, attacks on hospitals and medical personnel, and certain calibres and shapes of rifle bullets which were considered to inflict inhuman wounds. There was also a considerable body of precedent, based chiefly on the writings of the seventeenth-century Dutch jurist, Grotius, whose aim was to safeguard neutrals and civilians. But no nation had entered into a legal engagement to limit the number or strength of its armed forces.

The first twentieth-century disarmament treaties were those of 1919, which limited the armed forces of Germany and the other "Central Powers" defeated with her in the war of 1914-1918. All were on the same lines, and each prefaced its arms clauses with the statement that the defeated power in question undertook to observe strictly the restrictions laid upon her "in order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation in the armaments of all nations." Just what this preamble was intended to mean is uncertain; it gave some colour of equality to the one-sided disarmament imposed upon the defeated states, but apparently it was never seriously meant. Doubtless it is explained only by the strange atmosphere of the exhausting war together with the hypocrisy of politicians. Responsible statesmen permitted themselves to talk like Messiahs



announcing an immediate Apocalypse or Day of Judgment. One remembers Wilson's saying that a victory over Germany would "make the world safe for democracy"—he might have been better employed in considering how, if at all, democracy might be made safe for the world—and Lloyd George promising to make England "a land fit for heroes to live in." We cannot here discuss how far these men may have believed their own rhetoric; if they believed it at all it must have been because of the intellectual flabbiness of the decadent Protestantism from which they came. At any rate, the preamble was inserted in each treaty.

The Treaty of Versailles restricted the German army to four thousand officers and ninety-six thousand men, abolished conscription, compelled all officers to serve for twenty-five years and all enlisted men for twelve. Only five per cent. of either officers or men were allowed to be discharged in any one year. These provisions were intended to prevent the Prussianized German state from evading the numerical restrictions as Prussia had evaded those laid upon her by Napoleon after Jena in 1806; we have seen in previous chapters that she had then used the officers and non-coms. of the small army permitted to her as instructors of successive batches of short-service privates. Accordingly, the Versailles Treaty forbade military instruction outside the army, limited the number of police, customs officers, forest guards, and coastguards, and compelled the German army to organize itself in seven infantry and three cavalry divisions for which tables of organization were prescribed. All fortifications west of a line fifty kilometres eastward from the Rhine were ordered to be disarmed and dismantled; no new works were to be constructed on the southern or eastern frontiers. Still more sweeping were the restrictions on equipment; the German army was allowed only a fixed number of three-inch field

guns and four-inch howitzers; all larger pieces except fortress guns were forbidden. The manufacture or importation of arms was limited as well as the reserve supplies and ammunition stocks of the permitted weapons; the manufacture and importation of poison gas, armoured cars, tanks, "and all similar constructions suitable for use in war," was prohibited. The naval clauses limited both personnel and *matériel*; personnel to fifteen thousand—with other limitations like those in the army clauses, *matériel* to six old battleships, six light cruisers, twelve destroyers and twelve torpedo boats. Battleships and cruisers may be replaced when twenty years old, destroyers and torpedo boats when fifteen years old, but the individual tonnage of the replacement ships was limited to ten thousand tons for armoured ships, six thousand for cruisers, eight hundred for destroyers, two hundred for torpedo boats. All submarines, even of a commercial sort, were forbidden. The air clauses forbade to Germany any military or naval air forces whatsoever.

Three similar treaties, even more sweeping as to navies, bound Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria; the Austrian army was fixed at thirty thousand, the Hungarian at thirty-five thousand, and the Bulgarian at twenty thousand. There was also a treaty of the same sort binding Turkey, but this was soon superseded by the successful military action of Mustapha Kemal Pasha and his party.

The prohibition of war planes, submarines, large warships, poison gas, tanks and heavy artillery was accompanied by no statement condemning these military instruments. It is true that the use of poison gas—which the Prussians had begun—was directly contrary to the previously accepted rules of war, as was their use of the submarine; they had also led the way in bombarding civilian centres, both from the sea and the

air. On the other hand, the large warship, the tank or the heavy gun could hardly tempt their users to employ them unlawfully or wickedly. We must therefore believe that the idea underlying the prohibitions as a whole was merely that of weakening Germany; such and such weapons were denied to her merely because they had proved effective.

At all events the treaties of 1919 disarmed Germany and her former Allies in Europe as far as legal documents could do so. On the other hand, the political and economic structure of the Prussianized German state, although slightly amputated, was not destroyed. It was proposed to destroy that structure in various ways, by an independent Danubian state consisting of Bavaria and German-speaking Austria, by an independent state on the Rhine, etc., but none of these proposals were adopted. Again, the French proposed to annex the left bank of the Rhine and were dissuaded from doing so by Wilson's promise of a treaty by which England and the United States would guarantee the French frontiers. At Wilson's insistence the Versailles Treaty set up a League of Nations intended as a world-wide federation with vague but enormous powers to keep the peace by punishing aggressors. The United States, however, refused to ratify the Versailles Treaty because of unwillingness to surrender their national sovereignty to the League, and Wilson never even presented the Guarantee Treaty to the Senate for ratification. Behind the internationalist façade of the League the moral reality of nationalism remained intact—nowhere more so than in the German state, which although now a Republic continued to call itself the Reich, that is, the Empire. Historically, the policy and economics, both of Prussia and Bismarck's Prussianized German Empire, had always aimed to build up the armed strength through which power and wealth had been gained. Since 1918,

if any Prussian of importance has willingly accepted disarmament, that acceptance remains unknown to the world. Unanimously, at least so it would appear, the Prussians have tried to escape from the disarmed condition in which the Versailles Treaty sought to place them.

In the first place the Prussianized Germans used every loophole left by the Treaty. While persistently objecting to the payment of reparations intended to make good the damage they had done, they poured out money on their little army and navy. The Treaty said that their army was to be used "exclusively" to maintain internal order and patrol the frontiers; they made it the most effective force, man for man and weapon for weapon, in the world. Every soldier received as much military instruction as his intelligence could grasp; experienced observers estimated that the little force of a hundred thousand could instantly provide officers and non-coms. for an army of four times its own numbers; one of every five enlisted men is a non-commissioned officer. The preface of the regulations signed by General von Seeckt for "leadership and combat of troops of all arms operating together" takes pains to say that it is based upon "the effectives, armament and equipment of the army of a great, modern military power, not solely the German army of a hundred thousand as in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles." The German navy has put forward a new type, the so-called "pocket battleship," of which one is nearly completed, another is under construction, and the money for a third has been voted. These ships cost about twenty million dollars each, about twice as much per ton as an ordinary battleship with a riveted hull, supposing wages and prices to be the same. But, thanks to this lavish outlay, they are able to save weight by substituting electrically welded for riveted hull plates, and by other devices. Consequently, within the Treaty

limit of ten thousand tons they combine a battery of six eleven-inch and eight six-inch guns with a speed of twenty-six knots and a radius of action of ten thousand miles at twenty knots. They are the most powerful ships of their size in the world, and are faster than any warship of equal protection and hitting power.

To escape the Treaty limitations upon weapons and stocks of ammunition, there is reason to believe that German armament firms have gone into Russia and especially into Holland. In Russian arsenals there are said to be large stocks of shells and heavy guns belonging to Germany.

At the same time no one can fail to see that Germany has—at least—sailed close to the wind in evading the Treaty. The three hundred thousand men of the *Schupo*, *i.e.* militarized police, have been armed with rifles which do not seem either necessary or well adapted to the task of maintaining civil order. There is a large, well-organized and well-drilled semi-military organization known as the National Socialist or Hitlerite brown-shirt militia, which (although it does not give full military training) certainly counts for something. Further, President von Hindenburg in August, 1932, announced that the Government would give to all young Germans the benefits of camp life and physical instruction in the open air.

At the same time, in an industrial country like Germany the unvarying principle that the tools and products of peace are potential weapons of war operates against the Treaty provisions prohibiting such equipment as war planes and poison gas. Germany has developed her civil aviation with the help of government subsidies, and to convert a civilian plane into a bomber is easily done. To convert a fast civil plane into a fighter is a little harder, but not very difficult. Airmen are said to be in training in Russian camps. While the German chemical factories are intact the Reich has the power

to manufacture poison gas promptly and in great quantities.

We need not here discuss whether or not there have been bold and sweeping violations of the Treaty within Germany itself. It will be enough to note that Prussia has not always strictly observed her treaty obligations; the world will not soon forget how the Chancellor of the Reich in 1914 called the treaty guaranteeing Belgian neutrality "a scrap of paper." At all events "where there's a will, there's a way," and certainly the will of Prussia was not disarmed by the Versailles Treaty. Legalism has its limits, as the United States has discovered in the matter of prohibition; many sorts of "bootleg" armament are almost as easily provided as "bootleg" liquor.

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Before the entire question of disarmament was again re-opened three international conferences attempted to deal with naval disarmament alone. The legalistic method is better suited to dealing with war-ships than with land and air weapons, because a ship is so large that it cannot be concealed. Further, the policies of most of the sea powers were not so far apart as to prevent a certain limited but real success.

After the war naval construction ran riot among the three chief naval powers, Great Britain, United States and Japan. In 1914 the battleship and battle-cruiser fleets of the world were as follows:—

	<i>British</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Italy.</i>	<i>Japan.</i>	<i>United</i>	<i>Germany.</i>
	<i>Empire.</i>				<i>States.</i>	
Built .. ..	29 (a)	4	2	6	10	20
Building .. ..	10	8 (b)	4	3	4	4
Totals .. ..	39	12	6	9	14	24

(a) Not including three ships building for foreign powers: *Agincourt* and *Erin* (Turkey), *Canada* (Chile).

(b) The work on these was stopped when War broke out. Only three of the eight were completed afterwards.

When peace was signed in July, 1919, the figures stood thus:—

	<i>British Empire.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Italy.</i>	<i>Japan.</i>	<i>United States.</i>	<i>Germany</i>
Built .. ..	39	6	5	11 (c)	17	—
Building .. ..	1 (a)	—	—	2 (d)	4 (e)	—
Totals .. ..	40	6	5 (b)	13	21	—

Early in the century England, under Lord Fisher, had led the way in the construction of very large ships of the so-called Dreadnought type; the first-class battle-ships of 1904 had cost about seven and a half million dollars each, the latest monsters about thirty-five millions. Moreover, these monsters, displacing not quite thirty-five thousand tons, were soon to be exceeded by a British super-monster of forty-two thousand tons. In 1919, at the root of all the frantic building, there was only the war-time habit of spending, together with a post-war chaos as to national policies. People talked wildly of the chances of war between the United States and England, still more of conflict between the United States and Japan, although it is hard to see how—at the moment—any of the three could have profited by fighting. British policy was particularly bent on friendship with the United States. Between the United States and Japan there was real friction; the Japanese feared the great numbers and wealth of America. The

(a) *Hood*.

(b) *Leonardo da Vinci* had been sunk during the War.

(c) Includes *Satsuma* and *Aki*.

(d) *Nagato* and *Mutsu*. *Mutsu* laid down in June, 1918.

(e) *California*, laid down October, 1916; *Maryland*, April, 1917; *Tennessee*, March, 1917; *Colorado*, May, 1919. Others were projected (*Washington*, *Indiana*, *Massachusetts*, *Montana*). It will be observed, however, that only three were measurably advanced, the *Colorado* but a few months.

American-owned Philippines, if indeed they could be held in a war against Japan, would provide an advanced base from which the essential sea communications of the latter might be cut. In America, on the other hand, it was known that Japan was driven both by necessity and ambition. Necessity forces her to expand because of her limited territory and increasing population; her ambition has been shown by her seizure of Korea and her repeated efforts to encroach upon China. Nevertheless, the problem was not insoluble; the Japanese well knew the American resources to be greater than theirs; and no American vital interest demanded an attack upon Japan.

On the initiative of Hughes, an able lawyer of great experience in public affairs whom President Harding had made Secretary of State, a partial solution was found. At the Washington Conference of 1921-1922, England, America, Japan, France and Italy agreed upon a drastic programme for scrapping large quantities of recently or partially completed battleships. The scrapping, in which the United States was the heaviest loser, established a battleship ratio of 5-5-3-1.75-1.75, as between England, the United States, Japan, France, and Italy. Not only the total tonnage of the fleets, but also the individual tonnage and armament of single battleships and cruisers was limited; no battleship was to exceed thirty-five thousand tons or to mount guns of more than sixteen-inch calibre, no cruiser to exceed ten thousand tons or to have guns heavier than eight-inch. At the same time, there was an agreement on the fortification of naval bases, the most important point being that the United States, in the interest of Japan, agreed to fortify no base in the Philippines or elsewhere west of Hawaii. All five powers agreed to observe the rules of war when using submarines against merchantmen. All told, therefore,



a definite advance was made toward security with economy all round.

On the other hand, the attitude of England made it impossible to limit the total tonnage of the cruiser fleets. A treaty abolishing chemical warfare was not ratified by all the powers and therefore did not take effect. Worst of all, the limiting of individual ships and gun calibres was arbitrary and haphazard, having little relation to the function of the ships in question; it seems to have aimed chiefly at preserving certain existing types.

The Washington Treaty was signed in 1922. Three years later the Council of the League of Nations set up a Commission to prepare a "Draft Convention" or tentative programme for a future disarmament conference to include all nations and to discuss all sorts of armed forces.

In 1927 a second Naval Disarmament Conference was held at Geneva by Great Britain, the United States and Japan in the hope of restricting the total tonnage of their cruiser fleets. France and Italy, although invited, refused to attend. Nor were the three chief naval powers able to agree; the British demanding a total tonnage so high that the treaty would have greatly increased American cruiser strength instead of reducing it, the Americans insisting on a total so low that the British said acceptance would leave them unable to protect their sea-born trade in time of war.

Two years after the Geneva failure most of the nations of the world signed the treaty known as "The Pact of Paris," "The Briand-Kellogg (or simply the 'Kellogg') Treaty," which says that the powers abiding by it "condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with

one another." They further "agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise between them, shall never be sought except by pacific means." On the face of it, to renounce war as an instrument of policy is to renounce international war altogether, for obviously there can be no war between nations except to maintain conflicting national policies. It seems, on the other hand, that the treaty is generally understood to permit war in self-defence. Again, the agreement was widely heralded as accomplishing "the outlawry of war"—which phrase showed an astonishing ignorance of what the word outlawry had always meant. To proclaim a man an outlaw is to permit anyone able and willing to kill him to do so without punishment; of the many so proclaimed in the French Revolution only Napoleon survived. But to permit anyone to kill a man or, on the national scale, to attack a nation, is not exactly promoting the peace of the world. Also, it seems always possible to argue that any given war was not a war. If the reader think this only a flippant conundrum ("When is a war not a war?"), let him remember that wars can be called "measures to restore order," "punitive expeditions," "force used for the maintenance of treaty rights," or almost anything else that one chooses. Finally, there does not appear a single nation on earth which has felt itself sufficiently secured by the Kellogg Treaty to reduce its armed forces by a single soldier or ship.

In 1930 a third naval conference, this time including all the five sea powers, was held in London, at which the chief American delegate was Stimson, President Hoover's Secretary of State, a man inferior to Hughes in personality and in intellect. It was agreed that no more battleships should be laid down before 1936, a distinct gain as far as it went. The total cruiser,

destroyer, and submarine fleets were "limited" as follows :—

<i>Categories.</i>	<i>United States.</i>	<i>United Kingdom.</i>	<i>Japan.</i>
Cruisers :			
(a) With guns of more than 6.1 inches (155 mm.) calibre ..	180,000 tons.	146,800 tons.	108,400 tons.
(b) With guns of 6.1 inches (155 mm.) calibre or less .. ..	143,500 tons.	192,200 tons.	100,450 tons.
Destroyers .. ..	150,000 tons.	150,000 tons.	105,450 tons.
Submarines .. ..	52,700 tons.	52,700 tons.	52,700 tons.

Thus the United States accepted a cruiser ratio slightly lower than that of Washington as regards Japan. Furthermore, the seeming American superiority over Great Britain in eight-inch cruisers was nullified by an American agreement to complete only fifteen out of the allotted eighteen before 1936. Moreover, the entire London Treaty was gravely weakened by the complete failure to get France and Italy to agree to any ratio whatsoever; for the benefit of England a so-called "escalator clause" was therefore inserted, providing that if any contracting power felt itself threatened by new construction on the part of an outside power, the threatened state might then increase her own tonnage after due notice to the other signers. The other signers would then be free to increase their own fleets proportionately, so the whirligig of general competition would be set spinning merrily again.

So matters stood when the first General Disarmament Conference since the Armistice, originally conceived in 1925, met in Geneva in February, 1932. At Washington, ten years before, a limited but real step forward had been made because the differences of policy between the three chief naval powers were not such as to prevent a measure of agreement. On the other hand, the Geneva

Conference of 1927 had failed altogether, and the London Conference of 1930 can hardly be said to have promoted either the security or the financial economy of any power. On the contrary, the Conference of 1927 had roused ill-feeling between Great Britain and America, while the London Conference had definitely increased international friction in Europe through the failure of France and Italy to agree and the consequent escalator clause.

The Geneva meeting was faced with a much more difficult task. Disarmament, not only at sea, but also in the air and on land, were in question, and man is not a water but a land animal. Important though sea communication is, still navies alone can do no more than blockade, and few countries can be compelled to surrender by blockade alone. While armies can block land frontiers, they can also invade and occupy territory. Thus, navies can only invest an enemy; armies can both invest and assault him. Moreover, land disarmament was blocked by differences of policy far more bitter than those which divide the naval powers. There was Bolshevik Russia, necessarily opposed to all other states, with her Communist rulers expert at propaganda and at organizing insurrections. Since soldiers are first of all emergency policemen, it would strengthen Bolshevism to have all armies abolished by a stroke of the pen. Thus the cynical Russian dictatorship could support proposals for total disarmament precisely after the fashion recommended by the emotional cranks of all countries. Again, the powers defeated in 1918, and especially Germany, were and are at odds with the states whose positions are guaranteed by the treaties of 1919, that is, the French, the Belgians, the Poles, the Czechs, the Rumanians and the Yugo-Slavs. The *status quo* powers were Allied, they were all conscript, and all within the measure of their financial abilities had equipped

themselves with the weapons forbidden by treaty to the defeated states—heavy guns, tanks, planes, etc. Italy stood somewhat apart; dissatisfied with the boundaries granted to her by her Allies of 1919, directed by the most active and perhaps the most intelligent government in the world, conscript like the French and their Allies, and possessing a powerful air force. On the other hand, she is poor, has neither metals nor fuel, and is vulnerable to naval blockade. England also took her own line. Still powerful at sea, she has a large air force, and her small army has equipped itself with tanks more lavishly than that of any other power. Nevertheless, her wealth is decreasing, her internal difficulties are great; a new German fleet would seriously threaten her, and the French air force is close to her capital. In the Far East Japan moved in a world of her own; powerfully armed, ambitious, and too far from the other powers for them to bring their full weight to bear upon her. Even as the Conference met she was using armed force at Shanghai and in Manchuria. Nevertheless, she is not rich, and her fragile economic structure could hardly support a long war. The one power pressing for disarmament was the United States; secure behind her oceans, with her great navy, her considerable air force, and her tiny army; her large measure of geographical security permitted her to think more of international trade and finance than of warlike preparations. Since it was possible to argue that money spent on such preparations diminished trade, American politicians were free to urge other peoples to disarm. As regards land armament they had no assets with which to bargain, for American soldiers and coast defences threatened no one, but at least their proposals could hardly endanger American national security.

On the other hand, the European politicians were

very differently situated. On that crowded continent, with its acute international friction, no nation could be indifferent to the armament of its neighbours, and each could be certain of the good faith of those neighbours only in so far as their interests coincided with its own. Every European delegate at Geneva was the prisoner of public opinion at home, he could cling to office only by disarming rival states and thereby strengthening his own country.

Two world forces indeed supported the American desire for disarmament, the financiers and the emotional cranks of the world, but neither could be decisive. The emotional crank is a typical product of the democratic era: we have seen that the romantic-naturalist school dominant throughout that era has consistently preferred emotion to thought. When Wordsworth called the intellect "that base secondary power by which we multiply distinctions," when Goethe, in *Faust*, wrote "feeling is all," they were swimming with the main current of democratic unreason which still carries with it the contemporary worshippers of "spontaneity," "self-expression," and whatnot. Indeed, democrats are compelled to take this line in order to prefer the inferior or common man to his superiors in training or ability. The one field in which the inferior can equal his betters, the one mood which all can spontaneously express, is that of the instinctive emotions which men share not only with each other but also with the animals. To the natural man emotion is easy, and thought is not only difficult but painful. Hence the emotional cranks of the world, unable to analyse, let alone to remove, the underlying causes of unlimited war, descended upon Geneva in multitudes demanding the abolition of the weapons which were and are merely the instruments of the various warlike policies. Unfortunately for these people, the romantic-naturalist

mood has never succeeded in exterminating reality, everywhere sensible men and women remain convinced that causes still produce appropriate results.

The financiers, of course, are horses of a very different colour ; in their specialized field they are men of real ability, and their power over the world is enormous. In the matter of disarmament, however, their influence is doubly restricted. Many, if not most of them, are individually bound by race and sentiment to particular nations, so that their international self-interest is combated by patriotism. Moreover, they are so centred upon their absorbing profession that few of them are competent to discuss the technical riddles which any legalistic disarmament must solve. Consequently their influence was divided, and they seem to have had no programme.

Meeting early in February, the Geneva Conference had before it a Draft Convention made out by the preparatory commission set up by the League of Nations seven years before. Notwithstanding the need for simplicity in any enforceable agreement, the document, as published in a pamphlet by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, covers no less than forty-two pages, thus furnishing a magnificent field for the bad faith or mere timidity of any nation tempted to play hide-and-seek with whatever attempts at enforcement might be made. Since without hard and long study no one can make head or tail out of a technical document of such length, the mere bulk of the report is an eloquent commentary on such popular catchwords as "government by opinion," "open diplomacy," etc. Had the drafters intended to puzzle world opinion with a mist of words, they could hardly have done otherwise than they did. Nor did all the elaborate verbiage cover the elementary facts in the case ; for instance, the chapter on military effectives ran to two pages of print and

more than four pages of tables, took into account the number of days of conscript service during a year, the birth-rates of the countries concerned, and covered "police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, customs officials, forest guards, which, whatever their legal purpose, are, in time of peace, by reason of their staff of officers, establishment, training, armament, equipment, capable of being employed for military purposes without measures of mobilization, as well as any other organization complying with the above condition." It went on: "By mobilization, within the meaning of the present article, shall be understood all the measures for the purpose of providing the whole or part of the various corps, services and units with the personnel and *matériel* required to pass from a peace-time footing to a war-time footing." But all this jungle of words contains not a syllable of the huge private armies existing in Europe, the Fascist militia whose numbers almost equal those of the active Italian army, the unofficial German units which far exceed the German regulars plus the militarized police. The naval clauses take up ten pages of print without mentioning either naval bases or merchant ships convertible into auxiliary cruisers. From the beginning, therefore, the Draft Convention invited the Conference to spin juridical cobwebs unable to stand against a single blast of reality.

The twenty-five hundred odd delegates, assembling early in February, together with about forty-five hundred visitors, newspaper correspondents, and other satellites, spent several weeks in listening to speeches proposing programmes, each theoretically addressed to the other delegations, but really to the home public of each speaker. The French, more threatened than any other great power by possible future German action, proposed to organize peace by giving the League of Nations an armed force which should include all the long-range



artillery and war planes of the world. Further, all civilian planes were to be supervised by the League to prevent their conversion into bombers or fighters. In general the scheme was familiar; as early as the Paris Conference of 1919 prominent Frenchmen had urged a League of Nations army. Moreover, it was logical; the League must be a super-state or nothing. But no one expected the Conference to adopt it; the French themselves put it forward merely to show the weakness of all other alternative plans and to give themselves a good reason for signing no disarmament treaty which did nothing to enforce peace. Accordingly, the Americans and British listened with cynical amusement. The British delegate began with the fundamental truth underlying the whole problem of peace and war: "Armaments are the symptoms of a pathological condition," but without trying to diagnose this condition he drifted towards "qualitative disarmament," *i.e.* the prohibition of particular weapons of an "aggressive" nature—specifically chemical warfare and submarines. He also advocated a limitation in number of conscript effectives. Here again all present were on well-known ground; obviously Britain herself would benefit enormously by the adoption of her own proposal; non-conscript herself, limitation of the conscript armies of others would increase her relative strength. Most familiar and for Britain most important of all was the matter of submarines, to which she is more vulnerable than any other nation in that her vital communications pass over narrow waters close to possible hostile bases and shallow enough for submarines to rest at need on the bottom. The British orator saw fit to treat the French proposal with a lofty air of patronage. Unfortunately for himself, he loaded his speech with so many moral platitudes that not a few of the continental Europeans present openly laughed at him. Outdoing

even the Draft Convention, the Americans brought out a still more elaborate scheme: proportionate naval reductions all round and especially an agreement between France and Italy, the abolition of submarines—a new pro-British departure—the protection of civilians against air bombing, abolition of deadly gases and of “bacteriological warfare” by spreading disease germs, limitation of the number of armies according to a formula which would set down first the numbers necessary for emergency police and second an additional contingent for defence, “special restrictions for tanks and heavy mobile guns, in other words for those arms of a peculiarly offensive character,” finally a limitation of expenditure on war material. Italy and Japan went a little beyond the American and British proposals for qualitative disarmament: Italy offering to abolish capital ships—of which she has none in active commission—submarines, aircraft-carriers, heavy artillery, tanks, bombing aircraft, and chemical and bacteriological warfare; Japan proposing “to limit the use of submarines, reduce the tonnage of battleships and aircraft-carriers, to abolish bombardment from the air and the use of gas and bacteria.”

The Germans and Russians each struck an individual note. On the basis of the Versailles Treaty the Germans claimed equality, either in armament or disarmament. The Russian delegate—he calls himself Litvinoff, but his real name appears to be Finkelstein—argued in favour of the abolition of war through “total and general disarmament.” In view of Bolshevik specialization in propaganda and the moral cleavage between Communist Russia and a non-Communist world, this proposal was made with tongue in cheek; it can hardly have been intended to apply to the Ogpu, the one hundred and fifty thousand men of the heavily-armed Russian secret police who constitute the one Russian military body

entirely composed of Communists. Failing complete disarmament, the Russian delegate was willing to abolish tanks, heavy artillery, war-ships over ten thousand tons, aircraft-carriers, military airships, bombing planes, chemical and bacteriological warfare.

Then followed the long parade of the small powers. Generally their views followed their policies, especially their alignment with one or the other great powers. Thus the Allies of France—Belgium, Poland and the Little Entente—supported the French view, while Holland and the Scandinavian States followed England. The Swedish delegate flashed a ray of good sense by reminding those present that conflicts had gone on irrespective of weapons ever since the day of the stone axe; he would have been within the truth in carrying this argument much farther. The Dane observed that all the chemical factories of the world should be organized into an international cartel in order to make chemical disarmament effective. Some of the smaller states talked at random; for instance, the delegate of the microscopic Dominican Republic, strutting his little hour on the world stage, solemnly said that since “the League of Nations desires to spread among the childhood and youth of the world ideals of peace, fraternity and international co-operation—the Dominican Republic . . . has the honour to propose that the Conference should agree to recommend to all the countries here represented that they should agree to prohibit the manufacture of warlike toys.” In other words, he wanted to prohibit toy soldiers! Unhappily, such gleams of unconscious humour were rare. The great states having spoken, interest waned; the little nations talked on and on to bored delegates and emptying galleries. Meanwhile, the farce went on to an accompaniment of tragedy; through the Genevan cave of the winds there echoed the Japanese cannon firing at Shanghai.

Radio apparatus might have made the delegates hear the actual explosions.

There followed months filled with the pretence, but without the reality, of action. The Spanish delegate had some fun at the expense of the Russians by remarking that when the animals met to discuss disarmament : "The lion looked the eagle in the eye and said : ' We must abolish talons.' The eagle looked him full in the eye and said : ' We must abolish claws.' Then the bear said : ' Let's abolish everything but universal embraces.'" March began and ended with nothing done. Toward the middle of April the American delegation again pressed for qualitative disarmament by prohibiting "offensive" or "aggressive" weapons. The idea here is that aggression often involves invading someone else's country, and that invasion usually involves beating down his defending forces by offensive action on the field of battle. Therefore aggression was held to mean a tactical offensive in the actual fighting. Certain weapons favour the tactical offensive and increase the difficulties of the tactical defensive, especially large mobile guns which can batter defensive works, and tanks which destroy wire entanglements and cross trenches. Further, tanks and big guns are expensive. Gas was illogically added to the list of offensive weapons ; however horrible they may be, some gases favour the tactical defensive, particularly the persistent gases, for instance mustard gas, which remains long in an area.

Unfortunately the idea of aggressive weapons will not stand examination. It hopelessly confuses the moral category of political aggression with the tactical categories of offensive or defensive in combat ; you cannot compare the colour yellow to a loud noise. A policeman who breaks down a door behind which a murderer has barricaded himself is tactically on the offensive, although morally he is defending society. Just so nation A may

invade B merely to compel B to stop attacking C with whom A is allied—worse luck, it is not impossible that we may yet see France invading Germany in order to defend Poland. Again, educated soldiers have often said that the strongest form of war is that which combines the strategical offensive with the tactical defensive: thus nation B “gets the jump” on A, occupies some of A’s territory, entrenches himself therein and defies A to put him out. A’s attempts to recover his property, although defensive in intention, must then become offensive in form; we may compare the attacks made by the French and their Allies upon the German trenches in France. Even in the purely technical sphere a successful defence usually includes counter-attack. Anyhow, a weapon is a lifeless body incapable of intending anything: to say that a piece of steel is aggressive is like saying that sex, liquor, or narcotics are sinful in themselves irrespective of their various uses.

But, said the qualitative disarmers, to strengthen the tactical defensive is to make wars less probable, for when the defensive predominates conflicts take so long to reach a decision that both parties are exhausted and no one benefits. No nation, they insisted, will attack another merely to injure itself. Earlier in this book we have seen that the true cause of war is discontent with the previously existing conditions of peace. If discontent increases, then the longer it is bottled up the fiercer will be the explosion. Historically this is exactly what has happened throughout the democratic era: the lie that all men are equal, naturally begetting more and more discontent, has produced an appropriate crescendo of wars notwithstanding their increasing cost. If a war must be declared, clearly it is better for all in the long run to get a decision quickly, and this is precisely what any weapon which strengthens the tactical offensive will help to do. On the contrary,

supremacy of the tactical defensive has never meant peace but always decision by famine.

Moreover, the reader can see for himself that the tactical balance between offensive and defensive is for ever being altered by new inventions. Also that no prohibition, for instance of tanks, could possibly be enforced. Speaking to this point in the *American Mercury* for September, 1932, in an article called "Tanks," the distinguished soldier who signs himself "Arlington B. Conway" has imagined the following:—

*Scene*—The Grand Manœuvres of Bulgo-Slavia in 1936. A foreign military attaché is being shown round by a Bulgo-Slavian staff officer.

A group of twelve large caterpillar-tracked vehicles suddenly appears from behind a wood, crosses several fields at about fifteen miles an hour, and comes to a halt in a little valley near the two officers.

*Military Attaché*: Ah! Here is something which I have not seen before. Do you object . . . ?

*Staff Officer*: Oh, those! They are our new-pattern travelling field-kitchens. I don't suppose they would really interest you much.

*Military Attaché*: I am intensely interested in all that pertains to the comfort of the troops.

*Staff Officer* (uneasily): In that case I shall be delighted . . . (They approach the machines, and the Military Attaché examines them narrowly.)

*Military Attaché*: I confess I don't see the fire-place or boilers.

*Staff Officer*: No, they have not yet been installed. The machines have only lately been delivered by Schneiders, and the cooking apparatus, which will be made in this country, is unfortunately not ready yet. Nevertheless, we thought it well to give the vehicles a field test.

*Military Attaché*: Of course. The motor seems remarkably powerful—a hundred and fifty horse-power, I should say, at a guess.

*Staff Officer*: Ah! Our atrocious roads! A surplus of power is needed to negotiate them.

*Military Attaché*: Is there any intention of armouring these machines? Against air bombing, say? These brackets seem well designed for that purpose.

*Staff Officer*: Oh, no. You will remember that armour on mechanical vehicles is forbidden by the Geneva Treaty. I imagine the brackets are intended to take canvas flies to shelter the cooks.

*Military Attaché*: Ha, ha! You will forgive me, but I had the ridiculous notion that with a gun or two and armour, these cookers would make excellent tanks!

*Staff Officer*: Ha, ha! You are a droll fellow. Tanks, indeed! But your interest in our poor equipment is, I fear, only flattery. Now, I have heard that your army possesses cross-country ammunition-carriers of the most remarkable character. . . .

(At this moment a command is given, and with a roar of engines and a grinding of gears the mechanical cookers disappear over the brow of a hill. The two officers are left pulling their moustaches.)

Had the American and other advocates of qualitative disarmament possessed assets with which to strike a political bargain, then at least an appearance of success might have been achieved. Alas! their hands were as empty as their arguments were shallow. Nobody cared how many tanks or big mobile guns the United States possessed, everyone knew that the American Tank Corps had been financially starved. To the French and their Allies, the military masters of Continental Europe, the Americans were merely out to decrease the relative strength of Germany, whose weakness is to-day the chief guarantee of peace,

Progress being slow, in April Mr. Stimson, the American Secretary of State, paid a brief visit to Geneva. In sharp contrast to the permanent American delegates, who were finding themselves forced to economize, he rented a handsomely-furnished villa, including a fine collection of armour. Among these trophies of past wars, like Cæsar he came and saw, and if—unlike the Roman—he did not conquer, at least his failure was neither so public nor so humiliating as many others in the long list of his diplomatic and political defeats. His airs of a Roman emperor were perhaps not so much resented by the Europeans as by the American correspondents, and his departure left the general situation unchanged.

Late in May the American member of the Committee on Chemical Warfare very sensibly objected to prohibiting tear gas, which is a humane weapon used in police work. The rest of the committee, however, agreed with the French delegate, who said (*a*) that no exception could be made because it would be easy to convert tear gas into poison gas, and (*b*) that the Conference's decision would in no way apply to police work. Thus the Conference dragged on into June, France refusing to reduce effectives, and England proposing to scrap all tanks heavier than twenty-five tons—of which she herself had few and France many. The Air Commission came to the sensible opinion that no particular sort of plane could be considered more offensive than any other, more dangerous to national defence or more threatening to civilians.

On the day after the French had definitely refused to reduce their effectives President Hoover made sweeping proposals. The arms of the world were to be reduced by nearly one-third. Over and above the so-called "police component" figuring on the hundred thousand troops allowed to Germany to police her



population of sixty-five million, all land effectives were to be cut thirty-three per cent.; all tanks, chemical warfare, large mobile guns and bombing planes were to be abolished; the previous treaty number and tonnage of battleships were to be cut by a third, the treaty tonnage of aircraft-carriers, cruisers and destroyers to be cut one-quarter, the treaty tonnage of submarines to be cut one-third and no nation to have more than thirty-five thousand tons of them. Finally, the Kellogg Treaties were to be interpreted to mean that the nations of the world have agreed to use their arms solely for defence. Clearly some of the naval proposals might effect real economy; the other suggestions were mere wind.

Late in July, having passed through the first two stages of all unsuccessful world conferences, the agreement in principle and the disagreement in fact, the Genevan body reached the third stage of finding a formula to disguise failure, to "save the face" of all concerned, and to permit the weary delegates temporarily to adjourn. The adjournment resolution approved the principle of quantitative and also of qualitative disarmament by reducing "the means of attack." Not only air attack upon civilians was prohibited, but also all bombardment from the air was to be abolished; to this end civil aircraft were to be "subjected to an international régime (except for certain regions where such a régime is not suitable)." The principle of limiting the number and calibres of heavy land guns was approved without attempting to fix what the limitation should be. So with tanks, the principle of limiting the tonnage of individual tanks was approved without figures. Chemical, bacteriological and incendiary warfare were prohibited. The principles of limiting effectives, defence budgets and the armament industry were approved without a single figure or definite agreement. The naval powers were invited to go on reducing their fleets, and it was

proposed that some machinery—its nature not specified—be set up for supervising the observance of whatever agreements might finally be reached and for punishing violators. The whole report was as perfect a jelly-fish as any international congress ever brought forth.

Even this semblance of progress did not go on unchallenged. The Swiss delegate observed that the clause abolishing air bombing did nothing to abolish bombing planes. The Chinaman wanted to know how the same clause could be made to give real protection to the civilians of Manchuria who were daily being bombed by the Japanese. The Swede asked why, having "abolished" war by the Kellogg Treaties, the nations were now offered a resolution to prohibit special ways of conducting war. The Italian delegate, having flown to Rome to consult Mussolini, returned with a statement calling the resolution a "vain effort, entirely inadequate to the wishes and hopes of the world." It is not enough, said he, to lay down principles when no marked progress is made toward attaining their object. The Germans and the Bolshevik Russians went farther and voted against the resolution: the first because nothing had been said about Germany's equal right to armament, the latter because they said with some truth that the resolution did nothing for disarmament. Italy, China and six small powers refused to vote either way. The Conference adjourned to meet again in July, 1933, with the Germans loudly announcing to the world their intention not to return to Geneva but instead to re-arm in defiance of the Versailles Treaty. So ended the first act of the Genevan farce, with the guns still going in Manchuria and a new little war beginning to blaze merrily in South America.

With the later developments at Geneva, the French proposals for "militia" armies, the new British draft, the truculence of the Germans, etc., I will not weary

the reader. Suffice it that from the first the Conference has made a bad matter worse; it has shown every sign of ending in futility, and (as these lines are written in the summer of 1933) educated opinion everywhere seems unanimous in hoping from it nothing more than a face-saving treaty of small effect in itself, destined everywhere to be nullified by new inventions and violated by bootleg armament.

After the tedious task of chronicling so much hypocrisy and unreality a little truth is refreshing. At Williamstown, Massachusetts, in August, 1930, Rear-Admiral Hepburn, U.S.A., cited two memorable passages. His first quotation was from a Dr. William E. Rapport, who said in 1925: "The more I have watched the work in the field of disarmament the more I am convinced that disarmament, like a great many other good things, happiness for instance, will never be achieved by those who go out to pursue it. It is a by-product—as happiness is—of effort toward peace and justice." His second passage was from Sir Robert Borden: "Without moral and spiritual disarmament all practical steps toward disarmament are absolutely vain."

Even more striking is the conversion of Dr. Mary E. Woolley, once a female pacifist of the familiar American type and one of the American delegation to the 1932-1933 Conference. At the 1933 commencement at Bryn Mawr College she is reported to have said: "I did not realize when I went to Geneva that among the many lessons I should learn would be one in religion, that the essential factor in a new world relationship, as in all other human contacts, is the 'fruit of the spirit,' the substitution of good-will for ill-will, of trust for distrust, of concord for discord, of friendliness for hatred."

In religion we indeed touch the root of the problem of arms.

## CHAPTER XI

### WILL WAR DESTROY CIVILIZATION ?

THE spectacle of the governments of the world fumbling and bickering over disarmament suggests the question : Will war destroy civilization ? In the fourteen years since the Armistice the potential of conflict has fallen very little, and even this slight gain is due not to human wisdom but to the blind and automatic working of the economic limitation. Nowhere could the ruined taxpayer support another such performance. People willing to buy war bonds would be museum specimens ; if any appeared they would deserve to be stuffed and put into glass cases along side of the Dodo bird and the Great Auk. On the other hand, not a few intelligent people believe that the peoples of the world—if only they could find the necessary food and clothes during the process—would again march off cheering as they did in 1914. In other words, it is doubtful whether the essential, that is the moral, limitation has kept pace with the economic limitation. Far from being able to prevent future wars, Europe cannot even put an end to the last one ; the Franco-German clash is as definite as ever, the only difference is that for the moment it is waged with intrigue and gold instead of bayonets and high explosives. Our civilization is like a man who has only just survived a serious illness. Another attack may follow and, even though milder than the last, might carry off the weakened patient.

Nor is the case-history of the disease reassuring : in earlier chapters we saw that before our own hundred

and fifty years of democracy and mass massacre there was indeed a slightly longer period of limited war in the age of Louis XIV and the eighteenth century, but before that again we come upon another century and a half darkened by the unlimited Wars of Religion. Thus, throughout the modern period the centuries of "absolute" war outnumber those of strictly limited war by nearly two to one, and we must return to the Middle Ages and the Roman Empire for a limitation lasting more than a century and a half.

Is the problem then insoluble? The present writer does not believe so. If the question be permanently human, moral and spiritual in essence, then since our specifically modern evils have not always existed, they need not always exist. Over the last two thousand years, if the men of the Eighteenth Century, the Middle Ages and the Roman Empire were as human as ourselves, then with nearly seventeen centuries of limited against three of anything like "absolute" war, surely the former rather than the latter is normal to man. If limited war be artificial, as the nineteenth-century theorists claimed, then once more, were the distressed populations of 1918 artificial for not exterminating their conquered enemies, or resorting to cannibalism or boiling down their prisoners for fats? The present writer is not convinced that four centuries of Protestantism, together with a century and a half of democracy and universal education, have so destroyed the collective intelligence and goodwill of Christendom that nothing can be done to cure our diseases, including that of insufficiently limited war. What man has done man can do.

Correct diagnosis must always be the first step towards cure. In the first place, can we be sure that the democratic all-men-are-equal idea is guilty of the unlimited wars of the last century and a half? Democrats, of course, prefer to place the responsibility anywhere except upon

themselves and their pet theory: the wicked non-democratic states, they say, attacked the little white woolly lambs of democracy. In this or that case they may have been right, in general the evidence is dead against them.

Napoleon was frank enough when he said at St. Helena: "If we fought all over the continent it was because two societies stood face to face: that which dates from 1789 and the old régime; they could not live together, and the younger devoured the other." He, the Soldier of the Revolution, not only admitted but gloried in its guilt.

Experience, however, has so far disproved the rest of the passage just quoted: "War will become an anachronism . . . the present is only a painful transition. The future will be one of intelligence, industry, peace; the past was brute force, privileges, and ignorance. . . . A day will come when victories will be won without cannon and without bayonets." On the contrary, the democratic era, drunk with romantic-naturalist passions, has waded deeper and deeper in blood.

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Turning now to the inter-action of popular passion and imperfectly limited war upon the social order, that the French Revolution convulsed French society is well known; with the regular army disorganized in the chaos, the universal service with which democratic France outnumbered and beat back the professional soldiers of the kings was her only resource. Professor Ferrero has recently shown that it was a corresponding social chaos appearing in Italy in the wake of the French armies which forbade the Republic to rest content with the comparatively modest desire for the "natural frontiers" of Gaul, the Alps and the Rhine, and forced the establishment of the democratic Italian puppet

states of France, which in turn led to the French Empire. In the *Illustrated London News* of 16th January, 1932, Ferrero says: "In 1796 and 1797, in the whole of the Italian states two parties were formed, vehement and active minorities, a democratic party favourable to the ideas of the Revolution and France, and an ultra-Conservative party which supported the ancient régime—Church, absolute monarchy, the aristocratic régime—to the last gasp. These two parties were not slow in insulting each other, arms in hand; while the Governments, enfeebled and discredited by the invasion, stood passively by in a manner which reminded one of the Ministers Giolitti and Facta in the midst of the factions let loose by the War in 1920 and 1921. When Bonaparte returned from Leoben, he found Northern and Central Italy in flames; the two parties massacred each other before the eyes of impotent authority and the inert majority; the revolutionaries attempted to overthrow the old régime; the other party defended it by substituting itself for the Government and by massacring the French when they were the stronger.

"It was a struggle to the death which was beginning between two minorities. . . . It seems . . . to explain the whole Italian policy of Napoleon and the Directorate. Neither Bonaparte nor the Directorate wished for these disturbances; both well understood that they were a great danger for France; but they could not stop them, although they tried; and at last Bonaparte was obliged to intervene to prevent a complete collapse of the old Legality, which would have confronted the small French army with chaos, inflamed by the most violent anti-revolutionary hatreds. That was why he organized the Cisalpine Republic so precipitately on his return to Italy in 1797, the fatal act which caused the Revolution to be caught up in the Italian tangle."

Even supposing that Bonaparte's army in the Austrian

Alps could have been safely withdrawn across Italy to France, such a retreat would have meant not only the abandonment of the war against Austria on the Italian sector where the French had been so brilliantly victorious, but also the massacre of the Italian democrats by the counter-revolutionaries, and the encouragement of royalism everywhere. Accordingly France preferred to go down the road which was to lead to Moscow and Waterloo. Already after her earliest victories her annexation of Belgium had loaded upon her a lasting quarrel with England ; on top of this, Napoleon's inability to reconcile any of the great continental powers nullified all his triumphs.

Nor can any instructed man deny the connection between democracy and the superheated nineteenth-century nationalisms. Certainly since 1793 patriotism has been the chief religion of modern men. National patriotism was already apparent in Joan of Arc's time ; in the last four centuries it has grown so that to-day people bridle up at the mildest effort to enforce religious authority and yet take the heaviest sacrifices for granted when commanded by a national government. It is true that the democratic ideal of the French Revolution was international in theory and roused prompt echoes, not only in Italy but also along the Rhine. Indeed, the Revolutionary-Napoleonic destruction of outworn and obstructive feudal privileges and the dream of a great, reasonable modern state were never narrowly local in their appeal ; the wide enthusiasm for the promise of a new Europe was reflected in the furious valour of Napoleon's Italian and Swiss contingents as late as 1812. Nevertheless, the French conquests raised French nationalism to a hitherto unheard-of height and also, by reaction, fanned opposing nationalisms into a blaze ; the aristocracies and kings of Europe were glad enough to appeal to local feeling as well as to every traditional



sentiment which might strengthen resistance to the Gallic crusade. Much of the zeal for freeing the oppressed, beginning as an inter-class affair inspired largely by mercantile envy against the nobles, was easily shifted into desire for the freedom of oppressed nationalities ; Napoleon helped Poland, and the cannon of Waterloo had hardly fallen silent before the first scattering shots of the war for Greek independence rang out. More or less democratic nationalism ran red through the nineteenth-century wars, swelled to a torrent of blood in 1914-1918, and inspired the peacemakers of 1919 to invent new nations never before dreamed of.

The military history of the nineteenth century seems made on purpose to discomfit Democrats. The reaction after 1815, the Holy Alliance and the restoration of the legitimate monarchies, may or may not have deserved the sneers of democratic historians, but the most biased must admit that the period was an all too brief interval of peace. If Europe was exhausted, at least the restored kings were too wise to trouble her repose with great wars. On the contrary, the next step in democratic progress, the insurrections of 1848, were the prelude to a new flood-tide of blood in the American Civil War, together with the Italian and Prussian wars from 1848 to 1871.

Our own time has seen the wheel come full circle. In 1793 the social chaos of revolutionary France produced a new technical form, the universal-service mass army. Between 1914 and 1918 universal service in its turn begat social chaos in Russia and the threat of it elsewhere.

We saw in Chapter VII ("Democracy and Mass Massacre") that after Waterloo France returned to a professional army recruited by volunteering ; while Prussia alone went on with conscription, thus continuing in military technique the democratic preference

for quantity over quality, at the same time using her army as a vehicle for the typically democratic device of universal education.

The object of conscription was to raise enormous armies. Now the clumsiness of an enormous army had always been known; in 1812 it had robbed Napoleon of decisive victory near the Russian frontiers, and so set the stage for his fatal error of marching on Moscow. When in 1914, for the first time in history, two great conscript masses were opposed, each was like the giant dinosaur whose bones fill a great hall in a museum, although his brain was only the size of an egg. Chapter VIII ("Napoleon and Twentieth-Century Disarmament") has shown how each mass was equipped with firearms whose great power made the defensive far stronger than the offensive. In the event, no positive military decision was reached for over four years.

But when the defensive predominates famine approaches, and people dislike going hungry. Moreover, they dislike harsh discipline suddenly imposed on them, not to speak of the effort required of a whole population when a conscript army is to be kept in the field. War being under any circumstances desperately uncomfortable and horribly dangerous, to persuade such millions to endurance it was necessary to fanaticize them, for they have neither the discipline, the *esprit de corps*, nor the professional honour of regular troops. Now no exalted mood or severe strain can long continue without collapse. The first signs of general breakdown appeared in 1917. In that year, after the failure of Nivelle's April offensive, a number of French units mutinied, threatening wholesale disorganization. The difficult corner was turned, thanks chiefly to two men, Petain and Clemenceau, The former, made Commander-in-Chief, realized that the neo-Napoleonic fanaticism of the offensive was at fault; by contenting himself with a defensive until the Americans

should come, he was just able to hold the army together. Meanwhile, the British took the German pressure off the French front by sacrificing themselves in the mud of Passchendael. Clemenceau reorganized the French Government, checking the doubtful—not to say traitorous—activities of not a few important politicians of the left-wing parties.

In Russia the corner was not turned, and not only the national military effort but the entire social order broke down. The enormous tragedy has been set down with soldierly sobriety in General Golovine's admirably documented book, *The Russian Army in the World War*. Russia, with her immense population, was thought an invincible colossus; in fact, her man power was proportionately less than that of the western nations because of her great number of young children; and her primitive economic life necessitated holding out of military service a larger proportion of men than elsewhere. Her conscription law was imperfect, granting so many and such unreasonable exemptions that the moral obligation of universal service had not sunk into the popular mind. Again, she was even farther than the other conscript nations from estimating the immense need of twentieth-century war for artillery and munitions. Finally, she was handicapped by her ill-developed industries, her scanty railroad lines, and her lack of ice-free ports.

Notwithstanding all this, her armies sacrificed themselves again and again for their Allies, in the summer and again in the fall of 1914 to help France, in 1916 to help both France and Italy. In 1914 and 1915, however, the ill-equipped Russians had had over three million killed and wounded in addition to nearly two million prisoners, a total of nearly five million. Moreover, they had been compelled in 1915 to fall back over three hundred miles, with all the discouragement and sense

of failure that such a movement implies. At the same time the entire social order was weakening under the strain. Albert Thomas, a French Labour politician, and therefore not at all predisposed to sympathy with the old Russia, Orthodoxy, the Tsardom, etc., visited the country, and while discussing the defects of the supply system with a Russian statesman said appreciatively: "What does Russia need? She needs authority in her Government. For, if I may say so, in the grave times through which we are living Russia must be very strong morally to withstand the mild state of anarchy which reigns in your country and strikes a foreigner." Nevertheless, during 1916 there were new Russian offensives, over two million more casualties and nearly three hundred and fifty thousand prisoners, a total of nearly two million and a half for the year and well over seven million for the war. Toward the end of 1916 it is not surprising that the Special Council for National Defence submitted a memorandum to the Emperor, showing that the current rate of losses could not much longer be endured, and that some means must be found of lessening them. The principle chimed with a well-known saying of Tsar Peter the Great who, like any eighteenth-century ruler—or any sensible man, for that matter—had demanded that his generals win victories without great bloodshed. But since it clashed with the neo-Napoleonic worship of the offensive regardless of cost, the commanders of the various Russian fronts objected strenuously. General Brusilov, commanding the group of armies of the southwestern front, replied: "The desire . . . for a greater husbanding of the human element in battle, coupled with the demand that we wait patiently for the increase of the technical equipment needed for dealing the enemy a final blow, can least of all be understood by me. An offensive without casualties may be staged only during

manœuvres. . . .” General Ruzsky, commanding the northern group of armies, is said by General Golovine to have replied that “war meant victims, and that pressure on leaders to reduce losses might result in deadening their initiative and dash. . . .” In the spring of 1917, after the first revolution, the Russian soldiers took matters into their own hands ; in increasing numbers they refused to fight and began to go home. But still the Russian generals continued to order offensives. In that year the revolution made it impossible to move before June, by which time the French and British attacks in the west had died down, so that the Russian effort must be an isolated one ; still they persisted. Even long afterwards General Denikin, then Chief of Staff, justified the decision, saying : “There could be no doubt whatever that had the army remained passive, its loss of the fighting instinct would have ended in its going completely to pieces. On the other hand, an offensive followed by success might have restored its morale.” On which Golovine comments : “That is, all hopes of saving the army were based upon some final victory which would bring peace. But in 1917 the war was still in that stage when the only strategy possible lay in attrition, and not in any smashing Napoleonic blows. And because of its inferior armament, not only could the Russian army not count upon a decisive victory, but even an important success was unlikely. ‘Risk was necessary . . .’ General Denikin writes. But risk may be either reasonable or absurd ; and here it would have been the latter.”

By this time most of the Russian infantry would no longer advance, and were making it hot for such of their comrades as were still prepared to do their duty. Accordingly, the few well-disposed men were separated from the others and formed into special “shock

battalions." These last reserves of Russian patriotism might have been used in two ways: together with the Cossacks and with the cavalry and artillery (most of which branches, not having been repeatedly pounded to a bloody pulp like the infantry, had kept their discipline) the infantry shock units might have helped restore order both in the army and throughout the country. In the Russian armies on the Rumanian front (where Golovine was Chief of Staff) and in at least one instance on the south-western front they were so used with good results, promptly putting down all mutinies. Elsewhere they were uselessly sacrificed to the Moloch of the "offensive spirit," and with them perished the hope of saving Russia from anarchy and Bolshevism. Thus three years of "unlimited" conscript war broke down the Russian social order into a chaos as deep as that of France in 1793, out of which conscription and unlimited war had come.

The wonder is not that Russia collapsed in 1917; it is that she held out so long, while the central and western European nations, among whom democratic ideas, parliamentarism, universal education, etc., were more developed, were able to go on for another year. Those who proclaim the peacefulness of democracies can take little comfort from the fact that it was Russia, politically the least democratic of the powers, which fostered the one strong, spontaneous and successful peace movement previous to the Armistice of 1918. Nor will those who praise the wisdom and efficacy of spontaneous mass movements be encouraged to note that the anarchy and mutinies of 1917 brought Russia no peace but three years of civil war at least as cruel as any in history, ending only in a new despotism.

On the other hand, all governments, no matter how authoritative, and all philosophies, whether brutalizing or enlightening to the intelligence, have a limit to the

obedience which they can command. By the autumn of 1918 the remaining European belligerents were all feeling the strain. Lloyd George and Haig judged the condition of England to be so serious that they were prepared to content themselves with far softer Armistice terms than those actually imposed ; they were not even in favour of an Allied occupation of the left bank of the Rhine. Foch himself, notwithstanding his Catholic appreciation of the importance of ritual, would not join Pershing in favour of unconditional surrender and a triumphal entry into Berlin ; and this at a time when the German army was on its last legs, with Allied Intelligence Departments calculating that there could not be more than two German divisions sufficiently rested to counter-attack, and even those two divisions had probably been broken up long since. Moreover, the German fleet and the rear of the army were mutinying, the Emperor had fled, and grave social disturbances had begun, so that the advancing Allied troops might have been welcomed as restorers of order. On the world-wide after-effects of the war it is not necessary to insist ; they are all too obvious.

Thus, contemplating the prolonged, destructive, and insufficiently decisive struggle of 1914-1918, we are strengthened in our belief that military technique, although secondary to moral and political forms, has an independent life of its own. It is like a child which when full grown can act independently of its parent, or like a secondary infection which may spread more widely than the original germ. For the moment, however, let us turn back from technical questions to the primary moral question.

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Having noted the blood-thirstiness of our own democratic era, let us ask what that era has in common

with the other periods of unlimited war, that of the sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Religious Wars, or that of the Greek city states and the Roman Republic. Conversely, let us see whether the three periods of limited war, the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages and the Eighteenth Century, resemble each other in anything. The formula: "Moral disunion produces discontent, discontent equals potential war; therefore the degree of moral disunion within any society will equal the potential of war within that society," fits the case exactly. Each of the societies which have been successful in strictly limiting war had achieved a considerable measure of religious and therefore of moral agreement. In the Roman Empire it was the cult of the Divine Emperor together with humanist reverence for the high ethics of the Civil Law; in the Middle Ages it was the Catholic Faith; in the Eighteenth Century it was a restricted but real humanist worship of measure and decorum founded on the classic culture then universal among educated men. Moral unity once achieved, appropriate technical limitations came about of themselves. Conversely the societies which have suffered from imperfectly limited war have been those which proved unable to unify or reconcile clashing religions and moralities. So the quarrelling city-states of the ancient world had too low a moral common denominator; so sixteenth-century society was shaken to its foundations by the quarrel between Reformers and Roman Catholics. Just so every ideal of our democratic era has been and is divisive.

Political democracy with its creed of liberty, equality, fraternity, has never been a unifying force; often it has not even proved itself a tolerable form of government. In small communities untroubled by racial or religious diversity, for instance in the Swiss cantons or the self-contained villages of early America, it may do.



Everywhere else it has been a fertile mother of strife because its politicians are always yielding to the temptation of getting into office by exciting those popular passions which romantic-naturalist philosophy has always exalted above the troublesome business of thinking. But to excite popular passion, instead of healing the divisions inevitable in any complex society, exasperates those divisions. Moreover, under democracy every change of Government takes the form of an election, therefore of a contest—a potential civil war. Those elected almost always represent not the community but a particular party within that community. If mere numbers are to govern, then there is no moral authority to check oppression of the minority by the majority. If, on the other hand, elections become mere sham-battles with little at stake, the next stage is that of public indifference and the seizure of power by organized minorities. Moreover, the constant tendency of elected politicians is to centralize power and increase the dependence of citizens upon the Government; the more jobs and favours they can give the more votes they can buy. But the more the citizens habitually depend upon Government the less they can resist it, for instance if it orders them into a war.

Meanwhile, the democratic philosophy is continually dividing men by enraging them through its permanent conflict with fact. In order to exalt the common man with his abundance of instinctive emotion and his incapacity for thought, the romantic-naturalists have had to say that the poor creature was essentially good, if not perfect then certainly capable of becoming so if “given a chance” by the change of this or that existing social arrangement. In other words, they have been forced into a hopelessly inadequate definition of evil, a definition which cannot be made to cover the facts of human behaviour. Alas! all real saints and sages,

precisely in order to love mankind, have had to take just the opposite line and say that the human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Then, and then only, can one take a charitable view of the things real men and women keep on doing the whole time. If, on the contrary, you say like Robespierre that people are perfect or nearly so, then when you see the way they really act, your only logical course is to massacre them in heaps as he did. But to do that is not necessarily the way to persuade a community to live in unity and concord.

Further, the idea of equality, the keystone of the democratic arch, is perpetually at war with its two supports of liberty and fraternity. Both of the latter are obviously good ; fraternity is a chief source of human happiness, and few men, when free to choose, will not choose liberty. But equality is a horse of a very different colour. Among men of the Christian culture it can indeed be defended mystically, as Jefferson defended it when he said that "all men are endowed by their creator with equal rights," which mystical idea can in part be rationalized by saying with Belloc that "what is common to all men is . . . infinitely more important than the accidents by which men differ." In the sense of moral equality we may not only admit but insist that something of it is indispensable to man and a high degree of it to men in the Christian religion, who are shocked, for instance, by the Hindu caste system. But neither Christianity nor Islam nor any other egalitarian religion has ever taught an absolute moral equality. They have said that God would judge men with an equal justice, not that they would receive equal rewards. They have proclaimed the alternative between salvation and damnation. For what the point is worth, those of the poets who have imagined the hereafter have shown great ingenuity in inventing gradations among both

the saved and the damned. The attempt to turn this qualified moral equality into political equality can be made only by denying liberty and outraging fraternity ; if men are left free they promptly begin accentuating their inequalities, if they are really fraternal they care little for the mirage of political equality. Since society can exist only by discipline and subordination, the levelling tendency of democracy is always working against the grain.

How then might we break into the vicious circle of democratic social passions, chaos leading to universal service, vehement nationalism deliberately organizing the military technique which had been the natural expression of social upheaval, then an increased dose of universal service leading back to social chaos again ?

He would be a rash man who would look to the chief new moral and political development, Communism, for unity or peace. It is indeed an international ideal for which men have proved willing to kill and be killed, a new religion capable here and there of inspiring flaming faith, but a materialist religion envious of superior talent and fortune, hostile to normal human things, from God and permanent marriage down to property. Moreover, in spite of its dictatorship, it is a part of the democratic movement, merely shifting the mystic "All men are (or should be) equal" idea from politics to economics.

There remains the tendency toward federation represented by the League of Nations. Trade and finance are, indeed, internationalizing themselves. In a little known but brilliant essay called *The Natural History of War*, so keen a mind as General J. F. C. Fuller, whom the British Service calls "Boney" Fuller, to liken his intelligence to that of the Corsican, has suggested an "Economic Papacy" of great capitalists to iron out national rivalries. The difficulty here is

moral; no true federation of international capitalism seems likely because big business men are not generally loved. More often they are detested. Blind hatred of them is a chief source of Communism. How can men be loyal to superiors who are neither Princes, Lords, nor Fathers, but only bags of money? The gentlemen of old time had at least a cult of honour and courage; not a few men died for them gladly; the new masters represent nothing but successful acquisitiveness.

Admitting this, General Fuller thinks that an "Economic Papacy" might stabilize society long enough to allow a moral rally to come from within. He reasons that the moral aspiration of man to unify his individual and social life is as much part of him as yeast is of bread; but if when yeast has been put into a lump of dough the dough is always being pulled to pieces, no good loaf will result.

The present writer suspects that such argument puts the cart before the horse, that no social stability will come except that which has a real moral nucleus around which to gather. While it is true that the war weariness of to-day is not altogether unlike that which followed the great Roman foreign and civil wars and led to Augustus's pacification, yet in 29 B.C. you at least had Rome as a centre. Roman gentlemen like Horace and Vergil, although they must have smiled privately at the idea of Augustus being a god, were anything but cynical as to the peace-giving mission of their city, the Roman sword guarding the humble and warring down the proud. Again, had Napoleonic Europe been given time to settle down, it had a strong nucleus in France. To-day, however, there is no centre, and instead we have nationalisms as much stronger than those of Napoleon's time as these were stronger than the dust of fatigued city patriotisms with which Augustus had to deal. Be they never so eager to serve international finance,

contemporary politicians must reckon with the fact that the nation remains the moral unit of mankind.

Moreover, men rightly hesitate to attack nationalism, for although it may hinder us from peaceably dealing with foreigners, it remains the chief moral bond of union within each nation. We instinctively feel that the average internationalist must be something of a scoundrel. Morally, nationalism remains so strong that, even in the present phase of exhaustion, the world's chief nationalist quarrel, that between France and Germany, seems likely to come to a head.

Turning from political creeds like democracy and nationalism to religion, historically the chief unifying force among men, to-day religion is not even at unity within itself. Christianity with its universal message survives, but Christians are divided into three main groups of Eastern-Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant, and each of these three is subdivided: Orthodoxy on national lines, the Roman Catholic societies into clericals and anti-clericals who range from believers to militant atheists, and Protestantism into innumerable sects. It is therefore no wonder that since 1648 the Faith has not been our main motive for political action. Nor is it surprising that Protestant pacifism suffers from a distressing vagueness. Its leaders seem unwilling or unable to discuss the distinction between just and unjust killing. And yet their preachers constantly cry for more of the coercive power of government whenever they can incorporate one of their taboos into a statute. In so far as their pacifism rightly detests the current heresy of the morally omnipotent state whose citizens must not question its acts, most thoughtful men are with them. But they seem to get no farther than the "slacker oath," whereas present conditions in America compel us to ask how much peace the community will have left if its citizens do not soon rise

in arms against their criminal enemies? Peace must be a peace of order.

Summing up, then, we find democracy and vehement democratic nationalism still strong; the extension of the all-men-are-equal into the economic field through Socialism and Communism seems likely to be fruitful in new strife; capitalist federation is handicapped by the insufficient loyalty inspired by the big business man; and religion is itself divided. These are the difficulties which we of Christendom can conquer because we must. Sooner or later either we or a remnant of our remote descendants will reduce the scale of our indulgence in battle, murder and sudden death to the accompaniment of plague, pestilence and famine; the alternative is collective suicide on a scale unthinkable even to the wickedest or stupidest human beings. The question is, how much more experience of imperfectly limited war will be needed? If a strict limitation be too long postponed, there will be an abrupt and painful descent of our high civilization into a new Dark Age.

For the comfort of those discouraged by such a possibility, we may make a parable of a story told by Jack London somewhat as follows: There was a beautiful green island in the Pacific, full of birds and possessing a good harbour with a fine spring of clear water nearby, so that whaling-ships made a practice of anchoring there to fill their water-casks. One ship's tabby cat, having produced a surplus of kittens which the crew were unwilling to kill, the little beasts were marooned there. Thereafter the reports of those who visited the place, pieced together, made an amazing tale: the birds were so abundant and so tame that at first the race of cats increased prodigiously, hunting was so easy that the pampered beasts could put most of their energy into propagating their kind. Presently their numbers became so great that in time all the available birds had been

eaten. Then began a civil war among the cats; especially they ate each other's kittens whenever they could, until the communiqués of visitors pointed towards an approaching extinction of the species. But—and here comes the point of the story—this did not happen. Apparently the cats held a council and said: "If we don't stop eating each other's kittens the noble race of cats will presently disappear from this island. Something must be done." At all events the next whalers who landed found that the practice of kitten-eating had ceased; instead the cats were getting their living by fishing in the shallow tidal pools along the shore. This occupation being both ill-paid and fatiguing (here I leave Jack London, but the detail belongs in the story none the less), the beasts had not the same leisure and energy for making love. Accordingly the cat population of the island stabilized, and comparative although of course not absolute peace reigned.

How then might we imitate the island cats? Whether human births should be deliberately limited as the cat story suggests, and if so by what methods, we shall not here discuss; let it suffice that the world could support a far greater population than at present. Morally, our goal is a greater measure of unity. Technically, we might look for new military developments likely to weaken the means recently used for imperfectly limited war. Later in this book it will be shown how the plane and the tank will destroy the technique used hitherto in the mass massacres of the democratic era. Further, it will be shown how the present effort to reunite Christendom, should it succeed, will heal those unhappy divisions of which our mass massacres are the natural fruit.

Most moral and military changes, however, are gradual. Is there, then, any contemporary social and political force which weakens democracy, prolongs the

present insecure peace of exhaustion, and gives time to work out a technique of limited war and to advance towards a reunited Church ? Such a force is the tendency toward an armed élite found in Communism and Fascism. In America, too, should public order continue to decline and violent crime to increase, another sort of armed élite would doubtless appear ; the wealth which attracts the criminal gives its possessors the power to arm in return, indeed in the United States there are constantly increasing numbers of armed men on private pay. But since it is not certain whether our domestic insecurity will necessitate so drastic a remedy, for the moment we may confine ourselves to Russia and Italy.

Obviously the matter requires careful statement ; in so far as Communism is militantly international and Fascism militantly nationalist, their influence is anything but sedative. They promise peace only because—to the scandal of democrats—both Fascist Italy and Communist Russia have already gone a long way toward setting up their dominant parties as armed aristocracies. If an armed aristocracy can win a real consent to its rule by the mass of its subjects, there seems no reason why it should not prove an enduring form of government. All the new political theories imply a controlling body ; the fact is admitted even by radicals to whom the rags of democracy still cling. So thorough a hater of traditional gentility as H. G. Wells took the armed gentlemen of Japan as the starting-point of his *Proposals for Establishing an Order of Samurai* ; had he confined himself to his own country he could have found Orders of Knighthood without the heathen Japanese cult of suicide. After all, the old knights, lords and kings of Europe were not revered for the fun of it, although loyalty is a large part of happiness ; they were valued for the work they did, in the modern jargon for their “social utility.” Louis XIV, who stage-



managed kingship so effectively, had no illusions as to the source of its power ; having in his youth seen insurrection and civil war, in his will he took pains to remind his heir that "man, being naturally suspicious and proud, will never consent to be governed by another man until his own need shows him the necessity."

Now the service which the masses receive from any governing group is that they are left freer for their own private affairs ; the implied contract by which they consent to be governed by the group is that the latter shall permit them to attend to business and seek their pleasure. To conscript or otherwise inconvenience the masses for an avoidable war is a breach of this unspoken contract. Meanwhile, on its side the governing group has strong reasons for avoiding a general mobilization. We have seen that the Russian Communists and the Italian Fascisti owe a part of their power within their respective countries to the fact that they are armed, whereas their possible opponents are not : a general mobilization, by arming those opponents, would diminish the armed superiority of each dominant group. Therefore, although both Italy and Russia have retained conscription to meet the chance of wars with other countries, neither Mussolini nor Stalin is eager to mobilize their conscripts. Conscript nations like the Poles and Yugo-Slavs could mobilize if they liked, provided they could find the money ; the French could certainly do so, although France obviously desires peace. But who believes that the German factory populations of to-day would carry on with sufficient cheerfulness through another universal-service war ? What military benefit would a general mobilization give either to Japan or to any power at war with that remote country ?

These questions lead to others not so easy to answer : after the present pause of exhaustion will democracy and nationalism ebb ? Or will whole peoples again

march off cheering? That is to say, will mass massacre begin again, and if so how soon? We do not know. It depends on how the world uses whatever time may remain before the next war.

Meanwhile, we do know that every country and especially every province in Christendom can help towards a general and strict limitation of war only in so far as its own circumstances permit.

PART IV  
*CONCLUSION*



## CHAPTER XII

### TANKS, PLANES AND LIMITED WAR

THOUGHTFUL readers will justly despise the materialist nonsense of those who say that the new *matériel* must make wars even more savage and destructive than 1914-1918. A piece of steel, or any other material object, knows neither sin nor virtue, and may be put either to good or bad uses. Thus, contrary to vulgar error, no military instrument can prevent or accomplish the strict limitation of war.

If, on the other hand, we reinforce sound logic with recent history, we shall see that the new *matériel* will make for limited war by destroying the military value of the instruments with which the imperfectly limited wars of the democratic era have been waged. Modified military technique, by breaking up the nineteenth-century form, will bring in a new form which need not be morally worse and may be much better than that of the recent past.

The essence of imperfectly limited war is popular passion inspiring attempts to overthrow completely another human group. Secondarily, wars waged on the scale and with the intensity necessary to accomplish this end rouse passions where these did not exist before.

The typical instrument of the terrible democratic wars has been the unarmoured infantryman equipped with musket or rifle and bayonet. For centuries such equipment has been relatively cheap; to-day the U.S. service rifle, although a beautiful, breach-loading, magazine weapon, capable of accurate shooting farther

than the unaided eye can follow, costs only \$45.00. Throughout the nineteenth century this cheapness, combined with economic activity, international trade, the credit system, and with the willingness of the peoples to serve and to pay heavy taxes, made possible the raising of huge armies capable of putting severe military pressure upon hostile peoples whose defending armies had been defeated. Besides being cheap, the infantry equipment further favoured large armies, in that it was comparatively simple and easy to use without long training. Under a heavy strain, like that of France in 1814, Napoleon did have trouble in arming his troops, but this difficulty was far less than that of finding men, and in general neo-Napoleonic military thought took weapon power for granted and considered war chiefly in terms of mass man-power.

Of course, the high-powered late nineteenth-century infantry rifle, like the eighteenth-century musket, might have lent itself to specialized training. Take, for instance, the first shock between the German conscripts and the United States Marines at Château Thierry: whereas the Germans were bad shots even at short ranges, the Marines were highly trained in musketry, and apparently when they opened at a thousand yards the Germans were completely bewildered—with most fortunate results upon the morale of the whole A. E. F. But usually, as in other departments of civilization, military quantity dominated quality.

As compared with population, the mere size of the armies made it possible to hold down defeated states because a victor could occupy vast territories. Between first-class powers the little eighteenth-century armies rarely entered a hostile capital, the two short occupations of Berlin during the Seven Years' War seem the only exceptions; but Napoleon took every capital of the continent from Moscow to Madrid, and as his power

ebbed the Allies twice garrisoned Paris. In 1871 the Prussians occupied not only Paris but a third of all France. Again, between 1914 and 1918 the German occupation of Allied territories was of great effect, and in general the moral and economic advantages of occupying large territories are enormous.

It is true that the growth of overseas trade has made naval blockade very formidable: the blockade of the Southern Confederacy in 1861-1865 and that of Germany in 1914-1918 were more effective than any previous blockades of whole countries. But in neither case was blockade alone decisive; the Confederate armies of 1865 were at their last gasp, the German troops toward the end of 1918 were almost as badly off, and the German Government dared not face the invasion and occupation staring them in the face.

For more than a century wholesale occupation, or the threat of it, has been the goal of military effort and the chief means of persuading a hostile and determined people to surrender.

Meanwhile, unsuspected by the neo-Napoleonic generals, the increasing effectiveness, complexity, and cost of weapons was about to make industrial power, instead of man-power, the controlling factor in war. This industrial power happened to begin by begetting masses of cannon, munitions and machine-guns, all of which meant increased fire-power without increasing mobility or protection. Indeed, these tons of steel decreased mobility through their mere weight. On the Eastern front, where industrial resources were unequal, German fire-power decisively defeated Russian man-power, no courage could stand before the hurricane of German shells, and the more numbers the Russians accumulated the better the target. In the West, with industrial strength on both sides, fire-power cancelled out, leaving the two opposing groups maintaining not only their

armed hordes but also munition industries such as had not been seen on earth. Already armed camps, the nations transformed themselves into cannon-foundries; all available labour, including that of women, was sucked in to feed the guns and the peoples engaged in mutual destruction; everywhere the future was mortgaged in astronomical figures. For years all this went on without positive results, the two armies were like angry bulls separated by a wire mesh fence which might be dented here and there but remained unbreakable.

Because people take for granted a repetition of trench warfare—the unbreakable fence—together with complete national concentration on war industry, proposals have been made for a “universal draft.” As to industrial concentration, however one may dislike war profiteers—including labourers inflated like the frog in the fable by excessive wages—it is clear that efforts to “draft” capital and civilian labour are jokes bound to defeat themselves. Since confidence is an integral part of capital, frighten its possessors and it will vanish like a fairy in a wishing cap; and since the will to work is an integral part of labour, you must persuade or bribe the labourer into willingness or he will passively resist you. As to trench warfare: enter the plane and the tank.

All military studies are based upon history, the record of past experiment. Obviously an experimental science debarred from full laboratory tests except during short, irregularly spaced periods corresponding to wars would find itself forced back upon study of the results obtained during former periods of full liberty; it is not surprising that the elder Moltke used to put his ablest staff officers into his Historical Section. At the same time, changing circumstances forbid history to stand alone, and in the case of new weapons like the plane and tank it must be generously supplemented by study of the instruments



themselves. Although the results will not equal knowledge based on experience, we cannot do better; for we are like fifteenth-century men suddenly presented with powerful muskets and compelled to reason out ways of using them.

First, then, the plane and tank are mobile, independent of roads and indifferent to obstacles. The one obstacle which might inconvenience planes would be a high net hung on captive balloons, and that only at night or in connection with smoke clouds. Tanks cannot cross marsh, most existing ones will not float or manoeuvre in deep water, and in spite of their astounding tree-felling powers they are hampered by thick woods of large timber. They are only just beginning to jump, and they can neither descend nor mount escarpments of more than a certain height or steepness. Nevertheless, the freedom of movement and the speed of both new weapons—from a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five miles an hour for the plane and upwards of forty-five miles per hour for the new fast tanks—combined with their other powers to which we shall come in a moment—make them certain to modify and likely to abolish trench warfare as we have known it. Permanent fortification would be another matter, but the field works of the later nineteenth century, culminating in those of 1915–1917, grew out of the increasing defensive strength of modern weapons while mobility remained constant. Obviously the power to move and cross obstacles rapidly increases the strength of the tactical offensive.

In fact, whole books might be written on the effect of rapidity in war. Napoleon fully understood it, winning most of his early victories by speed, and saying that the striking force of an army was the product of its mass multiplied by its velocity. Again he said, not in public but in a confidential order to a responsible subordinate: "With 30,000 men in transports at the

Downs, the English can paralyse 300,000 of my army, and that will reduce us to the rank of a second class power." (Correspondence XIX, 421.) Even the sailing ship of 1800 was so much swifter than men afoot. Nor did the point escape his chief commentator, Clausewitz, who wrote: "Rapidity smothers in the germ a hundred measures which the enemy might take. . . . Surprise resulting from promptness . . . is the most efficacious principle of victory: Napoleon, Frederic II, Gustavus Adolphus, Cæsar, Hannibal, Alexander have owed their most brilliant glory to their rapidity."

Nor is rapidity the sole merit of plane and tank. After their several fashions they also have such power that they seem certain to make infantry subordinate. The power of infantry weapons is limited by the weight a single man can carry. All machine-guns are really light artillery, because each requires a team of men to carry the gun and its ammunition. But both plane and tank easily mount one or more machine-guns, and many tanks mount cannon as well, while planes can carry and drop explosives in the form of bombs. To tell one or a thousand riflemen to fire at a plane is like telling them to hit a man-eating bird on the wing. To oppose them to a tank is even worse, their bullets rattle harmlessly off the armour like those of men who might put out in row boats and engage a battleship. The Germans of 1918 were not slow to see the point. In *All Quiet on the Western Front* the German novelist Remarque writes: "From a mockery the tanks have become a terrible weapon. Armoured, they come rolling on in long lines, and more than anything else embody for us the horror of war. We do not see the guns that bombard us; the attacking lines of the enemy infantry are men like ourselves; but these tanks are machines, their caterpillars run on as endless as the war, they are annihilation, they roll without feeling

into the craters, and climb up again without stopping, a fleet of roaring, smoke-belching armour-clads, invulnerable steel beasts squashing the dead and the wounded—we shrivel up in our thin skin before them, against their colossal weight our arms are sticks of straw, and our hand-grenades matches.”

In the steadily decreasing areas unsuited to tanks infantry will retain its importance. But in the tank areas it will become “land marines,” useful only as garrison troops, pioneers, and—if carried in trucks or tractors so as to reach the field in time—as moppers up after tank attacks. The foot soldier will return to the lowly part he played in the cavalry era of late-Roman and medieval times. Future defence, like attack, will be the function of the guns, and those of the defence will have to be caterpillar-mounted like those of the attack in order to counter the sudden concentrations and other manœuvres of the latter. The supremacy of the gun will be nothing new and startling: a century ago Napoleon said: “It is with the artillery that war is made.” From the first appearance of rifled field-pieces in 1870 their power relative to infantry has steadily grown, as early as the Russo-Japanese War competent observers were saying that they were now the decisive arm, and in the war against Germany it became proverbial that “artillery conquers and infantry only occupies.” Now that the internal combustion engine has given the gun mobility, by marrying it to the plane and the caterpillar tractor, its mastery seems unquestionable. Against a force well provided with planes and tanks an army of the 1914 model, even if triply or quadruply superior in number of riflemen, would be helpless.

Clearly the descent of infantry will carry down with it the armed horde as we have known it since 1793; weapon-power, already dominant before 1918, will become still more important as compared with man-power.

The technical form hitherto characteristic of the "unlimited" wars of the democratic era will disappear, and future wars, whether imperfectly or strictly limited, will certainly take new forms.

Let us examine the chances of strictly limiting these new military forms. Assume two human groups, each vehemently determined on the complete overthrow of the other and little troubled by moral scruples, each willing to make great efforts to break its enemies' will by invasion, blockade, or both. The chances of either invasion or blockade will depend not only upon the resources of the two sides, but also upon geographical circumstances; however, let us assume the case most favourable to "absolute" war, *i.e.* that in which the two parties have a common land frontier. Neither will be entirely blind to the power of the new weapons; on the other hand, military conservatism, an excellent thing in its way, will make both unwilling to give up the armed horde altogether. Both will therefore try to combine the new instruments with a large infantry force, and events will depend first on the relative emphasis laid upon each of these two forms of military effort, secondly on the proportion between the total military effort and the national resources.

If one or both sides tried to combine a fully mobilized armed horde with a lavish production of the new weapons, there might be a campaign such as might have occurred in 1919. In *Amid these Storms : Thoughts and Adventures* Winston Churchill has written :

"Had the Germans retained the morale to make good their retreat to the Rhine, they would have been assaulted in the summer of 1919 with forces and by methods incomparably more prodigious than any yet employed. Thousands of aeroplanes would have shattered their cities. Scores of thousands of cannon would have blasted their front.

“Arrangements were being made to carry simultaneously a quarter of a million men, together with all their requirements, continuously forward across country in mechanical vehicles moving ten or fifteen miles each day. Poison gases of incredible malignity, against which only a secret mask (which the Germans could not obtain in time) was proof, would have stifled all resistance and paralysed all life on the hostile front subjected to attack.”

The war ended, and data, calculations and discoveries were hastily bundled together, and docketed “for future reference” by the War Offices of every country. He says :

“Should war come again to the world, it is not with the weapons and agencies prepared for 1919 that it will be fought, but with developments and extensions of these which will be incomparably more formidable and fatal.”

But against all this may be set a massive and impregnable fact already cited in Chapter XI (“Will War Destroy Civilization?”). By November, 1918, the strain of war upon the British army and people had become such that Haig and Lloyd George wanted an immediate armistice so much that they were willing to grant far easier terms than those the Germans finally accepted. Napoleonic France had proved that twenty years of conscript warfare alone would exhaust a nation ; 1918 showed that the effort to maintain both a conscript army and twentieth-century war industries would approach a breaking-point in less than five years. Since 1918 the power of weapons, especially of the tank, has greatly increased relative to the unarmoured infantryman, therefore we are safe in saying that future governments, even at the highest point of military effort, will do well to cut down their conscript masses in order to release labour for industries on which the more effective, that is the mechanized, form of war will depend. At the same

time, the increasing demands of war upon industry will make in the same direction, because it will be more than ever necessary to keep up the agriculture and other productive activities of countries in which many factories will be turning out expensive cannon, munitions, planes and tanks. Thus, whether they are to be used for "unlimited" or strictly limited war, the armies of the future will be smaller than those of the recent, democratic past.

At the same time, planes and tanks are expensive ; a big bomber costs from \$23,000 to \$25,000, a fighting plane \$12,000 to \$14,000, a tank from \$15,000 to \$35,000. Unit costs could, of course, be somewhat reduced by mass production or by enslaving the labourer, if he consented to a Soviet Government or other form of universal draft, but they could not be brought below a certain point. Accordingly, the numbers of airmen and tankmen will be economically limited, like those of the great war-horses and fully armoured knights of the Middle Ages, when a suit of armour cost as much as a small farm. Moreover, these expensive weapons, although invulnerable to the infantryman's rifle, are highly vulnerable to guns ; a single flush hit by a shell from a thirty-seven millimetre or larger piece will finish a tank, and whoever says that planes cannot be hit knows nothing of to-day's constantly improving anti-aircraft gunnery. Therefore, if planes and tanks are to be used in anything like the reckless offensives of democratic war, their rate of wastage will be so high that no labour power and no economic resources will long hold out.

On this basis, not only will future armies be smaller, they will also fight either shorter or much less destructive wars.

True, these reductions would not appreciably limit war if future conflicts, as the innumerable frightfulness-mongers assert, will make up for their shorter duration and smaller forces by proportionately greater barbarity,

horror, and destruction. Chapter IX ("The Future of Frightfulness") examined the chances of deciding wars either by means of frightfulness in general or by the particular form of bombing the civil population of cities, concluding that the political disadvantages of barbarity and the technical difficulties of greatly damaging cities left frightfulness little future. Therefore, let it here suffice that although the plane and the tank—and in naval war the submarine—have each a certain power to attack either military or non-military objectives behind the front, nevertheless a superior organized force, supplemented of course by proper measures against raiders, is reasonably certain to defeat any war plan based upon evasion. The success of raiding against a superior organized force would mean only that counter measures had been neglected, as the Allies neglected them against the German submarines until April, 1917; usually, the most to be hoped from attacks on non-military objectives is that a small force so employed may lead the enemy to weaken his main concentration by considerable detachments sent to deal with the raiders. Assuming that this well-tried principle needs only adaptation to make it fit any new instrument, let us see what might be the most effective use of planes and tanks in a war fought for the total overthrow of the enemy, in short a politically unlimited war.

All armed effort requires bases, and planes and tanks need them even more than other land arms. At regular intervals they must return to them as fleets do for supplies and especially for fuel, as well as for repairs and for the repose of their crews. Planes are effective only when in motion; in contact with the enemy their sole security lies in their speed, which makes them hard to hit. On the ground they are helpless, and from the ground they need a certain time, greater for the bomber than for the fighter, in order to rise in their air high

enough to be secure from ground artillery and to be on even terms with hostile planes. Thus, they can never be a self-sustaining arm, as was amusingly shown by the collapse of the Chilean Air Corps' revolt in September, 1932. A mutinous colonel, followed by some forty officers and fifty mechanics, with about thirty modern bombing planes, seized an aviation field. For a single night the neighbouring cities were in terror, an effect which ninety men could not otherwise have produced. Meanwhile, the mutineers, instead of raiding, were digging trenches to protect their field, after which they fell to carousing and were bloodlessly captured by a regiment of infantry. Thus the newest branch of the service, lacking a secure base, was ignominiously overpowered by the oldest branch in the world. Not only are planes dependent upon bases, but while these bases are secure the fliers are stronger when operating well within their radius of action, say four hundred miles for the latest bombers, three hundred for most bombers, and about two hundred for pursuit planes.

With tanks the story is much the same. Against pieces heavy enough to pierce their armour their security, like that of the plane, lies in motion. At rest they are vulnerable to anything heavier than rifle ammunition. Nor can they do much to secure themselves, they offer such favourable targets. They are not as helpless as the plane; their guns and armour have some defensive power. Pits might be dug for them, sloping behind for retreat, but with steep sides and front, and deep enough so that only the guns and turret would be uncovered. Sometimes they might be completely sheltered from the front, leaving their machine-guns free to fire to a flank. But it is doubtful whether such measures would often be worth the trouble, and certainly immobile tanks have less defensive value than guns in battery on lower mountings.



Accordingly, wars between plane and tank armies will turn upon bases, points fortified against ground and air attack and containing supplies, especially fuel. Pending the development of the helicopter, they must also contain landing fields. Strategy will try to gain greater range of action by pushing forward one's own advanced bases while taking or blockading those of the enemy. The resemblance to the medieval castle and fortress wars, or to the eighteenth-century importance of military magazines, is obvious.

In so far as raiding is undertaken, the French Admiral Castex has shown that air strategy will be somewhat like that of old-fashioned coastal warfare when one side possessed a superior fleet and the other a superior army. If we imagine a case like that of the French and Italian Riviera in the old wars, a number of more or less well-defended towns connected by a single road often within range of deep water, the parallel is still closer. As such a coast used to be harassed by bombardments, disembarkations, sudden appearances and disappearances of the assailants, so will wide belts of the earth's surface be harassed by air forces. Further, the thinning of fronts by the reduction in size of armies will give certain opportunities of the same sort to fast tanks. On the defending side, again, the appropriate measures will adapt familiar principles to the new instruments: fortification of the most important points—arsenals, munition factories, government offices, the water works and electric light and power plants of great cities—also partial evacuations of city dwellers into the country, systems of observation and communication to give warning of raids, finally mobile detachments spaced here and there throughout the threatened belt to cut short the time at the raiders' disposal. The necessity for interior detachments which, taken together, may seriously weaken the organized force, is new to land

warfare, but is no more than the old naval servitude to commerce protection.

Long experience of coastal bombardments from the sea reinforces the experience of air bombing in the war against Germany to the effect that the material damage done is microscopic compared with the effort made. Exhaustive French studies of the effect of naval bombardments agree with the old rhyme about the bombardment of Stonington, Connecticut, by British ships in the war of 1812 :

“ They killed a pig, they killed a hen,  
They killed two chickens in a pen,  
But that was not taking Stonington.”

In all the bombing of bridges between 1914 and 1918 only one seems to have been broken, a Turkish bridge which suffered a chance hit on an abutment.

Accordingly, it seems that the most effective raids will not be by air bombing but by squadrons of fast tanks, where they can penetrate the front or by demolition squads landed from large air fleets. In military engineering to cut a steel girder you must place the explosive directly on the girder and then you must tamp it down. Also ground raids, besides being in some ways more effective than air bombing, have not the moral and political disadvantages of that indiscriminating method. On the other hand, ground forces are slower than planes, and can be more easily located and pursued. Disembarkations from air craft require a landing field and take time : a really large raid of a hundred planes of the rare type capable of carrying twenty passengers, assuming the brief time of only two minutes per plane, would consume over three hours in landing alone. Moreover, the landing force would amount only to two thousand infantry with no great quantity of ammunition and only a few of the lightest pieces to hold off defending planes and tanks. As in the old coastal raids, the worst

moment for the raiders would be that of re-embarkation under pressure ; a few defending planes might cut off retreat, even if they were able only to cut up the landing field with bomb craters so that the raiding planes, having taken on their landing force, might have difficulty in taking the air. Helicopters would make landing and perhaps rising easier, but at the expense of speed in the air. Accordingly, the raids most to be feared would land small parties near an insufficiently guarded bridge, viaduct, or tunnel, explode demolition charges, and be off. During active operations between the organized forces the mere cutting of the transmission wires of an electrified railroad might be of value. As always, the conclusive way to deal with raiders will be to break up or push back their bases. Probably the old rule for the operations of "independent cavalry" will hold good ; *i.e.* the highly mobile arms of the service will be most valuable when their action directly contributes to the success of the main fighting force.

Passing to the shock between organized forces, history and reflection teach caution in predicting the future. When we say that events will turn upon this or that factor we are using a conversational shorthand which ignores other factors, especially the superlatively important accident of leadership and the vast possibilities of chance. Far more than the small war of raiding and commerce destroying, in which accidents to both sides tend to cancel out, battles are pregnant with uncertainty, and a single lucky throw may determine great sweeps of the future. If in 1870 the French machine-gnus had been better handled, that weapon might have dominated tactics forty-four years before it actually did. Had the French won, regular troops would doubtless have remained fashionable as against conscripts. So the defeat of an ill-led or unlucky tank-and-plane army by one weaker in those arms but

stronger in infantry might postpone what seems an inevitable development. Nevertheless, with leadership and chance at all equal, superiority in the new arms seems likely to decide the issue. In the days of smooth-bore muskets one continually reads that this or that regiment, caught by a mounted charge before it could form square, was ridden down and destroyed. Cavalry seldom if ever rushed headlong on a formed hedge of bayonets, but lapped around the flanks, compelling the hostile infantry to form an all around defence instantly and on the exact spot where they happened to be, which might make the squares admirable targets for artillery. The action of planes and tanks will doubtless be similar in principle: unless the enemies' anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns themselves are caterpillar mounted, plane and tank operations should be able to immobilize him so that he can do nothing toward winning his war. He will be like a turtle withdrawn into his shell or a porcupine curled up. Meanwhile, the superior mechanized force will roam at will through the rest of the theatre of war, cutting off detachments, interrupting communications, and living at their ease. Should the porcupine unroll and start to move, the speed of the mechanized troops will permit them to make him coil up again when and where they choose.

As to the tactical form of the operations, presumably all arms of the service will do well to co-operate closely. Infantry, although reduced in importance, will not vanish: tank forces in active service will need some—carried in trucks, or better in fast tractors—for moppers up after their attacks and for the service of security at night. All experience since 1918 seems to show that air forces will accomplish far more in close combat liaison with ground troops. In Nicaragua planes were only once decisive in actual combat; in July, 1927, a U.S. Marine and Guardia Nacional post at Ocotal was

attacked at 1 a.m. Next morning two photographing planes discovered the siege, and at half-past three in the afternoon five combat planes from Managua arrived and found the bandits bunched in a nearby ravine, consulting about the attacks to be delivered that night. The planes dropped all their bombs before the enemy could leave the ravine, then chased and machine-gunned the fugitives until all ammunition was exhausted, inflicting about two hundred estimated casualties. But future attacks on towns and ambushing of patrols on trails were always commenced and broken off before the planes could reach the spot (from "Tactics of Bush Warfare," by Major Roger W. Peard, U.S.M.C., in the *Infantry Journal*, September-October, 1931). European experience is much the same. After the war, when the French began to have trouble in Syria and Morocco, they began by thinking that their planes would easily subdue the Druses and the Riffians. On the contrary, air action only made matters worse until the ground arms were called in: a bomb dropped on a village might kill the best friends of the French there, nor was air attack very hard to avoid. British experience on the north-west frontier of India has been parallel: air work alone accomplished small results compared with the effort expended, but proved most valuable when combined with small ground forces. Without these last the barbarous enemy could escape loss by taking to caves. The one area in which the Air Corps by itself has accomplished results is in Mesopotamia, where the Arabs are timid and happen to be vulnerable to air attack because they depend on their flocks, which planes can scatter and molest. In real fighting against enemies possessing anti-aircraft guns planes seem likely to prove not much more than a most valuable form of light cavalry which gets information, blinds the enemy for short periods, and completes the demoralization of

a beaten force. Only when anti-aircraft guns are insufficient will the airmen be able to rush unshaken troops. As in the old wars, rash charges will not be worth the losses. Planes will, of course, affect all ground operations, compelling dispersion, night marches, etc., but by itself air work seems unlikely to be decisive.

Turning to the general military policy of future plane and tank wars, although the United States Army Industrial College does well to consider how mass production might be applied, the nature of the instruments seems to demand quality rather than quantity of personnel. As weapons increase in power and cost they increasingly reward skill and penalize blundering. In civil life an inexpertly handled axe or sledge hammer is bad enough, but a green-horn with a steam hammer or charge of dynamite spells disaster. The same thing is true in delicate matters such as the arts; anyone, after a fashion, can play the tom-tom but not everyone can play the piano, still less a church organ. So in war, two strong and courageous men, although they might never have fought with clubs, together might kill the most skilful single club-man, whereas two men who had never handled a high-powered rifle would be easy meat for a crack shot at fifty yards or more. In the plane and tank you have very costly weapons, enormously effective in skilful hands, but requiring real technical skill to operate, and vulnerable if unwisely exposed. In the war against Germany a single air ace would shoot down plane after hostile plane; if numbers combined against him they only got in each others way. And in general, armed with planes and fast tanks a highly trained few should beat far greater numbers of mediocre or ill-instructed men.

Thus the plane and tank are not horde weapons, and should suit the present Italian and Russian tendency to govern by means of an armed élite. A shift to military quality instead of quantity has more than

once been thought probable by good judges of war, even without reference to the new weapons. As early as 1883, in the lusty manhood of the European armed hordes, and in the full tide of praise for them which fills Von Der Goltz's *Nation in Arms* we find these words: "The day will come when the present aspect of war will dissolve, when forms, customs and opinions will again be altered. Looking forward into the future, we seem to feel the coming of a time when the armed millions of the present will have played out their part. A new Alexander will arise, who, with a small body of well-equipped skilled warriors, will drive the impotent hordes before him; when, in their eagerness to multiply, they shall have overstepped all proper bounds, have lost cohesion, and, like the green-banner army of China, have become transformed into a numberless but effete host of Philistines" (English Ed., 1906, p. 5). And the late R. M. Johnston, perhaps the ablest American military writer of our time, said in his *First Reflections on the Campaign of 1918* that "A force of one hundred thousand highly-trained professional troops could have marched through many places in the Western Front, and in either direction. By highly-trained professional soldiers I have in mind men enlisting as boys at sixteen, passing into the ranks three years later, thoroughly competent in another five years, and serving eight more years thereafter." And this in a book which, I believe, does not even mention the words mechanization, plane or tank! Plenty of educated soldiers who saw the constant misdirection and waste of effort inevitable among the armed millions of 1914-1918 would agree with Maurice de Saxe that "multitudes serve only to perplex and embarrass."

How far quality of troops might come to replace quantity we cannot say. While it is significant that the French disarmament plan, proposed in October, 1932, takes pains to do away with the high-quality little

German army whose twelve-year-service men have been estimated as worth three times their number of short-service conscripts, on the other hand the Germans themselves are agitating for a shorter enlistment—obviously to increase their number of trained reserves.

At all events, any substitution of high training for huge numbers must bring changes in the conduct of war. Whereas drafted men, being plentiful and cheap, are expendable in large numbers, generals must think twice before throwing away long-term veterans ; the support and instruction of these last will have made each man a real investment on the part of his Government, an asset not to be spent except for full value. Obviously the cost of tanks and planes will work in the same direction. We need not expect such caution as that of Jellicoe with his irreplaceable mastodons at Jutland, still less bloodless imitation battles like those fought by the sixteenth-century Italian mercenaries so justly despised by Machiavelli, nevertheless the rule against squandering that which cannot easily be replaced will hold good. Indeed, it is physically impossible to replace highly-trained men except over a term of years. Instead of expecting to march to victory only over vast heaps of their own dead, skilful generals will study how to avoid loss while inflicting it on the enemy.

This method is as old as the world ; it has been used by every long-service professional army in history. The fourth-century Roman military writer, Vegetius, advocated it when he wrote : “ It is better to beat the enemy through want, surprises, and care for difficult places (*i.e.* through manœuvre) than by a battle in the open field.” The “ Strategicon ” of the sixth-century East Roman Emperor Maurice says : “ It is better to win by superior skill and leadership than by sheer force ; in the one case the results are achieved without loss, in the other some price must be paid. . . . Courage



and discipline are more important than numbers; for the nature of the ground is often decisive and gives victory to the weaker force. . . . A wily enemy is more to be feared than a daring one." Three hundred years later the "Tactica" of Leo the Wise is in the same tradition: "A skilful general is one who gets results at little cost in lives." Rabelais, full of his classical reading, makes Grangousier plan to oppose Picrochole ". . . with as little effusion of blood as may be; and if possible by means far more expedient, such as military policy, devices and stratagems of war." The doctrine was familiar to the early modern professional soldiers and was elaborated by the eighteenth-century standing armies. Foch quotes Joly de Maizeroy: "The science of war consists not only in knowing how to fight, but still more in avoiding battle, in choosing one's positions, in planning one's moves so as to reach one's goal without risk . . . let battle be given only when judged unavoidable." Again he cites Massenbach's praise of Prince Henry of Prussia, Frederic the Great's brother: "He knew how to woo fortune by bold moves; more fortunate than Cæsar at Dyrachium, greater than Condé at Rocroi, he attained, like the immortal Berwick, victory without battle." The Generalissimo of 1918 goes on to quote Maurice de Saxe: "I do not favour battles, especially at the beginning of a war. I am sure that a clever general can wage it as long as he lives without being compelled to battle."

I digress for a moment—so instructive is the case of Foch—to note that his high intelligence was far from missing the point of the eighteenth-century doctrine: in the very act of praising Napoleon's continual and consuming desire for battle he visibly pauses to ponder Clausewitz's query: "Who knows whether in a few generations the craze for the old fencing . . . will not reappear, whether the campaigns and battles of Napoleon may not then be criticized as the actions of a barbarian?"

Clausewitz's flash of foresight has been all too well justified by events ; in the lurid light of 1914-1918, not only Napoleon but Ludendorff and Foch himself loom barbarically enough, darkening a still exhausted Christendom with their black shadows. But because the French of 1870 had used their powerful weapons ill, Foch refused to study the effect of *matériel* upon war and therefore failed to divine the future : tactically he was deceived into the astonishing statement that increased fire-power, even without increased mobility, would strengthen the offensive ! Had that error been confined to him, the armies of 1914-1918 would have suffered less. Worse still, he was hypnotized by what he himself called ". . . those glorious examples of the people's passions . . . known to us by the names of Valmy, Saragossa, Tarancon, Moscow, Leipzig." In other words, he saw fit to admire the unchained popular fury which has made the era of democracy that of mass massacre. To-day we should be wiser, although it is not yet certain that we are.

To return to the eighteenth-century method, the man who doubts the courage of its armies is ignorant of history, for the heroism of its battles has never been surpassed. Nor were its generals lacking in daring ; Marlborough and Frederic were as determined gamblers as any great captain of all time. They were none the less bold because they knew they must not overdraw their moderate balances in human lives ; Frederic was especially careful to remember that, after all, his army would have to fight again next year. Vauban advises besiegers, should their enemy sally out, occupy their advanced trenches, and begin destroying them, not to be hasty in driving him back but to let their fire play upon him in his exposed position, so that his sortie may cost him more men than its results are worth ; but this is not a counsel of timidity, it is an elementary calculation of profit and loss. When

Prince Eugène, out-mancœuvred at the Battle of Denain, lost his temper and threw away some lives in trying to retake a certain bridge, his French opponent severely criticized his conduct because, although not compelled to do so, he had attacked with the chances against him; he had "gotten seven or eight hundred men killed . . . uselessly." One may compare the millions uselessly sacrificed in the trench attacks of 1915-1916, and 1917 up to the tank battle of Cambrai.

Sooner or later future states will be wise enough to imitate the eighteenth-century Tsar Peter the Great, who insisted that his generals, whatever else they might do, must get their results and win their victories at the cost of but little blood.

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The small numbers of future armies, besides compelling generals to economize lives, will also reduce the ability of a victor to occupy hostile territory. Police work requires not great fighting power but numbers; the average policeman needs no weapons beyond his club and revolver, but there must be enough of them constantly on duty or public order will suffer. Mobility strengthens the action of police reserves, but cannot make up for the want of enough men on post. The plane and tank tend to divide modern armies in a sharp fashion reminiscent of medieval forces: first there are the soldiers *par excellence*, armed with the powerful new weapons and corresponding to fully-armoured knights; next there are the second line troops, including most of the infantry, less formidably equipped than the plane and tank men and corresponding to the militias recruited from the peasants and town burghers of the Middle Ages. The French disarmament plan of October, 1932, whatever else one may think of it, is interesting in that it so clearly recognizes the two categories of soldiery: certain powerful weapons, including fighting planes

and large, mobile cannon, are to be reserved for an international army of professional troops, leaving the nations of continental Europe with only "defensive militias." In future wars, if one side be much stronger in planes and tanks than its adversary, after defeating the hostile armies it will, of course, be able at its leisure to organize occupying infantry. But it will be the air force and tank corps which will do the heavy fighting, and in so far as peace-time military effort is more and more centred on these formidable branches the secondary job of raising abundant infantry should go out of fashion. Governments will say: "Since the real work of beating the enemies' force will be done by our first line of airmen and tank-men, let us take no chances, but make that first line strong. The infantry masses, who can contribute little toward winning battles, and will be needed chiefly to hold down the conquered territory—that is if we win—may be comparatively neglected."

War, should it lose the overwhelming tragedy and horror of our mass massacres, need not lose the glamour which has never failed the man-at-arms and has always at least dignified his tomb. To face death will never be other than heroic; if the fate of the professional soldier be not so sad as that of the conscript torn from his home, nevertheless he has a poetry of his own. The tank-man is the spiritual descendant of the Companions of Alexander, scattering the innumerable Persians like dust; he is the armoured Byzantine horse-archer, victoriously stinging back from Eastern Europe the barbaric hordes of a thousand years; or the steel-clad medieval knight, gleefully spurring his great charger into no matter how vast a *Jacquerie* of revolted peasants.

Nevertheless, no form of military technique, whether it seem favourable to the strict limitation of war or not, can by itself achieve limitation. That is a matter of the human will.

## CHAPTER XIII

### PEACE AND ORDER

ALL thoughtful study of war and peace, beginning with military technique and immediate policy, ends far from both.

Every peace must be one of exhaustion or one of order. In the first case men say: "For the moment we have not the strength to fight longer. Therefore we submit, but we do so unwillingly, and when we are stronger, or have gained Allies, or when misfortune has befallen our enemies, we will renew the struggle." So said the Poles for more than a century, from their partitions by Prussia and her accomplices until their re-establishment following the recent World War, and so said the French regarding Alsace-Lorraine.

But what is order? Superficially it is the policeman's club, reinforced in emergency by the soldier's rifle and bayonet to put down crime, to compose private quarrels, and in general to enforce rules of conduct known as laws. That is the necessary physical order, and the permanent imperfection of mankind—more vigorously known to our ancestors as original sin—compels us always to support that physical order by force; whether we call him policeman or soldier, the man-at-arms must for ever stand guard against the criminal and quarrelsome, be they many or few.

However, we need only think for a moment to see that physical order, whose necessary instrument is force, depends on an intellectual and moral order whose

instrument is persuasion. The truth that moral order alone makes physical order possible can be easily tested by imagining a society persuaded of no rules for conduct, so that all citizens murdered or robbed others whenever they felt inclined; among such impossibly wicked and foolish men physical order could not be preserved, and all would soon starve. A peace of order, the only one worth having, appears when men say: "On the whole we think our Government just. Therefore we willingly acknowledge its authority and freely submit to its laws."

If anyone ask why men should think a particular Government just, there seems no answer except that the idea of justice is mystical, resting upon strong conviction, but incapable of positive proof. An intellectual assent alone can support the simplest rules of conduct because they are useful and convenient; vehicles must have rules of the road so that there may be fewer collisions, but above this elementary level mysticism is always creeping in. Men have never been content to say: "It is socially useful that men should not steal"; they have always insisted on saying: "It is wicked that James should steal the goods of John, and in order to prevent such wrong John may lawfully kill James in the act if he can." Or on the point of nationalism they say: "It is right that we, being Americans or Englishmen or Mexicans or whatnot, should be governed by men of our own nation, and we will fight to the death rather than be ruled by foreigners." But suppose an aggressor says: "I am a better man than you, more industrious, more intelligent or more cultured. I could run your affairs more efficiently than you yourself. It is right that the superior should rule the inferior, and you yourself will be benefited by becoming my servant." It is darkly rumoured that certain Germans said something like that in 1914. The victim of aggression can support

his preference for doing what he likes only by asserting a mystical right as against theft or foreign rule.

Further, the mystical ideas of right, which are the support of order, usually attach themselves to some explanation of the central mystery of human life, that is to some religion. Chesterton has well said that, historically, men have never begun by saying: "If you do not hit me I will not hit you," but have always said: "We must not hit one another in the Holy Place."

We need not here debate why rules of conduct should go off into mystery. Suffice it that mysteries are all about us, that to ignore them is the mark of stupidity; to discover them the mark of intelligence. Many, if not most of them, have nothing to do with religion; there are the mysteries of number by which every figure could be indefinitely multiplied and every fraction indefinitely subdivided until the mathematician died of exhaustion; there is the mystery of space, time and motion; there is the mystery of human identity, by which an individual begins as a baby, turns into a youth, and finally into an old man, changing his chemical composition with every mouthful of food and yet remaining from birth to death the same person. But the greater mysteries are religious: Whence do we come? Whither do we go? Above all, why are we here?

At all events, moral order within a state is the care of its priests, or—if the reader prefers—its "ministers of religion" or "moral teachers," and the task of the soldier is to safeguard that moral order by extending it into the physical world. The alliance between priest and soldier has been stated in many ways; there is an old French proverb that the Devil fears the sabre and the Holy Water sprinkler: "Le Diable craint le sabre et le goupillon." To Sherman's saying: "The legitimate object of war is a more perfect peace," Fuller has added: "The legitimate object of peace is a more perfect man."

To this again we may add : The study of and approach toward human perfection is the object of religion.

The moral like the physical order must continually resist attack ; just as in every group there are some too stupid or too wicked to refrain from crime, so every man or woman has in them a streak of anarchy rebellious to all command except that of the instinctive appetites, especially the appetite for power, the desire to domineer. So St. Paul praises virtue as " The whole armour of God," and the Word—meaning not the arbitrary grunts or squeals of this or that language, but the reason, the intelligence carving out ideas—he calls a sword. The propaganda of 1914-1918 has reminded us that the Word is a weapon ; indeed, it is the weapon which has struck down the societies that seem to have been destroyed by conquest ; either they have forsaken their ideas under the discouragement of defeat and the prestige of the invader's victory, or else those ideas were already dead, so that the conqueror only cleaned up a rubbish heap, as Napoleon swept away the feudal privileges of Europe. If the conquered keep their soul alive, then like the Poles they survive. All order even in the mind must be an order of battle.

More and more men, seeing the dangers we are in through our unhappy divisions, begin to realize that at bottom those divisions are moral. While every nation says, " My right must override all other rights," there can be no peace of order between nations. While those who call themselves spokesmen for one class say to the others, " You have no right which we will respect," there can be no peace of order between classes.

We are compelled to seek order through unity. We have attempted a world federation, the League of Nations, but every day makes it clearer that a world state is little better than a mechanical robot. It must continually strike against the living patriotism of this or that nation.



and whenever it does so it will break as a rotten branch snaps against seasoned oak ; no such legalistic and hypocritical sham will cement the divisions of Christendom. But the mere word "Christendom" suggests an alternative ; instead of a political and legalistic federation clashing against national patriotisms, we might preserve and transcend these local loyalties within a reunited Christian Church.

It was the Church, building upon that which was good and beautiful in pagan antiquity, that formed our culture. She not only limited war, the kindly shadow of her cathedrals safeguarded the labour of the guild, the good cheer of the tavern, the permanence of marriage and the home. We have left her only to wade deeper and deeper in the blood first of Religious then of Democratic massacres. With the cathedral once in ruins, an icy blast from chaos has swept everywhere, half choking the jollity of the tavern in a dry dust of teetotal fanaticism, swinging the labourer and all society to and fro on a chain of unrestricted competition between the greed of our booms and the puzzled misery of our slumps, whirling away wives from husbands and parents from children in the cruel eddies of divorce. The senseless fury of our butcheries is only the lurid measure of our discontent.

Sooner or later our confused ferment will subside. Either the commercial rich will produce men who are gentlemen in the old sense, part statesmen and part soldiers, or else our increasing disorder itself will recall the man-at-arms, compelling us to rally around leaders who are natural fighting men. In either case the soldier will return, scattering the democratic hordes and supplanting the rich traders who are the plutocratic masters of democracy ; he will impose order and will rule. But whether his orders will be just and his rule happy we shall not know until we see whether he has

the priest by his side. For religion not only commands the governed to obey, it also commands the ruler not to oppress.

The obstacles to a reunited Christendom are very great. Local interest, inertia, routine and the rubbish of dead traditions block the way. But our need of reunion is greater still.

Let us map out the terrain. Let us imagine a man from Mars, remote from our controversies, but well knowing our civilization and its history, called in to advise. How would he estimate the situation? He would say: The Empire and the Church made you. But long ago the Empire sank to a name; Napoleon, who might have restored it, over-reached himself and has left no successors. The murderous fallacies of democracy and naturalism, emphasizing that part of us which we share with the animals, are indeed vulnerable to purely intellectual attack from humanist scholars concerned with that which is not animal but specifically human in man. At the same time humanism alone, without a God, can inspire no loyalty around which moral order might rally: the humanist must remain an auxiliary skirmishing usefully on the flanks of the legions that march under the banner of the cross. The Christian Faith has not perished, and not for a moment has any other Faith appeared capable of replacing it; except for Japan no great power on earth stands outside the Christian tradition. Even the atheist Moscow Jews cannot neglect the Church, they at least pay it the compliment of persecution. If throughout the world faith has cooled, is that any wonder among the disunity of those who call themselves Christians? The wonder is that anything of your religion has survived its own dissensions. You must restore the religious unity of Christendom within the Universal Church of Christ.

Next he would turn to our religious divisions, noting first that three great powers, the United States, England and Prussianized Germany belong to the Protestant culture. He would find the men of that culture concentrated upon "practicality," that is immediate results irrespective of logic and of principle. He would remember their great nineteenth-century successes, passing in review their economic and industrial development. Nevertheless, he would see weaknesses in that culture which are no accidents but a part of its inmost nature. Protestantism began as a protest against real and admitted evils, hence its concern for immediate things and its astonishing self-satisfaction. Meanwhile, the protestors agreed with each other only in rejecting tradition: hence their movement remains essentially negative, as the fabled Ulsterman who on his deathbed, asked to give some sign that he died a Christian, used his last lungs to cry: "To Hell with the Pope!" On the positive side their only authority has been mere individual interpretation of scripture; hence they are for ever splitting up into new sects, like the "fissiparous" low forms of life which propagate by breaking into pieces. In its youth each sect is warmed by a white-hot enthusiasm, that of the Mormons and Christian Scientists to-day is of the same sort as that of the Calvinists three hundred years ago; but so strained a mood cannot last, and the ideas of each new body are more and more eccentric to men and women of education and culture. Therefore on its religious side the Protestant culture is in decay; its churches still hold up their numbers, but their theology has faded to a vague, humanitarian benevolence, administered by bewildered ministers whose authority has gone. Protestant ethics have shrunk to barbaric taboos against the adornments or little amusements of life, cigarettes, wine or whatnot, which provincial taboos meet with an increasing resistance,

especially among the young ; the rising hatred of the American people for Prohibitionists is own brother to the contempt of the American soldiers of 1917-1918 for the Y.M.C.A. Gospellers.

Meanwhile, on the political side Protestantism is the direct source of our modern chaos. Its appearance marked a great flood-tide of nationalism ; since moral authority must go somewhere, that which slipped from the hands of the quarrelling sects strengthened the prestige of Governments. Protestant contempt for the traditional sacraments of Christendom weakened the sacramental tie between kings and their peoples, so that the eighteenth-century democratic movement—on its destructive side—was Protestantism's child. Universal suffrage, private judgement as against tradition in the State, followed naturally from private judgement as against traditional authority in religion. Further, the localism of the Protestant bodies exaggerated nationalism, setting up each province of Christendom as a law unto itself—a "chosen people" like the ancient Jews whose Old Testament so coloured Protestant thought. Worst of all, for kings and nobles Protestantism could only substitute traders, not men of the sword but men of the purse, dedicated to gain, believing that the duty of man was to "make" as much money as he could, consumers and not producers of public order. Thus the Protestant societies led in removing the medieval restrictions upon economic competition, and thereby produced vast masses of proletarians owning nothing—exactly the condition which the medieval restrictions had successfully prevented. Further, the Protestant absorption in economics led to materialism, a belief that only tangible and measurable things were important to mankind. Materialism powerfully divided society, which only common beliefs can unite ; if a man must share the money in his purse he has not more but less, while if

he finds another who shares his belief he believes not less but more. Recently acquisitiveness and materialism have produced their own nemesis and caricature in Communism, a materialist religion of hatred and slavery professing to satisfy the physical needs of all.

By mere dispassionate analysis of ideas and their social consequences, our visitor from another planet would conclude that Protestantism can produce no moral order capable of healing the bloody hatreds of our time.

At the same time he would notice hopeful signs of transformation within the Protestant culture. Taking first the unmistakably Protestant bodies, he would find almost all tending toward ritual and toward symbolism in architecture. He would note that superficially these changes involved no change in doctrine, but merely an increase in education and artistic culture. Nevertheless, he would see in every scrap of ecclesiastical millinery a tiny step toward sacramentalism—the traditional sanctities of altar and shrine that are older than history. Moreover, he would pause over the Anglican Communion, including the Church of England, the oddly-named “Protestant Episcopalian” Church in America, and the other Anglican bodies. It would need no long study of Anglicanism to discover its peculiar position; superficially part of the Protestant culture, the Church of England, none the less claims to be no new body but a part of the historic Church, descending in unbroken succession from the apostles. Moreover, traditionalism becomes more and more her principle of life as the Protestant opinions surviving within her ebb steadily away.

More hopefully, our man from Mars would next turn to the Roman Catholic culture, whose position he would judge somewhat as follows: Its Church united under the Pope, the Roman Catholic world includes

two great powers, France and Italy, and two other states of international importance, Spain and Poland. Its nationalisms and democracy equal those of the Protestant culture; indeed, France led Europe to democracy, but at the same time its intellect and its economics have gone their own way. Against the Protestant passion for immediate results, practicality, pragmatism, etc., the Roman Catholic culture has stood firmly for clear thought and accurate logic. If its industries cannot equal those of the Protestant societies, neither does it suffer so much from their vile cancer of proletarianism; its social order is firmly based upon free land-owning peasantries. Less easily seduced by the delusive hope of speculative riches, its peoples are content to work and save. Over against the vast incoherence of the Protestant world, its unity and order are impressive. Unhappily, the Roman Catholic culture has its own grave weaknesses: abuse of logic and religious despotism. Its love for neatness of reasoning has too often blinded it to fact. We saw in the last chapter how so fine an intellect as that of Foch, tricked with a mathematical appearance of proof, long believed that modern fire-power would strengthen the offensive in war! Reasoning from imperfect assumptions, the correctness of his logic merely magnified his error. In the political sphere the same taste for absolute logic makes for absolute power; no logic is more compelling than that of despotism unless it be that of anarchy. The point might be illustrated from the history of the French Bourbon monarchy, the chief political achievement of the distinctively Roman Catholic societies, but it is best seen in the Papacy itself.

The resistance to Papal absolutism—taking the forms of Eastern Orthodoxy, Protestantism, and Latin Anti-Clericalism—has reduced the Pope, once the First Bishop of all Christendom, to the despot of a minority

of the Christian world. As far as canon law can make him so, the Roman Catholic layman is subordinate to his priest, the priest to his bishop, and the bishop to the Pope. Financially responsible to no one, the Vatican has never publicly audited its budget, but disposes of its vast revenues in perfect autocracy. The canon law has been so centralized that for many important cases the Vatican courts, instead of courts of appeal, have become courts of first instance. Such are the temptations of absolute power, that we need not wonder to find such a system now and then begetting corruption and abuse; on the contrary, it speaks volumes for the wisdom and rectitude of most Roman Catholic leaders that the results have not been far worse.

Nevertheless, the fruits of Papal centralization have been bitter enough. In the eleventh century it separated the single Roman Patriarchate of the West from the four Patriarchates of the East. Throughout the later Middle Ages and early sixteenth century Papal financial demands were the scandal of Europe; together with the — happily temporary — personal degradation of the Papal office, those demands led directly to the Reformation, leaving Western or Latin Christendom, already separated from the Christian East, still further divided against itself. When the Papacy replied to the Protestants by centralizing itself still further, its claims and those of its clergy provoked strong anti-clerical movements throughout most of the Roman obedience, and this hostility to the political power of the clergy, moderate under the kings, became more bitter under the democracies. In the Latin countries anti-clericalism has become largely atheist, and has led to legalized robbery of Church property, which in turn has increased Papal centralization still more, because of the dependence of the local clergy upon the Papacy as against their persecuting Governments. The old kings both curbed

the political power of their local Churches and defended the traditional liberties of those Churches against Papal encroachment. In France the anti-clericalism of the Third Republic is considered the chief merit of the régime ; the average Frenchman, after heartily abusing the universally unpopular parliamentary politicians, will qualify his condemnation by saying that at least the Republic has saved his country from government by priests. In the English-speaking countries, in spite of the growing incoherence of Protestantism and the new intellectual activity among Roman Catholics, it is not certain that their communion is increasing in numbers ; apparently the converts are equalled if not outnumbered by those who fall away. In the United States most of those who leave the Church give the financial demands of the clergy among their reasons for going. Confronted with the loss of the Orthodox Christian East, of the Protestants, and of the vehement Latin anti-clericals, supporters of the present centralization of the Roman Catholic Church must either call most of mankind perverse and blind or else they must suspect that their own system might be improved.

Yet in the Roman Catholic culture, as in the Protestant, our interplanetary visitor would discover reasons for encouragement. He would rejoice at the new intellectual vigour within the Church, so different from the slackness of a century and a half ago, and he would anticipate a steady weakening of clerical domination before the rising tide of well-educated and zealous laity. Notwithstanding the ever-present dread of "scandal" and the unifying effect of standing shoulder to shoulder against Protestantism, he would note plenty of resentment at the concentration of ecclesiastical power and wealth within the Vatican. From faithful Roman Catholics in Europe he would hear the frequent wish for greater local control of Church life. He would



even come upon occasional protests against the scandals of the Papal judiciary; in the writing of so notable a champion of the Church as Belloc he might read acid, resentful little comments such as "the annulment of marriage . . . was a practice abused, and . . . is indeed abused to this day" (*History of England*, vol. ii, p. 22-3, published 1927 shortly after the notorious Marlborough and Marconi annulments). Doubtless his attention would be called to the repeated and significant saying of the great Cardinal Mercier that the Church had greatly centralized her organization without ceasing to be the Church, and might decentralize herself again if she chose.

Finally, having surveyed the Protestant and Roman Catholic worlds, our man from Mars would consider the third Christian culture, the Eastern Orthodox. He would appreciate the isolation of the Christian East, its separate calendar, its alphabets differing not only from the Latin letters common to Protestant and Papalist, but also from one Orthodox nation to another. He would see the Church in what was yesterday the great Orthodox power, Russia, subjected to a persecuting atheist tyranny. But at the same time he would not be long in learning that Orthodoxy combines unbroken faithfulness to tradition with elasticity of thought; Orthodox leaders would tell him that the law of the Church is not that of logic but that of love. He would be touched by the joyful mysticism of the Eastern Church; indeed, that spirit might explain to him why centuries of non-Christian rule by Turks and Tartars have never yet shaken the Faith of a single East-European people, which bit of history would make him slow to believe predictions of the approaching disappearance of Orthodoxy in Russia. He would observe the present tendency of the Orthodox, while preserving the essence of their own traditions, to familiarize

themselves with Western thought; perhaps he would hope that—at last—the Bolshevik terror in Russia may have some such effect in that unhappy country. If the Bolshevik Jews to-day have shaken the Russian masses out of their inertia and are teaching them to admire the worst results of Western civilization, large scale industry and the worship of the machine, perhaps those masses may end by appreciating some of the riper fruits of Western culture. Aside from such distant hopes, the growing friendship between the Orthodox and Anglican Churches, with its bright promise of inter-communion, would figure in any survey of Christendom; when that promise shall be realized the first step will have been taken toward a reunited Christendom.

Our imaginary visitor from another planet, having summed up our condition, would take his leave. So dispassionate an analysis can indicate to us the road to be taken, but cannot inspire us to the effort of the journey. It can say: "Yes, your civilization, if it is not to tear itself to pieces in international and inter-class war, must recover its spiritual unity. Only religion can resolve your discords into order, and no non-Christian religion has touched the men of your race. You must restore the Universal Church or perish." But having said this, analysis must be silent, for it can give us neither the wisdom nor the fire needed for the task. These we must find for ourselves. Not even desire for the benefits of unity can by itself heal our divisions; a Christian order will return only through faithful obedience to the Master who in the night in which He was betrayed prayed for His followers that they all might be one.

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Suppose a man, seeing clearly the gravity of the issue, were to despair. He might say: Our culture is

finished, the intellectual, artistic, and moral perversions known as modernism have gone too far to be stopped. The swine's hoof of democracy must soon stamp the last fruits of our glorious inheritance down into the mud of barbarism. That done, it will remain only for the democrats to go on devouring each other by mass massacre, precisely as the sow gobbles up her own piglets. No doubt the scattered bodies of Christians are again drawing together, but what of it? Granted that Protestantism is turning sacramental, that Anglicanism is in a fair way to unite with Orthodoxy, granted that the Malines Conversations have shown that a resolute Pope resolved upon any sacrifice except that of conscience for the sake of unity, could make the dogma of Papal infallibility itself far less of a barrier than it now appears, all that is unimportant because Christianity is dying. Even if its separated Churches were to unite, they are too decrepit for their marriage to bring forth children. European man is passing out of his Christian phase: no longer erect and observing the sky, he crouches over a test-tube in a laboratory, applying what is left of his intellect to the mere cataloguing of physical sequences, and waiting for some chance mob of proletarian robots, led by an atheist Jew boiling with ancestral hatred of Christian things, to come in and knock him on the head. The Christian Faith is only a lovely and sacred but defenceless tomb. Who shall call upon its dry bones to burst their coffins and live?

We of Christendom cannot make light of such a challenge. We well know that to-day the futilitarians sweep the field. As these lines are written a chance clipping announces that a prominent woman writer, a well-known contemporary critic, identifies soldiering with sadism. Yes, as I live by bread. So and so, she pitifully laments, "was a conscientious objector . . . these (war) years must have been a severe ordeal, for

his repudiation of sadism was unsupported by membership in any political body with internationalist sympathies." By the Lord, 1914-1918 was a severer ordeal for the men that held the line. We have, indeed, travelled far when one whose favourite argument is to attribute perversion to those who have the honour to disagree with her, is allowed to insult the sacrifice of our dead. And yet her words express, only more nastily than is usual, a typical futilitarian idea heard every day.

Nor can the Christian wrap himself in illusion concerning himself. He well knows that he has not only the shortcomings common to men, but also other weaknesses peculiar to himself—as though he were the Devil's favourite target. The old practice of confession leaves a man little self-complacency.

Nevertheless, we Christians can make answer: If we are not gods neither are we beasts. We are men. Free to choose whom we will serve, we would rather lose in a good cause than win under some idol even baser than we. If, indeed, Christendom must perish, if the Church be doomed to remain divided or to come together only in death, if the men of to-morrow will see in the universe only blind, mechanical force or meaningless delusion, at least these things shall happen only after our puny resistance has been crushed. For we are under the orders of a Captain who has commanded us to fight but has not promised victory.

But though we have no promise of victory, neither can we be certain of coming defeat. Over and over again throughout Christian history the inevitable did not happen. After the hopeless despair of Good Friday the Church began with a resurrection from the dead, and ever since she has had the habit of rising from what seemed to be death. Why was the last and fiercest of the Roman persecutions followed by the triumph

under Constantine? In the worst of the Dark Ages what inspired those desperate rallies that saved us from Saracen and Viking? After the long agony of the Religious Wars, who doubted that the laughter of the polite eighteenth-century sceptics would blow out the last flickering altar candle? Most astonishing of all, how comes it that our myriad divisions have not altogether destroyed the Faith? Those who know the Church's long story of battle against odds, her stubborn endurance and her sweeping reconquests, will not soon expect her end.

We or our sons may yet restore a Christian order. The momentary mood of tired cynicism will pass like any other, our fog of bewilderment and confusion will vanish, and better things will return as surely as morning and the clean nor-wester. For better things are normal to man. Courage and honour, although just now unfashionable, will not disappear; there is something in us that answers to their drum beat, to the voice of Dr. Johnson rumbling: "Courage, sir, is not, strictly speaking, a Christian virtue, but without it a man is in danger of losing all the others," to Chesterton singing:

"And I heard above bannerets blown the intolerant  
trumpets of honour,  
That usher with iron laughter the coming of Christian  
arms."

These high virtues of the soldier are not his alone, he does but cultivate that which in its own fashion supports honesty and self-respect; every woman who has borne a child knows that there is something in courage, and every constant wife can tell the promise-breaking divorcees of the world that there is such a thing as honour.

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The Faith of our fathers was founded in reason. Because the sword was the most effective of hand-to-hand weapons they clothed it with glamour, making it the symbol not only of dominion but of order. Higher still, they made it a symbol of Faith, and the sword that shall establish our peace will have its blade straight and its hilt in the form of the cross.















