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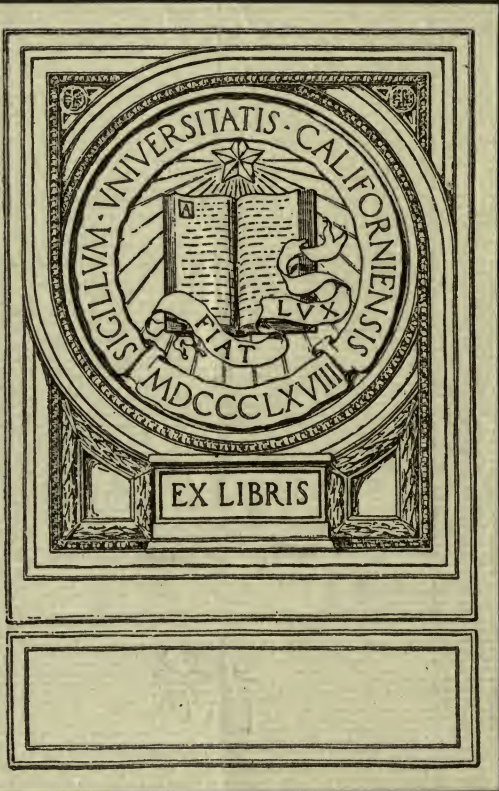
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THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

BY

J. B. MOZLEY, D.D.

LATE CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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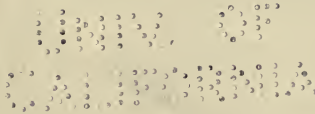
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NOTE

THIS Sermon is reprinted from Dr. Mozley's *University Sermons* in response to repeated applications made to the Publishers by clergymen and others in view of the circumstances of the present time.

January 1915.

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War.

MATTHEW XXIV. 7.

"Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom."

THE relations of Christianity to war are certainly at first sight an extraordinary enigma. For what do we see? those who are spiritually one with another, and brethren in Christ, killing each other deliberately, on an immense scale, by weapons and engines which have been long and systematically improved with a view to the highest success in destruction; the contrivance of which indeed has strained to the very utmost the invention and ingenuity of Christians. Nor is this mutual slaughter, by the law of the Church, the slightest break in Christian union and fellowship; the Communion of the Church absolutely unites one side spiritually with the other. When then, having first looked upon Christians fighting one another with the eye of custom, taking it as a matter of course, wanting no explanation, we have suddenly become alive to the strangeness and startlingness of the fact; we then turn right round and forthwith suppose that there must be some very *extraordinary* explanation. But there is no other than an ordinary explanation to give.

The Christian recognition of the right of war was contained in Christianity's original recognition of *nations*, as constituting at the same time the division and the structure

of the human world. Gathering up the whole world into one communion spiritually, the new universal society yet announced its coalescence with mankind's divisions politically; it was one body of one kind, in many bodies of another kind. It did not interfere with the established fabric of human society; its ancient inclosures, those formations of nature or events which collected mankind into separate masses, those great civil corporations into which mankind was distributed; in a word with *nations*; it gathered up into itself not only the unions but the chasms of the human race, all that separated as well as all that united; all that divided, and by dividing created variety and individuality in our human world. The nation was one of those wholes to which the individual man belonged, and of which he was a part and member; it existed prior to Christianity, and was admitted into it with other natural elements in us; Christians were from the outset members of States; and the Church could no more ignore the State than it could the family. And as one of those wholes to which the individual belonged, a sentiment and affection attached to it; Christianity admitted this sentiment; it gave room for national feeling, for patriotism, for that common bond which a common history creates, for loyalty, for pride in the grandeur of the nation's traditions, for joy in its success.

There is indeed a jealousy in some schools of thought of this national sentiment, as belonging to members of the Church Catholic, as if it were a sentiment of nature which grace had obliterated; as if a universal spiritual society had left far behind such lower rudiments of humanity, and it were a mark of a relapse into heathenism to express any particular interest in your own country. The universal society claims the whole individual affection of the man; the Catholic has ceased to be patriotic, and

become a citizen of the Church only. This is the idea, but just as there are no two more different landscapes than the same under altered skies; no two ideas are wider apart than the same under different circumstances for realising them. In Heaven, all is one spiritual society only; but here, if besides the Church there is the nation, the effacement of the national sentiment is an artificial and violent erasion of a fact of nature. We see all the difference in such a case between the vision of an angel and a fanatical or pedantic theory. It appears to belong to such theories to impoverish the minds which they absorb. Nature punishes with dryness the spirits that reject her; even their spiritual citizenship issues forth stamped with utter insipidity, a piece of the most technical, barren, and jejune mechanism.

The question, indeed, whether Christianity admits of the national sentiment is part of the general question whether Christianity adopts nature. To one class of zealous religious minds everything connected with nature has looked suspicious; poetry, art, philosophy, have not only had the taint of original evil which they bear, but they have only and simply appeared sinful. And to this view of them it has been replied that Christianity does not abolish, but purify and consecrate nature. Nature enriches, nay, makes the material which religion is to penetrate. Christianity is not a flame which burns in a pure vacuum and a void. The soul has natural feelings and affections for it to feed upon; as the rich unguents of the wood feed the flame. So with respect to the national sentiment. It is part of the great inheritance of nature. The nation is one of those natural wholes to which man belongs, as the family is another. He is annexed to it; and a sentiment arises out of that annexion. He belongs to it by the same great law of association

though in a further stage of it, upon which the tie of the family depends.

It may be said that the tie of country is not inculcated in the New Testament, which, on the other hand, everywhere speaks of us as members of the Church which it contemplates extending over the whole world. But if it does not expressly form an article of teaching in the New Testament, we still cannot argue from the omission as if it were rejection, and gather from the absence of direct injunction to it that it is obsolete under the Gospel. It must be observed that the argument of Hooker, by which he met the Puritan formula—that in the matter of Church order and ceremonial whatever was not enjoined in Scripture was wrong, applies to the *ethics* of Scripture as well. Hooker said that Scripture, by leaving out, did not *condemn*, but only sent us back to the ground of reason and natural law. And to those who would argue that Scripture prohibited some affection, or sentiment, or bond, because it omitted the injunction of it, the answer is the same. The New Testament, *e.g.*, says very little about duties to equals, and enlarges upon duties to inferiors, upon charity, condescension, and compassion to the poor, the sick, and the afflicted. But we may not suppose from this that duties to equals are not very important duties, not even that they are not the more trying class of duties, and the most pregnant with discipline, and that the society of equals is not a more searching ordeal to the character than intercourse with the poor, who do not try our pride or challenge our jealousy. Nor may we suppose that if Scripture omits special injunctions to patriotism, it therefore cancels or prohibits it. It only sends us back to the law of nature and reason on this head.

The Christian Church then recognised and adopted nations, with their inherent rights; took them into her

inclosure. But war is one of these rights, because under the division of mankind into distinct nations it becomes a necessity. Each of these is a centre to itself, without any amenableness to a common centre. Questions of right and justice must arise between these independent centres; these cannot be decided except by mutual agreement or force, and when one fails the other only remains—not that it necessarily settles questions rightly indeed, because it is force and not right which decides; but the right side makes the trial. In the act, then, of recognising and including within herself, nations, collecting within one spiritual area so many different independent political sources, the Christian Church necessarily admitted also war within her pale. Together with the nations there comes also within the Church the process of *national* settlement of questions—that which in nations corresponds to judicial proceedings between individuals—*i. e.*, war. For, if Christians only use, in resorting to it, a natural right, the use of this right does not exclude them from the Church; which is to say, that Christians fight each other in full spiritual communion. Such an issue the primitive Christian perhaps hardly foresaw; and could the veil of time have been lifted, and a European field of battle been shown him, he could hardly have believed the picture; but it is still the result of a natural right which Christianity had begun with admitting.

Christianity does not admit, indeed, but utterly denounces and condemns the motives which lead to war,—selfish ambition, rapacity, tyranny, and vanity; but the condemnation of one side is the justification of the other; these very motives give the right of resistance to one side. And, inasmuch as the Church has no authority to decide which is the right side,—is no judge of national questions or of national motives, not having been made by her

Divine Founder a "judge or a divider" in this sphere, the Church cannot, in her ignorance, exclude the other side either. The Church therefore stands neutral, and takes in both sides; that is to say, both sides fight within the bond of Christian unity. She only contemplates war forensically, as a mode of settling national questions, which is justified by the want of any other mode.

This independence of nations is not of course the ultimate account of war, which is human passion and misapprehension, but only an account of it as differing from the peaceable settlement of disputes between individuals.

It must be observed that individuals are enabled to settle their disputes peaceably by the fact of being under a government. It is not that individuals are less pugnacious than nations, but they are differently circumstanced. Being under a government, they are obliged, if they do not voluntarily come to terms, to accept the arbitration of a court. Nobody supposes that the suitors for justice in our courts agree with the judge when he decides against them. They think him in error, but they submit because they are obliged. Every judgment of a court is backed by the whole force of the nation, as against the force of the individual who dissents. Individuals then are able to settle their disputes peaceably, because they are governed by the nation; but nations themselves are not governed by a power above them. This then is the original disadvantage under which nations are placed as regards the settlement of disputes; and in consequence of which, force takes the place of justice in that settlement. We are struck at the very first with the enormous, the almost incredible, contrast between the mode in which individual disputes are decided and that in which national disputes are; they appear hardly to belong to the same age, or to the same world; it is to appearance all the

difference between civilisation and barbarism. And yet the whole difference springs from one distinction in the situation of the two,—that there is a government of individuals provided in the world, but not a government of nations. The aim of the nation in going to war is exactly the same as that of the individual in entering a court; it wants its rights, or what it alleges to be its rights; but it is not in the situation in which the individual is of being compelled by force to accept the decision of a judge upon them. For indeed a court of justice possesses, only in reserve, exactly the same identical force as that which exerts and demonstrates itself in war. It is one and the same force in principle; only in the court it is confessedly superior to all opposition, and therefore has not to make any demonstration of itself, *i.e.*, it acts peaceably. In war it has to make a demonstration, to come out, *i.e.*, its action is warlike. It acts as a contending force; because it is only as a superior force that it is effective; and its superiority can only be proved by contention. It exists in its compressed form in the court, like the genius shut up in the chest in the eastern legend; in war it rises to a colossal height, like the same genius when let out. In civil government the force of final resort is a stationary force at the nation's centre; in war it is a moving and nomad force, going about the world, and showing itself by the proof of the event in battle, in whatever place the occasion may arise; but it is the same force in different circumstances.

It may be observed that such an account of war, as arising from the want of a government over the contending parties, applies in reality to civil wars as well as to national; only in the former case the headship over the contending parties has given way for a time; in the latter it never existed.

So far we have been dealing with wars of self-defence ; but self-defence by no means exhausts the whole rationale of war. Self-defence stands in moral treatises as the formal hypothesis to which all justification of war is reduced ; but this is applying a considerable strain to it. When we go further, we find that there is a spring in the very setting and framework of the world ; whence movements are ever pushing up to the surface—movements for recasting more or less the national distribution of the world ; for establishing fresh centres and forming States into new groups and combinations. Much of this is doubtless owing to the mere spirit of selfish conquest ; for conquest as such is change and reconstruction ; but conquest does not account for the whole of it. There is doubtless an instinctive reaching in nations and masses of people after alteration and readjustment, which has justice in it, and which rises from real needs. The arrangement does not suit as it stands ; there is want of adaptation ; there is confinement and pressure ;—people kept away from each other that are made to be together ; and parts separated that were made to join. Thus there is uneasiness in States, and an impulse rises up toward some new coalition ; it is long an undergrowth of feeling, but at last it comes to the top, and takes steps for putting itself in force. Strong States then, it is true, are ready enough to assume the office of reconstructors, and yet we must admit there is sometimes a natural justice in these movements, and that they are instances of a real self-correcting process which is part of the constitution of the world, and which is coeval in root with the political structure which it remedies. They are an opening out of political nature, seeking relief and proper scope in new divisions ; sometimes reactions in favour of older union, disturbed by later artificial division. In either case it is the frame-

work of society forced by an inward impulse upon its own improvement and rectification. But such just needs when they arise must produce war; because a *status quo* is blind to new necessities, and does not think such an alteration to be for the better, but much for the worse. Then there are wars of progress; they do not belong to the strict head of wars of self-defence; but so far as they are really necessary for the due advantage of mankind and growth of society, they have a justification in that reason. And as Christianity at its commencement took up the national divisions of mankind, with war as a consequence contained in them, so it assumes this root of change and reconstruction with the same consequence—this fundamental tendency to re-settlement, this inherent corrective process in political nature.

It is this judicial character of war, and its lawful place in the world, as a mode of obtaining justice; it is the sacred and serious object, which *so far* attaches to war, which gives war its morality; and enables it to produce its solemnising type of character. For we should keep clear and distinguished in our minds the moral effects of war, and the physical. These are apt to be confounded under such expressions as the horrors of war. But the horrors of war are partly bodily torment and suffering, which are dreadful indeed, but dreadful as misery, not as sin. War is hateful as a physical scourge, like a pestilence or a famine; and again, it is hateful on account of the passions of those who originate it, and on account of the excesses in those who serve in it. But if we take the bad effects on those who serve in it by themselves—it is not impossible to exaggerate them, at least by comparison: for while war has its criminal side, peace is not innocent, and who can say that more sin is not committed every day in every capital of Europe than on the largest field of

battle? We may observe in the New Testament an absence of all disparagement of the military life. It is treated as one of those callings which are necessary in the world, which supplies its own set of temptations, and its own form of discipline.

There is one side indeed of the moral character of war in special harmony with the Christian type—I refer to the spirit of sacrifice which is inherent in the very idea of the individual encountering death for the sake of the body to which he belongs. There is a mediatorial function which pervades the whole dispensation of God's natural providence, by which men have to suffer for each other, and one member of the human body has to bear the burden and participate in the grief of another. And it is this serious and sacred function which consecrates war. Without it, indeed, what would war be but carnage? with it, war displays in spite of its terrible features, a solemn morality. The devotion of the individual to the community stands before us in a form which, while it overwhelms and appals, strikes us with admiration. That the nation may rise the individual sinks into the abyss; he vanishes as a drop that waters the earth, yet he does not murmur; it is his function, it is his appointment, it is an end to which he is ordained; the member is bound to the body, the unit exists for the good of the whole. In a battle itself, a mass moves, advances, wins, and occupies without one look to its gaps; a remorseless identity carries it through it all; the whole is the same, while the parts disappear at every step; and the great unit moves on without a pause to its goal. So it is with the nation itself; before it is the glorified whole, and behind it are the strewn and scattered fragments everywhere upon the ground. The nation pursues its road to greatness, and to the individuals it only belongs to say, *Ave Cæsar, morituri*

te salutant. Thus is history formed, thus do great States rise, and thus is national sentiment cemented. The whole wins at the cost of the members: and the life which is gone, and whose place knoweth it no more; that which is effaced and expunged from the tablet,—the vanishing, the perishing and lost, is the solid rock on which a nation is founded. Certainly one asks—what and who is this mighty enchantress, that can so chain the spirits of mankind, so fascinate, so transport them; that can claim such service, and impose such martyrdom? Is it anything tangible, visible? Can you see the nation, can you feel it? You cannot. It is all around you, but impalpable as the air; you cannot take hold of it; the individuals are there, but the whole eludes your grasp. The nation is nowhere,—an abstraction. It exists only in idea; but ideas are the strongest things in man; they bind him with irresistible force, and penetrate his affections with supreme subtlety.

War is thus elevated by sacrifice; by the mixed effect of glory and grief. There is in it that action just before death which so interests the human mind. All that a man does upon this extreme boundary of vision appeals to us; what he said, or did, how he looked, his expressions and signs upon the verge of that moment awaken our curiosity; it seems as if he were *in* another world, when he was so *near* one. So in war there is just that conflux of splendid action upon the very edge of life, which rouses curiosity and emotion; the figures move upon the extreme line of a shifting horizon, in another instant they are below it; yet the flame of energy mounts the highest upon the moment of the eclipse. There is a miraculous outbreak of power and will, which gathers all into a point; then all is over, and the man is gone. The old Saxon poet, though he deals with war of the rudest kind, though it is

the storming of a mound, or battle of boats up some creek, is carried beyond himself in contemplating the superhuman energies with which life goes out; the action in which man vanishes from earth; and unable to express his emotion in words, fills up his blank intervals with inarticulate sounds, to serve as the signs of what is unutterable. It is true there is inspiration in numbers, in men acting at once and together; it is a marvellous prop to human nature. "The fear of death," says Montaigne, "is got rid of by dying in company; they are no longer astonished at it; they lament no longer." There is a strain in solitary action when a man is thrown upon himself, which is too much for him, fellowship in danger relieves it. And there is excitement doubtless in a crowd, an indefinite mass of human beings; it fills the mind; the spectacle is stirring and absorbing; and a crowd has this singular effect too, that so far from lessening the individual in his own eyes, which one would imagine before that it must do, on the contrary it magnifies him; he appends it to himself; he does not belong so much to it as it to him. Still though it is assisted nature which acts on these occasions, it is nature assisted by natural means. Thus have the scenes of war figured as a kind of supernatural borderland of action, in human sentiment; they have left an impress upon the memorials of the city and the field, and as associations and memories their place would be missed in the roll of the past; while the self-sacrifice of war has also produced a class of virtues which cannot well be spared in the portrait of man.

And as the individual fights *for* a whole, so he fights against a whole too: the hostile aim passes through the individual, as a mere necessary incident, to rest for its real object upon the impalpable generalisation of the nation, which disperses itself in the air, and defies our

grasp. As respects the individuals it is simply a problem of force, which is working itself out, by means indeed of those individuals on each side as exponents, but wholly irrelevant of any regard to them as persons. It works itself out, just as an argument does, nor is there more hatred in force than there is in reasoning. It is a means to an end—that end being the establishment of a right, as the end of an argument is the establishment of a truth. Thus, take two hostile armies, and the total amount of anger is in almost spectral and unearthly contrast with the hideous mass of injury. It is like a tempest without a wind. The enmity is in the two wholes—the abstractions: the individuals are at peace.

But there is a sad counterpart of the self-sacrificing encounter of death on the part of the individual for the body,—the mere animal defiance of death. We know that man can, by custom and constant hardening, be at last rendered callous to the fear of death; but the result sometimes is, so far from a good one in man, a terrible and wild outburst of evil nature in him. So long as he was under the fear of death there was something to restrain him; there was something hanging over him; there was something before him which he dreaded; he was under a yoke and felt it; but when this last check is flung off, then he triumphs wildly in his freedom, and tramples upon law. This is the effect of the exultation of conquering the dread of death in the base and carnal heart; it lets the whole man loose; and in the rule of *corruptio optimi pessima*, just as the victory over the terror of death, in self-devotion produces the highest state of mind, so the mere animal conquest of it produces the lowest.

Is war to be regarded then as an accident of society, which may some day be got rid of, or as something rooted

in it? Imagination earnestly stretches forward to an epoch when war will cease; and first, it has been said that the progress of society will put an end to war. But, in the first place, human nature consists of such varied contents that it is very difficult to say that any one principle, such as what we call progress, can control it. Old feeling starts up again, when it was thought obsolete, and there is much that is wild and irregular in man, however we may think we have subjugated and tamed him. There is an outburst when we least expect it. "Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook? will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?" "I have never seen," says the great philosopher I have quoted, speaking of himself as the human creature, and with that roughness which is peculiar to him, "I have never seen," he says, "a more evident monster or miracle in the world than myself: a man grows familiar with all strange things by time and custom; but the more I visit and the better I know myself, the more does my deformity astonish me, and the less I understand of myself." Therefore the pretension of any one principle like that of material progress to control entirely this being, to make a covenant with him, and take him as a servant for ever, is on the very face of it an absurdity. But what are we to say when progress produces war, instead of stopping it? It is true that progress has stopped wars arising from that petty class of causes—court and family intrigues. So much popular power has done. But if progress stops war on one side, it makes it on another, and war is its instrument. Certainly it would be as easy to justify the crusades on the principle of self-defence, as it would be to justify two of the three great European wars of the last dozen years on that principle. They were wars of progress; wars of a natural recon-

structing scope. So in the East war has been war of progress; forcing two empires that have shut themselves up, and excluded themselves from the society of mankind, out of their artificial imprisonment and insulation, and obliging them to come out into the world, and take at any rate some part and place in it.

But again, and principally—the progress of society doubtless increases by comparison the barbarous aspect of war as an instrument; but does it provide any other instrument by which nations can gain their rights? Any other process of obtaining justice, however rough this one may be, and however chance its verdicts?

The natural remedy for war then would appear to be a government of nations; but this would be nothing short of a universal empire, and can this be accomplished by any progress? It is indeed a physical improbability. The Church, indeed, in the Middle Ages put forth pretensions to this power; the Roman Empire was in its day an approach to it; and so are all large conquests in their degree, keeping the nations under them distinct, but only partially self-governing, and depending on a centre. Nor is the dream of a universal government or empire confined entirely to such shapes, or to such sources. Great popular causes, powerful tides of opinion, as they spread and advance over the world, tend to level the barriers of nations, to reduce patriotic sentiment, and to throw open the whole of human society into one vast area, in which the interests of collective humanity alone reign. The first French revolution was such a movement; it bound together the disciples of revolutionary philosophy all over the world, and tended to erect one immense brotherhood, whose common ground was stronger and more connecting than their differencing one; the union of ideas more forcible than the separation of country. At the present

time that vast common fellowship, co-extensive with the world—the great uniting bond of labour, man's universal yoke, has produced a move in a like direction; and even in Spain, which so long idolised its own blood, the International Operative Society proclaimed, upon the late question of the election to the throne, a total freedom from prejudice, and entire indifference to the distinction of nations, and whether their king was to be Spanish or a foreigner. But whatever approach may occasionally take place toward a relaxation of the national tie, the alternative is still an inexorable one between independent nations and a universal empire; and as a universal empire is impossible the division of nations only remains. The waves of universalism can only dash themselves in vain against that rock; they cannot possibly shake the seat of distributed power and government; and by a fortunate necessity nations must ever form the barriers and breakwaters in that boundless ocean of humanity, which would otherwise drive with irresistible and wild force in the direction of particular great movements and ideas; they are the groins which divide the beach, whose immeasurable expanse of sands would otherwise crowd up into overwhelming piles and masses.

We thus fall back again upon independent States, which must decide their own rights, otherwise they are not full and integral States; they have not that autonomy, that freedom from all subordinateness to an authority above them, that self-sufficiency, which the peremptory logic of our well-known statutes claims for them in the statement that, "by divers old authentic histories and chronicles, it is manifestly declared and expressed that this kingdom of England is an empire, and so hath been accepted by the world, with plenary, whole, and entire power, authority, prerogative, and jurisdiction, and final

determination in all causes." But such States meet equal rights in other States, for the conflict of which no solution is provided but war.

The idea has risen up indeed, at various times, of a modification of the autonomy of States by the erection of a court of arbitration, which would be a universal government upon this particular point; but though no well guided State would disturb the world for secondary points, or refuse a neutral's judgment upon them, it is difficult to see how, upon a question vitally touching its own basis and safety, it could go upon any other sense of justice than its own. Take an individual, what a natural keen sense he has of the justice of his own case. How he is penetrated through and through with its grounds and reasons, into the full acquaintance with which he has grown gradually and naturally, having had time to see the facts in all their relations. An individual then certainly does accept the judgment of a neutral on his cause in the person of a judge, and surrender his own sense of the justice of his case; but he is compelled to do so. A nation is not compelled to do this; if it doubts then whether an indifferent spectator who would have to apply a hard, forced attention to its cause would do adequate justice to its rights, it is asking a great deal that it should give up its own judgment of its own rights to the judgment of that other. A nation knows it does justice to its own case; it cannot be sure that another will do so. It is not partiality to self alone upon which the idea is founded that you see your own cause best. There is an element of reason in this idea; your judgment even appeals to you, that you must grasp most completely *yourself* what is so near to you, what so intimately relates to you; what, by your situation, you have had such a power of searching into. The case is indeed something analogous to an indi-

vidual surrendering his own moral judgment to another. He may do so if he is not certain; but if he feels certain it is almost a contradiction to do so.

It may be said, why may not a nation give up its rights on a principle of humility and generosity as the individual does? But to impose such humility as this on a nation would be to impose on it something quite different in ethical constitution from the same humility in an individual. An individual's abandonment of his rights is what the very words grammatically mean—the individual sacrificing himself; but a nation's abandonment of its rights means the individual sacrificing the nation; for the nation only acts through individuals. The individual is humble not for himself but for another, which is a very different thing.

It is thus that every prospect which the progress of society appears to open of eradicating war from the system of the world, closes as soon as we examine it. It may indeed be admitted that even under all the existing defects of the world's system, a great diminution of war might arise from an improvement in one particular in the public mind of nations; their judgment in estimating the strength of rival national causes and movements. In an age, *e.g.*, when the clouds of war gather round the cause of national concentration, the interested neighbour-state that is conscious its own relative greatness is challenged by it, should be able to calculate the strength of that cause and its susceptibility of resistance. We in this country, *e.g.*, have long had this measuring faculty with respect to the strength of our own internal public movements and causes; an acute sense of their growth, and when they reach a point at which they cannot be resisted; and thus civil war has been forestalled by opportune concession. Did such a subtle perception exist in nations with respect to the

strength of these national causes outside of them, nations too could reasonably judge when these reached an irresistible strength ; and so war would be forestalled between nations.

It is the lack of such a perception as this to which we may trace the cause of the recent terrible war close to our shores. In that case, on the one side there were the fragments of a mighty nation determined to reunite ; and on the other side there was a splendid nation, accustomed to supremacy, resolved to prevent a combination which would challenge that proud position. But to stop that reunion was an impossibility ; that reunion was rooted in the action of a century, in a whole age of gradual drawing close ; it was too deeply fixed in the will of the people, had too strong a hold over their hearts ; it had turned the point of resistance. Yet this was what the other nation did not see ; one man alone saw it, and he was its Ruler. It came out afterwards, indeed, that even he had not the knowledge of particulars ; but he had that intuitive judgment and fine balancing faculty which sometimes acts in its place. He stood upon the shore, and to his importuning subjects, who bid him order back the wave, replied that he could not. But his will was not equal to his penetration, he did what, a thousand times before him, the acute, the discriminating, and the philosophic have done, gave way to the impetuous and blind ; and he had soon to retire from the uproar and conflict of empire, to meditate in solitude and isolation on the use of being wise.

But though nations may advance in judgment, what sign is there that the progress of society ever can alter the existing *plan* of the world, or rather want of plan, from which war comes—viz., a want of all head to the nations and states of the world,—that progress can give natural society a vertex which nature has not given ?

Are we then, progress failing us, to look for a cessation of war from the side of Christianity? The question has often indeed been asked tauntingly, and it is a favourite fact which is called in evidence against revelation—Why has not Christianity done away with war? But if an alteration in the system of the world would be necessary in order to stop war; if there is an irregularity in the structure of natural society, a void and hiatus in the fabric as it is—that is no deficiency which Christianity is required to correct. It is no part of the mission of Christianity to reconstruct the order of the world; that is not its task, or its function. It assumes the world's system and its want of system; its system as regards individuals, its unsystematic condition as regards nations; it does not profess to provide another world for us to live in: Yet this is the work which those in reality impose upon it who ask triumphantly, why has not Christianity stopped war? Progress has not done it, within whose sphere it rather is. Without indeed any correction of the structure of the world, a universal change in the temper of mankind would stop war. But Christianity is not remedial to the whole of human nature, but only to those hearts that receive it.

It might, indeed, as well be asked—Why has not Christianity done away with civil government as carried on by force, and by the infliction of punishment, chains, and death? Yet we do not blame it for not having substituted love for compulsion here; and why should we blame it for not having done so in the case of nations? War and civil force are branches of one common stock, however wide apart in their mode of demonstration. Civil government with its sword is a kind of war with man; war, with its settlement of questions, is a kind of government of man. Can we indeed historically separate civil

government and war, with reference to the ultimate basis of the force which each respectively applies? Civil government has practically arisen out of conquest, which collected the scattered fragments of human society together, bound together independent tribes, and congregated mankind in a sufficient mass to admit of it. And yet, though apparently war yields neither to the secular principle nor the religious, but keeps its place in the future obstinately, some go on thinking of this world as advancing to some indefinite state of perfection.

Prophecy indeed has foretold the time when nations should beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But this total change pictured by the prophet does not in truth apply to war only; it applies just as much to the civil government of the world. He foresees a reign of universal love, when men will no longer act by terror and compulsion; but this is just as much against the chains and death of civil government as it is against war. Prophecy has two sides. On one side it says, a great renovation is coming, the slough of inveterate corruption will be cast off, peace and love will reign, and there will be no more war. On the other hand, prophecy says, it will always be the same—things will go on as they do—the world will not change; man will not cease to sin; iniquity will abound up to the very end; and there shall be wars; nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. Such are the two voices. Separately, the one is all vision, the other all matter of fact. But we cannot take these two prophecies separately; we must take them together; they are two sides of a whole. Prophecy speaks as a whole, of which the oppositions are interpretations. A kingdom of peace there will be; but

when the prophet seems to associate this paradisaical era with earth, then apparent prophecy is corrected by a later supplement. As we approach the Gospel time, the sublime and supernatural scene remains, but its locality alters. To the Jewish prophet earth was heaven; they mixed together in one landscape; but the two worlds under the Gospel light divided, and the visible was exchanged for the invisible, as the *place* of the prophetic realm of peace. With respect to this world, later or Gospel prophecy is, if one may so say, singularly unenthusiastic; it draws no sanguine picture, is in no ecstasy about humanity, speaks of no regeneration of society here; it uses the language of melancholy fact.

It was open to Christianity at starting to adopt and impose a higher law than the necessities of society allowed. Community of goods is better than the appropriation of them, and the renunciation of the sword better than the use of it, provided only these agree with the necessities of society. It was open, therefore, to Christianity to have prohibited property and war. But such a course would have been in the first place wrong, if we may so speak; because the higher law which is right if it agrees with the necessities of society, is wrong if it contradicts them; and in the next place, though a sect can afford to be arbitrary and exclusive, and to disown natural rights, Christianity, if it had done so, would have been abandoning its mission to embrace the world. There was therefore an inauguration of an era, a symbolical fragment, an expression by action of the law of love, in the shape of a passing scene of community of goods; but Christianity fundamentally assumed the right of property, and assumed the right of war. The right of property was open to the greatest abuses; the right of war was a great evil to prevent a greater; but they were

necessary — absolutely necessary, therefore Christianity did not shrink from them.

But Christianity at the same time only sanctions war through the medium of natural society, and upon the hypothesis of a world at discord with herself. In her own world war would be impossible. And this mixture of Christianity with an alien hypothesis it is, which makes Christian war so portentous a fact—almost like a picture of Manichean dualism, in which the empire of light and darkness, order and confusion, spirit and matter, divine peace and self-conflicting uproar, coalesce in one creation. In Christian war, upon each one is the Holy Spirit's seal of peace, and on the mass wild nature's stamp of discord. It is indeed a humiliation, and we shrink back from it; but Christianity is obliged to act upon the assumption of that world which as a matter of fact exists, not upon the assumption of her own ideal world.

When Faustus, the Manichean, argued with Augustine for his own idea of Christianity against the Catholic one, he said in effect—I want to release Christianity from degrading alliances: *your* Gospel is too accommodating; it descends to the lowest connections, and rises upon the very rudest basis of the Jewish law and its low and sanguinary morality; rid Christianity of this coarse foundation, and shift it to a basis of sublime Magianism instead, and I will join you. What Faustus objected to was the actual junction in which the Divine Spirit of revelation in the Jewish law placed itself with the rudimental and coarse ideas of a rude age. But though Divine revelation might have come out as a pure ethereal flame, floating in air to feed some few fastidious spirits, and neglecting the mass, that was not its temper; and Augustine declined to change the Jewish for a sublime Magian foundation for Christianity.

Now the rights of natural society are not to be put upon a par with the rude ideas of early ages ; still Christianity does undoubtedly drag an enormous weight with her in the adoption of these natural rights with their consequences. We speak of Christianity joining the world in the age of Constantine ; but indeed, antecedently to any particular relations to courts or states, Christianity is weighted with human nature ; is burdened by having to act upon an alien hypothesis ; and has to admit within its pale a state of relationships full of dreadful disorder. Yet it stoops to conquer ; it grapples with the coarse elements of human nature, descends to the dust with man, to raise him out of it ; and accommodates its celestial birth to a worldly sojourn.

Lastly, Christianity comes as the consoler of the sufferings of war. The general only regards his men as masses, so much aggregate of force ; he cannot afford to look at them in any other aspect ; he has only two things to look at, the end and the means, he cannot pause between them to think of the life individual ; it would carry him into interminable thought ; it would be meditating as a sage, not acting ; the idea is overwhelming, and it would paralyse him ; he may admit it just for a moment, like Xerxes, but he must dismiss it instantly. No ! force is all he has to do with ; if he thinks of the persons, he totters ; if he pities, he is gone. But the Church takes up the mass exactly where he left off ; at the units in it, —the persons. Every one of these had his hopes, his interests, his schemes, his prospects ; but to some a wound, a loss of limb, in a moment altered all. Christianity comes to him as comforter, and shows how even that loss may be a gain. Every one of them has his home, where he is thought of, where he is somebody. If he has fallen, Christian hope alleviates the sorrow of that home. Thus

the aspect of man as a mass was true for a purpose only, and false in itself. To some, to think of humanity as personal seems a dream and romance; that it is an aggregate, a whole, is the matter of fact; but to the Church this last is the dream, the first is the fact. Mankind is all mass to the human eye, and all individual to the Divine.

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