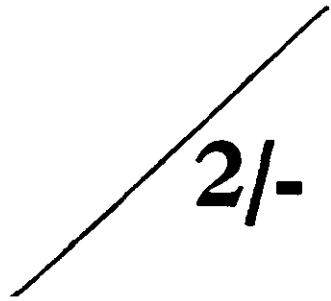
H. GIGON, Ph.D.

# ETHICS of PEACE and WAR



Foreword by
LORD HOWARD
OF PENRITH

No modern study of the problems of war and peace, declares Dr. Gigon, 'is so stamped with commonsense' as the work of the scholastic philosophers of the Middle Ages, particularly St. Thomas Aquinas. 'They are idealists, but their thought is never divorced from reality. They know how to adapt the idea to concrete circumstances.' In this concise and admirably clear exposition of scholastic theory, he examines the fundamental principles and their application to the problems of a just war and of preserving peace.



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BY

REV. H. GIGON, PH.D.

*With a Foreword by*

LORD HOWARD OF PENRITH

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# FOREWORD

I HAVE been asked to write a foreword for Father Gigon's book, the *Ethics of Peace and War*, and I gladly do so, not as one who is familiar with the works of the great Scholastics or of German Philosophers, such as Hegel or Kant, but, at any rate, as one who has given much thought and reading to what may be termed the practical side of the problem of Peace and War as opposed to the more theoretical side which occupied the Scholastics. I therefore welcome the little grammar, if I may call it so, of the views and opinions of such great writers as St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine, who are quoted over and over again, and I feel sure that this book will be of real use to all who search for ethical values in order to decide their own attitude on this most difficult of the problems of life. All except extreme Peace-at-any-price men will, of course, admit that a war of self-defence is, and must be, a just war, and that to prepare for such defence is not only legitimate for us, but even a duty of the State.

It is, perhaps, not so difficult to lay down rules and definitions in a general way as to what may be considered a just war. Some of those to be met with in this book are wholly admirable. The difficulty comes in when we seek their application in any particular case, as, for instance, in the fruitless search for a

definition of an ' aggressor nation ' which has now gone on at Geneva for years.

Thus, on page 37, it is argued that the Right of War in order to be ethically sound has to be animated by a right intention, that is, has to be undertaken in order to promote the Common Good and Peace.

The real intentions of those who make War are, however, often known only to the Almighty, and as much debated between belligerents as the alleged causes of the War itself.

While, therefore, from the point of view of the theologian, such definitions of a just war are indeed of the utmost importance as telling men how they may expect their actions to be judged at the final Great Tribunal, they do not greatly help forward that immediate ideal of maintaining ' Common Welfare ' which the author, on pages 8 and 9, quoting St. Thomas, holds up as being the principal duty and aim of organised States. This, he says, can only be secured by the ' Stability of Order, which is Peace.'

' The Welfare and Salvation of men associated together (and in the shrunken world of to-day we are all associated together), consists in the preservation of that unity called Peace ; if it disappears the utility of social life perishes. Moreover, a multitude without order becomes unbearable to itself. Therefore, above all things, the Head of Society has to try assiduously to procure the unity of Peace.'[1]

Our difficulty up to now is that we are not yet sufficiently advanced in civilisation to have found a ' Head of Society,' which will not only try assiduously to enforce Peace, but is capable in practice of enforcing it. That is really the whole problem.

[1] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum*. Lib. I, cap. VIII.

It will be for the rising generation to find that Head, and we must pray that they succeed in time to save our European civilisation.

In any case, however, I feel sure that this little grammar of the *Ethics of Peace and War* will be read with great interest and used by all who care to learn and to ponder over what the great masters of the past have to teach on this problem which, at this time more than ever, hangs over us and affects our every action like the dead weight in the air of an approaching tornado.

Like Father Gigon, I may say, in conclusion, I am not a pacifist if by 'pacifism' is meant 'Peace at any price,' even at the price of selling justice for a mess of pótage. But I nevertheless hope that by Reason, the Nations of the World may be brought to understand that War, as a means of attaining their ends, is not only immoral, but grossly stupid and should be forced by the collective action of those who are sufficiently reasonable, sufficiently civilised, sufficiently moral, to perish from the earth.

HOWARD OF PENRITH.

# INTRODUCTION

WAR—the armed conflict of two or more States[1]—is but an aspect of the great human struggle, for on this earth, man's life is a perpetual war: 'The life of man upon earth is a warfare.'[2]

On the other hand, every human being feels within his heart an irresistible attraction towards happiness and peace. By his nature he tends to choose what he conceives to be good for him—nay more, he cannot even choose anything else but happiness and peace.[3] How can we explain the co-existence, in the very same nature, of two forces which seem diametrically opposed to each other?

There is an abundance of literature on this subject. Both Imperialists and Pacifists have flooded the world with their books. The former deify War by proclaiming force equal and even superior to Right: 'War,' writes one of them, 'is not only a necessary element in the life of Nations, but also an indispensable factor of Culture, even more, the highest expression of the vitality and strength of civilised Nations worthy of the name.'[4] That is why 'we recognise that all attempts made in order to abolish War are not only

[1] St. Thomas Aquinas: *Summa Theologica*, IIa–IIae, Q. xlii, art. 1.

[2] Job vii, 1.

[3] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum*. Lib. I, cap. VIII.

[4] F. von Bernhardi: *Deutschland und der nächste Krieg*, p. 7. Stuttgart und Berlin, 1912.

foolish but strictly immoral and to be stigmatised as unworthy of mankind.'[1]

War indeed awakens all the virtues which slumber in us: fortitude, courage, self-sacrifice, charity, and rouses us from a self-indulgent life.

'In this sense it resembles the movement of the winds which prevents the sea from stagnating as Nations living in perpetual peace would do.'[2]

Pacifists condemn War in the name of brotherhood, civilisation, and other equally high-sounding abstractions. Some of them go as far as saying that every War, without exception, is murder. They all dream of the advent of a 'perfect Peace' from which the spectre of War would be for ever banished. 'To the Quaker who would practise the simple ethics of Love taught by our Lord, the condemnation of War is inevitable. . . . Christ forbids all hatred, revenge, envy and has commanded all men to love even their enemies, to do them good and to overcome evil only with good. No one possessed by this spirit can kill his brother, or wound him; therefore War is impossible.'[3]

With so many contradictory opinions so eagerly debated, we feel that it cannot be but of use to examine the problem of Peace and War more deeply and to try to explain it. I have no intention of offering a new solution of the problem, still less have I the pretension of giving a solution of my own, which of course would carry no authority. My aim is simply to explain the solution proposed by the old Scholastics, more particularly by St. Thomas Aquinas and his commentators.

[1] F. von Bernhardi: op. cit., p. 30.

[2] Hegel: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, 324. Berlin, 1840.

[3] Franziskus Stratmann, O.P.: *The Church and War*, p. 146. Sheed and Ward, 1928.

The reason why I appeal to them is that no contemporary study is so stamped with common sense as the work of these representatives of the Middle Ages.

They would never have been the partisans of a warlike fanaticism, even less would they have been the dupes of a visionary peace. They were idealists, that is, they had a sense of proportion, believed in the ideal and gave it its proper place—the first, but their thought, at the same time, is never divorced from reality. They know how to adapt the idea to concrete circumstances. They know what is possible and practicable. The mediæval Scholastics had too acute a sense of reality to allow them to forget—in the words of Pascal—'l'homme n'est ni ange ni bête, et le malheur est que qui veut faire l'ange, fait la bête.'

Every human problem—whether in the sphere of Economics, Politics, or Morals—is subject to human nature. It is impossible to give an exact solution if previously we have not a true notion of human nature itself. If we wish to build an edifice we have to give it a foundation; if we wish to establish a theory of human relations we have first to bear in mind the facts of the sociability of human nature, and of the existence of authority which is the soul of society. When we possess the base we may build the theory and pose the problem. Later we shall be able to attempt the solution and criticise the extremist theories.

# ETHICS OF PEACE AND WAR

PART ONE

## THE FACTS

### CHAPTER I

#### SOCIABILITY OF HUMAN NATURE

WE come into this world with a particular kind of nature. We are human. Whether we will or no this is a fact and we have to submit to it; we cannot choose to become angels or animals and cease to be men.

The second fact we have to acknowledge is that the conditions under which a man makes his entrance into this world are very deplorable. He needs everything and has nothing. Nature endows other animals with all that is necessary—food for their sustenance, fur for their clothing, natural means of defence against their enemies. Man alone has none of these, and, since of himself the individual would be unable to provide and guarantee the necessities of life, it follows that by his very nature man is destined to live in society.[1] 'Man needs so many things,' writes Bellarmine, 'that by

[1] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum.* Lib. I, cap. I.

himself he would be unable to live . . . abandoned to himself he would die. . . . Consequently, in order to live, we have to help one another.'[1] We may add to this that language, which is proper to man, by which we communicate our thoughts to others, proves also the necessity of Society.[2]

The help, which safeguards man's first steps in the world, is the *Family*. It is, first of all, the duty of parents to look after the physical, intellectual, and moral development of their children.

In practice, parents have not sufficient leisure to undertake the complete education of their children, and hence the necessity of a second aid which co-operates with the family to the progress of man—*Society*. In addition to collaborating with the family in man's education and instruction, Society has another duty, a negative, yet perhaps more necessary one—to protect individuals and families from violence and injustice.[3] From this we see that for men to live in complete isolation would seem to be impossible, since they would then be incapable of developing their natural faculties and tendencies. Human nature calls for a life in common and we can assert with Aristotle and the Scholastics that man is a social animal.[4]

Society is essentially a *human* fact. There are no animal societies. Society is not a flock. Animal associations are based on instinct; animals are individuals, not persons, because they do not possess those superior faculties—intelligence and will—which

[1] Bellarmine: *De Controversis Christianae Fidei*. Lib. III.

[2] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum*. Lib. I, cap. I.

[3] Franciscus de Victoria: *Relectiones Theologicae*. De Potestate Civili 4.

[4] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum*. Lib. I, cap. I.

are inherent in a person and make him the lord of creation.[1]

It is then the very *raison d'être* of Society to help persons and families in their vital development. To be exact in our statement we have to recognise that if man is lacking in many things given to animals he has *reason* and 'by this means and by that of first principles he may know all things necessary for human existence. But it is impossible for the one person to attain, by his own reason, all this knowledge. In consequence men have to live together in order to help one another and to be able to dedicate themselves to such research by specialisation.'[2]

[1] Genesis i, 28.

[2] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum*. Lib. I, cap. I.

## CHAPTER II

### AUTHORITY

EVERYONE looks for happiness and each of us has a different conception of it. Man is like a boat tossed by contrary winds; he needs a light to direct him safely to the harbour. A society in which each individual would have his own way is condemned in advance to speedy dissolution.

Consequently, if Society is not to give place to anarchy, there must be a regulator, a unifying power, maintaining and directing the members of the social body as the soul assures the unity of our own organism. In short there must be *Authority*. Authority is as necessary to Society as Society is necessary to mankind. 'If all men were equal, not under any Power, each of them would follow his own opinion and judgement, and in such circumstances the destruction of the republic or city would be the necessary consequence. . . . As the human body cannot persevere in its integrity without a certain regulating force, which co-ordinates each separate limb for the use of the others and especially for the advantage of the whole man, so anarchy would necessarily ensue in a society if everyone attended only to his own business and every citizen neglected the common welfare.'[1]

This political power, whose object is the safeguard of

[1] Franciscus de Victoria: De Potestate Civili 5.

the equilibrium of Society, is not identical with Society nor even with the State. It presupposes Society and precedes the State. It is what perfects and gives life to that scattered matter: society; it is its soul. The State is society unified and harmonised by the political Power.

The State has been considered by Scholastics as a perfect society, that is to say as a single, independent, sovereign entity having its own life in which no other had a right to interfere: 'The City is a self-sufficing community.'[1]

It goes without saying that we do not pretend that a perfect society is an isolated community; we do not think economical or financial intercourse between States is detrimental to their autonomy. Human nature develops itself to such an extent that it breaks away from the boundaries of the State as it broke the narrower bonds of the family. As long as their interests are in harmony their proximity may have advantages for each of them. But as we deal with human groups, having their own interests and aspirations, we may presume that difficulties will arise. In this case, what would be the issue?

This question can only be solved by defining the purpose or end for which the State exists. After that, we shall better understand the responsibility of statesmen who make War unjustly.

Whence the divisions of the following part:

Chapter I. The Purpose of the State: Peace.
(i) National Peace.
(ii) International Peace.

Chapter II. The Violation of Peace: War.

[1] St. Thomas: *In Aristotelis Politicorum.* Lib. III.

PART TWO

# THE PURPOSE OF THE STATE

## CHAPTER I

### PEACE

(i) *National Peace.*

WE have just seen that Society is a means to help man in the pursuit of his destiny. Each individual looks for happiness; happiness consists in the *full development* of a man's faculties; when he has attained this object he enjoys its fruit—Peace. Men do not associate merely in order to live, but in order to *live well*, that is what distinguishes them from animals.[1] In consequence the purpose of the State is to secure the *welfare* of its members and by that means to promote the reign of Peace. The 'welfare' of citizens is a rather vague term which it is necessary to define. There are three things to consider in human nature: intelligence, will, and sentiment. (*a*) Man is a rational animal. Unlike other animals he not only knows things in their concrete state, but he can break through their fragile crust and attain their essence; he is able to compare his ideas and rise to *science*, which guides him in his special investigations. Finally, by showing him the meaning of life, Philosophy gives him an insight into the whole world.

[1] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum*. Lib. I, cap. XIV.

(*b*) It is, however, impossible to live on abstractions. Life is action. Every idea is a seed of *action*. *Acts* are but the product of our internal thought.

(*c*) We are endowed too with sensibility. We judge men and things by our sentiments. Who has not experienced that our judgements depend very often on our own character and emotions? The Stoics taught that our passions were things essentially bad. That is error. A man without passions would be inoffensive, but worthless. In themselves our passions are neither good nor bad, we cannot suppress them, but we must control them. Our passions are awakened by contact with the world of nature. Though we often witness beautiful sights yet we cannot escape the necessity of seeing ugly ones too.

In order to find perfect harmony we should have to live in an ideal world. Such a world does not exist. We can, however, create it by *Art*, for art is the creation of the *Ideal*. Art is also, therefore, a normal function of the human soul and helps man in the realisation of his ideal.

Besides the society of his fellow-creatures, man is related to two other worlds, the spiritual and the material world, God and Matter.

(*d*) Our life is connected with God. Infinite and absolute Being, God could not create anything for any other purpose than Himself. To create with another aim would imply a subordination which is incompatible with the idea of Godhead. Man, created by God, has to return to God—that is the object of *Religion* (*religare*=to bind). 'We are tied to God and bound to Him by the bond of piety.'[1] Society, as well as individuals, is created by God and has to worship

[1] Lactantius: *Divinae Institut.* Lib. IV, cap. XXVIII.

Him; hence we find that Religion is a social function and the highest of moral values. 'Each thing is brought forth by its desire towards the very cause of its existence; the cause of the human soul is nothing else than God, for He made it to His image.'[1]

(*e*) Lastly, our life depends on material things. Nature is very rich, but does not give its riches without an effort on our part. We have to work hard to get them. 'In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt earn bread.'[2] This sentence lies heavily upon all men and we can only avoid being slaves of nature by being its masters.

The full development of Religion, Science, Works, Art and Material Good, such is the 'Common Welfare' which the State has to promote amongst its members. But 'men proceed towards their appointed goal by different ways, as the variety of their occupations and actions indicates clearly.'[3] In the human body if one limb become hypertrophied, the others become atrophied. Similarly, in the social body, if one of the factors of civilisation (the material factor for instance) develop unduly it will invade the sphere of the others and these will be dwarfed. Failure to understand the meaning of the Common Welfare and the relative value of its different elements is the origin of all political and social decay.

The task of the political authority is to maintain each factor of civilisation in its proper place, and so to secure that unity in multiplicity, the 'Stability of Order,' which is *Peace*. 'The Welfare and Salvation of men associated together consists in the preservation

[1] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum*. Lib. I, cap. VIII.
[2] Genesis iii, 19.
[3] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum*. Lib. I, cap. I.

of that unity called Peace; if it disappear the utility of social life perishes. Moreover, a multitude without order becomes unbearable to itself. Therefore, above all things, the Head of Society has to try assiduously to procure the unity of Peace.'[1]

But to declare that the chief care of Authority is to introduce, maintain, and promote order amongst different factors of civilisation, is as much as to say that the principal duty of Authority is to realise that social life must be virtuous. For a life to be truly virtuous it must be in conformity with Reason. No peace can be obtained in social relations without the practice of duties, that is to say without *virtue.*

Virtue is a 'habit,' a permanent disposition which inclines men to act conformably with Reason, and the characteristic of Reason is to put everything in its right place: 'Ordinare est rationis,' helping us to find the happy medium, equidistant from excess and defect. Virtue put into practice is the best safeguard of the common good and peace.[2]

But in the present state of affairs, to live virtuously is not easy; it involves sacrifices and, humanly speaking, virtue would be impossible without divine assistance which gives us the strength to overcome 'the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life.'[3]

Therefore, it is the primary duty of Authority to give to Religion the first place in social life. 'Two things are necessary to secure man's happiness: the first and chief is to act always virtuously, for virtue is the means by which a man leads a good life; the other is

[1] St. Thomas: ibid. Lib. I, cap. II.
[2] St. Thomas: op. cit. Lib. I, cap. XIV.
[3] 1 John, ii, 16.

secondary, and the instrument of the first, a sufficiency of the goods of this world, the use of which is necessary if virtue be practised.'[1]

Let us note that the Scholastics do not despise material goods, nor do they place their happiness in them. To aim exclusively at material pleasure is to lose all sense of the common good, and when that has gone, private interests triumph and noble ideas give place to base sentiments. The country which has lost all ideals is doomed.

One might, perhaps, smile at the conception of the State as a school of virtue! Let us say in passing that the Scholastics of the Middle Ages only rebuilt, on a larger scale, and with the assistance of revealed truth, the theory of the State as it was conceived, centuries before Christ, by two pagans, the two greatest philosophers the world has ever seen—Plato and Aristotle.

'Men associate together not only in order to live,' writes Aristotle in his *Politics*, 'but to secure for themselves a good and happy life; otherwise we should have to reckon sheep and goats as members of the community. . . . From this we understand that a true city can not be unconcerned with virtue.'[2] Plato in *Alciabiades* says: 'Is it not evident that a city or kingdom without virtue is ruined?'[3]

(ii) *International Peace.*

Political Authority makes known Right by means of Laws, but because Authority thus promulgates Right, it does not follow that Authority *creates* it.

In practice it is only with a certain difficulty that we

[1] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum.* Lib. I, cap. XV.
[2] Op. cit. Lib. III, cap. V.
[3] Op. cit. Lib. I, cap. XXX.

envisage Right or Law apart from coercion because, coercion suppressed, Right seems to remain without authority and practically without existence. 'Natural Law, as such, does not imply this coercion. . . . It is men who created law-courts, established the police force, built prisons. From this it is but a step to the conclusion that the ultimate source of Natural Law is the human will, but it is a false step.'[1]

Hegel, amongst others, was deceived in this way. He writes: 'We must venerate the State as an earthly divinity,'[2] and, of course, once this principle is established, the conclusion follows logically, if the State be a divinity, it is the source of Right; the State has no obligations towards individuals, while these have but duties towards the State.

Such a theory bears in itself its own condemnation, for if Right depends on arbitrary Power, which can make and unmake Right according to its own caprice, we sink into the fetishism of legality, to break out into anarchy and disorder.

What gives strength to the Scholastic theory is that in it Right proceeds from nature itself, and above all, from its Author.

The power of political Authority is not absolute, and when it enacts laws they must agree with reality and justice; they must express, as Montesquieu said, 'the necessary relations which are derived from the very nature of things.'[3] Otherwise the law becomes 'a corruption of the law,'[4] and the orders of Authority an abuse of Right, and act of violence.[5] An unjust law

[1] G. Renard: *Le Droit, l'Ordre et la Raison*, p. 149. Paris, 1927.
[2] Hegel: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, § 272.
[3] *L'esprit des Lois*, Livre I, Ch. I.
[4] St. Thomas: *Sum. Th.*, I–II, Q. xcv.
[5] Ibid., I–II, Q. xcvii, art. 4.

is no law at all. In consequence, political Authority, when it decrees a law, submits itself to a superior law; it is the servant of the Natural Law, which presides over the government of mankind. It may seem to command but in reality, in its turn, it obeys.

In the eyes of Aristotle, laws are guardian deities, hovering over a city, governing and personifying it. To acknowledge the pre-eminence of the Natural Law over the sovereignty of the State is to establish the reign of Reason, of God Himself. 'To will that Law reign is to decree that God and Reason must be the only sovereigns. To choose man with his passions in their stead is to will to serve a brute in place of God. Passion is such that it leads astray men who are in power, even the best of them. . . . Law is Reason minus the passions.'[1]

If Authorities, in securing national Peace, are but obeying the Natural Law, they must not forget that the Right of Peace (in which all others are included) is not the monopoly of one State only: it is common to all, 'for the good of peace is generally the greatest wish of the world.'[2]

The State is not supreme. Above it is the Eternal Love and Unchangeable Justice, expressed in the Rights of the People, which dominate the States' activities, and dispose them to Peace. The rights and duties of States are reciprocal, and this necessarily limits the rights of any one State, as it is bound to recognise and respect in its neighbours the same privileges and rights that it enjoys itself.

The Problem of Peace exacts from a State, however,

[1] Aristotle: *Politics*. Lib. III, cap. XI.

[2] St. Augustine: *The City of God* (translated by John Healey). Book XV, Chap. XII.

something more than the negative duty of respect in others, great or small, the rights attributed to itself. Justice alone is powerless to secure Peace. Justice, without Charity, does not unite. It marks, it limits, it divides and, very often, it shows contrasts and oppositions. Peace is the fruit of Love, and consequently, Justice must be coupled with Charity.

There are not two standards of Morality. The law of Charity obliges both individual and State. The identity of human nature, its common origin and destiny are the foundation of a universal friendliness which tends to make us love our neighbours as ourselves. Consequently, the most perfect State will do its utmost to procure for others what it desires for itself.

The increase of international relations should make it easier to understand why States, compelled to live *on* one another, are also compelled to live *for* one another.

Friendship, like any kind of affection, involves self-sacrifice. 'Love is . . . never seeking itself, for where a man seeketh himself there he falleth away from love.'[1]

But, as St. Thomas says: 'Love makes all things easy, and sees no difficulties.'[2]

'And therein lies the great principle which gives to all nations movement and life. Without this love (or wishing well), people can be united, excited by common interest, but they are like those wrestlers of the ancient amphitheatre who clutch each other more closely in order to overcome their adversaries by guile, skill, or strength. The Society of Nations is an association of

[1] *Imitation of Christ.* Book III, Chap. V.
[2] St. Thomas: *De Regimine Principum.* Lib. I, cap. X.

intelligence and will; its goal must necessarily be to advance Order and Love. Suppress love and friendliness, and such a Society will be a mere corpse."[1]

[1] Taparelli d'Azeglio: *Saggio teoretico di Dritto Naturale.* Vol. II, Diss. VI, capo VIII.

## CHAPTER II

### THE VIOLATION OF PEACE: WAR

WE all have to realise that man is a bundle of contradictions, 'for in every man the flesh is against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.'[1] Here is the origin and the cause of the antithesis between the City of God and the City of Satan, a war which follows its course through the ages and of which St. Augustine is the immortal historian.

The history of the Nations is nothing else than the reproduction, on a larger scale, of the intimate struggles of the human soul, from which they proceed. If there is in each of us an internal anarchy, how can we expect an external peace amongst nations?

If the individual is himself unfaithful and does not recognise the supreme authority of God and of the Natural Law, how can he delude himself by hoping that heads of governments will keep their promises? When a State is no longer ruled by these two sentiments in which all charity consists, love of God and love of its neighbour, nothing can arrest its progress on the road which leads to War, to that crime of hatred which involves so many others, injuring millions of people in their most tender and sacred interests.

On this earth there is no immunity from the temptation to injustice and covetousness. All are exposed to it: States no less than individuals.

[1] St. Augustine: *The City of God.* Book XIII, Chap. V.

Someone wrote that 'to gain or to lose a piece of ground men are willing to rob each other, to burn, to kill, and in order to do this more ingeniously and surely, they have invented splendid rules which are called the military Art. They attribute to the practice of these rules glory or the highest reputation. And since then, they have enriched themselves from century to century, on the best methods of mutual destruction.'[1]

We do not all pretend cynically with Hegel that States have the right to declare War for trifles—'geringeren Wahrsheinlichkeiten.'[2]

Generally, we call on the Rights of civilisation. There would be nothing to say against that if the colonising States assured the progress of those peoples who seem to be in a lower state of culture. But, alas, is it not a matter of history that the European Powers have had too obvious a tendency to subordinate the rights of the backward Nations to their own interests?

To pretend that savages are made rather to serve than to command does not give to anyone the right to occupy their territory. Even the most undeveloped countries have a certain notion of Order. They are constituted in tribes or clans, they have chiefs, laws, a whole social, political, and religious order.

'If they seem backward and weak-minded,' says Victoria, 'that is the result of a bad and barbarian civilisation, as among ourselves we see many of the peasantry little removed in their habits from the brute creation.'[3]

There is no obligation on any country to achieve

[1] La Bruyère: *Caractères.*
[2] Hegel: *Philosophie des Rechts*, § 335.
[3] Victoria: *De Indis*, I, 23.

the greatest amount of good of which it is capable (and what civilised Nation could even claim to have done all that lay in its power ?) for the welfare of its subjects. The essential task for a Nation is to secure the Common Welfare in a normal and reasonable way. Besides, as it has been said, the greatest good for a Nation is to enjoy autonomy and independence.

While to-day we declare War under the pretext of civilisation, in the Middle Ages they urged its necessity in order to propagate the Faith.

Religion does not impose itself by means of arms. It appeals to the reason and will. Its means are reasonable proofs, confirmed by the example of an honest life, ' which is the great argument for confirming Truth.'[1]

Let us add that if War were a means of converting people, it would expose unbelievers to the temptation of simulating our beliefs, which would be inhuman and sacrilegious. To make War for the simple purpose of proselytising the inhabitants of a country is more praiseworthy than to make war to civilise it. If such a reason authorised a declaration of War, the universal Order would be disturbed, for, ' as we find sinners everywhere, amongst Christians as well as Pagans, a perpetual war would logically ensue and the maps would be altered every day.'[2]

Lastly, any War, made under pretext of the glory of kings, or enlargement and exaltation of an Empire, is illegitimate and consequently a crime ; it would be as good as saying that a war can be both justifiable and unjustifiable for each party, which is an absurdity.

A king, under pain of becoming a tyrant, is obliged to look to the welfare of his subjects, and, according to the

[1] *De Indis*, II, 13. [2] Ibid., II, 16.

precept of Charity, to the common good of the neighbouring States too. He cannot seek only to please himself, rule his kingdom by caprice, look on his subjects as a lot of slaves, and violate the rights and the peace of others; such a crime has been condemned with just and vehement indignation by St. Augustine in a famous passage whom the readers will allow me to quote once again.

'Set justice aside then, and what are kingdoms but fair thievish purchases? because what are thieves' purchases but little kingdoms? for in thefts, the hands of the underlings are directed by the commander, the confederacy of them is sworn together, and the pillage is shared by the law amongst them. And if those ragamuffins grow but up to be able enough to keep forts, build habitations, possess cities, and conquer adjoining nations, then their government is no more called thievish, but graced with the eminent name of a kingdom, given and gotten, not because they have left their practices, but because that now they may use them without danger of law: for elegant and excellent was that pirate's answer to the great Macedonian Alexander, who had taken him: the King asking him how he durst molest the seas so, he replied with a free spirit, "How durst thou molest the whole world? But because I do it with a little ship only, I am called a thief; thou doing it with a great navy, art called an emperor."'[1]

If, generally speaking, War is defined as a contestation by means of arms between two or several states, on the other hand, it may be a violent outrage of the Right of Peace, and consequently, a crime against Charity.

[1] St. Augustine: *The City of God.* Book IV, Chap. IV. (Translated by John Healey.)

But does this mean that War is always to be condemned? Far from it. That War is always a *physical* calamity, we agree. That War is always a *moral* evil, no. It takes two to make a quarrel. The Natural Law allows every individual to defend himself, even by means of violence, against an unjust aggressor who would make an attempt upon his life, honour or goods. With even more reason, the State has the right and sometimes the duty to declare War on a criminal State which disturbs international peace and would deprive a country of its autonomy and existence.

As St. Augustine writes: 'It is the injustice of the enemy which obliges the wise to undertake a just war. . . . When on one side they draw the sword for Right, they strive on the other for iniquity.'[1]

The definition of War: conflict between two or more States involves consequently two other definitions. Namely—Right as the servant of Force, and Force in the service of Right, the latter being the definition of the Right of War.

Both are but two aspects of the same Problem of Peace, the first being its violation, the second its rehabilitation.

Having examined War from one point of view, I will now look at it from another.

[1] St. Augustine: *The City of God.* XIX, 7 and 15.

PART THREE

# THE RIGHT OF WAR

## CHAPTER I

### PRINCIPLE OF THE RIGHT OF WAR

WE now come to the principle underlying the problem of the Right of War, namely, man's instinct to abolish all that is inimical to peace. As St. Thomas says, the very fact that we desire a thing implies that we desire the removal of all that prevents our obtaining it.[1]

As it has already been pointed out, the ultimate aim of every society, as of every individual, is peace, because peace is the natural fruit of happiness, which is universally desired. Social life is, furthermore, but the manifestation of individual life, and its correct interpretation involves a precise knowledge of human nature.

Now, if human nature be analysed, there is found in it a fundamental tendency towards truth, goodness, happiness, in short, towards peace. It follows, as a necessary corollary to the desire for Peace, that there must be an innate aversion to all that is opposed to Peace. In other words, there must be a purely natural dislike of error, evil, and suffering. This instinct

[1] St. Thomas: *De Veritate*, Q. xxii, art. 1, ad. 12.

towards Peace and the correlative aversion towards discord, are the results of a natural inclination which is called in philosophical language, the 'concupiscible appetite.' By means of this inclination, man has a definite propensity towards all that contributes to, and is capable of, preserving human nature.

This natural virtue would be sufficient of itself to maintain and secure life if human nature were not subject to decay. Man's nature is essentially corruptible; he is exposed continually to perils, insecurity, and dangers of every description. Consequently it would seem necessary, in order to explain the longevity of life, to admit the existence of a second power. This is known in Scholastic philosophy as the 'irascible appetite,' by which: 'Man resists harm by defending himself against wrongs lest they be inflicted on him, or he avenges those which have already been inflicted on him, with the intention, not of harming, but of removing the harm done.'[1]

This doctrine is confirmed by actual fact. Should a man fall by accident into the river he does not remain passive, but instinctively struggles against the current carrying him away; and he continues his struggles until safety is reached or he is overcome. Furthermore, man not only fights for his personal security, but is often willing to face danger for the sake of others: a mother may undergo innumerable sacrifices for the education of her children—is willing, if necessary, to lay down her life for them. It may be inferred, therefore, that to remain passive when threatened with evil is not indigenous to human nature and, consequently, is not within the power of man; in fact, it is the prerogative of a log. To deny this inclination to resist evil is to

[1] St. Thomas: *Sum. Th.*, IIa–IIae, Q. cviii, art. 2.

contravene a law of nature and to abandon common sense.

Pacifists acknowledge that 'there is only one and the same morality for States and individuals.'[1] But if morality is the same for States and individuals, one is bound to admit that what is legitimate and natural for the one must inevitably be so also for the other—for the State is but the manifestation on a large scale of the innate desires of each individual of which it is composed. As, therefore, in each individual there is an instinct towards good and peace and, correlatively, an aversion for evil and all that is not conducive to goodness and peace, so must there be in a nation a natural tendency towards the common good and national or international peace, and an abhorrence of War (War considered in its narrower sense, as a crime of injustice against another nation).

To be consistent, however, as the individual has an innate and active repugnance to all that hinders the attainment of his own good and happiness, so in every State there must be a right to repel any unjust aggression—in other words, the Right of War: the right of a hand to meet a blow in order to protect the body, the right of the mother to expose herself to suffering for the sake of her children, the right of the citizen to brave death for the sake of his country.

These two factors, the desire of peace and the aversion from evil, would be sufficient of themselves to secure peace if injustice between nations were unknown. Nations, alas! are no more perfect than the individuals of which they are composed: and if the Church herself, with her promise of everlasting life, and possessing as she does the most efficacious resources of perfection

[1] Stratmann: op. cit., p. 162.

and progress, has been compared by her divine Founder to a field in which wheat and cockle grow together, and to a net cast into the sea gathering all kinds of fish, both good and bad—what must be the perfection of other human societies?

From the foregoing, therefore, it must be admitted that so far from being the destruction and negation of Peace, the Right of War is its safeguard and defender, just as the irascible appetite is the warden and protector of the concupiscible. As the individual overcomes, through the irascible power, the various obstacles that prevent his obtaining peace, so the State must have the Right of War in order to repel the unjust aggression that threatens the common good and national Peace. 'All the passions of the irascible appetite rise from the passions of the concupiscible appetite and terminate in them.'[1] The Right of War has its origin and end in the fundamental and universal Right of Peace, for in the pursuit of happiness and peace man must be able to employ the means of removing everything that stands in the way of its attainment.[2]

Disorder can arise from two sources: from within, i.e. from rebellious subjects, or from without, i.e. from external enemies.

As the task of the State is to safeguard the interests of those who compose it, it follows that the State has to take the sword not only against its own rebels, but also by *Right of War* against foreign aggressors.

Justice, which presides over relations existing between States as well as between individuals, exacts that to everyone should be rendered that which is his due.

[1] St. Thomas: *Sum. Th.*, Ia, Q. lxxxi.
[2] St. Thomas: *De Veritate*, Q. xxii, art. 1, ad 12.

If a man act well, we owe him gratitude. Should he do wrong, Justice and Charity require his correction. If a State transgress another's Rights, it has to be punished and amended, for such violation of Rights calls for the reparation of the offence. As each fault demands its punishment, War, an act of hatred against international Justice and Charity, clamours for another war, the Right of War, vindication of the violated Rights, and safeguard of international Peace.

The cause of disorder is a perverted will and if the culprits are not influenced by motives of virtue, they 'are prevented from committing sin through fear of losing those things which they love more than those obtained by sinning, else fear would be no restraint to sin. Consequently, vengeance for sin should be taken by depriving a man of what he loves most. Now the things which man loves most are life, bodily safety, his own freedom, and external goods, such as riches, his country and his good name.'[1]

Consequently, the Right of War is a natural right, and to affirm the contrary is to maintain that the Creator is lacking in wisdom.

Quite so. We have seen that God created man a social being. Consequently, Society and State belong to the natural order. The State is under an obligation to strive for its ideal. All that is God's will. But it is obvious that if God wishes the State to attain its destiny, He must give it the means of accomplishing it. In the present state of affairs, no one—either individual or State—is beyond the reach of injustice. The State, under pain of extinction, must have the just claim to repel another State which transgresses its Rights. To War, it must oppose the Right of War; otherwise God

[1] St. Thomas: *Sum. Th.*, IIa–IIae, Q. cviii, art. 3.

would have given to it the order to attain its goal, and in the meantime He would have forbidden the means necessary to reach it, which is contradictory.

If all the tyrants, thieves, and murderers could commit injustice with impunity and oppress the good and innocent without these having the Right to punish the culprits, it is easy to understand that the world would be reduced to the worst conditions and that happiness and peace, the end of Society, could never be attained.[1]

Similarly, a State—the perfect human Society—would be imperfect indeed if it were not allowed to punish foreign countries which infringe its rights and if, by a so-called natural law, a criminal individual or State should go unpunished.[2]

'Can we blame war for killing men, who have all to die one day, in order that others may be free to live in peace? To utter such reproaches against war would be the sign of a pusillanimous, but not of a religious man.'[3]

Above the material ruins War brings in its train, above the happiness it spoils, above the hecatombs of lives it sacrifices, we place the supreme value of Justice and Peace. 'At times we have to submit to war in order to put an end to the triumphs of the greatest of all evils—Injustice.'[4]

That is why the Scholastics, after having condemned War in the name of Charity, endeavoured to examine the conditions of the Right of War.

[1] Victoria: *De Jure Belli*, I.

[2] Cajetanus: *Com. in Sum. Th. Sti. Thomae.* IIa–IIae, Q. xl, art. I.

[3] St. Augustine: *Cont. Faust.*, XXII, 74.

[4] R. P. Janvier, O.P., Conférences de N-D. de Paris: *La Charité.* 1915.

## CHAPTER II

### CONDITIONS OF A RIGHT WAR

EACH science has its own method, and while Mathematics is not satisfied with the approximate, Ethics has to be content with moral certitude. We cannot expect to determine the value of the conditions of the Right of War with mathematical precision. The task of Moralists is to give principles which can direct the conscience. They leave their application of these principles to political authority.

'In reality, the conditions which justify a declaration of war as they are taught by a constant tradition, are clear enough. Moreover, we may say that they are even much too clear and precise for the wishes of statesmen, and, generally speaking, for those who consider Politics as being independent of Morality, and it is precisely because they are often so embarrassing that discussion of these points is so unwelcome. In fact, if we consider this teaching as a criterion, how many wars, ancient or modern, could escape condemnation by impartial Judges?'[1]

We may classify the conditions which justify a declaration of war under the following headings:

1. Legitimate authority.
2. Just cause.
3. Right intention.

[1] Le Fur: *Guerre juste et juste paix*, p. 48.

1. *Legitimate authority.*—By definition, War is not a quarrel between two or several people, not even strife between two parts of a Nation, but between *States.* Consequently, War—and its correlative, the Right of War—are *public, social* acts. Indeed, the declaration of War is made not against individuals as such, but against individuals as *citizens*, that is to say as members of a Society under the head of a political authority. Now, no man, be he Pope or King, has a claim upon our obedience unless he commands in God's name. In a State, as it has been said, Order based on Natural Law, requires that the social power remains in the hands of the political authority. If he who declares War has not this lawful power, if he be usurping a right which does not belong to him, he perpetrates an injustice, and from the outset the War is unjust. Therefore, since War is a social act, the Right of War is the exclusive privilege of political authority.

The State's very *raison d'être* makes it clear as well that the Right of War is its own privilege.

As we shall see later on, the only intention which makes War moral is the punishment of injustice and, consequently, the promotion of Common Good and restoration of Peace.

Now, we have seen that the *raison d'être* of Authority is precisely the safeguarding of the Common Welfare and Peace. It realises its aims by encouraging all that might co-operate to its end, and by repelling and punishing the violators of its Rights.

Therefore, Political Power only is the legitimate authority for declaring War.

The Right of War, the use of Force in the service of Right, is essentially an act of Justice, but Justice involves a relation between superior and inferior.

'If man be the master of his own goods, he is not the master of what belongs to others; consequently, so far as Justice is concerned, it is necessary to consult the judgement of a superior who has authority over the opponents, who will examine the interests at stake, and re-establish Order.'[1]

If each individual had the right to revenge himself, social life would be impossible. In order to assure national Peace, each State possesses men 'who have power to pass judgements and, if necessary, to inflict punishments.'[2]

Similarly, in order to secure international Peace and pass judgements between States there ought to be a supreme tribunal over the States which would preside over their relations and punish any infraction of international Right.

If such a tribunal existed, each State would be obliged to have recourse to it. As, however, it is hardly likely that this plan will ever mature, it is prudent to follow the teaching of those older thinkers who, relying upon the experience of the past as well as upon their sure knowledge of man's fragility, taught that sometimes, under certain circumstances, Justice could be secured by means of War.

Given the fact that human nature is not perfect, a State which had not the Right to defend itself against an unjust aggressor, and was unable to have recourse to Force in order to protect itself, would be in a very sad way indeed.

That is why St. Thomas, following St. Augustine, concludes that the most favourable guarantee for the

[1] St. Thomas: IIa–IIae, Q. lx, art. 1, ad 3.
[2] Ibid., Ia–IIae, Q. xcii, art. 2, ad 3.

maintenance of international Peace is that Authority possesses the Right to make War.[1]

One might object that the Right of War is an outrage upon the autonomy of the State, for has not the State been defined, a perfect and independent Society?

Natural Order demands that every evil shall be reformed or punished. By the fact that a State violates its neighbour's Right, it commits an injustice, it degrades itself by acting unreasonably and the authority of judge resides in the injured State, to which the other is subjected by the fact of its crime.[2]

2. *Just Cause.*—The Right to make War is the means by which to vindicate violated rights. 'We usually say that just wars are those which avenge an injustice, for instance to punish a Nation or a City for a bad action perpetrated by its people, or to restore what has been unjustly acquired.'[3]

The Right to make War is a part of the virtue of Justice, which disposes us to render to everyone (be he individual, Society, or State) his due: 'Jus suum unicuique tribuens.' We act justly when we reward the good, and punish the evil, because each receives what he deserves. We act justly too when we make War to protect our country, and if our enemies are killed in a war which they have unjustly provoked, their death is just: 'When we overcome our enemies,' writes Cajetan, 'we only give them what is their due —"*Quod suum est,*" for their actions are deserving of death.'[4]

[1] St. Augustine: *Contra Faustum*, XXII, cap. 95; and St. Thomas: *Sum. Th.*, IIa–IIae, Q. xl, art. 1.

[2] Sylvius: *Com. in S. Th.*, IIa–IIae, Q. xl, art. 1, and *vide* also Cajetan: *Summula*, verbo: Bellum.

[3] St. Augustine: *In Heptateuchum.* Lib. VI, Q. x.

[4] *Com. in Sum. Th. Sti. Thomae*, IIa–IIae, Q. liii, art. 11.

The Right to declare War, like any other act of virtue, calls for the means of virtue in its exercise. It may run to excess and turn into cruelty, as it may fail by omission and degenerate into weakness, if under the pretence of charity we close our eyes to injustice.

Justice again exacts that there should be proportion between the crime and its punishment.

A judge who fosters injustice and does not punish the guilty, acts against Order and Peace, for Peace results from Order: 'Peace is the tranquillity of Order.'[1]

In consequence, punishment presupposes a fault, otherwise it would be baseless and mere cruelty, for we do not punish an innocent person. So too, the declaration of War by legitimate authority does not suffice. The Right to declare War presupposes, for its lawful exercise, some injustice committed by those on whom the War is to be declared, otherwise it is criminal.[2]

Moreover, as a judge does not condemn to death for a trifle, so the State cannot declare War except for serious reasons: 'The infliction of grave punishments such as death, exile, confiscation of goods, for no matter what fault, is ordinarily forbidden. War involves so much suffering—murders, fires, devastation—that it can never be lightly undertaken; consequently it is forbidden to make War on those who have committed but a slight injustice, for the gravity of the offence must be the measure of the punishment.'[3]

Having established that a serious injustice alone can be a just cause for declaring War, we have now to point out various reasons which are sufficient to authorise a declaration of War. Later on we shall

[1] St. Augustine: *The City of God.* Lib. XIX.
[2] Victoria: *De Jure belli*, 13. [3] Ibid., 14.

prove that Authority must be assured that an injustice has been committed.

It is Justice that presides over our relations with others. Its note is to assure the equality between Man and Man (private Justice), Society and Society (social Justice), State and State (international Justice).

We saw that by nature man is a social being. The end of Society is the Common Welfare and Peace: but if Society has the duty of promoting the common good and Peace, it has also the right to do whatever is necessary to attain this goal, and this every other Society or State is bound to respect.

International rights and duties are correlative, and in establishing the rights of a State, we, at the same time, establish the duties of others towards it.

The fundamental rights of a State, which are indispensable for the attainment of its goal, Peace, are:

(*a*) The Right to Existence.
(*b*) The Right of Commerce.
(*c*) The Right of Communication of spiritual goods, and,—according to the law of independency and solidarity between States,—we may add:
(*d*) The Right of Intervention.

(*a*) The Right to Existence.—The State is a natural fact based on human nature and intended by God Himself.

Each State has first of all the Right to exist, that is to say, to possess a territory; to possess something means that we have the right to make use of it, and, negatively, to prevent incursion and interference in our affairs.

This right would be unavailing if the State had not the means to attain its goal. As each individual is

under the obligation of attaining his destiny he therefore has the right to all the means necessary for this purpose, so the State, whose duty it is to protect the rights of its members and thus promote the Common Welfare, has also the right to all things necessary to the realisation of its ideal.

The Right to Existence naturally includes the right to the means of existing and these means must be of material and spiritual orders, as man is composed of Matter and Spirit.

(*b*) The Right of Commerce.—Although a State is independent in political affairs, it is not independent in other spheres. Each State has the right to the sufficient financial and economical wealth necessary to its prosperity, and the law of interdependency of States brings with it the *Right of Commerce.* This exchange of material goods is a part of the Rights of the People, and is a natural right.

Unless this exchange would be detrimental to itself, no State has the right to refuse to trade with others. If a State refuse to exchange goods with another, without serious reasons and in order to benefit itself alone, this country is guilty of an act of injustice, and if there be no other way of obtaining satisfaction, this would be a just cause to declare War.[1]

The Right of Commerce brings with it the problem of emigration and immigration. It seems that no State has the right to reject (without sufficient reason) any foreigner who desires to establish himself in the country, or who wants to change his nationality.[2] To Scholastics, a foreigner who settles in a country becomes like its inhabitants, and this point of view is clear if we conceive the world as a community of men

[1] Victoria: *De Indis.*, Sect. III, 6. [2] Ibid., III, 5.

living like brothers for the same destiny, and animated by justice and charity.

(*c*) The Right of Communication of Spiritual Goods. Societies, like individuals, do not live only on material bread; above the communication of earthly goods, is the exchange of spiritual goods.

It has been said that ideas govern the world. If nothing can be more dreadful than a wrong and perverse doctrine, on the other hand, nothing is more wholesome than a just and right idea, i.e. than truth itself.

Should a State have not only the right, but the duty of suppressing the subversive doctrines which may lead the Nation to its ruin, it has also the right to assist, or at least, the duty not to discountenance the propagation of Truth, which is the source of moral good and Peace.

We saw that Religion is the principal factor of civilisation. No *human* authority, as such, is infallible; consequently, none of them has the right to impose a religion of its own on its subjects. No human being can force me against my Will; if a child obey its father, if a citizen obey the head of the State, it is because, explicitly or implicity, they acknowledge in them the representatives of Almighty God.

But, as we believe, with Scholastics, that the only Church founded by Jesus Christ is the guardian of Truth—for there can be but one Church as there is but one Truth—it follows that no State has the Right to prevent the delegates of this Church from propagating its doctrine.[1]

Of course, it would be criminal and sacrilegious to compel people to embrace the true religion under threat

[1] Victoria: *De Indis.*, III, 9.

of War, but it would be *in itself* a just cause for declaring War if the Authorities oppose the propagation of the Faith or if they persecuted converts.[1]

We said: 'in itself,' because we have to bear in mind the counsel of St. Paul: 'All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient.'[2] A thing which in itself is just and licit, may be unjust and illicit if we consider it in all circumstances.

(*d*) The Right of Intervention.—Each State is by nature an autonomous and perfect entity. Each State is its own master and no other State has the right to interfere in another's business. However, a State is only worthy of the name when it fulfils its duties of sovereignty.

Should a State be unable to attain its ends in a normal and reasonable way, it would seem that another State has the right to interfere, even by means of arms.

This Right of Intervention may be due to the incapacity of the political authority, to the lack of civilisation in the natives. In this case, another State could be authorised to take it under its protection and to impose a new form of government.[3]

Malevolence or tyranny in the reigning authority would also be sufficient cause for the intervention of neighbouring States, whose duty it would be to re-establish Justice and Order,[4] for those who are able to prevent injustice and who remain indifferent make themselves party to the crime.

This Right of Intervention is an application of international Justice and Charity; as we must respect the existence of a country, we are obliged to help it and protect it against any unjust aggressor.

[1] Victoria: ibid., III, 12, 13.
[2] 1 Cor. vi, 12.
[3] Victoria: ibid., III, 18.
[4] Ibid., III, 15.

*The evidence of the just cause.*

We see that, according to Scholastic theory, the State participates in the privileges, duties, and rights of moral persons. (The relationship of State with State is analogous with that of persons with persons.)

Peace, which is not only the ideal, but the duty of a State, involves the Right to Existence, the Right of Commerce, and the Communication of Spiritual Goods, and lastly, the Right of Intervention. The serious violation of any of these rights is in itself a just cause of War.

Injustice (and consequently the Right of Vindication) may be more or less evident; the *evidence* (or certitude of the justiciary) must be proportionate to the gravity of the fault.

In civil matters, in order to punish a criminal, it is not sufficient that he has committed a fault; Order exacts that the judge be *certain* of the culpability of the delinquent.

With more reason—for in War it is not the life of one individual which is at stake, but the lives of millions—a State cannot declare War on doubtful grounds or for a probable injustice. Much less can it declare War for 'a mere appearance or presumed suspicion,' as Hegel pretended. Opinions are not convictions. Conviction is a firm, reasonable, and decisive judgement, which leads to absolute assent.

The degree of certitude varies with persons.

Political power is obliged to act under a *moral certitude*, excluding all doubt and probability. An action is good if done in good faith; if done in doubt there is a risk of doing evil, and this risk should not be taken.

The political power must not only *think*, but it must

*know* that it is doing the right thing; that is why those in authority are under the obligation of taking the greatest care when considering an act of War; they have to examine and ponder the reasons brought by the enemies,[1] and as the judgement of a few, obscured by passion, error, or ambition, might easily be biased, it is their duty to seek advice from impartial judges,[2] and even from the representatives of the Church,[3] as the Right of War is not only a mere political problem, but a religious and moral one.

Officers and soldiers are compelled to take part in the War in so far as the injustice of the War is not evident.

Firstly, Order exacts that an inferior obeys his superior and a soldier his chief.[4] Secondly, the Authorities may know all the reasons and circumstances which force them to declare War, without being obliged to notify them to their subjects.

3. *Right Intention.*—Legitimate authority and just cause are sufficient for the assurance of the justice of a War, but they do not guarantee its morality.

To give to the poor is virtuous, but if we give alms through vanity this same act is tarnished with sin. It is the intention animating our actions which makes them either good or bad.

Similarly, in the Right of War, as in any act of vindicative Justice, we must consider the *application of the punishment*—by which *malum culpæ* (moral evil) is checked by *malum pœnæ* (physical pain),—and the *intention* of the judge.

If, in punishing a criminal, the judge take pleasure in the infliction of pain, his act, although just in

[1] Victoria: *De Jure belli*, 21.
[2] Ibid., 24. [3] *De Indis.*, I, 3.
[4] St. Thomas: *Sum. Th.*, IIa–IIae, Q. civ., art. 5.

itself, is tainted by his vicious intention; it is an act of hatred.[1] Even if a criminal tried to kill a man, the victim would be forbidden to wish him any *moral* evil, for we cannot, without sinning, render evil for evil; the fact that somebody has sinned against us is no excuse for our sinning,[2] for the end never justifies the means.

It follows that the Right of War, in order to be an act of virtue, to be ethically sound, has to be animated by a right intention.

What is the meaning of 'right intention'? Man is a *moral* being, that is to say, he is free and responsible for his actions. He comes into this world with a specific nature, principle of operations. Every being has a purpose in acting: to do *good;* such is the end of human nature, the directing and ordinating idea of each of our acts.

From this we may conclude that an act is moral, i.e. ethically good, when it tends to this end, and bad when it swerves from it.

Let us apply this principle to the Right of War. We saw that the *raison d'être* of State is to promote and secure the common Good and Peace. In order to be good, each act of the political authority must be directed towards Peace. Although a War may be proved to be just, it is still possible for it to be immoral if it be inspired by any criminal desire such as 'the passion for inflicting harm, the cruel thirst for vengeance, an unpacific and relentless spirit, the fever of revolt, the lust of power and suchlike things.'[3]

In consequence the only intention that secures the morality of War (that makes a war ethically sound) is

[1] St. Thomas: Ibid., IIa–IIae, Q. cviii, art. 1.
[2] St. Thomas: Ibid.
[3] St. Augustine: *Contra Faustum*, XXII, cap. 74.

the safeguard of the common Welfare and Peace; the safeguard of common Welfare, because it is the *raison d'être* of the State; Peace, because it involves the removal of everything which makes any obstacle to the realisation of the common Good.

Therefore, if War be declared and carried on, not through hatred and revenge, but 'with the hope of amendment of the culprit, or at least of checking him and securing tranquillity for others, of safeguarding justice and God's honour, and of course, if all other circumstances be observed, such an act is licit.'[1]

The Authorities act with Justice and Charity when they declare War with these intentions; they act with Justice because Justice demands the vindication of violated rights; they act with Charity because 'Charity begins at home.'

Now, the task of the Political Power is to safeguard the rights of its subjects, and 'he who does not protect the rights of those to his care, sins. It may be praiseworthy to renounce our own rights; it is always blameworthy to neglect the rights of others, and with more reason the rights of God.'[2]

'He who makes War without authority or just cause,' writes Bellarmine, 'commits a sin not only against Charity, but also against Justice; he is not a soldier, but a brigand. He who makes War with legitimate authority and just cause, but without right intention (such as desire of revenge, of enlarging his territory or for some similar purpose) does not injure Justice, but Charity; he is not a thief, but a wicked soldier.'[3]

[1] St. Thomas: *Sum. Th.*, IIa–IIae, Q. cviii, art. 3, ad 3.
[2] Ibid., IIa–IIae, Q. clxxxviii, art. 3, ad 1.
[3] Bellarmine: *De Controversis christianae fidei.* Lib. III, cap. XV

Peace is the principle and the end of individual, national, and international life. Each human action, be it private or social, is ethically sound as far as it tends towards Peace, and on this condition alone War is justified for 'we do not seek Peace in order to be at War, but we go to War that we may have Peace.'[1]

So much for the theory. Before concluding this glimpse of Scholastic theory on Peace and War we still have to examine the application of the Right Intention before, during, and after the War.

If the Authorities who declare War have the intention of re-establishing Order and Peace, the spirit of Justice and Love will animate all the negotiations which precede War, the hostilities will be carried on with moderation, the treaty which puts an end to the struggle will be the triumph of Right and Charity.

(*a*) *Before the War.*—War is but a means of restoring Peace. Like a physician who employs only the most powerful drugs when lesser remedies have failed to effect a cure, the State is only authorised to declare War when all attempts of arbitration have failed. As long as there is hope of restoring Order by pacific ways, War cannot be declared. It is only when the guilty State obstinately refuses to restore Justice that the victim has the right to make War. And in this case, the responsibility of the War lies at the door of the guilty party.

(*b*) *During the War.*—If the desire of Peace is the spirit animating War, it follows that hostilities will be carried on with Justice and Charity.

Like all acts of virtue, the Right of War is incompatible with anything wrong or evil, such

[1] St. Augustine: *Ad Bonifacium.*

as thefts, lies, calumnies, breaking of promises or treaties.

But apart from anything immoral, the Right of War authorises all that is necessary to punish the enemy and to restore Peace.

In the rehabilitation of Justice we may fail either by *excess*, namely, by cruelty, if we go to excess in the application of punishment, or by *defect*, namely, by a misconception of Justice and Love, if we punish the culprits less than they deserve.[1]

(1) The Right of War is the *use*, not the *abuse* of Force in the service of Justice. Consequently, useless or unnecessary violence is unjust. It is forbidden to kill those who are unable to offer resistance, such as wounded soldiers, chaplains, and physicians.

Besides, let us remember that War is not a conflict between individuals, but between *States*. The Right of War gives the Right to inflict death on our enemies and to seize their goods, but it does not include any right over individuals as such. Destruction of private property, slaughter of old people, women and children must remain the 'privilege' of barbarous and uncivilised nations.

However, the State, as it has been said, is a unit entity, in which all members are dependent on one another, and, to a certain extent, all are responsible for War.

Although it is forbidden to kill an innocent person purposely, it may happen by force of circumstances, and with the full knowledge of the assailant, that the innocent are destroyed.[2] For instance, if civilians are taking refuge in a building occupied by the enemy, it

[1] St. Thomas : *Sum. Th.*, IIa–IIae, Q. cviii, art. 2, ad 3.
[2] Victoria : *De Jure belli*, III, 37.

is permissible to kill them, if it be necessary for the success of the attack.

(2) If Justice and Charity forbid any excess in the application of punishment, they keep us from an inordinate love. Charity involves Order; as we have to love ourselves more than our neighbour, so, all things being equal, we have to love our own country more than another. It would be an injustice to sacrifice the existence of our country for another. If a State transgress the rights of its neighbour, the latter has not only the right, but the duty of repressing the culprit, and if there be no other means of obtaining Justice, it has the right to declare War for 'the Right of War is not contrary to real and honest but only iniquitous peace; it is rather a means of attaining true and safe peace.'[1]

(c) *After the War.*—The end of the Right of War is the restoration of Justice. A State, although in possession of just cause, cannot declare War if it realise that it would be unable to overcome its adversary. Instead of collaborating to the restoration of Peace, such a War would be useless, even more, it would be a contribution to the triumph of iniquity.[2]

But, when the enemy is overcome, the treaty which ratifies the victory must be *just*.

The victorious State has to re-establish the past and secure the future.

(1) The first right of the victorious State is to restore Justice, i.e. to assure the rehabilitation of its rights, the respect of its sovereignty, a compensation for all that has been lost during the War, for through their obstinate hatred, the enemies are not only

[1] Suarez: *Disputatio*, XIII, Sect. 1.
[2] Victoria: *De Potestate civili*, 13.

responsible for the initial crime, but for all the calamities which followed the declaration of War. As human nature is always more impressed by punishment than by good example, the State has the right to punish the culprits.

It would not be an injustice to seize a province of the vanquished in order to compensate for the damages of War.

Moreover, Scholastics are not afraid of saying that, under certain circumstances and for very great reasons, it would sometimes be licit to kill all the culprits.[1]

(2) The duty of the State is also to secure the future. The Authorities are obliged to take all guarantees against any future aggression. Even if there were no imminent danger from the enemy, it would be permissible to punish them in order to secure future peace.[2]

It is very difficult to be just and impartial, especially when he who has to represent Justice is judge and party in the same cause. It is a delicate task to distinguish in a war between guilty and innocent. The victorious State must not forget, in imposing its conditions, that it is a judge rather than an accuser ; it has to act with moderation and poise, without passion and cruelty. Consequently, 'after having punished the criminals as they deserve, it must try to mitigate as much as possible, the misery and woe of the vanquished.'[3]

[1] Victoria : *De Jure belli*, III, 46, and ibidem 48.
[2] Victoria : Ibid., III, 46.
[3] Victoria : Ibid., III, 60.

PART FOUR

# THE EXTREMIST THEORIES

## I. REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

IDEAS govern the world. Order and disorder exist in the superior spheres of the Intelligence before manifesting themselves as facts and animating our actions.

The political, social, and moral anarchy in which the world is struggling to-day seems to be caused by the same ideas of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity which gave birth to the French Revolution.

These ideas are not the privilege of France only. Although we find them in the humanitarian philosophy of Rousseau, we must acknowledge that the subjectivism of the German Philosophers was not alien to revolutionary theories, and what is more, it is clear that the ideas to which we owe our present disorder are the same as those which were at the bottom of the great religious upheaval: the Reformation. Weary of a subjection which they found too constraining—and with good reason!—the Reformers broke with the Head of the Church, and in order to appease their conscience, they proclaimed the principle of INDIVIDUALISM, that is to say, of the absolute sovereignty and freedom of each individual.

In common with all error, the ideas of Liberty,

Equality, and Fraternity contain a certain amount of truth. People are easily attracted by these noble-sounding terms; but, as they are false, or, to say the least, wrongly interpreted, they lead individuals and nations alike to their ruin.

It is, therefore, necessary to disentangle truth from error in order to obtain a clear conception of their meaning.

We have seen, from Scholastic Philosophy, that man desires Peace, i.e. the abiding possession of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty—in short—of God. Man is not absolute master; he has to submit to the authority of his Creator and to observe the Natural Law, expression of the Divine Intelligence and Will. And there you have the condemnation of the absolute Liberty of man, germ of *Imperialism.*

We are obliged to live in Society, and in every Society there must be authority. All men are born with equal rights, but there exists an inherent inequality in them based on the Natural Law, which is the negation of revolutionary Equality as seen in *Communism.*

Lastly, Peace, fruit of Charity, comprises Order. If Charity oblige us to love all men, it demands that this love be well-regulated. We cannot love all men equally, with the same intensity, but their love for God should be the measure of our love for them, and herein is found the repudiation of that sentimentality which leads to *Pacifism.*

## II. IMPERIALISM

Ever since the creation of Man, God has prescribed how He desired to be worshipped. Some of the books of the Old Testament are nothing more or less than a

code of liturgy, exposing in detail the mode in which the Hebrews had to celebrate their sacrifices, feasts, and ceremonies. In the New Testament, we see that Our Lord taught His Church the manner in which He was to be served, especially by the institution of the Sacraments.

With the Reformation comes the breach with all tradition. God is but an abstract being, whom the Reformers consigned to Heaven as they relegated His Vicar to the Eternal City. The Liberty of man is proclaimed! We are free to think as we wish, free to teach the most erroneous and absurd doctrines, free to practise what we will! To see how these principles work in practice, I invite you to read the biography of Luther, by Denifle,[1] and that of Cranmer, by Hilaire Belloc.[2]

This liberty of word and thought produces the subjectivist philosophy of which Kant and Hegel are typical representatives. The principles which the Reformers had introduced in Religion and Morals passed into Philosophy and, through it, to all human actions. Subjectivism means the autonomy of the human intelligence and will, in other words, that man is his own master, that he is no longer governed by an objective and external Law; each *subject*, i.e. each individual, is his own law-maker and as a logical consequence 'they call evil good, and good evil.'[3]

In proclaiming the identity of the contraries, Hegel broke with reason and commonsense, as the Reformers broke with Divine Reason and Order. These liberal principles, attributed in the first instance to the

[1] *Luther*, by Denifle, O.P. *Mainz.*
[2] *Cranmer*, by Hilaire Belloc. Cassell.
[3] 'Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil.' Isaiah v, 20.

individual, are applied to the State. The State takes the place of God and, like God, it has no duties but only rights. The practical conclusion is the primacy of Might over Right, the negation of the Right of Peace and the vindication of all wars.

'A Nation, like a State, is the Spirit in its substantial rationality and its immediate reality; consequently it is the absolute power on earth; therefore a State enjoys sovereign autonomy with others. Its first and absolute right is to be recognised and considered as such by others.'[1]

Hegel recognises, it is true, the observance of treaties as the basis of International Right, but according to his principle: the State being God, it is not *obliged* to respect them; caprice is its law; if a treaty get in the way, it is esteemed as a 'scrap of paper.'

Where no higher Law, which would direct the will of rulers and restrain their whims and passions, is recognised, the Rights of a State are practically identical with its interests. As the particular interests of one State do not always accord with those of another, it follows that War, the subjection of the weak to the strong, is the only way to settle the difficulty! Moreover, as according to Hegel's philosophy both parties are always justified in going to War, it ensues that the killing of the innocent is permissible. This is the essence of Imperialism and the application of the absurd identity of the contraries to international order; 'two country rights,' says Hegel, 'are equally true.'[2]

Nowadays, the doctrine of the autonomy of the

[1] Hegel: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, § 331.
[2] Hegel: Ibid.

State seems to be taking the place of that of the autonomy of the Nation.

According to the ' Rights of Nationality ' all groups of common race or culture are free to constitute a new State. The Rights of national groups are limited, for they are obliged to respect legitimate authority.

A country is not formed by the configuration of the land, neither by the unity of tongue, nor by community of religion and race. ' L'histoire humaine,' writes Renan, ' diffère essentiellement de la zoologie. La race n'y est pas tout, comme chez les rongeurs ou les félins, et on n'a pas le droit d'aller par le monde tâter le crâne des gens, puis les prendre à la gorge en leur disant : tu es de notre sang ; tu nous appartiens ! '[1]

A common extraction, a similarity of culture, language, and religion may contribute to the unity and consequently to the stability of a State, but they do not constitute it. A State (take Switzerland for instance) may be a perfect State without complying with any of these conditions. When difficulties arise and the Rights of the Nation and the State clash, it appears that the former must give way to the latter.

According to the Scholastic Theory of the Right of War, it would not be unjust to annex a territory, if necessary, in compensation for the losses suffered from an unjust aggressor or to secure future Order.

The Rights of Nationality are not so absolute but that it might be used as a cloak for injustice. Nowadays, it would be still more difficult to put it into practice as, owing to the ever-increasing intercourse between people of different races and tongues, there hardly exists an unmixed race.

[1] Ernest Renan : *Discours :* ' Qu'est ce qu'une nation ? ' Paris, 1887.

It is not with impunity that we banish God and reason from private and social life. The Great War was but the result of the intellectual anarchy which proclaimed the autonomy and liberty of man.

### III. COMMUNISM

A false conception of liberty leads to another error: the false conception of equality. Here again we have to distinguish truth from error.

We have all the same origin, nature, and destiny, and before God we are equal. But our gifts differ greatly, and as long as this world lasts there will be rich and poor, clever and stupid people in it. We have seen that man is a social being and that no Society can exist without authority. It follows that any attempt to reduce fortunes and families to a common level is futile and against nature.

When people have lost their Faith and Hope in Divine Justice, when the poor workers are the 'victims of grasping speculators, who use human beings as mere instruments for making money,'[1] it is easy to tempt them with the phantasm of Equality and community of goods.

I will not expatiate further upon this class warfare as it does not belong to my subject; but Communism and Bolshevism in practice are the best demonstration of the 'value' of the idea of Equality.

### IV. PACIFISM

The idea of Peace is linked with that of Love of mankind. We are all children of the same Father,

[1] Pope Leo XIII. Encyclical on the Condition of Labour quoted in 'Socialism and the Working Man,' by Rev. Joseph McDonnell, S.J. *Irish Messenger.*

created to His image and resemblance, destined to participate in His happiness. This identity of nature, origin and destiny is the foundation of a universal brotherhood. Therefore, the Scholastics taught that this love embraces nations as well as individuals. This international Fraternity is the basis of international harmony and peace. And it was for this reason that the same thinkers condemned War as a crime of hatred rather than a sin of injustice.

But War is an equivocal expression. The definition quoted above: 'The armed conflict of two or more States,' has two meanings: (1) War—*an act against charity*, breach of unity and love; (2) the Right of War—*an act of Justice*, vindication, by means of arms, of violated rights, and both are as inseparable and opposite as the concavity and convexity of the same curve.

Pacifists' arguments against War are valid if it is a case of a war—an act against charity—but when it is a question of an act of Justice, of the Right of War, their claims are groundless.

A few years ago, a book written by Father Franziskus Stratmann,[1] was published in this country. It seems to be more dangerous than others for it attempts to assimilate Pacifism and Catholicism.

The arguments in favour of this 'religious pacifism' are of three kinds:

*A*. Intellectual arguments.
*B*. Arguments based on Catholic tradition.
*C*. Arguments taken from Revelation.

I shall try to expose and criticise them.

[1] Franziskus Stratmann, O.P.: *The Church and War*. A Catholic Study. London, Sheed and Ward, 1928.

### A. *Intellectual Arguments*

All men are brothers. Therefore, we must love one another and look on all mankind as one great family.

Now Father Stratmann says 'hatred is murder,'[1] and is incompatible with love. Consequently, Peace, which is the fruit of love, excludes enmity, fruit of hatred.

'True Peace rests in freedom from hatred and enmity, as Christendom has always known,'[2] and as War is the expression of hate and the negation of Peace, it follows that the spirit of War and the Spirit of Christ 'can no more amalgamate than can fire and water.'[3]

So we must banish from our hearts all hatred and enmity, and in their stead we must cultivate love of enemies and forgiveness of every injury, which are 'the conditions of the everlasting love.'[4]

Let us make war against War, say the Pacifists, let us inculcate in human hearts this interior Peace, necessary foundation of Peace between Nations. If we moulded the minds of the people to the sense of duty, if they were advised to act justly, if they were true to themselves they would also be upright in their dealings with others. If they understood that 'passive resistance . . . is the Spirit of Jesus Christ,'[5] 'if authority were resisted by the accredited means adopted by Pacifists,'[6] if this doctrine were taught in church and school, and were held by the best and most high-minded of the population, there would be no more talk of the cowardice and weakness and want of

[1] *The Church and War*, p. 161.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Op. cit., p. 42.
[4] Op. cit., p. 161.
[5] Op. cit., p. 157.
[6] Op. cit., p. 158.

honour of Pacifism.'[1] 'Nothing shall be impossible —not even perfect Peace—if in our minds, Christ is the Alpha and Omega of the Peace-ideal.'[2]

CRITICISM. General Impression.—What strikes me most forcibly in reading Father Stratmann's book, is the poorness of the hypothetical value of Pacifism.

It is evident 'that disputes can be arranged by other means than international wars, if there is the will to find these means,'[3] if 'the State responsible for the political murder should be required to punish the murder,'[4] and 'if this was done adequately there would be no question of War.'[5] 'If these groups (States) had no trained and equipped army behind them, what we mean by War would be impossible. That is to say if Justice could take the place of force, and a trial by law the place of carnage.'[6] 'If this doctrine were taught in church and school,'[7] 'if all this were realised, Pacifism has no doubt that defensive War as the only means of protection against attack or restitution of justice would become absurd.'[8] But let us suppose —what is nearer the mark—that man will never lead a perfect Christian life, if he be always doing evil, if a supernational League of Nations has no effective power, Pacifism remains what it is—a word.

Father Stratmann himself is obliged to acknowledge that 'materially War will never cease, if man will never give up . . . the nation's right of fist,'[9] and he will agree with us that with 'IFS' we can make a lot of plans and build the most amazing theories.

Now, let us examine this first argument more thoroughly.

[1] Op. cit., p. 158. [2] Op. cit., p. 215. [3] Op. cit., p. 135.
[4] Op. cit., p. 66. [5] Op. cit., p. 66. [6] Op. cit., p. 51.
[7] Op. cit., p. 158. [8] Op. cit., p. 158. [9] Op. cit., p. 163.

As we have seen, love of mankind is the foundation of Pacifism. It is a fact that the love of our fellow-creatures is based on the Natural Law, and so far we agree with Father Stratmann, but when he affirms that love and hatred are incompatible, we disagree, or, at least we must make a distinction.

Love is the inclination of the Will towards good. Hatred is the repulsion of the Will from evil. Love and hatred are incompatible if their object be the same, but they are not necessarily incompatible if their objects differ; moreover, if their objects be adverse, hatred is the necessary result of love.

If we love goodness and justice, we shall therefore hate evil and injustice. Consequently, the absolute statement—love and hatred are incompatible—is false.

The moral character of our love and hatred depends on what we love and hate. Our love is moral when we desire a real good: it is immoral when we desire an apparent good. Similarly, to hate is ethically sound as long as we only hate real evil such as crime, vice, injustice, error. It is immoral if we hate good such as virtue, justice, truth. Now, when we hate our neighbours, it is either their persons or their actions that we detest. To hate their persons is a sin and it is in this sense alone that it is written: 'Hatred is murder.' But it is just and reasonable to hate their bad actions; moreover, it is an obligation and an act of virtue to do so. To remain passive when confronted with moral evil, if it be in our power to prevent it, is to be an accomplice in the crime.[1]

Therefore, the principle of passive resistance, so dear

[1] 'Who do such things, are worthy of death: and not only they that do them, but they also that consent to them that do them.' Romans i, 32.

to the Pacifists, permissible in a case of physical evil, can never be justifiable when it is a question of moral evil. When brought face to face with error and injustice we must not remain passive, we are under the obligation of finding out the truth, of defending our rights.

If every War be murder, as some Pacifists maintain, it follows that all soldiers who fight for their country are murderers. The fact that they are commanded to fight does not excuse them from crime, and to pretend that War may be both a murder and a duty is absurd and immoral.

Duty and right are correlatives. There is no duty without rights. If I be obliged to go to war it is obvious that some higher power (the authorities or laws of my country) has the right to impose this obligation on me, it being taken for granted that the commands I am expected to obey are in accordance with the Natural Law. On the other hand, when these orders are contrary to the Natural Law, they are worthless and not obligatory. As St. Thomas says: 'Such laws are but a corruption of the law.'[1] The authorities have no right to compel me to obey. If War be murder it CANNOT be a duty. Such is the Scholastic theory.

When Pacifists assert that murder is at times a duty it is as though they said that we are bound by the Natural Law to commit it. As the author of the Natural Law is God Himself, the logical conclusion to be drawn from this statement is that God obliges us to sin, which is a blasphemy.

I have said that the excuse that they are obeying orders does not exonerate soldiers from sin. For an

[1] *Sum. Th.*, Ia–IIae, Q. xcv.

action to be sinful three conditions must be fulfilled: there must be gravity of matter, full knowledge, and full consent of the will. In this case, 'War being always murder,' the first condition—grave matter—exists; knowledge and consent, too, for we conclude that the soldiers understand this doctrine and willingly execute the orders of their rulers. Therefore, if they cannot in conscience obey those in authority they should be ready to submit to the death sentence rather than be false to their convictions.

What is more, all who participate in the accomplishment of a crime participate in the guilt; so if Pacifism were veridical, all soldiers and sailors, all those who in any way aid or abet the Army and Navy are in a state of mortal sin. And Father Stratmann's conclusion that not only War should be abolished, but 'military service is to be refused,'[1] and that 'no authorities have the right to impose it'[2] is logical, as the *raison d'être* of military service is to protect a country from the unjust aggressor, which means War and . . . murder!

Who are our enemies? Those who wish us harm or who act unjustly without the intention of making restitution.

Charity teaches us to love our neighbours and this includes our enemies; we do not love them because of their animosity, but in spite of it. Charity has degrees. We do not love all with equal ardour, neither do we bestow on our enemies the affection due only to those near and dear to us. Love of our enemies must of necessity be of the supernatural order.

As human nature is always more impressed by material losses and physical sufferings than by spiritual

[1] Op. cit., p. 169. [2] Ibid.

exhortations, it is both licit and wise to threaten our enemies and even to punish them, when necessary.

Therefore, I maintain with the Scholastic philosophers that in a just cause, the legitimate authorities have, not only the right, but the duty to declare War, provided they have the intention of restoring Justice and Peace.

Pacifists never tire of repeating that there are not two codes of morals, one for the State and the other for the individual[1]—and this is quite true. So, as to kill is always a crime,[2] it follows that a judge cannot sentence an assassin to death without himself, in company with those who fight in defence of their country, committing murder. According to the principle of passive resistance, we must not defend our honour or our lives, surely then, still less may we protect our property. Passive resistance in practice would mean the abolition of the Courts of Law, the annihilation of the Police Force and the end of prisons and penitentiaries, and we should have to be prepared to allow ourselves to be deprived of our most cherished possessions without raising a finger in self-defence!

Others say that *War is permitted* in a case of 'formal injustice,' but *never* for 'material injustice.' 'The *justa causa*,' says Father Stratmann, 'must contain two features: moral guilt and certain knowledge of this guilt. A merely judicial or material, i.e. an unconscious guilt, is not enough. It is not an evil deed. Those who commit it are not evil-doers. To

[1] Henri-Demont: *Pour supprimer ce crime: La Guerre*, p. 31. Paris, 1932.

[2] 'To abolish war, we must first consider this high principle that "Human life is sacred," that no one, State or individual, has a right to suppress it.' 'Project of a Juridical Peace Organisation' Conference by Me. Henri-Demont—translation by Georges Maullion.

declare War on such is forbidden by the laws of nature.'[1]

This objection is beside the point. Whether the unjust aggressor be in good faith or no is of interest to his conscience alone.

The question I put to the Pacifists is this: 'When I am unjustly attacked have I or have I not the right to defend myself?'

If they answer affirmatively, then Pacifism is ruled out. If negatively—the decision is absurd. The individual, then, is not allowed to protect himself from a madman who assails him or a wild beast who seeks to devour him, as neither of these are conscious of doing evil.

If Pacifists put the principle of passive resistance into practice unconditionally, they would be guilty of grave immorality.

If they admit it only in regard to moral guilt, and denounce it when it is a question of 'material injustice,' they simply reduce it to an absurdity.

If they acknowledge it in international affairs and repudiate it in personal ones, they establish two standards of morals, condemning on the one hand what they commend on the other.

But, if perchance they only desire to oblige others to do what they will do no more than preach about themselves—then Pacifism is sheer and abject Pharisaism.

### B. *Arguments based on Catholic Tradition*

Father Stratmann bases these arguments on the authority of the Fathers of the Church. It is easy to

[1] Op. cit., p. 65.

prove that they condemned War if we pick out isolated sentences from some of their writings.

'Tertullian, Origen and Lactantius,' writes Father Stratmann, 'were firm opponents of military service.'[1]

Although in his work *De Corona* Tertullian advises soldiers to leave the Army the better to safeguard their faith, he reminds those who do not follow his counsel that a soldier's life does not exempt them from their religious duties but that, like the rest of the world, they are obliged to avoid evil and do good, and even be ready to face martyrdom.[2]

Origen 'who was absolutely opposed to War,' if we are to believe Father Stratmann,[3] in his work: *Against Celsus*, writes, 'As bees make War sometimes, it is perhaps a sign that War may be permissible between men in case of necessity.'[4]

St. Athanasius avows that, although we must not commit murder, 'it is legitimate and praiseworthy to kill our enemies in War.'[5] And Father Stratmann himself quotes this statement by St. Ambrose: 'The valour which protects our country by War against the barbarians and protects the weak, this valour is full of justice.'[6]

It is certainly a gross exaggeration to say that all the early Fathers of the Church were 'firm opponents of military service' for, with the one exception of Lactantius who, like some Pacifists, considered wars to be 'murderous and execrable,'[7] they all recognised, as

[1] Op. cit., p. 115. [2] *De Corona.* Cap. XI.
[3] Op. cit., p. 81.
[4] Origen: *Contra Celsum* (*Against Celsus.* Lib. IV, m 82).
[5] St. Athanasius: *Epist. ad Amunem.*
[6] Quoted by Father Stratmann. Op. cit., p. 119.
[7] Lactantius: *De Div. institut.* Lib. IV and V.

seen by the above quotations, that there is such a thing as a just War.

Besides, 'if there was a very strong feeling against military service amongst the early Christians'[1] we must not forget that conditions were very different then, and in order to judge them fairly, we must place ourselves in their position. Service under the Roman Emperors usually entailed difficulty in the performance of religious duties with the consequent danger of loss of faith. The Army had its own customs and traditions and soldiers were obliged to offer sacrifices to the gods and take an active part in pagan and impious ceremonies. It is, therefore, easy to understand the anxiety of the heads of the early Church, when we realise the serious dangers to which Christian soldiers were exposed. Their opposition to War and military service was not because they considered them immoral, for as Father Stratmann truly says: 'The Church has never forbidden military service as such'[2] and 'could not be an absolute enemy of War.'[3]

### C. *Arguments taken from Revelation.*

The fact that War has always been, say the Pacifists, does not mean that it always will be.

'When Our Lord speaks of wars . . . He does not prophesy that War is to be a regular occurrence in the Christian era. There is no justification for such an idea.'[4]

'It is impossible to say that Christ acknowledged War as the recognised means of arranging international disputes, nor can we allow that Christian conscience

[1] Father Stratmann: op. cit., p. 117.
[2] Op. cit., p. 118.
[3] Op. cit., p. 119.
[4] Op. cit., p. 86.

should be reconciled to War because of its periodical recurrence.'[1]

War 'always has depended on man's free-will,'[2] and consequently its suppression, too. As the suppression of War depends on man's free-will we have to inculcate in the minds and hearts of individuals the Spirit of Christ, i.e. to establish interior peace, foundation of international justice.

'We do not begin to build a house from the roof, nor does a tree grow from its top branches down. We begin the house from its foundations and the tree grows from its roots. The foundation and root element of political peace always is, and always will be, the peace of individuals in their souls, in their relations to God and to their neighbours.'[3]

Many writers, Catholic as well as non-Catholic, have said that Catholicism with its belief in the dogma of Original Sin is incompatible with Pacifism. 'A total, positive Christian Pacifism,' writes Max Scheler, is impossible, first of all, because it is opposed to the doctrine of the Fall and of Original Sin; and secondly, because it is against the teaching of Thomas Aquinas, who acknowledges a "right" War.'[4]

But, reply the Pacifists, that is a one-sided view of the problem, for they forget 'the Dogma of the Redemption and the renewal of the face of the earth by the coming of the Holy Ghost and the foundation of the Universal Church.'[5] Besides, says Father Stratmann, 'War as it is to-day is essentially different to War in the past.' 'It is allowed that there have been righteous

[1] Op. cit., p. 86. [2] Op. cit., p. 80. [3] Op. cit., p. 112.
[4] Max Scheler: *Die Idee des Friedens und der Pazifismus*, p. 38. Berlin, 1931.
[5] Father Stratmann: op. cit., p. 192.

wars in the course of history. . . . But it is not considered that anything can justify modern warfare and its practices.'[1]

'The whole character of War is changed since the advent of the machine-gun. Now men are shot down in hordes by an enemy they cannot see and who cannot see them.'[2]

'To-day the idea of punishing moral guilt is forgotten, but the distinction between innocent and guilty remains: and the newest idea is that even this should be done away with. It is certain that modern military technique no longer takes the distinction into consideration. Poison gas warfare is especially directed against the civil population, which is a sufficient proof of its injustice and its criminal murderous character.'[3]

CRITICISM. Here again we must avoid all equivocacy. There is no doubt that War, the violation of Peace, is condemned both in the Old and the New Testament as it is condemned by the Natural Law and Reason, and in *this* sense 'we must give up trying to square the spirit of War with the Spirit of Christ.'[4]

But we are mistaken if, speaking of the War of self-defence against unjust aggressors, 'we (must) acknowledge that they can no more amalgamate than can fire and water.'[5]

To begin with, it seems to me that it is an exaggeration to say that the regular occurrence of War is not justified by Revelation, for we read in St. Luke: 'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,'[6] and SS. Matthew and Mark give us the cause. 'The brother also shall deliver up the brother

[1] Op. cit., p. 169.
[2] Op. cit., p. 38.
[3] Op. cit., p. 73.
[4] Op. cit., p. 42.
[5] Op. cit., ibid.
[6] St. Luke xxi, 10.

to death, and the father the son: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and shall put them to death.'[1]

If we cannot assure peace between brothers or between parents and their children, with still greater reason will it be impossible to assure it between nations. Revelation confirms the fact that War is but too often due to our evil lives. We learn from Holy Scripture that each time Israel forsook God by sinning, God himself abandoned His people to their enemies.

'I also will walk contrary to you, and will strike you seven times for your sins. And I will bring in upon you the sword that shall avenge my covenant.'[2]

The Book of Judges is an example of the Divine Mercy and Justice delivering the Children of Israel into the hands of their enemies, until they cried unto the Lord: 'We have sinned: do Thou unto us whatsoever pleaseth Thee. Only deliver us this time.'[3]

As soon as the Israelites confess their fault, are contrite and ready to make satisfaction, God saves them from their enemies. Even He cannot forgive the sinner unless he admits his guilt and is willing to make amends.

The following conclusions are drawn from the teaching of Holy Scripture:

(*a*) That it is forbidden to declare War if the enemy repent and be ready to restore justice. But to allow him to make War with impunity is to refuse to acknowledge Justice and Charity as the touch-stone of Christian life.

[1] St. Matt. x, 21; St. Mark xiii, 12.
[2] Leviticus xxvi, 24–25. [3] Judges x, 15.

(*b*) That in the Garden of Eden there was no strife because there was no sin.
(*c*) That in a perfect Christian Society (which has never yet been seen) neither would there be War.
(*d*) That to guarantee *perfect* Peace between nations would be to establish an earthly Paradise.

Unfortunately, people and nations still sin in spite of 'the Dogma of Redemption and the renewal of the face of the earth by the coming of the Holy Ghost and the foundation of the Universal Church.'[1] Father Stratmann is obliged to acknowledge 'that we shall sin again and again,'[2] and here is the crux, for how can Pacifists dream of the advent of 'perfect Peace' between nations if they cannot first assure it amongst brothers? How can peace be maintained abroad, when anarchy is rampant at home?

. . . . .

War is always unchristian, says some Pacifists; we should do as God bids us, and love our enemies, following His example. They forget that He said: 'Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.'[3] He hates the devils and the damned.

Moreover, He sends death to His friends in order to preserve them from sin. 'He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul.'[4] Therefore, the taking of life, *in itself*, cannot be an immoral act, otherwise God could never have countenanced it.

It is not contrary to the teaching of Revelation to wish the death of the persecutors of the Church or to

[1] F. Stratmann: op. cit., p. 192.
[2] Op. cit., p. 87.
[3] St.Matt. xxv, 41.
[4] Wisdom iv, 11.

make War against them. In the book of Genesis we read that Abraham, 'the father of all them that believe,'[1] is blessed by the High Priest, after having made War: 'After he returned from the slaughter of Chodorlahomor. . . . Melchisedech, the King of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the most high God, blessed him, and said: Blessed be Abram by the most high God, who created heaven and earth.'[2]

If War were *always* unjust, it would be impossible to understand how Abram could be blessed 'after he returned from the slaughter'!

But all Pacifists are not so absolute in their statements.

Although Father Stratmann recognises how difficult it is to decide who is the unjust aggressor, for 'we may be sure that only history, namely, a later generation, can possibly judge fairly who is responsible for a War,'[3] he proclaims all modern warfare immora:

'We are shown how modern War in its cause and still more in its results contradicts our moral sense. Modern War with all the all-round ruin it brings must be immoral.'[4]

Therefore, they make a specific distinction between wars in the past and the wars of to-day, modern warfare being the worst, of course!

The fact that a man is killed with a bullet or with poison gas does not affect the moral character of the action; it is not a difference of *kind*, but of *mode*. Neither has the employment of machine-guns altered the *intrinsic* character of War, nor does the use of poison gas (if inevitable) make War a murder. The

[1] Rom. iv, 11.
[2] Genesis xiv, 17–19.
[3] Op. cit., p. 71.
[4] Op. cit., p. 169.

moral character of the War depends on the justice of the cause and the intention of the belligerents. That members of the civil population were killed during the last War is not a sufficient proof of its 'criminal murderous character.'

The Reverend Father agrees with Catholic teaching that the end never justifies the means. Every intrinsically bad action, such as a lie, crime or murder is ALWAYS forbidden, as 'God cannot approve of anything immoral even to gain the most holy ends.'[1]

We read in the Book of Josue that at the siege of Jericho, the chosen people killed, not only the soldiers, but their wives, their children, and the aged. 'And they took the city, and killed all that were in it, man and woman, young and old. The oxen also and the sheep, and the asses, they slew with the edge of the sword.'[2] 'They burned the city, and all things that were therein.'[3]

And God approves of Josue's action, for He says to him: 'And thou shalt do to the city of Hai, and to the king thereof, as thou hast done to Jericho, and to the king thereof.'[4]

'And, falling by the sword in the same place, the children of Israel returned and laid waste the city. And the number of them that fell that day, both men and women, was twelve thousand persons, all of the city of Hai.'[5]

'And he (Josue) burnt the city and made it a heap for ever. And he hung the king thereof on a gibbet until the evening and the going down of the sun. Then Josue commanded, and they took down his carcass

[1] Op. cit., p. 81. [2] Josue vi, 20–21.
[3] Josue vi, 24. [4] Josue viii, 2.
[5] Josue viii, 24–25.

from the gibbet, and threw it in the very entrance of the city, heaping upon it a great heap of stones, which remaineth until this present day.'[1]

If we compare the events of these wars with those of to-day, we might admit that we are hardly more humane than our forefathers, but we cannot allow that we are less charitable.

How do Pacifists explain this: if the killing of the civil population, the slaughter of women, children, and the aged were sufficient of itself to make War immoral, how could God, who 'cannot approve of anything immoral even to gain the most holy ends,'[2] have commanded it?

Although Father Stratmann avers that the end never justifies the means, that it is always forbidden to do wrong and that War as it is to-day is criminal and immoral[3] he does not shrink from stating (although contrary to his own principle) that 'Christ's words, "but you shall not withstand evildoers," must not be taken as accepting injustice patiently.'[4]

'Justice is the highest good on earth. No material good, no undisturbed possession of this world's good, neither health nor life itself, is of such high worth and dignity as the guarding of justice. If no home was destroyed, no life lost in War, but justice went unvindicated, it would be shameful.'[5]

'If, without just cause, one State overruns another, lays waste the land, murders the inhabitants: in a word, treads Right and Justice underfoot, then the State that is attacked has undoubted right to defend itself with armies.'[6]

[1] Josue viii, 28–29.
[2] Op. cit., p. 169.
[3] F. Stratmann: op. cit., p. 81.
[4] Op. cit., p. 88.
[5] Op. cit., p. 53.
[6] Op. cit., p. 54.

The early Fathers of the Church, the philosophers of the Middle Ages, the inspired writers of the Holy Scriptures could not have spoken more eloquently on the Right of War ! There is just this slight difference, they were at least consistent !

## CONCLUSION

THE intention of a State in declaring War in a righteous cause is to re-establish Peace. We hear Peace spoken of on all sides, but few seem to have a true idea of its meaning; people talk so much and think so little these days!

St. Augustine says that 'Peace is the stability of Order.' Concord between States would constitute International Order, but concord is not Peace. Peace is only found in interior order, i.e. when a person's will is ruled by his reason, when his ideas and actions are in harmony. It is in this order that Peace is engendered and fostered.

If our actions conform to the dictates of reason—and human reason is the expression of the Divine Intelligence and Will—our lives will be a participation in the immutability of the Divine Life and we shall enjoy Peace.

The foundation of International Peace and the Stability of Order, therefore, lies in virtue. Society will be what men are—for it is but made up of individuals. It is folly to imagine that those who are not true to themselves will be upright in their dealings with others: the old pagan philosophers understood that better than politicians to-day. I am not opposed to the League of Nations. On the contrary, I think that its meetings are an immense help; members are able to exchange ideas and arrive at an understanding of the difficulties and

interests of countries other than their own and to rid themselves of a narrow-minded Nationalism. I sincerely believe that the League is full of promise and that the world might face the future with confidence and joy if the members of the League and the Rulers of Nations had a true conception of Peace, and put it into practice.

I rejoice in all reasonable efforts for preserving Peace—but they *must be reasonable.* Reasonable,—Pacifism is not ; and that is why I am its firm opponent.

In accordance with common sense as expressed in Holy Scripture and in company with the Fathers of the Church and the philosophers of the Middle Ages, I maintain that 'those who wage War justly aim at Peace, and so they are not opposed to Peace, except to the evil Peace, which Our Lord, " came not to send upon earth." '[1]

[1] St. Thomas : IIa–IIae, Q. xl, art. 1, ad 3.

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