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A SHORT HISTORY
OF WAR AND PEACE

By G. H. PERRIS

LONDON

WILLIAMS & NORGATE

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A SHORT HISTORY OF
WAR AND PEACE

BY
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AUTHOR OF "RUSSIA IN REVOLUTION,"
"THE EASTERN CRISIS AND BRITISH
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WAR AND PEACE

CHAPTER I

THE HUMAN SWARM

THE first step in science is to learn to make distinctions, especially between appearance and reality. We know that war has been a vast preoccupation throughout history, and that the most advanced nations of to-day are engaged in preparations for war on a scale undreamed of by the great conquerors of the past. From this it might appear, and it has often been concluded, that warfare is an inevitable feature of the growth of human societies, and must continue because it is rooted in instincts and passions which are modified in only the slightest and slowest way from age to age, without which, indeed, the race would soon decay and die out. A moment's reflection, however, shows the idea of an unchangeable "human nature" to be full of difficulty. Modern thought points to nothing so certainly as the universality of change. We stand on a whirling ball, every atom and molecule of which is in perpetual movement. Individually, we are aware of being different



men and women every day of our lives; the life of the world has undergone such a transformation even during our own generation that an unmoved character-basis of society is incomprehensible, a miracle in a realm of law—and what an evil miracle! In a modified form, the pessimist theory is more plausible, and therefore more disturbing. It presents not merely to the blind optimist, but to every thinking man, a challenging question: There may be change, but is there “progress”? Is not the blood struggle necessary to “the survival of the fittest”? Granted that man is softer in some ways, is he not harder in others, so that the average is unaltered? Looking back over the procession of the ages, the flux and re-flux of populations, the building up and collapse of States, are we not driven to the conclusion that the simple man’s faith in an “increasing purpose” running through it all, a trend from violence to reason, is a vain superstition?

The following pages offer an introduction to some of the historical material on which an answer to such questions may be based, and something like a scientific definition obtained. They deal, not with the speculations of great minds about war and peace, but with these kinds of human effort as institutions evolving in form, if not in spirit; with their physiology, as it were; their economic bases,

and, more slightly, their political and moral relationships. They assume that sentiment, opinion, even genius, are factors in social growth of small importance in comparison with hunger, sex, greed of wealth and power, and other primary and universal motives which provide the body-stuff of history. They attempt, therefore, to get beneath more heroic but superficial explanations of events to those roots of material interest in which, as the writer believes, and not in passion or instinct, the causes of war and peace are to be found. They give ground for thinking that these material interests have a pedigree, develop in a certain direction. Finally, they seek to throw into proper relief some governing conditions of the subject, the chief of these consisting in two simple but momentous facts: The first is that the earth is now nearly filled with human societies. The second is that, in the most advanced of these, the increase of population is rapidly slackening, while in some it has practically ceased. These are conditions which Malthus, and even Darwin, did not live to witness.

In terms of physiology, all life is a compromise of mobility and stability, of variation and unification, under pressure of environment. Though there is no evidence that they lie under the same doom of mortality,



societies grow, like individual organisms, by a harmony of expansion and organisation, the double process being conditioned by difficulties of elbow-room and food-supply. If a society expands beyond its power of organisation, it suffers (as Napoleon said all empires die) from indigestion. If, on the other hand, it cannot expand, either laterally or, as it were, upward and downward (I mean by intensive cultivation, a limited possibility except in advanced societies), it must stagnate and starve. This process of expansion will be our chief subject-matter. Every function of society at every stage of its growth is affected by density of population and the margins of free land. And, since we are limited to this planet, the whole process of expansion is necessarily modified as the filling-up of the earth nears completion.

History commences with a number of scattered centres from which tribal swarms arise like bees from so many hives. Unlike the bees, they are not vegetarians, or engaged in a highly systematic storage of wealth. They are human, however, in the use of tools, and, paradoxical as this may appear, in their capacity for drunkenness and destructiveness. Animals never intoxicate themselves, and seldom destroy more than they want for food. If it be asked how man can be characterised as both a reflective and a drunken animal,

as one that is capable of associating ideas and yet of falling lower than the beasts in his fits of destructive violence, the reply would seem to be that the former restraints of instinct have become weakened, while the guidance of reason is still slight. The first erect animals soon tire of thinking, and must let off their energy in sheer mischief and cruelty. The hobbledehoy and hooligan are survivals of these animal moods; and, even in the most advanced societies of to-day, the love of skilful destruction has not been worked out. It is a relic of the time when it was, or seemed to be, more profitable to kill than to keep, when the light of reason was only an intermittent glimmer, and there was no social restraint except upon acts immediately hurtful to the tribe.

We no longer think, then, of the scattered communities of primitive man as living in an idyllic state to which the race will revert by a revival of lost virtues. On the contrary, we know, from a comparison of prehistoric remains with contemporary accounts of existing races in the savage and patriarchal stages of social development, that these differ widely from the pictures of them presented to our grandfathers by idealist writers. The earliest human life is a state of extreme insecurity and constant strife. With little or no knowledge of building or the use of fire,



of clothing or any but the simplest weapons, of agriculture or cattle-raising, the existence of the "noble savage" of the hunting horde is an alternation of torpor and excitement, hunger and repletion, equally repulsive. Passion is his master; in intelligence he is a child. He lives to the day only; foresight, providence, the accumulation of goods are beyond him. Leadership in such groups could only mean, as, indeed, it has often meant in later ages, a surplus of violent energy, showing itself in love of domination, destructive enterprise, and greed. Tyranny is always the first, as self-government is the last, of social achievements.

This chieftainship, however, worked together with the elementary control and breeding of animals to convert the hunting group into the patriarchal tribe, and to develop five of the most important of human institutions—property, slavery, polygamy, soldiery, and statecraft. The pastoral community, with its flocks and herds united for easier protection, is larger and wealthier than the hunting group. Arms and organisation are necessary either to attack or to defend it. Slavery, as soon as there is regular profitable labour to be done, supplants the slaughter or devouring of enemies. Polygamy marks the increasing value of the labour of women and children in the domestic industries. Cattle, slaves,

serfs, and wives: these are the chief forms of early property. But, as food and shelter, and with them vigour and intelligence, improve, the arts rapidly advance. Gold and other ornaments are treasured as signs of superiority—yet another temptation to warlike attack. Luxury begins. Economic inequality also begins, with the hiring of labourers and the loaning of weapons or tools. The administration of customary law produces hereditary chieftaincies and councils of elders, and priesthoods are evolved to watch over the religion of the tribe. It has been said that “the origin of the State, or political society, is to be found in the development of the art of warfare.” This seems to be a partial or inexact statement of the facts. The origin of the State lies in the need of protecting the lives and insuring the increase of property necessary to a growing society; and it is only in relatively modern times that the maintenance of internal order has been clearly distinguished from the art of military defence and offence, or increase of property by cultivation from increase of property by conquest.

Immense periods of time must have been occupied by the advance from the hunting group to the pastoral tribe, and still longer periods to the clearing and digging of land for crops, the growth of village communities,



and the beginnings of trade. The next step, metal working for farm implements and weapons, would come more rapidly, as the relatively larger profits of agriculture easily allow the maintenance of an industrial class. Often there would be a throw-back—a famine or other disaster to the tribe would set it on the war trail, and, under successful martial leadership, would convert it into a barbarian horde breaking like a storm over regions where better-favoured races had settled down to the accumulation of wealth. Differences of land structure, also, would intensify and perpetuate differences of social character—mountainous country, for instance, favouring the survival of martial qualities proper to the hunting stage; a broken coast favouring trade and travel; a muddy delta favouring the growth of a despotic State. To this day the sites of the great river civilisations of antiquity are bordered by vast desert regions in which wander tent-dwelling huntsmen and herdsmen, to whom steady labour seems an intolerable oppression. In the dawn of civilisation these nomad fighters would be a much more serious menace to the settled people of the fertile river-sides. Outlaws, escaped slaves, prodigal sons, would swell their ranks. They could offer, as only crime and the more daring kind of financial adventure do to-day, the prize of quick-won wealth and abnormal

power. Martial talent in the servile or dispossessed classes of the settled States must have been strongly attracted to them. So it was, up to a comparatively recent date, on the forest borders of northern Europe. Hence the first separation of a soldier class, in the kinsmen of the chief, among the more advanced pastoral communities, and its elaboration in the courts of the early monarchies, where pretorians or janissaries are the pivot of a military system as necessary against internal revolt as against external attack.

In an examination of the chaotic material of early history, three distinctions of primary importance come to light. In the first place, the swarming movement by which the earth has been filled—which gave us the great tribal migrations in the dawn of European life, the transatlantic migration beginning in the fifteenth century, and the later reaction of Europe upon Africa and Asia—reveals a double character. Varying by infinite degrees of the scale of motive, it may yet be said to possess predominantly a character either of Conquest or Colonisation, of armed authority or voluntary enterprise. In the second place, as the human swarm settles, the social organisation is seen to be marked by a preponderant character either of Despotism or of Democracy. And, thirdly, the economic activities on which both organisation



and expansion depend, while infinitely varied in kind and degree of development, yet display a common quality either of **Exploitation** or of **Cultivation**. But when we speak of these six, which are really soluble into two, preponderant motives, we mean not a spirit of pure good or pure evil possessing peoples, classes or individuals, but a balance of energy, due mainly to favouring conditions and opportunities, and leading in the direction either of war or peace. There will be no dispute as to where the bias lies in early history. Colonisation in the strict sense (*colonia*: a place occupied by and for cultivation) has proceeded from the beginning; and the ancient world shows splendid examples, such as the Greek settlements of the Mediterranean and Black Sea littorals. But in the whole picture it is overshadowed by the method of conquest. A colony is a settlement of men, for the most part of like mind and like race, associated for the pursuit of free agriculture and industry, and seeking in equality and self-government a happier lot than the mother-country offered. The anti-thesis of this is the characteristic fruit of conquest, the *Imperium*, which may be defined as a forcible union of peoples differing not only in political rights, but commonly also in race, religion, economic status, and language.

A tribe settles down on the Palatine by the

Tiber, or Tower Hill by the Thames. Thanks to geographical position (at the mouth of a river, on a good ford, or on a defensible bluff, for instance), the chieftains wax strong, and gradually extend their sway over less fortunate tribes in the neighbourhood. They get the pick of their flocks and lands; slaves, captured in foreign raids, work and fight for them with no reward but bare subsistence. The plebeians support them—at first from the natural respect for physical or intellectual superiority, for the sake of employment, for the benefits of law and order; and afterwards because they share, if only in a small degree, in the joy and gain of conquest. This may be called a Slave economy. The *patres* become a hereditary patrician class, differentiated into monarchy and aristocracy (holding the land), with professionally organised military, financial, and ecclesiastical supporters. The need of a class of skilled artisans or a better soldiery loosens the shackles of the slave. Trade arises. Agriculture improves. Let us suppose that Nature has helped to make the State in question fairly homogeneous and stable. Land now comprises the mass of wealth; land, therefore, dictates the character of government—a hereditary monarchy, based on feudalism or some other caste system. The home-territory becomes a settled nation-State. The forms of wealth





change. With the aid of a sweeping pestilence, or at the cost of a civil war, free labour replaces serfdom; tenants and traders become strong and intelligent enough to resist extreme oppression and extortion, and to obtain a large share in domestic legislation and administration. There is a law of diminishing returns in government, as in agriculture; and this begins to affect the ruling class, who are compelled to look further afield for new opportunities of gain. A gold mine, let us suppose, is found in a heathen land by a company of adventurers. If the capture is not contested, it remains a private affair, subject to royal charter; but the adventurers, holding on to the gold mine, come home and buy up more means of political power. Generally, however, the capture is contested either by natives or by rivals; and then it becomes necessary to call for the aid of the home government, with its land and sea forces, its wealth and prestige.

Meanwhile, the forms of wealth have continued to change. Factory organisation is displacing free labour; credit largely replaces money. These changes should reflect themselves in government. But the ancient obsession of territorial property prevails; and "much would always have more." The difficulty and cost of territorial expansion, however, constantly increase. The day of

the great choice has come. On the one hand, there lies the possibility of restraint and intensive cultivation. Along the other path, the original nation-State—its energies diverted from the development of native resources by science and education—becomes an oligarchy engaged in the exploitation of a system of alien dependencies. Its original base of economic advantage has been upset, its social integrity undermined, by the poisonous influences which always flow from tribute. However great the original virility of its people, it is overweighted by the machinery of extensive rule and the demands of international rivalry. Sooner or later the structure grows top-heavy, and falls before the attack of younger peoples, for whom a fate no better may be in store.

Here is, as it were, a skeleton from the museum of history. It has the limited value of a genealogical tree, an artist's manequin, or the "reconstitution of the crime" in a French trial. We hasten to add that, as Plato or Napoleon would be unrecognisable in their skeletons, so it is what is added to the "predominant motive" that makes the humanity, the flesh-and-blood reality, of the men and movements of the past. As there is no individual who is wholly good or wholly bad, there is no society that is pure democracy or pure empire. Every organism



is a ratio of contending forces; that is the method of development. A balance of energy there must be on one side or the other, and it will be on that where the resistance is less and the profit more. But the life-giving must have been greater than the death-dealing force, else mankind had not multiplied. Nay, it must be immensely greater, since one can kill in a moment what it has taken laborious years to rear. The great unknown of the Stone Age who invented the flint-headed arrow set going a wave of expansion which was doomed to the failure of all merely destructive effort. Man is a lazy animal; and there would have been no progress but for the penalty that falls on the individual or society which does not produce more than it destroys. The increasing difficulty of hunting and fishing stimulates the cultivation of crops and herds. Slave-raiding only ceases as free labour proves its superior economic value. Only when a number of clans had settled down into some semblance of a nation could industry and commerce grow. Robbery and piracy are checked when the majority of men obtain an interest in law and order. When foreign booty becomes scarce and the royal resources at home inadequate, a system of inland revenue, and consequently of popular government, is established. Force, an extension of man's attack upon the animals

to those groups of his own kind whom he regards as alien and inferior, is characteristic of the early stages of society both in domestic and external relations, but especially in the latter, because the checks and balances that are raised against arbitrary power within any society are only slowly and with difficulty carried into its outside affairs. When there are no more good empty lands, and every nation's borders march with those of others of nearly equal strength, a new economy of effort has become imperative. Warfare, always wasteful, has become ruinously so. To the expansion of co-operative industry and commerce, on the other hand, no bounds can be set. The extent to which a State has transferred its activity from the former field to the latter is the measure of its civilisation.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST EMPIRES

MUD and sand mean only waste in the north temperate zone; but the ancient empires of West Asia and North Africa lived upon mud, and it is to mud and sand that we owe the preservation of their wonderful libraries, picture-galleries, and monuments. The British Museum alone has an immense



number of Babylonian and Assyrian wedge-script records on clay—collections of books, letters, laws, contracts, astrological reports, grammars, liturgies, legends, inscriptions of all kinds; twenty thousand tablets and fragments have been found in the last half-century on the site of Nineveh alone. We are, however, still far from having the full picture of life under the West Asian Empires necessary to determine fully the part which militarism and war played, and that for two reasons. The first is the vast period of time covered, the frequent breaks in the records, and—most of them having been quite recently unearthed—the need of further study. Then there is a bias characteristic of the earliest as of the latest art galleries. Even the artist, if he pleases to live, must live to please; and the modern journalist and novelist are not the first to be drawn disproportionately to the heroism of the stricken field because it most easily provides “good copy.” The ancient scribes of the clay tablets, cones, and cylinders, the cutters of steles and monuments whose masters were kings and satraps, give us, in cuneiform writing and low-relief pictures, abundant details of warfare, especially of royal prowess and the horrible fate of the vanquished and the captives. So impressive are these memorials that whole millenniums seem to be filled with the

clamour of moving hosts, the ferocious encounters of bowmen and spearmen, horsemen and charioteers, the siege and pillage of cities. That there was perpetual slave-hunting in the ancient world we know; but it is a simple deduction that for every year of devastating warfare there must have been many years of laborious peace.

At the time of the earliest monuments, the art of war is so highly developed that relatively little progress is manifest in succeeding centuries, save in the size of the armies employed and in their engineering supports. Through ages men fought with practically the same weapons till gunpowder came into use. A carving attributed to the reign of Eannatum, who first confederated the cities of Babylonia (perhaps B.C. 4400), shows a line of close-packed infantry, wearing helmets with nose guard, and carrying very long blade-headed spears and squarish shields reaching from chin to toe. The shields touch or overlap, and the formation appears to anticipate the Macedonian phalanx of a much later time. A splendid stele of Naramsin (B.C. 3750), found at Susa, illustrates a freer style of attack in mountain fighting. Bowmen and spearmen are the chief forces; short swords, daggers, maces, are also in evidence. A thousand years later there is little change in field equipment: chain armour has become



common; the Assyrian helmet is somewhat taller, often with a conical peak; there is a conical as well as a square shield. Foreign slave levies and mercenaries have brought in the sling and axe; and, with the introduction of the horse, the war-chariot, carrying a driver and a combatant and drawn by two or three horses abreast, becomes an important and dreaded arm. Some of the archers shoot from behind a huge square shield held by an attendant. So far, copper and bronze are relied upon for weapons, as for tools; but, "probably from the tenth or twelfth century B.C.—earlier than in any other country" (Flinders Petrie), iron comes into common use; and the hardening of iron to steel soon follows. This must have resulted in a great enlargement of warlike material. Under Ashurnasirpal (B.C. 883–858) companies of mounted archers appear for the first time. From the earliest records the towns had been fortified; but now fortification and siege operations are upon a vaster scale; sappers and miners are employed, with spade, pick, saw, and other tools. A bas-relief shows a huge turreted battering-ram, running on three pairs of wheels, being used against one of the brick walls of Babylon, from the towers of which archers are shooting at their long-coated assailants. These siege operations were not markedly improved upon

for two thousand years. Another relief gives a remarkable picture of the navy which Sennacherib (B.C. 705-681) sent down the Euphrates to the Persian Gulf against the Chaldeans; some of the galleys have rams and a square sail, all have two banks of rowers, and a line of shields to protect the fighters on deck. Under Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon, B.C. 604-562), a method of defence anticipating modern Dutch expedients was put into successful operation. The Tigris and Euphrates were connected with huge dams above and below the city, so that the upper and lower country could be flooded against the invader. It was these tremendous works which made it necessary for Cyrus a generation later to divert the course of the Euphrates in order to obtain a passage into Babylon.

Details like these, with which a technical history of the art of war may be filled, give us, however, no impression whatever of the cause of the rise and fall of Babylonian and Assyrian military power. For that we must look to the nature of the land, and the position of the States to which it gave birth in relation to their neighbours.

The natural fertility of the Babylonian plain was unequalled in the ancient world. Whereas the Nile inundation gave only a narrow strip of black earth, there was here,



in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, and between, a broad belt which may again in the early future become one of the greatest granaries of the world, and, thousands of years before our era, maintained scores, perhaps hundreds, of cities and a dense agricultural population. Surrounded by warlike and for the most part relatively barbarous peoples—Hittites in the highlands of the north-east, and Medes in those of the north-west, Egyptians in the south-east, Elamites in the south-west, and nomad Semitic tribes in the southern desert—it was designed by nature for a theatre of perpetual conflict. The northern kingdoms did, indeed, act as buffer States between Babylonia and those tribes whose descent from the steppes of Central Asia is the great mystery of the morning of civilisation; but in their turn they were pushed south by these hordes. Assyria, having first to meet this pressure, developed the more martial character. Early immigrations had left, also, causes of internal conflict. Throughout the plain, the invading tribes settled in independent principalities, and the rivalry of their chieftain-kings led to incessant feuds, only to be resolved (as in later mediæval Europe) by the gradual formation of extensive kingdoms or empires, which, in their turn, became the stakes of great adventurers in the game of war. But

civilisations like the Babylonian are only slowly created, and they are not in reality, though they seem to be, quickly destroyed. It is most certain that they are only slowly created, that the botanic and zoological gardens of Nineveh, the splendid palaces of Babylon, the regulation of the water-courses, the very art that made Babylonian the culture language of Egypt and carried the clay tablet and seal cylinder into Crete and far eastward into Asia, are witnesses of steady labour and developing intelligence and discipline. Over and over again, wild mountaineers poured down into the Chaldean plains, only to be absorbed into the settled body of townsmen and feudal tenants. The wealth of the land, especially after the establishment of systems of irrigation, is indicated by the ruins of many cities that still await exploration. It explains, on the one hand, the development of despotic governments—necessary as much for the construction and maintenance of the canal works as for external defence and the enforcement of peace upon feudatory States—and, on the other hand, the waves of invasion which created successively the Babylonian, Assyrian, and Persian Empires.

Even in the modern world, where a thousand influences tend to equalise conditions, we find something like a localisation of the



characteristics of the three great stages of social development—the martial vigour characteristic of the hunting stage in the mountains, the laborious passivity of the pastoral stage favouring centralised despotism in the great plains, and mercantile adventurousness on the navigable seaboards. (Compare Albania, Russia, and England.) But in Europe the spirit of the mountains has been tamed, and now speaks rather for liberty than conquest. When Babylonian civilisation was being founded on the lower courses of the Tigris and Euphrates six thousand years before Christ, the three types of society were already in competition, the prosperous cities of the south offering a perpetual invitation to the northern barbarian, recovering from the river mud and the Gulf coast-trade the wealth thus destroyed or removed, and imposing their culture on the invader. At the beginning of the third millennium B.C., the Sumerian and Semitic strains were beaten together, and the first Babylonian empire arose. From Persia to the Syrian coast, a supreme authority was recognised; roads were built and postal services established; trade followed; libraries in clay were collected; and sculpture gave splendid expression to the pride of Court and temple. The Code of Hammurabi (B.C. 2200) shows an extensive organisation of slave labour, and above this an elaborate pro-

tection of personal and trading rights, based on secular ideas and superseding the old law of the blood-feud. Most of its 280 provisions had been in use for centuries; but Hammurabi codified and regularly enforced them—1400 years before the Spartan Lycurgus (if, indeed, he was not a mythical person) and 1200 years before the Athenian Solon. We have hundreds of tablets of the same period referring to legal and commercial transactions only possible in an advanced society.

This great civilisation, from the relics of which, eighteen hundred years later, the Greeks were to learn as we learn from theirs, was undermined by a Hittite invasion, and (about 1800 B.C.) a more permanent occupation by the Kassites, a warlike race on the eastern border. A century later, the northern part of the Empire asserted its independence; and a succession of wars between it and Babylon established the supremacy of Assyria in Western Asia (from about B.C. 1250). Under Tiglath-Pileser I (B.C. 1100), Ashurnasirpal II, and his successor Shalmaneser II, its armies overran the Nearer East. A peasant revolt at home interrupted these wars, but they were soon resumed. These were no longer mere raids, but organised campaigns of conquest. At first the aim was to obtain only tribute or alliance; but more and more



frequently viceroys were left behind with the double duty of raising troops to hold the conquered territory and of sending forced levies to the imperial army. The Old Testament is full of evidence of early Babylonian influences; and this period is interesting as that of the first armed contact between Assyrians and Israelites. The removal of subject peoples from one end of the empire to another became a regular expedient for breaking the spirit of the little nations. In B.C. 701 Sennacherib invaded Judæa, enslaved 200,000 of the inhabitants, and only raised the siege of Jerusalem when Hezekiah had stripped the Temple to give him tribute. Twice more, in B.C. 597 and 586, under Nebuchadnezzar II, Jerusalem was captured, and its people taken away into exile. In such manner the Syrian, Armenian, and Medean States were successively reduced and ravaged. Slaves, loot, and tribute were the great objects of the imperial system; and, though commerce and legitimate taxation followed in the path of war, a perpetual supply of plunder was the only means of maintaining the Assyrian host. The name of Sennacherib has remained a byword for wholesale destruction and cruelty. Lands naturally the richest in the then known world could not long bear this human plague; and, undermined by a Scythian invasion, the

Assyrian empire fell in B.C. 606, never to rise again. Babylon, rebuilt and fortified by Nebuchadnezzar (B.C. 604-562), enjoyed a brief period of splendour and independence, to be overwhelmed by the swift emergence of the Persian empire, which in turn—made by the swords of Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius—succumbed to the attack of Alexander of Macedon (B.C. 330).

The astonishing thing is not that Babylon—which, when Herodotus visited the city in the fifth century B.C., covered an area of 185 miles, or half as much again as the “administrative county” of London to-day—should have fallen into decay, and be now dust, but that the slave tillage of the Chaldean plain and the plunder of neighbouring lands should have maintained it the glorious centre of the known world through thirty centuries, with but a few intervals of eclipse. We have seen that the northern empire was no better than a system of spoliation carried on by a hierarchy of soldiers and officers by means of armies of slaves, serfs, or mercenaries, under a feudal system which reduced a formerly free agricultural population to actual or virtual slavery. In Babylonia the same development was checked by the power of the large towns and the privileges of the priesthood. But, while the people paid with liberty and life the costs of perpetual war,



its prizes were absorbed mainly in the aggrandisement of the palace and the great temples. In a new colony with the resources of a mother-country behind it, the effects of continued warfare are concealed by fresh immigration of the same race. It is quite otherwise with an old civilisation. Every forward step it has taken—for instance, in the enlargement of cities, the improvement of agriculture, the increase of roads and markets, the better rearing of horses, the perfection of weapons and strategy, the elaboration of trade credit—means a wider area of destruction when conflict breaks out. Every fighting man represents years of labour in rearing; his place can only be filled by like years of fresh labour. Under the strain of continuous warfare, in which scores or even hundreds of thousands of the strongest members of the community are slain, while only the weaker are left to continue the stock, the original race is progressively debilitated, and may at last become extinct. The slave basis of society is inert, unadaptable, cannot provide reserves of governing power. When, as is usual, continuous despotism accompanies continuous warfare, the new subject peoples, brought in, not by choice, but by force, and kept in an inferior position, cannot form a nation with the social integrity of their predecessors. For there is, though

it is difficult to define, an integrity of a nation, as of an individual; and, when it is subverted, even a small shock may bring an outwardly splendid fabric to the ground. So fell Babylon, and the collapse was, perhaps, the more complete because so long delayed.

The other great State of antiquity offers this main point of similarity to Babylon, that it is absolutely, as Herodotus put it, "the gift of the river," and this main point of difference, that through thousands of years of oppression Egypt has never ceased to maintain a large and laborious population. Exhausted by native tyrants, and despoiled by every militant race of the Levant, while its ancient art treasures are the wonder of the museums of the world, the black soil of this river valley, only from ten to thirty miles wide, gives life to-day to ten million people and a sufficient tribute to its latest masters. There is a superstitious idea that races and States must die of old age, of prosperity, of some vague disease called degeneracy, which is favoured by continued peace. A rapid glance through the history of Egypt, especially its military history, will correct this impression.

The Nile valley has three great advantages. The river gives the whole country a highroad, and does for its agriculture what we are



beginning to do for ours by intensive cultivation. It is a self-sufficing country, producing ample food, building materials, minerals, and textile crops; so that its rulers are not driven to foreign adventure, and its people need not depend on foreign trade. Its position, protected by deserts and mountains except on the north, though favouring social stagnation, was in olden times, and even now is, one of considerable political strength. These advantages seem to have borne fruit rapidly even in the earliest period. The Stone Age was ended by the introduction—by the first Asiatic invaders, probably Semites, whose weapons explain their success—of metal arms and implements, perhaps also of wheat, barley, sheep, bricks, and Babylonian methods of irrigation. The use of copper and bronze marks a great advance in the status of hunting and pastoral tribes; and, with even the most elementary regulation of the Nile overflow, crops would multiply tenfold. Gradually the tribal communities of the valley were gathered into two kingdoms of the north and south; towns were founded; and, with the legendary King Menes, a single dynasty was established (about B.C. 4400, by the British Museum chronology), with a supporting hierarchy of nobles, officials, and priests. By the Fourth Dynasty (B.C. 3730–3560) government, the organisation of labour,

and the accumulation of wealth had so far progressed as to make possible the erection of the Pyramids. The regulation of the Nile to convert destructive floods into permanent irrigation led naturally, indeed, to the growth of a powerful government. The Great Pyramid of Cheops is said to have taken twenty years to build, employing 300,000 men in gangs of 10,000. A few of these were raided Soudanese herdsmen, but the mass were natives; and, however foolish these marvellous works may now appear, they undoubtedly indicate a time of peace and plenty, of intellectual advance and national unification. This development took a course in some ways similar to that with which we are more familiar in modern times. Under the Fifth Dynasty (B.C. 3560-3300) a theocratic absolutism had become firmly established, and religious art reached its highest excellence. Under the Sixth, the courtiers had grown into an independent landed aristocracy, and the rivalries of princelings led to the end of what is called the Old Empire in a re-division of north and south. With the Tenth and Eleventh Dynasties a United Kingdom, the so-called Middle Empire, is restored at Thebes; and under the Twelfth (about B.C. 2460), with trade and handicraft flourishing as well as art and literature, the old landed nobility gradually becomes a



semi-feudal bureaucracy. Then Imperialism appears.

The Nile and the humble fellah have done their best; how are the ever-growing pride and greed of kings and governors to be sated? "Conquest"—the hunt for slaves and loot—is the everlasting answer to this question. A spur and example were provided by the immigration and tyranny of the Semites of Canaan and Arabia called Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings (B.C. 1800), whose superiority probably lay in another novelty in military organisation, the war-chariot. Their rule in the north seems to have lasted for two centuries, and to have been followed by a nationalist reaction, including the Hebrew "Oppression" terminated by the Exodus. By this time there could have been no more of the instincts of the hunting stage left in the blood of the Nile peasants than there is of the Viking strain in our English blood to-day. From the beginning, the Egyptian appears the least martial of men. The army, hitherto, had consisted of a feeble militia, mainly of spearmen, raised by the local officials, and the royal guard, with Sudanese and negroes for stiffening. The war-chariot now became the centre of a new professional force, with foreign auxiliaries in increasing numbers—Syrian and Nubian archers, and Shardana

mercenaries carrying long swords and shields, dirk and javelin, and clad in mail and helmet. With such troops Amenhotep I of the "New Empire" (about B.C. 1560), having unified the country, set out upon a career of conquest, which Thotmes I, II, and III carried far into Syria, Babylonia, and Nubia. The last, who is accounted the greatest of Egyptian monarchs, led no less than fifteen campaigns. Immense spoils were brought home and went to the building of splendid temples, palaces, and monuments, and to the elaboration of furniture and ornament. The Court was steeped in oriental luxury, and the army swollen with foreign captives. Under Thotmes IV (B.C. 1430) there is evidence of a reaction of the powerful priestly and clerical classes; and in succeeding reigns we hear more of bribery and negotiation than conquest.

The next great campaigns are the most southerly reverberation of the oncoming of the Central Asiatic hordes in which Babylon was already involved. In B.C. 1297 the end of a long struggle with the Hittite Empire of Asia Minor leaves us the interesting text of a regular treaty of peace and alliance for defence and offence. Rameses III, of the Twentieth Dynasty (about 1200 B.C.), revived the power of Thebes and the arms of Egypt. In the first naval battle of which we have a record (B.C. 1192) his Levantine sailors



routed a force of Cretans, Philistines, and other Asiatics at the mouth of the Nile. The veracity of the boast of Rameses that a woman might go wherever she liked in his realm without molestation is less evident than that of his stony memorials of slaughter in battle. But loot sets up a double reaction : it creates vested interests in disorder at home, and the cry of revenge abroad. While its rulers were content to depend on domestic labour and not on foreign pillage and tribute, content to develop native resources and an indigenous civilisation, Egypt remained, despite internal tyranny, a stable and progressive State, with strength to spare for the erection of the monuments which astonish us, even in this day of mammoth engineering enterprise, by their witness of skill and organisation. The first outburst of Imperial adventure in the Middle Empire had led to a weakening of the native economy by the introduction of slave labour, and to a barbarian invasion. The Imperialism of the New Empire, culminating in the campaigns of Rameses, resulted in a further weakening of the native economy by dependence on foreign tribute and commodities, the diversion of large bodies of men from productive to destructive work, and to a series of reactions from neighbouring countries, ending in military disaster, political collapse, economic misery, and sub-

jection to Libyan, Ethiopian, and Assyrian conquerors.

Henceforth there is no State that can be properly called Egyptian. But the patient cattle still draw the wooden plough, and the creaking of the shaduf, the primitive water-wheel, never ceases along the Nile. What more of extortion there may have been by Persian satraps, Greek and Roman governors, Arab Kadis and Mamelukes, and Turkish Pashas, must have been compensated by the discovery of Roman and still more distant markets. The Ptolemies were in their time the wealthiest rulers in the world; and the encouragement they gave to Greek traders in the north may have been for the good of their subjects. But, while the city of Alexandria, with its famous library and lighthouse, grew to be the centre of intellectual influence and commercial activity in the Levant, Greek Pharaohs and Roman prefects ruthlessly exploited the upper country, and, by destroying all native elements in the administration, made easy the way for twelve centuries of Mohammedan rule.

This rapid sketch of the military history of the ancient empires of the Near East indicates some broad conclusions as to its character. In these rich and extensive dominions we are already far from the crude impulses of the savage tribe; but tribal



conditions on the outside vitally affect them. The swarming movement, the great immigrations from Central Asia into the warmer and more fertile lands of the west and south, are provocative of constant conflict. The older and more important "predominant motive" is internal despotism, with its law of diminishing returns. The rationale of the union of village communities into principalities, and these into empires, has been a general interest in law, order, and the organisation of the river works. But the governing class becomes larger and larger, developing from the simplest form of patriarchal monarchy, through a feudal period, to a bureaucratic despotism battenning upon a vast body of slave labour. The limit of extortion being reached, Pharaoh begins to look abroad for new fields of exploitation; and warfare becomes a regular function of government. Agricultural serfs are not the stuff democracy is made of; but neither are they militant patriots. A class of foreign traders has not yet arisen; and Nature is so kind that there is no need of outflow in colonisation. War, with its constant new supplies of captive toilers, is always a depressing interference with native life; and, though it reaches a vast scale, its organisation strikes us as less remarkable than the preceding monuments of peaceful labour. At length, warfare also

presents increasing difficulties, and gives diminishing returns to the now almost completely alien ruling class. The original racial stock may have been ruined in learning the lesson, as in Mesopotamia, or only degraded and debilitated as in Egypt. Then the centre of gravity in history passes to other lands where ideas may count for more, and arbitrary power for less.

In a little garden by the Nile noisy with the evensong of many hidden birds, I sat once watching the sun go down behind the holy mountain of Kurna, and dreaming over the fate of the Pharaohs buried there. From the parched black fields the peasants had gone to their mud-brick homes; the feluccas were moored ashore, their lateen sails looped up; the wise asses and gentle buffaloes and camels were stalled. Peace lay over all the plain where once stood royal Thebes of the hundred gates. Life seemed suspended, save that the vast river, a sheet of ruffled steel, poured downward her vital stream, the same to-day as ten thousand years ago. The kings and priests, rulers of thirty splendid dynasties, do their ghosts still attend their accustomed shrines now that there are no prostrate multitudes where once was Thebes? Dead . . . and they so sure of immortality; they and their works and thoughts, all dead! These colossi, so piteously dumb; these deep-



cut records of war that the jackal laughs at by night and the tripper exclaims over by day; the solitary obelisks and pyramids—can the world show any such spectacle of pathetic futility? The fellah has no pride in them; they are dead work of alien hands; he is alive, and, humble as he is, his hopes lie higher. The sand and ruins of Thebes, laden with the dust of kings and slaves, exhale continually this nightmare thought of death. Athens and Rome breed no such deep sadness. For this must be the gloomiest tragedy of human effort—to have meant so much, and to mean nothing; to have given to-day to win to-morrow, and to have lost both.

Yet that is not the whole truth. There is nothing lost. The Egyptian mind passed into Greece and Judæa. The Dynasties held the human spirit captive too long; they must be broken that the wider world might learn what they had to teach. History is the tale of this ceaseless fermentation, re-incarnation, or rather re-animation. Englishmen are but the latest followers of Hittites, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Turks, on the sacred soil of Thebes; and all the Dynasties could but be a moment in the secular history of the rise of man. If I am master of myself, I am greater than Ptolemy; and the freed fellah bending over his sugar-cane is nearer the reality of things

than Queen Hatsephsu. For immortality lies no more in royal splendour and strength than in swathings of linen with myrrh and salts and spices, but only in deeds of beauty, justice, and love.

CHAPTER III

GREEK, JEW, AND CHRISTIAN

THE Nile and Mesopotamian basins are the two great fertile breaks in a belt of deserts and steppes—including the Sahara, Arabian, Thian Shan, and Gobi deserts—which run N.E. by E. across the Old World from Nigeria to Kamtchatka. To the south of this belt lie tropical Africa and Asia, to the north the earlier and later homes of the Indo-European race. We yet know very little of the cause of the ancient waves of Aryan expansion, but their main results are evident. There is a mysteriously steady westward trend, under the impulsion, perhaps, of a pressure of population behind, perhaps of some immense natural change, such as the drying-up of the central Asian tablelands, or some great social disturbance—a trend along the lower level of the north temperate zone. It is significant that half a dozen of the greatest historical cities—Pekin, Constantinople, Rome, Madrid, Lisbon, and New York—lie very near to the 40° of



northern latitude, and that if, instead of this parallel, we follow the annual isotherm—the mean average temperature line—of 50° , we may add Vienna, Paris, and London to the list. The tribal stream sweeps into Europe, then, along this belt of climatic advantage by way of the Caspian region, one branch moving to the north of the central European mountain block, across the Russian plain to the South Baltic and the western plain; the other into the southern peninsulas and Asia Minor. As might be expected, the branches which soonest develop into rich and strong communities are those which move southward into the three Mediterranean peninsulas—partly, perhaps, because of the mere convenience of getting up a side street when a procession is at one's heels, partly because these peninsulas were richer in natural advantages, and offered better defensive positions, than the bogs, forests, and prairies of the north; above all, when commerce began, because the sea is a perpetual challenge to the adventurous, and the easiest path to everywhere—the way alike of liberty, trade, and empire. To the robust children of this vast westward immigration fell some of the richest lands of the earth. One after another the three peninsulas of the north Mediterranean seaboard held the centre of gravity in history. Each people in turn, the Greek, the Roman, the Spaniard,



rises to the most magnificent achievement—to the mastery of the world; and each in turn is humbled to the dust. In each case the successful growth is due directly and indirectly to geographical position and physical resources; in each case the temptation of dominion over peoples less fortunately situated leads to the weakening, and finally to the destruction, of the economic advantages and the political integrity which the conquering race had originally enjoyed.

Neither within the limits of political, nor of intellectual, nor of military history, can the rise and fall of Greek power be adequately explained. I shall offer here only some general considerations which fall in the straight line of our inquiry; but the student can hardly too often recall the facts of elementary geography. There he will find the contributory elements of Greek democracy, colonisation, and empire. With a rapidity like that of the transformation of modern Japan, the city-states of the peninsula developed a type of political life not merely the highest of the age, but one of perennial interest, since there is hardly any political expedient of subsequent times which is not foreshadowed in Greek experience. Its rise was so rapid—a space of less than 500 years lay between the Homeric epos and the period of Socrates (B.C. 470–399), Plato (429–347),



and Aristotle (385–322)—its growth, despite enormous sacrifices, especially in warfare, and despite the pressure of peoples to whom its spirit was utterly alien, was so persistent, that we seem to be in presence of a miraculous break in the order of ancient history. The marvel is somewhat modified when we consider the circumstances which conditioned the first considerable expansion of the Hellenic peoples in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., and gave the direction to their subsequent development. The narrowness of the Attic plains and the difficulty of the mountain barriers long preserved Greece from invasion *en masse*, and directed the tribal settlement so as to preserve old elements of social cohesion in the new circumstances of city life. The land is sufficiently hard to put a premium on energy and skill; thus, while slaves did the roughest work, there was always a large supply of free labour. The abrupt isolation of the different small communities was a source of military and governmental weakness; but it encouraged the spirit of liberty and independence, and a fluidity of political forms favourable to experiment and imitation. It is the antithesis of those broad flat wheatlands of ancient Babylonia and modern Russia which breed the taskmaster and the serf. The Greek had the sea as well as the mountains at his doors. His home was easy of defence, fertile (there is

never famine on a seaboard), yet not rich enough for idleness and luxury, and requiring foreign supplies of corn, wood, and wool—a resting-place between a tent and a ship. With the advantages of the most southerly position in Europe, it had that of a mild and bracing climate. Athens lay nearly equidistant between the mouth of the Nile, Tyre, Odessa, Rome, and Carthage. Insular and peninsular life produces an adventurous disposition; and the sailors of the Piræus must have learned very early their advantage in northern and western voyages over their rivals of Tyre and Sidon. We find them building triremes in B.C. 700, and trading with Russia, Persia, and the Caspian by way of the Black Sea, with the East by way of the Nile Delta, and with the western Mediterranean.

The proximity of the Ægean islands and that Asian shore whence “deep-browed Homer” brought the legends of the race would early lead to a leisurely outward movement. Each city-state threw off colonies reflecting its own democratic character. The Greeks were not, like the Egyptians, reluctant to fight; but they went abroad as freemen to found homes such as they had left; their business was settlement for cultivation and commerce, rather than conquest. Here Sparta, landlocked in the Laconian mountains, was



at a disadvantage, a fact which must have contributed to her development on military and conservative lines. The first wave of emigration in the eighth and seventh centuries probably resulted as much from a temporary rise of aristocratic power in the tribal organisation, at the cost of the kings and the freemen, as from the discovery of mercantile and maritime opportunity. In B.C. 735 was founded the first Sicilian colony; from the sixth century the settlements in South Italy came to be known as "Greater Greece"; and about B.C. 600 the three angles of the great triangle of Greek influence were established at Marseilles, Odessa, and Naucratis in the Nile Delta. The size and security of their base of origin is a chief factor in the stability of colonies. A glance at the map will show that the base of the Phœnician system was very small, and—directly the Eastern empires under whose shadow it lay were stirred into activity—very insecure, as compared with that of Greece. Tyre suffered by every disturbance in her Asiatic hinterland or in Egypt, as Venice and Genoa suffered in later times when the Eastern land-routes were closed by the semi-circular advance of the Saracen and Turkish power. Greece had the kind of advantage over Tyre that England had over Holland in the seventeenth century—she was nearer to the new lands, and safer

from the old. At the same time, with her quick and shrewdly acquisitive mind, she drew upon the experience of the older lands, learning weights and measures and something of monumental art from Babylon, mathematics and astronomy from Egypt, iron-working and shipbuilding from the Phœnicians, and the value of a regular coinage—perhaps the chief factor of all (about 700 B.C.)—from her own Lydian colonists. The combination of these acquirements accounts for the rapid increase of wealth when Greece entered definitely into the exploitation of Mediterranean trade. Travellers of free birth are the keenest of patriots; and it was a mental activity capable of adding the knowledge of “barbarian” life to the heritage of Mycenæan culture, and not merely the martial valour of tribesmen fresh from the hunting and pastoral stages, that fed the flame of Greek patriotism.

There was a base of slave labour; but in the great period much of the service was done by freedmen or well-treated domestic slaves, who were commonly emancipated (see A. E. Zimmern in the *Sociological Review*, 1910. Prisoners of war were enslaved, but might not be killed in cold blood. Crops and buildings were destroyed, but olive-trees rarely. Such was the rule, though it was sometimes broken. The seeds of international law are to



be found in treaties made by the Greek city-states and in the rules for the residence of aliens and the reception of embassies. A vague "law of nature," or humanity, was uncertainly recognised; and, within this, distinctions were more commonly made between Greek and non-Greek, civilised and barbarian enemies. "Xenophon depicts his ideal king as making an agreement with his foe that the labourers in the land should be let alone on either side, and the operations of war confined to those bearing arms." "The Amphiktionic Council, which has been by some erected into a board of international arbitration after the model of the Kantian scheme, was in truth a religious, not a political assembly, but nevertheless did operate as a symbol of international good-fellowship, and to a certain extent as an active international agent" (Walker: *History of the Law of Nations*). The feuds of the States, though wasteful and enfeebling, did not destroy the sense of Hellenic fellowship. Nourished by like tastes in physical and mental culture, and organised in the great national sanctuaries and festivals, in successive leagues for war and peace, and other federal experiments, it held the colonies faithful even when far removed from the mother-states, and sustained the prestige of a homogeneous civilisation.

When the Persian storm burst over the

Orient, in the middle of the sixth century, Greece had these sources of strength, but little of military advantage to oppose to the invading host. Her arms and armour, so far as we can judge by what remains, show a singular lack of the variety and ingenuity of her industrial and artistic invention. The decline of monarchy and the rise of trade had produced the same change from cavalry (in this case war-chariots) to heavy-armed infantry (hoplites) which we shall see accompanying the decline of mediæval feudalism. The body armour, consisting of metal helmet, cuirass, and greaves, had long been known throughout the Nearer East, and was to continue to the end of Roman times, with only slight changes in response to the effectiveness or feebleness of weapons of attack (the helmet covering the whole head when cavalry had to meet skilled bowmen, for instance). The metal breastplate and leg-guards are accounted for by the smallness of the Greek shield. In Mycenæan times (B.C. 3000–2000) the sword had not been invented; the first swords, developed from the bronze dagger and spear-head, were used mainly for thrusting. The long heavy spear then became the most important weapon; the sword was added as iron-working improved; bows and slings were used by mercenaries; the axe was accounted a purely barbarian weapon. The fighting



power of Sparta lay in her system of physical training, and her heavy infantry which found a glorification in the Macedonian phalanx, a formation of pikemen, sixteen deep and five hundred in frontage, standing so close that the spears of five ranks extended beyond the front line. It was the union of the military spirit of Sparta with the new naval force to which Themistocles sacrificed the army of Athens (aided by the discovery of a new bed in the Laurion silver mines) that made the repulse of Persia and the Greek reaction possible. Marathon (B.C. 490), won by the rapid assault of the heavily-armed Athenians; Thermopylæ, lost after a heroic resistance; Salamis, where six or seven hundred Persian ships were thrown into confusion in the narrow straits by half the number of Greek triremes (B.C. 480), and Plataea (B.C. 479), where the hoplites again proved their superiority to the mob of servile Asiatics, led to the final retirement of the Persians and the liberation of the Asian coast-lands. Athens had been twice captured and partly destroyed; the city and its port were now strongly fortified, and Pericles set up new glories in stone on the Acropolis.

His design of a Pax Hellenica broke upon the aggressive spirit of Sparta. Nearly a century of civil war witnessed many peace congresses and at least one reference to arbitra-

tion, but produced no lasting agreement. Despite the "Philippics" of Demosthenes, Macedon was in control of the Hellenic Confederation and its Council in B.C. 338; and in 334 Alexander took the warpath against the Persian Empire, at the head of 30,000 infantry, light and heavy, and 5,000 cavalry. After defeating the immensely stronger army of Darius, and reducing successively Phœnicia, Egypt, Babylon, Persia, and the Punjab, he endeavoured to found a court and dynasty of mixed Persian and Macedonian blood. He died in B.C. 323, being only in his thirty-third year. He had done much to spread Greek ideas and to join East to West. But he had almost completed the destruction of the old Hellenic stock, begun by generations of internecine strife. He created an outward stream of Greek adventure, and an inward stream of oriental luxury. The ideals and organisation of the old city-states fell together into decay. Soldiering became a profession instead of a patriotic duty. The economic advantages, the political experience, the religious spirit which made Hellas great lost their value in a campaign of Asiatic empire-building. The old Greeks were killed out, aliens of a quite different sort taking their place. The Empire, built in bloodshed, lacked any natural bond of union, and broke up into separate kingdoms; while the



peninsula fell an easy prey to the legions of Rome.

In societies, as in individual organisms, there is a ceaseless adjustment of internal to external relations; and a self-governing State or federation which suddenly gives itself up to the business of conquest suffers a strain such as a school-master would suffer in the prize-ring. For a moment, the possession of an intelligence unusual in that field may yield brilliant results; but collapse must quickly follow. Here is a case above all others in which we may appeal confidently to the verdict of posterity. The Greece we all worship is not the far-spreading empire of Alexander, but the group of related, autonomous city-states, where intelligence and commercial skill were qualities of citizenship, and citizenship was the essence of civilisation. The great Greeks reached, and helped succeeding peoples to reach, a higher plane of political and moral experience than had hitherto been deemed possible, created a new world of science and art, established an ideal of the sane mind in the sane body and the perfect man in the perfect society, cut out a new line of progress between anarchy and despotism, and made moral ends supreme over material in the State. These are the things which make us children of the barbarian West, thousands of years afterwards, humble subjects of the

Greek genius. The empire of the spirit survives the shocks of time; and Greek universalism, the Greek ideal of Democracy as a brotherhood of equals for progress in the good life, the Greek tri-unity of Reason, Righteousness, and Beauty, are the articles of a spiritual empire before which all the material achievements of Macedon and Rome are as dust in the balance. The Greece that fell before the Roman legions was a different, a decadent Greece. Only around the middle seas did the Greek city-colonies long continue; some continue there to this day as vital centres of the arts of peace. Renan said of the great nations of history that "they must die first that the world may live through them." That was supremely true of the peoples whose spirit was most cosmopolitan. When Philip and Alexander were forgotten, the greatest victories of Greece began.

While Aristotle was formulating the political and ethical philosophy which has been called the dying legacy of Greece to mankind, a significant development was preparing among the other people who, in their national decline, were to become pre-eminently the teachers of the Western world—the Jews. No comparison of Greek, Jewish, and Christian conceptions of State policy and international relations is possible within the limits of this volume; yet the influence of Greek and



Hebrew thought, cast like grains of mustard-seed into the rough furrow of early Levantine life, has been so profound in the subsequent course of events that it cannot be passed over. The Greek vindication of free, homogeneous citizenship, the Hebrew vision of human brotherhood derivative from a divine fatherhood—these ideas have shown such inner force that the very governing classes whose lives most plainly denied their validity have always insisted upon them as the necessary bases of a sound education.

The Jews are the supreme instance of high organising power and intellectual ability continuously dissociated from imperial temptations and burdens. The special gifts which made them brokers and middlemen on one of the chief of the ancient caravan routes, qualities developed under pressure between the hammer of Babylon and the anvil of Egypt, have been nurtured through centuries of oppression. That a kingdom of this world was forbidden them is the ground of all their greatness, if, also, of some evident limitations. Whether it is better to have no fatherland or too many possessions, to be hardened and narrowed in the Ghetto or debauched by opportunities of dominion too huge for mortal compassing, who shall say? Whatever a freer future may have in store for the Jews, it is certain that the highest manifestation

of their religion was not that which they carried away with them on the dispersion, but that which is to be found in the Prophetic age. It was the nearest approach the world had yet seen to a religion of humanity. The earlier nomad and peasant religion had been sacrificial, belligerent, nationalist. "Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth": such was the Mosaic law of battle, only to be modified in favour of related tribes, or by the needs of foreign trade. The post-Prophetic religion was ceremonial, priestly, legal, and was accompanied by a somewhat milder practice in warfare. Between these, in the Prophets, we find at its highest the ethical strain, the emphasis on justice, righteousness, and inner self-possession, which were and are of even more value for a better organisation of the world than more explicitly cosmopolitan pronouncements. The wide comprehensiveness of the Prophetic faith is very remarkable when we remember that the Assyrian tyranny was then looming threateningly upon the Eastern horizon; it contrasts strongly with Greek racial pride, and still more markedly with Mohammed's later command of war upon the infidel. The Law had at once a more intimate and a more universal quality when it had no political aim. "If Jahveh represents the good, the ethical and spiritual principles, then this has but to be grasped in its depth



for all national restrictions to be set aside. Good, properly understood, has from the very first an international significance; it is a conception which belongs to a higher sphere than that of communities formed either naturally or by chance. . . . Thus the unity of the State and the national citizenship lose their religious significance; the individual, who was previously merely considered as a member of the nation, now steps into the foreground, and comes to be of importance in himself for religion; and, as it no longer matters what nation one belongs to, Jahveh not being confined to the territory of any one people, so the citizens of other states, *i. e.* the whole world, enter into relationship with Jahveh. In other words, individualism and universalism have taken the place of nationalism in religion" (Prof. Marti: *Religion of the Old Testament*).

This broad spirit, as distinguished from the later sacerdotalism, Jesus resumed and carried to yet higher levels. For the first time, the world witnessed propaganda for a moral idea on a large scale. Love, not dogma or ritual; universal brotherhood, not a Jewish Messiahship; governance from within, not from without; the power of gentleness—such was the new message. The heathen had understood self-sacrifice for the family or at the command of the State; Jesus taught self-sacrifice for the

ideal of a universal commonwealth. The circumstances favoured a faint cosmopolitanism. The conquests of Rome had destroyed over wide areas the possibility of the ancient tribal patriotism, and had accustomed men of many races to acknowledge the bond of one law. Roman jurists had to some extent realised the Stoic ideal of a world citizenship. The Empire broke down many of the old barriers, and recruited its leaders indiscriminately in East and West—Marcus Aurelius and Trajan, Seneca and Martial were Spaniards, Severus was an African. But the Imperial unity was an artificial product, with little hold upon the hearts and consciences of men. It rested on force and upon pride in an exclusive right of dominance. At a cost of centuries of anarchy, Europe was to learn that the destruction of the principle of nationality was an utterly false method of establishing a world-state. The organisation of humanity, like the growth of the individual, must proceed by regular, natural stages.

How much of this was foreseen by the son of the Nazarene carpenter we do not know; but he saw the essential fact. Not only were Jew and Gentile, bond and free, to unite in an all-embracing kingdom; not only was the right of warfare, and of the reduction of prisoners of war and their children to slavery—the great buttress of the military empires



of the ancient world—denied; the love of humanity—not of a vague cosmopolitan ideal, or of single individuals only, but of man as man—must become a passion so possessing as to burn up selfishness, exclusive prejudices, all the old (and still commanding) ideas of the virtue of individual and national self-defence, and even the love of life itself. “In the society of selfish people,” said Sir John Seeley in his fine exposition of this teaching in *Ecce Homo*, “selfishness is simply self-defence; to renounce it is to evacuate one’s entrenched position, to surrender at discretion to the enemy. If society is to disarm, it should do so by common consent. Christ, however, though He confidently expected ultimately to gather all mankind into His society, did not expect to do so soon. Accordingly, He commands His followers not to wait for this consummation, but, in spite of the hazardous nature of the step, to disarm at once. . . . The discipline of suffering will wean them more and more from self, and make the channels of humanity freer within them; and sometimes their patience may shame the spoiler.”

A hard teaching, as to which I will only say that this, and nothing else, is the heart of Christianity, however otherwise ecclesiastical persons may persuade themselves. Had it only come as an academic lesson, it could

have made no impression on Roman life. But it was a message to the common folk based on familiar facts and couched in familiar terms, rich with assurance of a profound knowledge of the human heart. "He who is truly humane," I quote Seeley again, "considers every human being, as such, interesting and important, and, without waiting to criticise each individual specimen, pays in advance to all alike the tribute of good wishes and sympathy. Now this favourable assumption with regard to human beings is not a causeless prepossession, it is no idle superstition of the mind, nor is it a natural instinct. It is a feeling founded on the actual observation and discovery of interesting and noble qualities in particular human beings; and it is strong or weak in proportion as the person who has the feeling has known many or few noble and amiable human beings." To his burning belief in the noble capacities of man Jesus gave up his life, and it was this belief and this sacrifice that constituted the inspiration of the early Church. It has made many conquests, especially in softening the barbarian invaders and aiding the re-settlement of Europe, and many failures, especially its inability to withstand the force of ecclesiasticism within and Islam without. Lip-service has marred its beauty—as when clerical persecutors invented burning at the



stake in order to evade the guilt of bloodshed, and, in a much later day, when a "Christian Power" forced opium upon the Chinese at the cannon's mouth. But even when, in the fourth Christian century, Church and State began to enter into formal union, the leaven went on working. The persecutions had left their mark. Christianity challenged, and not quite vainly, four of the most characteristic results of Roman imperialism: war, slavery, infanticide, and the gladiatorial shows. Against the ideal of patriotism, the last word of Græco-Roman public morals, the early Christians placed that of universal beneficence. Courage, a purely martial virtue for Aristotle, took a new form in endurance of injustice and passive resistance of violence.

The view of Tertullian, Clement, Origen, and Basil that no Christian could properly be a soldier, or keep a magisterial office in which he would have to inflict the death penalty, was gradually abandoned; and few later bishops endorsed Ambrose in forbidding bloodshed in self-defence. This change was inevitable. The refusal to bear arms may be an effective method of protest against local oppression, but its organisation on a large scale requires conditions which did not exist in the early Christian world. The Semitic races do not take kindly to soldiering; passive revolt was natural to reforming Jews

standing between the Sanhedrim and the Roman Governor; and it was a feature of the toleration of the race in the early Empire that they were not subjected to military service. As the Church extended into the cosmopolitan West and became non-Judaic, the character of protest gradually gave way to that of missionary zeal. This was met by persecution; and, again, it was natural that a Tertullian (A.D. 160-220) should threaten cruel proconsuls with the only method of resistance then open to the poor Christian. Another line of influence proved easier, however. The Church became organised under a federation of aristocratic bishops. Rich men joined it; its property grew with the hierarchy. It had to struggle against internal heresy; theological speculation and ecclesiastical discipline took the place of ethical and democratic experiment. Most of the Fathers, grateful to Rome for the opportunity it gave them, trimmed their sails to the favouring breeze; most of the congregations became content to enjoy the advantages of Roman law and citizenship. The ideals of common property and non-resistance rose and fell together.

As years passed, and martyrdom ceased; as ecclesiastics became the patrons and partners of the secular power, and the hope of a miraculous success in war offered to the barbarians the chief motive for conversion,



Christian doctrine and practice underwent a transformation which was completed by the panic fear of the Moslem peril. "The spirit of Mohammedanism slowly passed into Christianity, and transformed it into its image. For about two centuries every pulpit in Christendom proclaimed the duty of war with the unbeliever, and represented the battlefield as the sure path to heaven" (Lecky ; *European Morals*, where the subject is fully treated). The Church had become thoroughly imperialised.

But the "glad tidings" remained. With the Greek idea of self-government and the Christian idea of brotherhood before it, the world could never again be quite the same. Civilisation could no longer mean only road-building and the reign of law—henceforth it could mean nothing less than the making of civil persons and civil communities. The divorce of progress from the trade in arms was proclaimed.

CHAPTER IV

THE STRENGTH OF ROME

ROMANS and Hellenes were of kindred race; if slavery was the base, citizenship was the body of Roman, as of Hellenic, power. But there were deep differences. Rome was the

meeting-point of three rival nations, the Etruscans, Sabines, and Latins, among whom there must have been a good deal of blood mixture, which would be increased with the expansion of the Latins over the Apennines. The city had then no more fitness than now to become a great industrial or commercial centre. Situated further than Athens from the line of Aryan invasion, further also from the ancient empires, and joined by an almost unnavigable stream to an inhospitable, harbourless coast looking out into the unknown West, the patriarchal stage of development was here more prolonged. Destiny pointed to a landward, not a maritime, development. The martial spirit was always modified by a power of assimilation and an accommodating, practical temper that would have appeared mean to the proud Greek. Thus, paternalism was as strong in Rome as personal independence in Athens; political experience was prized more than a quick intellect, governance more than trade, organising skill than the love of adventure. Civilisation meant, for her, opportunity, not inspiration, an outer condition represented by law and order, rather than an inner state fed by art and philosophy. If it be true, however, that the body must be satisfied ere the spirit can expand, that social organisation is a condition precedent of moral and intellectual



progress, the Pax Romana was the necessary precursor of Greek, Hebrew, and Christian ideals in those northern and western lands toward which Rome faced as naturally as Athens did to the south and east.

Military skill was, then, but one of many instruments of Roman expansion. Moreover, the political instinct which gradually expressed itself in public works, codes of law, an elastic administration, and the successive grades of franchise (Roman, Latin, Italic, Provincial) was developed first at home. If a genius for government and devotion to the Mother City had not been built up through centuries of moderate popular demands and aristocratic concessions, before the strain of foreign conquest began, Rome could never have become mistress of the world. The Romanisation of Italy, which preceded foreign adventure, and occupied ten times as long as it took Alexander to conquer the East, was an outgrowth of democratic experience and civic pride, together with agricultural colonisation and road-building, not pure conquest. It was no mere hunt for tribute and slaves; and it never became a trade policy, despite Greek and Carthaginian examples. The long faithfulness of the Latin cities and the colonies is significant of much. Thus broadly based on the social organisation of a large part of the peninsula, Rome was safe against Hannibal,

himself "greater than any of the Romans themselves in the very qualities which made Rome great" (Mommsen). Carthage, with all her wealth of tribute and traffic, a strip of coast with a hinterland of wild and rebellious tribes, depending on armies of slaves and mercenaries, jealously restricting her own colonies in trade and her own citizens in political influence, was no match for the citizen soldiery and the statecraft of Rome, already impregnated with Greek culture.

This is the turning-point. That conquest degrades the conqueror seems to be a rule admitting of no exception. The long struggle of the two Punic wars (B.C. 264-241 and 218-201), and the cruel campaigns of the following century, produced both in the capital and among the Italian allies a deep demoralisation, which, aggravated by economic revolution in the home provinces, ran its natural course in the Cæsarean era. While the stoutest men were away fighting, the meanest were left to breed, to govern, to sell the public offices to any who would give most largess, until at last the Pretorian Guard sold the Imperial chair itself. The latifundia were at first a copy of Carthaginian models of large-scale scientific agriculture. Usury, the resultant land-grabbing, and extortion by provincial officials gradually brought about the ruin of the small farmer and yeoman class



that had been the backbone of the State. This, in turn, led to slave tillage, the decay of the old rural life, dependence on foreign food supplies, and the gathering of a landless proletariat in the towns. Upon the old slave economy, there was superimposed a peculiarly oppressive money economy, represented by the "publicans," or great money-lenders and contractors—a relative monopoly due to the scarcity of bullion. The republican power was divided between a hooligan populace fed on a regimen of "bread and games," and a governing class seeking new fields of ambition even in civil war, and wider opportunities of indulgence in the plunder of the East. Thus democracy gave place to oligarchy, the Republic to the dictatorship (Sulla B.C. 81, Julius Cæsar B.C. 49) and the Empire (Augustus B.C. 29); thus a decadent society was initiated into a career of spoliation as a substitute for the peaceful development of native resources and true colonisation.

Why do we feel the sequel to be so much more poignant a tragedy than the fall of Babylon, the decay of Egypt, or even the disintegration of Greece? Because it saw a united Europe, a political system not unworthy of comparison with our own in richness and extent, plunged into centuries of anarchy, through a large part of which almost all traces of civilisation were lost. No such con-

tinuous realm has ever been, or is now likely to be, built upon the earth as that which served the will of the Antonines. From the Scottish wall to the Atlas mountains, from the Lower Rhine to the Euphrates, by slow and steady steps the rule of Roman law, the sagacity of Roman administration, had been extended. The magistracy was inspired by a spirit of toleration altogether new in the history of government. The humane spirit of Greek philosophy softened the rougher though broader western nature. Stoicism became the religion of the educated Roman. Cicero proclaimed a "universal society of the human race"; Lucan foretold a time when "the race will cast aside its weapons, and all nations will learn to love"; Seneca said, "My country is the world"; and Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius declared themselves citizens of the world. Conquest was robbed of much of its sting by the extension of civic privileges, the reward of barbarians for services, and the opening of a door of escape from slavery. Wide-distant provinces, which could never have been held by force of arms alone, were placated by the double expedient of establishing colonies, civil as well as military, and extending the franchise, above all by opportunities of peace and exchange of goods, which made the grandchildren of Julius Cæsar's Gallic enemies most loyal servants of



Rome. Latin became the universal language in the West, and through it Roman and Greek ideas flowed from the Mediterranean lands far into the dark North.

So long as her heart beat sound, Rome had certain advantages in the maintenance of this vast organism which none of her Imperial predecessors or successors have enjoyed. The first was a relative monopoly of political and military genius within vast areas whose potential fertility invited Roman expansion. Considerations of the "balance of power," such as had been paramount in the policy of the Greek States and long afterwards vexed Europe, never troubled her. After the subjection of Carthage and Macedon, no such rivals stood in the way of the Cæsars as face every civilised State to-day. West of the Persian frontier, Rome was the only great Power. This advantage in the externals of civilisation made it possible, at a time when we should expect to see society unformed and full of turmoil, to maintain settled peace over an area of some six million square miles of territory, inhabited by, perhaps, a hundred millions of people, with a force not numerically stronger than the British army of to-day. Moreover, her conquests followed in a relatively natural and organic order, beginning with the civilised States of the Mediterranean; and, though of many races, her subjects

showed a relative likeness of condition. The East was but touched, and then only after Alexander had paved the way; when at length it began to react on Europe, Rome was already tottering to her fall.

It has often been asked what made the once so robustly democratic Romans meekly accept the change to dictatorship and autocracy. The usual answer is that the Senate and people were unequal to the task of governing the territories they had acquired. This must mean that there is a logical development in the business of conquest, and that when the spirit of democracy had been abandoned, it was only a question of time for the forms of democracy to go also. In fact, structure responds to function in social as in individual organisms—or rather it tends to do so, often breaking down in the process. The Republic had been quite equal to the defence of the peninsula; it slowly broke down before schemes of universal conquest, and with it expired what was left of the old Roman nationality. The transformation from a republic based on a municipality to an empire based on a monarchical household took place gradually, in accordance with the Roman temperament. Cicero eulogised the mixed constitution of his day, but already alarming changes had taken place; and, as the preponderance had passed from the



popular assembly (abolished by Tiberius) to the Senate, so this, in turn, came to be a mere tool in the hands of the autocratic monarch, restrained by no effective influence save that of the soldiery.

The evils of this change, which set in decisively a generation before the birth of Christ and was fully developed in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian (A.D. 98-138), are obvious; its advantages may be fully admitted. Autocracy is, indeed, the natural organ of empire. For a time it operates rapidly and effectively. It keeps internal peace, if at a heavy cost. It can supplant irregular extortion by systematic taxation. Neither customary law nor a representative assembly imposing any restraint, rules suggested by experience and common-sense can be promptly applied to the different circumstances of widely-separate communities. But this very promptitude easily develops into a dangerous facility. As Mr. Bryce says in an interesting discussion of Roman and English law: "Ease begets confidence; confidence degenerates into laxity and recklessness. . . . In the field of legislation the danger of doing too much is a serious danger, not only because the chances of error are manifold, but because the law ought to undergo as few bold and sudden changes as possible. The natural process whereby the new circumstances, new condi-

tions, new commercial and social relations that are always springing up become recognised in custom, and are dealt with by judicial science before direct legislation impresses a definite form upon the rules that are to fix them—this process is the best, and, indeed, the only safe way by which a nation can create a refined and harmonious legal system” (*Studies in History and Jurisprudence*).

In other words, law, to be strong and useful, must grow of itself out of the experience of the people, not come suddenly from the imagination of some outer providence. The highest claim of Imperial rule is to create social peace, which is merely to prepare the way for its own disappearance in favour of a higher type of government. In the derangement of local life that follows conquest, the advantage of arbitrary rule, such as it is, is at its maximum; and when, as in the case of the Roman Emperors, the laws thus given express a high political genius to which some traces of its democratic origin still adhere, extensive good may result, especially in primitive communities among and between which this external law is almost the only security of peace and justice. Such limited advantages as Imperial monarchy and bureaucracy can claim are seen to belong to an early and passing phase of social readjustment, when diverse alien territories are newly subjected,



and cessation of bloodshed and oppression, and protection from outer foes, are the highest benefits they can hope for. These are, in fact, not civilisation, but the conditions in which civilisation may spring up.

The costs of every benefit, even one so novel and so important as the protection of person and property which Rome gave her non-servile subjects, must be weighed. What we now call international law arose from the need of providing for the ever-growing number of aliens in the capital in the early Imperial period, and the grading of rights from the Eternal City itself down to the meanest and most distant province. Other elements passed down the centuries from the *jus fetiale*, regulating the declaration of war, the making of peace and treaties, and the *jus belli*, which proclaimed the sanctity of truces, and military faith generally, and put some poor bounds to the ruthlessness of the Roman soldier. Curiously enough, law and practice did not develop together. The idea of a "law of nature," a common law of mankind, and of consequent restraints upon warfare, advanced pretty steadily, with a clear distinction between what was due to civilised and what to savage foes. "But there were sure signs in the later days of the conquering Republic of a lowering of the Roman national tone. . . . The wars of the decaying Republic were in

well-nigh every case wars of mere plunder, the credit at Rome of the triumphing consul being largely dependent upon the value of the treasure brought to the public chest by the pillage of conquered cities. The Roman was also ruined by evil associations. Reprisals exercised upon savage foes degrade the more civilised belligerent, and the case becomes worse when barbarians are employed as auxiliaries, or even as regular troops" (Walker).

The *jus gentium*, with the extension of civil rights, reacted upon that Roman code which had been the safeguard of democratic citizenship so as gradually to break down Roman privileges and to assimilate the condition of all the peoples of the Empire as subjects of an arbitrary ruler. Citizenship, in the full sense, cannot be far extended; you cannot be a citizen of a city you have never seen. Thus, the more "citizens" there were, the less were any of them citizens. The more widely applicable became the boast *Civis Romanus sum*, the less did it mean. So, too, the recognition of Christianity as the State religion was simultaneous with the establishment of absolute monarchy; and Mr. Bryce points out that the subsequent codification of Roman law arose out of political and intellectual conditions not of progress, but of decline. The genius of rulers, poets, orators might conceal, and even momentarily check,



but could not remedy, the ravages of a deep-seated political and social disease, the disease whose active principle is the spirit of conquest.

I have emphasised the special civil strength of the Roman character, rather than any peculiarity of the military organisation of the Republic and Empire, because, in fact, it was this civil character more than any strength of military organisation that made Roman arms so long invincible. Until the Carthaginian peril was past, to be a soldier was first to be the brother of the man next to you, free like him, confident in yourself and him, proud of the legion, and devoted to death to the Mother City. The barbarians of Gaul, the slaves or mercenaries of Etruria and Carthage, could have no such *esprit de corps*. In the middle of the third century B.C. the Republic could summon to the standards about 280,000 citizens. This Roman army was greatly enlarged by calls upon the military garrisons posted in conquered provinces, and by auxiliaries from the Italian allies. Here appears the other great Roman capacity, that of assimilation and leadership, and with it the peculiar danger of all increase of mere force. Especially after the victories over Carthage, the allies pressed ardently into the military service of Rome. Every colony also became a recruiting post; and the hope of plunder and civil advance-

ment fed the flame of martial daring. By the time the three Mediterranean peninsulas and Asia Minor had been subjected, the old civic patriotism had become transformed into a definite belief in Rome's "manifest destiny" to become mistress of the world. Long after the rapacity of proconsuls and the development of a city mob had given omens of what was to come, the citizen soldiers kept, under the stimulus, indeed, of hard exercise, regular pay, frequent booty, and condign punishment, their spirit of discipline and valour. About 110 B.C., however, after a series of defeats by the Northern tribes, Caius Marius revolutionised the army by throwing it open to the lowest grade of citizens, and thenceforth, "in proportion as the public freedom was lost in extent of conquest, war was gradually improved into an art and degraded into a trade" (Gibbon). Julius Cæsar enlisted Northern tribesmen wholesale, and commenced the system of honouring their leaders; the armies with which he repeatedly reduced Gaul, at a cost, if Plutarch is to be believed, of a million lives, were mainly of Gaulish blood. This was a second revolution, no less disastrous because inevitable.

The legion was at once a firmer and a more flexible body than the phalanx of Macedonian pikemen. In its heyday, and for a period of three centuries, it consisted of 6,800 heavy-



armed infantry, divided into ten cohorts and fifty-five companies, supported by 720 horsemen. The infantry arms were a crested, open helmet, breastplate or mail coat, leg-guards, and an oblong shield, a light spear, short sword, and above all the *pilum*, a very heavy throwing spear, five or six feet long, which was most effective against cavalry. The usual formation was eight deep, with an open order of rank and file that allowed of free movement and rapid evolutions. The extension of the Empire along the Danube and Rhine and in Britain, and the reaction upon it of the Northern tribal immigrations, set up new conditions. Warfare on so wide a border, with a force relatively so small, demanded a new rapidity of movement between the legionary stations. This and the decay of Roman physique produced a lighter-armed infantry and a constant enlargement of the mounted force. The difficulty of relieving one frontier post from another, when the attack of the barbarian confederacies developed all along the line, led to the creation of a central Imperial army, whose tyranny could at last only be broken by the division of metropolitan power which marked the substantial end of the Empire. When, in A.D. 212, Caracalla extended Roman citizenship to all the provinces, the old distinction between the legions and the auxiliaries was

destroyed; and the enlistment of increasing masses of Gothic and other mercenaries sealed the doom of the legion. The Comitatenses, or mobile guards, of Diocletian and the Palatine Guard both consisted largely of barbarians, these being for the most part mailed horsemen carrying bow, lance, sword, and shield. It was thus the Goth (the Cossack of his day) became "the lineal ancestor of all the knights of the Middle Ages, the inaugurator of that ascendancy of the horseman which was to endure for a thousand years" (Oman: *History of the Art of War*). The last straw came when the wild Teutonic "foederati" were turned to the suppression of revolted legions which already, during the civil wars of the third century, had done their best to destroy each other. Provincials and mercenaries faded away before Alaric's Goths and Attila's Huns; and on August 24, 410, "eleven hundred and sixty-three years after the foundation of Rome, the Imperial City, which had subdued and civilised so considerable a part of mankind, was delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia" (Gibbon).

This most ghastly tragedy has never failed to impress the imagination of the student of history; but the lesson is not always clearly drawn. No doubt there were many contributory causes of the decline and fall



of the Empire. There was a moral and a material decay. The abandonment even of the forms of republicanism and the concentration of the whole supreme power in the hands of the Augustan Cæsar hastened the decay of the old Roman religion, prostituted to worship of the Emperor, and sapped by Persian and Egyptian superstition and by Greek and Christian influences. When, to adapt the boast of Verres, the governor of a province had during his year of office to make three large fortunes out of his poor subjects, one to pay his debts, one for himself to live upon, and one to bribe his judges if he were brought to trial; when Cato asked what would become of Rome if she had no longer any rival State to fear, and Scipio prayed "not that the gods would increase, but that they would preserve, the State," the old patriotism was evidently dead. On the material side, Roman roads, aqueducts, palaces, fortifications, theatres, harbours, and bridges did not come into being by magic. It is reckoned that there may have been sixty millions of slaves in the Empire; certainly their numbers had continually increased. As the burden of labour fell with inconceivable cruelty upon the servile masses, so the burden of taxation fell with crushing force upon the middle class. Tribute continued, but did not increase. When expansion

ceased, and the Empire was forced upon the defensive, the supply of slave labour was practically stopped. But, while slavery was declining, and revolted serfs swelled the ranks of the enemy which knocked more and more insistently at the gates, the free worker was losing his economic freedom. Finally, a series of plagues and famines thinned the Latin population. Rome had no defence when all the old Roman blood had been shed. Long before, indeed, the best had been destroyed; and Macaulay, in his essay on *The Romance of History*, after drawing a lurid picture of the intellectual stagnation which resulted from the rigid Imperial concentration in Rome and Constantinople, goes so far as to say that it was well the Empire should be saved by death from "a calamity far more terrible than any of the quick, destroying maladies to which nations are liable—a tottering, drivelling, paralytic longevity." It has been suggested that the introduction of malaria may have been an important factor in the degeneracy of the Romans. Perpetual warfare affords at once a simpler, more certain, and more adequate explanation. When a barbarian mercenary pricked the bubble of Imperial omnipotence and omniscience, Rome had long been dead, though her ghost was yet long to haunt the blood-stained fields of Europe.



CHAPTER V

THE SWARM SETTLES

WE turn now to consider the interplay of the forces of war and peace in the Middle Ages. Eastward of the Adriatic, it is the history of the Byzantine Empire (founded A.D. 395, and destroyed by the Turks A.D. 1453), with its Greek-Christian civilisation, which is still to East Europe what Rome has been to the West. In the West, the period includes two stages—the first one of destruction, decomposition, and anarchy; the second carrying us, by way of “Chivalry,” to the beginnings of modern national settlement. Europe was, through these ten centuries, bordered on the north, east, and south by a semi-circle of barbarian pressure and turmoil. Moreover, it was, as it were, interpenetrated by this same barbarian pressure in a modified form. Roman power, originating in a municipality, had been spread through a network of towns, well governed and fortified. The countryside was little touched, was, indeed, little populated, and consisted largely of forest and marsh. There the barbarian invaders first established themselves—Teuton Franks and Goths in Gaul and Spain; Slavs, Huns, and Bulgars in the Balkans; Goths and Lombards in Italy.

Thus the municipal system enjoyed a reprieve, and its Roman character was never wholly extinguished. But, while Byzantium maintained itself with difficulty, the chief heritage of the Empire of the West passed to the Christian Church, which, and not any artificial political combination, was its true successor. To these four main elements standing out above the general disorder and break-up of old forms—the Byzantine Empire, the Western Church, the barbarian kingdoms, and the continued invasions—we must give closer attention. They represent an immense confusion, that is not yet completely resolved, but also an immense and rich variety of blood, ideas, customs, and tendencies to which, after long fermentation, the later vigour of European life is due.

The West had great advantages in the accomplished work of Roman administration, the freer form here taken by Christian influence, and the greater distance from the oriental peril ever impending over Byzance. The Teuton tribes had come far from their original homes, had learned something from the Kelts on the way, and had absorbed more of Mediterranean civilisation during several centuries of contact with the Empire, though still obstinately opposed to the Imperial spirit, and imbued with strong instincts of martial independence. So long as they were



only urged on by a normal increase of population and need of new arable lands, so long even as they were content with occasional outbreaks of the raiding instinct, there was a possibility of a continuous development. But when, in the fourth century, the Mongols began to invade Europe and to drive the settled confederations before them, there was no power to stay the inundation. The Vandals, pressed forward by the Goths, as these were by the Huns, crossed Spain, desolated Roman Africa, capturing Carthage in 439, and, after a career of piracy in the Mediterranean, were only at length defeated by the Byzantine general Belisarius, in 534. The West Goths, following them, set up a theocracy in Spain which lasted till the Arab conquest in 713. The Italian-Gothic kingdom of Theodoric, the most developed of these shadowy realms, lived only from 493 to 533, giving place to the Lombard dukedoms. The prime cause of this disturbance, the Huns, an utterly alien race, with the lust of destruction and cruelty developed in an astounding degree, swept like a plague over Central Europe till, stopped at Chalons in 451, they disappeared from the scene as rapidly as they had come. The invaders, wherever they stayed, had gradually to accommodate themselves to the legal customs, the language, the religion, and

manners of the latinised mass. Such was the darkness of the eclipse of civilisation following their onset, however, that the population, already reduced by millions, was long stationary under a chronic dearth of food; while the only extensive dominion which could be maintained for a lengthy period was that of the lawless and treacherous Frankish kings. In the effort to redeem and raise the Frankish Empire, the Church itself slipped downward to the utter degradation of the ninth century.

I have said that the Papacy was the chief heir of the Roman Empire. At the beginning of the fifth century, it was an elaborately organised institution, with a pope at the head making ultra-Augustan pretensions which were only slowly to be recognised, with its own revenues, its Senate in the form of occasional, and its system of local government in the form of provincial and national, councils, its hierarchy of bishops, priests, and deacons. To the power of its gospel and ritual, it added, in fact, that of a State machinery; and, as the clergy became more and more separated from and supreme over the laymen, the business of ruling the bodies of their subjects inevitably began to overshadow that of saving their souls. In the surviving Roman municipalities, bishops stepped into the magisterial chairs; outside, abbots became great landowners. Political



ambition grew; in men of culture and a wide outlook in a time of anarchy, it was, indeed, often welcome. Barbarian princes, eager to legitimate what they had gained by the sword, were very willing to pay for such august patronage; and this degree of compunction shows, doubtless, the influence of those larger ideals of human union for which the name of Rome still stood. Thus, under the Merving Franks, the great Churchmen had sunk into the position of a worldly aristocracy, rich in lands whose tenants and serfs they led to the battlefield like the secular counts and dukes, luxurious, ready at intrigue, indifferent to learning as to religion, greedy, alternately servile and arrogant. It is true that the Church often stayed the hands of a ruthless king, and that the close of the sixth century was marked by the beginnings of a great outpouring of missionary zeal, the firstfruits of which were reaped in England and Germany. But the Roman See had definitely sacrificed an intensive for an extensive influence. When the Frankish dynasty was changed, and Charlemagne, fresh from the overthrow of the Lombards, was crowned Roman Emperor by Pope Leo III before the altar of St. Peter's, on Christmas Day 800, "Christianity seemed like a society of soldiers and priests, governed by a soldier and a priest" (Lavissee : *Political History of Europe*).

Charles effected a temporary reformation; there was one secular and military ruler capable of forbidding the princes of the Church to ride to war or carry arms. His new idea of a revived Holy Roman Empire was, however, to prove a plentiful cause of deadly strife through many succeeding centuries. The rule of peace he had made soon fell into disuse. It is said that, within thirty years, at the close of the ninth century, two archbishops and eight bishops died on the field of battle. (Buckle suggests, nevertheless, that these fighting ecclesiastics were the more formidable opponents, because "in those happy days it was sacrilege for a layman to lay hands on a bishop.") Sees and abbeys became the rich spoil of worldly adventurers; licence, unchecked in the priestly palace, invaded the cloister. The Papacy had entered upon the unchecked enjoyment of temporal power, and had sunk into profligacy, when the cry of the outer barbarian again rang across Europe, and a new attack began which shook the new political fabric, created Chivalry, that strange union of cross and sword, and in or on the way to the "Holy Land" drowned the pure ideal of human fraternity in a sea of blood. The Northman and the Saracen appeared simultaneously: how were they to be held back?

Goths and Lombards had established them-



selves by weight of numbers and horsemanship, the Franks by infantry strength, all by vigour and daring. They were well armed with lance, sword, mace, and axe, with ring mail and scale armour, with big machines (fonda and balista) for throwing stones and darts, and battering rams. As compared with the Goths of Spain, a nobility supported by war-bands of personal retainers and adventurers, the Franks, owing to the killing off of their minor chieftains, were an undisciplined horde. Generally, however, the beginnings of feudalism were apparent in the growth of bodies of "King's men" and a nobility of service in place of the old tribal aristocracies. The tribal swarm had itself passed through a definite development from the patriarchal stage in which it first appeared, under pressure of the process of conquest.

The Teuton "kindreds," or unions of households, had become federated into the "folk," with its popular assembly of men capable of bearing arms, and its "kuninge," or noble family. For long the popular assembly was the dominant force; but gradually, as raids grew into mass movements, and folks into federations of folks, the need of leadership created a specialised military class. Headed by the chieftain whom the Romans patronised and called "princeps," prince, or the war leader ("dux," duke), the old group of royal

kinsmen was transformed into a little court of "thanes"—adventurers, giving the king a rather independent support, and tending, as warfare ceased to pay, to settle into a territorial aristocracy. In Britain and Scandinavia, protected by the sea from the overwhelming masses of the continental horde, the development took place more slowly and regularly; the spirit of tribal democracy lasted longer, and the military development was delayed. So the Anglo-Saxons, in war, were still, in the fifth and sixth centuries, only scattered bands of unarmoured foot-soldiers, with spear and axe, and until after the Norman Conquest knew nothing of fortification or of cavalry fighting. Two centuries before this, Charlemagne, who may be regarded as the first crusading monarch, had compelled the adoption of armour throughout his Empire, organised cavalry, commissariat, and the raising of foot levies by landlords, and established a system of fortified posts connected by roads. But this was altogether insufficient to meet the new emergency. Perpetually in the field, from the Ebro to the Elbe and Danube, endeavouring to establish order and stem invasion, he lived to see a yet wilder flood break over the North-West. First, the Danish Vikings swooped suddenly upon the Irish, English, and Frankish coasts, everywhere pillaging monasteries, sacking



towns (London and Canterbury among them), devastating the countryside. The pioneer raiders became adepts, veterans in plunder and destruction; and still other hosts followed. Rarely has the tribal swarm taken a more terrible shape.

Three ways of meeting them were gradually discovered. The first was the substitution of a regular class of mounted soldiers for the slow and ill-armed local foot-levies; the second, the fortification of cities, river bridges, and nobles' houses; the third, and much less important, was King Alfred's establishment of a fleet, the foundation of English sea-power. The first two expedients became the basis of feudalism: the feudal castle may be called the nail which fixed the nobles, hitherto roving fighters, to a given territory. Similar measures were instituted on the east against the Magyars, a race of mounted bowmen much given to stratagems, cruelty, and rapine. At the same time, defensive armour was elaborated (hauberk, or neck and cheek guard, long mail shirt, and kite-shaped shield); and the two-handed axe and long sword came into use. The final supremacy of the feudal mounted lancers and archers, over levies of infantry armed only with weapons for close fighting, is marked by the battle of Senlac Hill, near Hastings (1066), which decided the destinies of Britain. It was a triumph

of organisation and greed over ignorant courage and patriotism. The Northmen had in the ninth century established a dynasty in Russia, and in the tenth a nominally French duchy in Normandy; in the eleventh, they scored their greatest achievement, the subjection of Anglo-Danish Britain. "Duke William had undertaken his expedition, not as a mere feudal head of the barons of Normandy, but rather as the managing director of a great joint-stock company for the conquest of England, in which not only his own subjects, but hundreds of adventurers, poor and rich, from all parts of Western Europe had taken shares" (Oman). There may have been 696 vessels in the fleet of invasion, carrying 10,000 mounted and 15,000 unmounted men.

The North submitted or settled down, and in "The Truce of God"—a series of rules forbidding fighting on holy days and otherwise restricting warfare, first adopted by the clergy of Roussillon in 1027, and extended in 1054 and 1119—a novel and remarkable effort was made by the Church to check internal disorder and Teutonic barbarity. It was to be otherwise in the East that Greece and Rome had so easily conquered. During the centuries through which Constantinople, with its undivided spiritual and temporal power, and its strangely bureaucratic character, held the Balkan lands against Slav and Turk, and



Asia Minor against the Saracen, there was a still quicker development of professional cavalry and a much higher skill in strategy and tactics, an art of war in which shrewdness and even trickery were permissible, though treaties and armistices were respected and cruelty to captives was forbidden. The shrewd Byzantines laughed at the blind courage, and sometimes played upon the ignorance, of the Crusaders, who, however, more than once took a treacherous revenge. Northmen and Magyars had now settled down or been driven back. The land road by the Danube to the Orient was open; and the navies of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa were making an easier route by sea, which had the further merit of diverting the stream of commerce from Byzance. The Arab raiders of the tenth century were comparatively easily checked; three later waves of Moslem conquest showed a deepening strain of barbarism. The Saracens were more civilised than Franks and Goths; and the conquering force which, within a century of Mohammed's death in 632, carried the Crescent and Scimitar through Persia, Syria, Egypt, Northern Africa, and Spain, enfeebled by the division into the three caliphates of Bagdad, Cairo, and Cordova, was eclipsed by a new irruption of invaders from Central Asia. These, the Seljuk Turks, were repulsed with more difficulty; and it was at the cost of

frightful losses from starvation, disease, and slaughter that Jerusalem was held in Christian hands for a hundred years. The horde of Jenghiz Khan followed. "Babylonia was till then still the chief seat of Mohammedan culture; but since the Mongols set foot on it, it has been a desolation" (Nöldeke: *Sketches from Eastern History*). The Moslem empire of Saladin and the Mamelukes of Egypt was a nearer and not less redoubtable enemy; in 1291, nearly two centuries after the first of the eight crusades, the last Christian foothold on Syrian soil was abandoned.

The rise and arrest of the Ottoman Turks completes the story of Moslem expansion. Checked for a time by the Mongol horde which had penetrated into Russia, this most permanent of the Turkish sovereignties took Constantinople by storm in 1453, forty years before the Arabs were driven from Spain. Though stopped by Hungary, and later by Russia, the Ottomans have kept their grip upon the Balkans, and even appear at last to be entering into the paths of European development. Islam to this day sways the peoples of the whole desert belt from Central Asia to the Atlantic, with Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, and large parts of Central Africa; while she counts millions of followers in India and other parts of the East.

The Crusades show a very mixed motiva-



tion. In course of two centuries, during which all Europe—first common folk, then nobles, then kings—was set afoot, they drained off from the barbarian West a great deal of that spirit of adventure which is so much more easily satisfied than the spirit of greed and dominion. Feudalism would have lasted longer but for this bloodletting. The completeness of the stoppage of the movement is the best proof of the immense modification of ideas and interests it brought about. It was exploited by clerics and contractors of every grade throughout Europe. Every fresh venture meant loans by wealthy townsmen to kings and nobles; it was not without cause that the practice of usury became a burning question between the new commercial class and the Church. The demands of hundreds of thousands of men for supplies on their eastward journey must have enormously stimulated trade and shipping; and in the wake of these armies the import of spices, sugar, drugs, and precious stones from the East, and the return flow of woollens, hides, metals, and food stuffs, increased rapidly.

Representatives of the merchant princes of the Italian cities accompanied the Crusaders, always on the look-out for commercial privileges. The Venetian money-lenders forced the knights of the fourth crusade to help them in capturing the rival port of Zara, and

then to plunder Constantinople itself; it was thus the city of the lagoons won its empire, and Shakespeare got a subject for his wit. The by-products of the Crusades range from shaving and bathing to a new geography, a new vocabulary (bazaar, barracks, elixir, tariff, talisman), and a new art of diplomacy, copied from Byzantine practice in Near Asia. While the rise of towns and a commercial class was ultimately to lead to an era of toleration and progress highly inimical to Roman influence, the first and greatest material gains of the feudal reaction on the Orient came to the Church. Many pilgrims gave their estates in return for masses and the papal benediction; others sold them to the monasteries at a trifle of their value. Some of the returning Crusaders entered the cloister, abandoning their worldly goods to the clerical authorities. Again, estates of dead nobles were forfeited to Crown or Church; and the outbreak of religious zeal produced a crop of great endowments. But a very mountain of gold would be no fortification against such a moral and intellectual shock as the rough Westerners suffered when they saw Rome as she was against the background of what she had been, when they heard the wonderful lore of Byzance, when they discovered that the Saracens could teach them lessons in honour, courtesy, and mercy, as well as in mathematics



and astronomy, medicine and engineering; and that even Mongol emperors could treat on an equality with Christian kings.

Our canvas is too small for a perfectly clear picture of the warfare of the earlier Middle Ages, but this crowded sketch will serve to remind us of its main outlines, the chief factors in the subsequent development. The field of the inquiry falls into four zones. Of these one, the south and east coasts of the Mediterranean, has fallen definitely into the hands of the Moslem Arabs and Turks, at first the source of important elements of Semitic culture, then a conquering horde recruited from the deserts and sustained by polygamy, slavery, and a fanatical religion. Europe, constantly trying to recover its lost unity, begins to settle into three main divisions—the Eastern, the most conservative and martially organised, because always on guard against Asiatic savagery; Italy, Germany, and the North, a host of little principalities, obsessed by Roman traditions and superstitions, the prey alternately of pope and emperor and their parties (Guelphs and Ghibellines); the West, in which Rome, by its ecclesiastical jurisdiction and secular influence, is still a strong power, but one soon to be threatened by the growth of monarchy in France and England.

Throughout Central and Western Europe,

the system of military landlordism known as Feudalism is the answer of the age to the demand for external defence and internal order. We have seen it beginning in the Frankish court as a blend of barbarian clientship and clerical patronage. From this point it extends to an all-embracing and elaborately graded system of sovereignty, military organisation, and land-holding. The words it has left tell their own tale: "feudal" (connected with the Teutonic *vieh*, cattle; *fehde*, hostility, vengeance of the kindred); "gentleman," man of race; "knight," from the Teutonic, armed follower; "esquire" and "equerry," from French *écuyer*, the knight's shield-bearer; "fealty" (old French *feaulté*, from Latin *fidelitas*, faithfulness, loyalty); "homage," which is making yourself so-and-so's man (*homo*); and the modes of address still current, "My lord," "My man." The king in theory owed fidelity only to God, or, as the Churchmen said, to God's Vicar in Rome. Even so pious a theory being subject to disturbance, he entrenched himself in new possessions too large for direct exploitation by parcelling them out, in return for armed support, among his vassal lords, who, in turn, divided their land on the same terms of protection and service. Monarchy became territorial instead of racial, and, as it became more able to defend religion and order, made itself



more free of the two larger but vaguer authorities—Papacy and Empire. The system extended rapidly in the ninth and tenth centuries, after the break-up of Charlemagne's Empire, because small landowners were only too glad to save themselves from noble robbers and wandering swashbucklers by obtaining the protection of neighbouring lords in return for personal service. Churches, monasteries, and towns thus granted their lands as fiefs, engaging professional soldiers to defend them, or putting themselves under a count or duke; thus, in return, the towns got their charters or bills of rights. Under the aristocracy so created (kings, lords, knights, squires), and its attendant priesthood wielding both worldly and unworldly power, lay the mass of the population—freemen, mostly in the towns; yeomen, and serfs tied to their lords' estates, in the country.

The immediate result of this development was to create a settled countryside, to stimulate agriculture and land values, and so to produce a rapid increase of population. Towns ceased to be the only centre of order. "The social preponderance, the government of society, passed suddenly from the towns to the country; private property became of more importance than public property; private life than public life" (Guizot: *History of Civilisation in Europe*). Within his own

domain the lord or squire was absolute master, with but the faintest shadow of the old tribal obligations toward the lower mass. The hereditary spirit, evidently convenient both to the family and the suzerain, grew rapidly, its attendant art, heraldry, arising in the twelfth century. Intermarriage strengthened the sense of class superiority, and solidified the aristocratic structure. In France, the field of constant warfare, private as well as public, the weakening of the baronage permitted a development of royal supremacy and a centralisation that have left marks on the State to this day. In England, where the right of private war between nobles was never recognised, we owe the beginning of our liberties to a better balance of power which forced first the barons and then the king to consider the interests of the commoners in town and country.

The paradox of feudalism, resembling in this respect the "armed peace" of our own time, is that, beginning as a higher organisation of military forces, it ended by producing a deadlock of these forces, a condition in which regular warfare was almost impossible. This arose from the great development of body armour and of fortification. Veterans returned from the East brought from their contact with Byzantines and Saracens something more than sacred bones and curious



perfumes. Through the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries—the period of the unquestioned supremacy of the new cavalry—knightly armour became more and more elaborate, the helmet at last covering the whole head, the mail coat falling to the feet and being strengthened with thin iron plates. Thus a caste which as yet possessed no nationality protected itself from itself. Seignobos (*Mediæval Civilisation*) quotes a chronicler of the battle of Brémule, 1119, thus: “140 knights remained prisoners in the hands of the conqueror; but of 900 engaged in battle I know of three only who were killed. In fact, they were completely clothed in iron; and as much through the fraternity of arms as through the fear of God did they spare each other, seeking less to kill than to take prisoners.” The stone age had now followed the age of wood and mud in fortification. The first feudal castles followed the earlier model, consisting of a ring wall round the nobleman’s house, with a tower for a last refuge. Then the tower became a solid keep, usually at one end of the enclosure, with the houses of the retainers in its shadow. With knowledge of Byzantine castle-building and Saracen sieges, the protecting walls were doubled and tripled; the battlements were set with projecting turrets so that besiegers could be played upon, and these outworks

took a greater, and the donjon a less, importance. Finally, the concentric type of fortification was perfected, and at its best it was impregnable, until gunpowder revolutionised the conditions. In the towns, too, as the proverb attests, the Englishman's house became a castle, with turret and sometimes a parapet, and with the family rooms "upstairs" (that is, up a removable ladder) for better defence. The town walls and gates were more and more elaborately fortified; many a city and small State owed its continued freedom to this fact.

"By 1300, the defensive had obtained an almost complete mastery over the offensive, so that famine was the only certain weapon in siegecraft" (Oman). In another century the only warfare that was not too costly to pay consisted of plundering raids by relatively small mobile forces. The Hundred Years' War, beginning in 1337, between the now firmly founded French and English monarchies, partook mainly of this character, and at the same time witnessed the introduction of a weapon, the longbow, and a type of man, the "free lance," that were to prepare the way for a new military era. The foreign wars of the Plantagenets could not have been carried on but for the wholesale employment of foreign adventurers, together with the younger sons and other impecunious



members of the noble class who hired themselves for foreign service without much consideration of its object. These scientific plunderers were stiffened with picked levies of archers wielding what had become, under Edward I in his border wars, the national weapon. Bannockburn proved the weakness of feudal cavalry against skilled bowmen in a good defensive position; and, at Crecy and Poitiers, Edward III improved the lesson, to the astonishment of the French chivalry. When Normandy had been devastated, the French nobles shut themselves up in their castles, and, no more booty being obtainable, the war came to an end. But feudalism was doomed as a military instrument.

Chivalry—the word reminds us that every fighting organism must have a sort of religion of its own. In the primitive tribe it was the blood feud, the *lex talionis*. In ancient, as in modern, settled States, it was patriotism. In the expanding Empires, ancient and modern, it was race pride. In the early Mediæval as in the later Moslem theocracy, it was the spirit of proselytism, so nearly allied to the spirit of persecution which inspired the religious wars of a later day. The religion of feudalism was chivalry, a very curious and interesting mixture of Christian and barbarian elements, both debased to the purpose of taming a class of

full-blooded princelings. It was at once a discipline, physical and moral, a cult of aristocratic pride (valour, pride, and loyalty were pre-eminently the sentiments of chivalry) and a playground of the romantic temperament. Feudalism was a secular organisation of society; and the Church was not excepted from its sovereignty. Chivalry, with its professed object of protecting religion and succouring the weak, and its elaborate ritual, represents the best (if we except cathedral building) the Church could obtain of its Teuton masters in return for this submission. It produced some softening of manners, and favoured an enlarging influence of woman. Alas, it did not help the despised villeins, or prevent ferocious cruelty to prisoners of war; and it created a new form of inflated vanity which, though it soon became unpopular, has left deep marks upon our public and private life. The late mediæval art of hunting is distinctly a case of what biologists call reversion to type. The tournaments stand, in point of legitimacy, between the Greek games and the Roman gladiatorial shows. Courtesy—the manners of the royal or ducal court—became dependent on ruinously extravagant fashions. Knight-errantry has deceived later generations by the great literature it produced. In superstitious and disorderly days, it may have given a certain balance of good; but the spirit it set afloat



in the governing classes of the West was essentially false and hypocritical, since it blinded them to the iniquity of a servile basis of society, and of an art of war all of whose privileges and restraints were for the well-born. Another embodiment of the fighting Churchman consisted in those Orders, the Knights Templar, Knights of St. John, Teutonic Knights, and others, which Buckle (*History of Civilisation*, ch. ix) denounces as "establishments that inflicted the greatest evils on society, and whose members, combining analogous vices, enlivened the superstition of monks with the debauchery of soldiers." The fighting parson survives to-day in "transpontine" melodrama, as the proud rescuer of distressed maidens survives in the penny novelette; but the solid business of defence and conquest has passed to paid laymen mostly of the common orders.

We have now seen how, after infinite losses, Romanised Europe held back or assimilated the barbarian invader, and, combining Teuton custom with clerical teaching, found a new method of settlement and protection. We have glanced at the military features of this system, at the mixed character of its expansion in the Crusades, and at the nature of its peculiar *esprit de corps*, called Chivalry. The causes and effects of the decay of Feudalism, and the transition to modern conditions, will be the subject of our next chapter.

CHAPTER VI

THE BREAKDOWN OF FEUDALISM

Two centuries and a half separate the re-discovery in the West of how to make gun-powder (usually attributed to a German monk named Schwartz, about 1330; but it is said by De Bloch to have been used by the Tartars against the Poles in 1241) and the defeat of the Spanish Armada—a time fuller, perhaps, of the elements of far-reaching change than any like period in history. At the beginning, Europe seems to be settled under the heavy hand of Feudalism, and in lip-service to Rome; at the end, its western lands have reconstituted themselves politically and economically, and are started upon a new stage of the swarming movement by which man has taken possession of the earth. Our subject-matter now becomes more and more complex, because the whole globe comes under review, and every kind of social growth has contributed to the motivation of war, of which the military art is one of the least important and least impressive products, and because the connected ideas of organised peace and national self-government by representative institutions now faintly emerge.

The collapse of Feudalism was due to a series of changes—economic, political and



military, intellectual and religious—having a double character of destruction and construction. In the first place, the economic bases of society were radically altered, especially in England, by the growth of commerce and manufacture, the rise of towns, the decay of serfdom, and the emergence of a free labourer and tenant farmer class.

Italy and Germany led the way in the establishment of independent cities whose memorials are to-day the bourne of our holiday pilgrimages. But the evil traditions of Rome and the Lombard dukedoms lay heavy upon them; what they won in industrial skill and financial power they squandered in profligacy and strife; and when the main stream of trade was diverted from the Levant, the Rhine, and the Baltic, to the Atlantic, they fell behind. There were, of course, many other influences. Where militant Protestantism established itself kings gained, if candle-makers and fishermen suffered. Disturbed eastern frontiers left feudalism an unfinished task; and among the new States it was those which proved their strength in feudal warfare against Slav and Turk that best held their own—those of Austria and Prussia. But perpetual warfare—wars, ostensibly, of religion and royal succession, wars of conquest and the “balance of power”—destroyed the energy and wealth that might have won a

New World; while thousands of toll-bars impeded trade even more than the hostile tariffs of neighbouring States. As the Teutonic knights represented the old spirit of conquest, so the Hanseatic League represented the opposite principle of commercial expansion. But if Luther's scoffing question, "What is the good of Crusaders who do not crusade?" satisfies us as to the disappearance of the one, the reason of the collapse of the other is less obvious. It lies in the unnatural, perhaps it would be better to say the unsocial, character of the Hanseatic organisation. There were external causes—the rise of Danish and Swedish power, the civil broils of the fifteenth century, the change in the movements of our humble friend the herring; but internal causes of decay are nearly always the more important. International federation cannot be worked on a purely capitalistic basis. The commercial empire which the league established across Northern Europe in the middle of the fourteenth century was moribund by the middle of the sixteenth. It never lacked wealth or armed force; but it combined the weaknesses of the ancient Greek federations and the commercial despotism of Carthage. Niebuhr likens the Phœnician States to plants which do not take deep root, but spread over the surface of the ground. The Hansa was not subject to the influence of



a contiguous tropical desert; but it, also, had to learn that trade is a function of society, and cannot permanently subsist apart from the other functions of a sanely organised group.

Failing the new economic impulse toward a larger unity that came successively to Spain, France, Holland, and Great Britain, feudal separatism in central Europe continued longer; and Germany and Italy, their little States generation after generation the prey of foreign adventurers and rival native princes, have only in the last century formally effected their national unification. The steady advance of the cities of the West from a semi-feudal condition, in which the great merchants stood over the craft guilds as the nobles over their retainers, to one of complete freedom and self-government, is a happier spectacle. Parallel with this development there occurred a rural revolution, the conclusive factor of which was the frightful visitation known as the Black Death, in its milder modern form called bubonic plague. Following in the track of war, it is reckoned to have swept away a quarter of the population of Europe and a third, or more, of that of Great Britain. The commutation of the serf's labour dues for money payments had been slowly proceeding since the Conquest. The plague, by producing a great scarcity and consequent dearness of labour, decisively stimulated the rise of a

wage-paid labourer class. But the landlords fought hard to keep their privileges; and though the rise of wages continued, and serfdom gradually died out, after the extinction of the agrarian revolts under Tyler and Ball (1377-81) the subsequent laws of revenge and panic, the evictions, the growth of large holdings and sheep farms, created a new vagabond and pauper class which provided excellent material for the wild essays toward empire-building that were to follow.

Every economic change tends to express itself in a corresponding political change. Every improvement in the industrial arts, every new market or branch of trade, every successful expedition, every new discovery of natural resources, every extension of the use of law instead of force, leads, through the increase of available wealth, to the enlargement of the unit of government and the elaboration of a governing class. The market succeeds the family as the economic base of society; and national boundaries tend to represent the market. The old Slave economy is passing away; the second great economic stage, based on settled land-ownership, is being undermined; a third stage, based on money and credit, is opening. Government changes accordingly. Custom is slowly modified in favour of ability and competition; birthright yields place to State service, kinship



to professionalism. Internal administration is gradually divided between central, intermediate, and local authorities. In England, especially, the new central power of a national monarchy was held in check by strong survivals of the spirit of patriarchal society, by a prior development of law, the rudiments of representative government, and by the overshadowing strength of the great nobles, due largely to intermarriage and the union of estates. When slavery is extinct and serfage is only a local bond, kings must get money by new expedients. Hence taxation; and this in turn is the nest of representative institutions, because it exhibits publicly the ratio of government expenses and the contributions of various classes of citizens. State revenue soon brings in its train a universal use of currency, in place of barter and service payment; and this change to a Money economy is an immense stimulus to trade.

After the Great Charter (1215) parliamentary power and individual right were firmly enough based to stand the strain of a century and a half of warfare and, thereafter, another century and a half of Tudor and Stuart despotism. They embodied, in fact, the only method of national unity, without which England might long have remained a French fief, a stagnant and servile estate. Under this restraint, where feudalism had been the

negation of nationality, monarchy offered a rallying point, a voice and hand, to society, a general authority based on an administration, a system of taxation, a judicature, and a permanent army. In the thirteenth century there was reason why a common Englishman should "dearly love a lord." But the suicidal work of the Hundred Years' War against France (1336-1431) was nearly completed in the War of the Roses (1450-71); and the Tudor sovereigns finished it by bringing women and men indiscriminately to the stake and the block, and by confiscations that transferred a fifth of the land of the country to the Throne. Henry II, by the imposition of a military tax in lieu of service and the employment of mercenaries with the product, Edward III, by the dissolution of the liveries, or nobles' bands of armed retainers, paved the way for this change. Gunpowder—used at Crecy (1346) as bombs to frighten the French horses, and with portable cannon against Joan of Arc at Orleans (1429), was from the beginning the king's weapon. And, as we saw that the old Romans killed themselves out in conquest and civil strife, so a main cause of the collapse of feudalism consisted in the fact that the chivalry of the West killed itself out in a warfare which had not even the excuse of being directed against the outer barbarian.

In this case, as in that of a thousand years earlier, the collapse of the established order



was marked by a serious, if less-prolonged, anarchy. It is the most grievous chapter in English history. I shall call attention here only to two parts of the gloomy picture—the demoralisation of the conduct of warfare during the decadence of chivalry, and especially during the French wars, and the growth of the spirit of persecution and its outcome in political terrorism and a series of wars of religion. Edward III commenced the vain struggle for the French Crown by profuse subsidies to German and Flemish princelings for military aid—an interesting precedent to Pitt's Continental policy; yet, in the end, England had to do her own dirty work and pay the Florentine bankers into the bargain. It was not only a land struggle. The narrow seas were overrun with marauding fleets, English, French, and Spanish; and from this time forward, piracy and privateering were endemic in the Channel and the Atlantic. But every county of England bled—border wars and highland forays brought no commensurate misery on Scotland—and North and Central France were ruined. The Black Prince, hero of Crecy and Poitiers, proved himself a very king of freebooters, and an adept at foul butchery. The new mercenaries (soldier, from *solde*, simply means a paid man, and “brigand” at first only meant a light-armed soldier) easily proved their superiority to the lumbering cavalry of the

old noblesse. In service, they tried to "play the game," with only a little more greed and a little less scruple than their employers. In the intervals, they were simply highwaymen on a large scale, hunting in companies, pillaging villages, holding castles and even towns to ransom, and using horrible cruelties. Such an interval preceded the peace of Bretigny (1360). Famine and desolation drove the English out; but, nine years later, the king was directing the cold-blooded massacre of the three thousand inhabitants of Limoges. Then it was the turn of John of Gaunt to waste a British army in rapine. These conquests were all lost, the south coast was ravaged, British shipping was destroyed, debt accumulated, and pestilence and social revolution reduced the possibilities of foreign aggression. It was fitting that the revolt against the poll-tax should be headed by a returned soldier from the French wars, Wat Tyler. The truce continued under Richard II, much to the disgust of his nobles. Henry V renewed the war; and it is strange that one of the finest outbursts in English literature, that which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of the king on the eve of Agincourt—

" This story shall the good man teach his son ;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered,
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers "—



should cover so wanton and barbarous an adventure.

Much of British fighting pride goes back to those three French battlefields on one of which eleven thousand Frenchmen, including a hundred princes and great nobles, were left dead. But it is an ill story to read now as a whole and in cold blood. The Church had lost all hold upon Christian ideals in anxiety for its threatened lands. "The greed of the nobles had been diverted, whether, as later legend said, by the deliberate device of the great Churchmen, or no, to the fair field of France. For the real source of the passion with which the baronage pressed for war was sheer lust of gold. So intense was the greed of gain that only a threat of death could keep the fighting men in their ranks; and the results of victory after victory were lost by the anxiety of the conquerors to deposit their plunder and captives safely at home before reaping the more military fruits of their success. The moment the firm hand of great leaders such as Henry or Bedford was removed, the war died down into mere massacre and brigandage. Cruelty went hand-in-hand with greed; and we find an English privateer coolly proposing to drown the crews of a hundred merchant vessels which he has taken, unless the council to whom he writes should think it better to spare their lives" (J. R. Green: *History of the English People*). Such

ruffians helped to beat the French counties into a nation.

Anarchy, however, cannot be restricted to the foreign field; the curse of conquest always comes home to roost. Rapine abroad was inevitably reflected in lawlessness at home. "British Parliaments, which had become mere sittings of their retainers and partisans, were like armed camps to which the great lords came with small armies at their backs. That of 1426 received its name of the 'Club Parliament' from the fact that, when arms were prohibited, the retainers of the barons appeared with clubs on their shoulders. When clubs were forbidden, they hid stones and balls of lead in their clothes. The dissoluteness against which Lollardism had raised its great moral protest reigned without a check." The savagery of the French campaigns was repeated in the slaughter and ruin, the treasons and executions, of the Wars of the Roses. The men who burned Joan of Arc were soon ready for the exercise of the rack, the wheel, and the block at home. This, together with the call of the Church for new means of authority, and the panic cry of the propertied classes for order at any cost, is the cause of Tudor tyranny and terrorism.

Our subject thus develops a new paradox. As the breakdown of a military organisation of society led to new horrors of warfare, so



the dawn of enlightenment which issued in the Reformation led to an unprecedented outbreak of superstitious fury, and the New Learning, in aid of which Colet declared from the pulpit of St. Paul's that "an unjust peace is better than the justest war," contributed to bloodshed from end to end of Europe. A power become tyrannical and degraded at length provokes a challenge, and, equally surely, attempts persecution in reply. The officers of Innocent III, the founder of the Inquisition, had set an example as early as 1216 of how to deal with budding sceptics by the massacre of 27,000 people in the capture of Beziers. For a time thereafter the Papacy was rendered impotent by its division. In the first years of the fifteenth century, the Wycliffite pioneers were burnt and John Huss died at the stake. It was amid this opening of the struggle of rationalism against persecution that Constantinople fell, the Turks took Belgrade, in 1520, and nine years later stood before Vienna—a respite for papal power, and a stimulus to reaction throughout Eastern and Middle Europe. This was the hey-day of trials for witchcraft. The offence had been known throughout the Middle Ages. In the demoralisation of early Tudor times it became the pretext for wholesale persecution. "The panic created by the belief advanced at first slowly, but after a time

with a fearfully accelerated rapidity. Thousands of victims were sometimes burnt alive in a few years. Every country in Europe was stricken with the wildest panic. Hundreds of the ablest judges were selected for the extirpation of the crime. It was not until a considerable portion of the eighteenth century had passed away that the executions finally ceased; the last law on the subject, the Irish Statute, was not repealed till 1821" (Lecky: *Rationalism in Europe*).

Such was the work the travelling inquisitors of Romanism set afoot in the diseased imaginations of the ignorant masses. It was greatly stimulated by the outbreak of the Black Death, for terror breeds cruelty as well as invites oppression. The persecuting spirit took an economic colour in massacres of Jews and the repression of Lollards, in the practice of confiscating the property of heretics, and in the after-treatment of the "mere heathen" beyond seas. It took a political colour as the issue between Protestantism and Catholicism involved royal successions, the struggles of England and Holland against France and Spain, the struggle of conquering Germans against reforming Bohemians. It was only decisively checked when the majority of people could read and write, and when these majorities made and unmade their national governments. But for long it involved the



most learned and the most ignorant in a common savagery; Luther, Erasmus, the Pilgrim Fathers, and Wesley were equally victims of the belief in witchcraft. The connected doctrines of hereditary sin and exclusive salvation were also very ancient; their new vigour in the mouth of the great Reformers is evidently connected with the dislocation of a religious and political system that had come to rest on a doctrine of hereditary merit and indifference to purity or justice. The violence of revolution responds to the violence of a dying tyranny.

On the whole, the Romance nations, where Papal influence and the old country life were strongest, remained Catholic; the Teutonic States, where harder conditions have always favoured independence and individualism, and where the commercial towns enjoyed increasing power, became Protestant. In France and Germany, where the two spheres met and the two forces were nearly balanced, the result was prolonged civil war, marked in the former case by the massacre of Huguenots in Paris on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572. One of the worst assertions of arbitrary power at this time lay in the transfer of small States by royal marriage from one ruler to another. This led to popular revolt on the one hand, and, on the other, persecution was brought in to aid tyranny, as when the Low Countries,



added to the crown of Castile, Aragon, and Burgundy, revolted against the blood-orgies of the Inquisition, and, after a struggle of incomparable bravery, established the Dutch Republic in 1609. Both Protestants and Catholics persecuted—Protestants less, perhaps, because they less often exercised civil power; Catholics certainly more because they had the power as well as the tradition. “Llorente, who had free access to the archives of the Spanish Inquisition, assures us that by that tribunal alone more than 31,000 persons were burnt, and more than 290,000 condemned to punishments less severe than death. The number of those put to death for their religion in the Netherlands alone in the reign of Charles V has been estimated by a very high authority at 50,000 (Sarpi; Grotius says 100,000); and at least half as many perished under his son. These atrocities were not perpetrated in the brief paroxysms of a reign of terror or by the hands of obscure sectaries, but were inflicted by a triumphant Church with every circumstance of solemnity and deliberation. Nor did the victims perish by a rapid and painless death, but by one which was carefully selected as among the most poignant that man can suffer. They were usually burnt alive. They were burnt alive not unfrequently by a slow fire. They were burnt alive after their



constancy had been tried by the most excruciating agonies that minds fertile in torture could devise" (Lecky). Yet this was not all. Hundreds of thousands who did not suffer death suffered loss and the terror of death. "Where religious fanaticism reinforced political resentment, there was no limit to the barbarity of the rough soldiery. In the struggle with the Huguenots, nothing was sacred from the plunderer, not even the sepulchres of the dead. In the Low Countries, too, the fight was to the death. Pillage and devastation reigned in the open field; siege after siege terminated in a scene of wild licence and savage butchery. The story of the 'Thirty Years' War will live for ever as a tale of horror. Twelve hours after the fall of Magdeburg, 20,000 men, women, and children lay charred and blackened corpses amid the ashes of the lifeless city" (Walker). The wars of religion planted animosities in Europe that are still not rooted out, and made a virtue of military excess. They produced a spirit of intolerance that poisoned the two great liberationist movements of the following centuries, the English and French Revolutions, and added a new element of ferocity to the movement of expansion oversea by which a series of European Empires were to be established in America, Asia, and Africa.

Is it enough to say, as Lecky does, that "it

was out of the Christian conception of the guilt of error that persecution arose"? I think not. Persecution and tyranny are twin expressions of the Imperial idea in a time of demoralisation when the property basis of society is changing, and an old governing class is giving place to a new. They have an almost completely utilitarian origin. Popular superstition may be cultivated and provoked (as we see in Russia to-day) in order to provide the means and surroundings favourable to persecution; but its effective cause is the determination of a small number of men in possession to retain by terror the property and power whose regular sanctions are disappearing. Thus, the rationalistic spirit of the Reformation only destroyed persecution when, passing from the field of private opinion into alliance with democracy and trade, it became a positive political force capable of restraining all forms of arbitrary rule, secular or clerical. This happened first in England, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia, then in France. At the two ends of Europe, Spain and Russia are economically most behindhand because there, face to face with the Moors and the Mongols, despotism was most strongly developed. The era of religious wars is usually counted as closing with the Peace of Westphalia (1648), six years after Galileo's death as a prisoner of the Inquisition. The Thirty Years' War,



begun by Protestant revolts in Bohemia and Hungary, soon degenerated, in fact, into a secular struggle for territory in Central Europe, during which France rose to greatness under Louis XIV, and Germany was devastated and divided by foreign adventurers and her own rival princes.

I have given this much prominence to the two great expressions of the anarchy following the breakdown of feudalism—the degradation of warfare, and the mania of persecution—because there is a too common impression that the era of invention and discovery meant a sudden passage from darkness to light; and this idea makes the barbarities of the following centuries incomprehensible except on the supposition that human nature is incapable of progress in one direction save at the cost of backsliding in another. There was, in fact, no such sudden transition. The mariners' compass was in use in 1300; yet it was 1492 ere Columbus landed in the West Indies, 1497 ere Da Gama rounded the Cape, 1522 ere Magellan circumnavigated the world, and 1577 ere Drake sailed for the Pacific. The Chinese used fireballs and like contrivances five hundred years B.C., and to this fact seems to be due the erroneous belief that they then used gunpowder. The first traceable employment of artillery in China was at the defence of Taiyuen in A.D. 757 (Herbert Spencer's



Descriptive Sociology, vol. "Chinese," 1910, p. 285). We have seen that gunpowder mysteriously reappears in the fourteenth century, along with small portable cannon. But, in 1427, of an army of 80,000 against the Hussites, only 200 men carried arquebuses; at the end of the century only a tenth of the French infantry were so provided, and leaden bullets were only just coming into use. Cannon developed much more rapidly than hand arms; but the pieces of bronze of the end of the fifteenth century were lumbering things, needing 50 horses for transport and service. At Nordlingen, in 1645, the artillery could only fire three rounds, and, about the same time, a musketeer only fired seven times in eight hours (Jean de Bloch: *La Guerre*). In 1596, the British crown was trying to revive the use of bows and arrows; and archers appeared in the British forces in 1627. Muskets were used with rests till the reign of Charles I, when gunpowder cost no less than £3 a barrel, so that train-bands often could not afford to practise. Its effective use may be dated, not from 1330, but from the invention of the cartridge, the flint-lock, and the bayonet three centuries later. If the invention the most sure of all to appeal to the wealthy and powerful was thus slowly developed, how much more tardy would be that intellectual and moral change which Caxton



started when he introduced the printing press into England in 1476. In fact, it was to take four centuries to give rag paper and movable types their logical issue in universal primary schooling.

Nevertheless, these landmarks represent the beginnings of change deep, universal, and abiding. If it was true that the world could never again be quite the same after Christianity had thrown down its challenge to Roman Imperialism, so it is true that, whatever the immediate turmoil, a world possessing the printed sheet could never again be wholly dominated by mere force and the superstition that is the base inspiration of force. When the "disruption of Christendom" occurred, thousands of new centres of life were already re-creating European society. While the age of discovery brought fresh opportunities for the outer man, there came, through the recovery and spread of Greek and other Eastern learning, and through the Reformation within the Christian Church, a great stimulus to intellectual life, an introduction, even for the common people, into new realms of moral experience, and a new independence of personality. Systems of tyranny and conquest accepted without question in the ancient servile world could not long exist in face of this fundamental change: sooner or later a political revolution must follow. In its appli-



cation to a practical emergency, secular reason no more than religion spoke at first with a single voice. Dante, the greatest mind of the Middle Ages, had not got beyond the ideal of a universal monarchy as the way to personal and social freedom. Kings now proved themselves only too ready to claim this benevolent function, after Dante's example of ascribing it to a particular prince.

Still, the idea of a European jurisdiction was there, and it grew. The "Consolato del Mare," a large collection of maritime rules, "made seemingly at Barcelona about the middle of the fourteenth century," "set out a veritable common law of the sea" (Walker) for the coasts of Europe; marine insurance was common, though not nearly as common as wrecking and piracy, at the end of the fifteenth century. In Central Europe, as the Imperial ban failed of effect, leagues of cities and principalities for mutual defence sprang up. The end of the Thirty Years' War (1648) marks the eclipse of the aim of world dominion, and the definite appearance of territorial nationality. Mixed or rival precepts drawn from Roman civil law and mediæval Church (canon) law were gradually, with the clearer definition of the boundaries of State control, developed into a code of rules no longer universal, but properly international, a code of duties corresponding to the new rights. Absolute right of ownership in the seas was



permitted to continue long because of its usefulness against piracy. Elizabeth vigorously denied it in defending Drake; yet as late as 1805 the British Admiralty claimed possession as far as Cape Finisterre, and to this day military claims upon sea are upheld that have long been obsolete on land. Similarly, English protests against the Spanish monopoly of trade with the Indies gave birth to ideas which were afterwards to undermine the fabric of Britain's own trade monopoly. Though diplomatists too often imitated their royal masters in "going abroad to lie on behalf of their country," for it was a faithless age, a certain etiquette and regularity were now for the first time elaborated in State relations. By the end of the sixteenth century there was a definite assertion of neutral rights.

In Italy, which had suffered most from the corruption of the Papacy and the tyranny of soldiers of fortune, where the Renaissance and the ideal of free republicanism were already declining, and hope of resisting the foreign invader and the native oppressor seemed dead, a new force—politics as an independent science and art—was brought to birth by Machiavelli (1469–1527). It was a sinister apparition. Ancient Rome still haunted the Italian imagination; and the author of the new statecraft could think of no better expedient, amid the troubles he so clearly saw, than a revived Cæsarism. The happier



circumstances of insular England are indicated in the fact that the *Utopia* was being written at the same time as *The Prince*. Though there was a quick reaction against More's early radicalism, the seeds of progress had been sown, and the conditions favoured their growth. Finally, there appeared, in Vasquez, Ayala, and Gentilis, above all in Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), a clear definition of the rights and the grosser wrongs of warfare; a declaration of the freedom of the seas; a code of rules for Ministers, Ambassadors, Generals, and Admirals; a law of neutrality and private immunity; a discussion of what is permissible under the Law of Nature, under the Law of Nations, under honour and moral justice, and under specific agreement; last, but not least, a revival of the idea of arbitration.

Thus far we have traced the Westward swarm across European history. We must now follow its passage across the Atlantic, into the Pacific, and round the African coast into the Indian seas.

CHAPTER VII

THE SWARM OVERSEAS : EAST AND WEST

ENGLAND was by no means first in this field. Companies of Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and Russian adventurers had inaugu-



ated the new era of discovery and conquest on the American, African, and Asian coasts, and in Siberia. It was, in fact, a very little and a very backward England that gave birth to Shakespeare and humbled Imperial Spain. In the two centuries after Edward III, the population had increased from $2\frac{1}{4}$ millions to perhaps double that number, at a high estimate. Scotland was still independent. The country was very imperfectly settled; communications were difficult; industry was but slightly developed; the small external trade was carried on by foreigners; the development of the middle class had but lately begun.

Seamanship was in the first flush of its success. Italians and Spaniards preceded English adventurers into the Western Hemisphere, while Portuguese and Dutch showed them the new Eastward passage. English seamen rarely ventured beyond the Baltic, the Narrow Seas, the Spanish coast as far as Seville, at the time when Columbus was making his famous voyage, and for a long time afterward they did not venture into the Mediterranean. Until 1532 English traders with the East found their chief opportunity in the yearly visits of the Venetian fleet. America had been discovered, and India reached by sea, nearly a century before Gilbert took possession of Newfoundland and Raleigh founded the colony of Virginia. With these exceptions, not yet



established, (Calais, the last of the French possessions, having been lost in 1558) England had not an inch of territory beyond these islands till she had asserted herself against Spain by the defeat of the Armada and by the Dutch alliance; till, through immigration of Protestant refugees, London had succeeded Antwerp (sacked by the Spaniards in 1567 and 1585) as the greatest commercial centre of North-West Europe; till, from the Thames to the Bristol Channel, a chain of busy seaports had arisen, and the El Dorado legend had taken a firm hold upon the English mind. These are the elements to which is commonly traced the rough outburst of Elizabethan maritime enterprise. But they are, in the main, conditions and manifestations rather than causes of the new spirit of foreign adventure and aggression which marked the sudden opening of a new chapter of British history. Some other motive-force there must have been beside greed of Spanish gold and hatred of the Spanish Inquisition. What is the missing factor?

We have seen in the last chapter that, among the first effects of the breakdown of Feudalism and Papal authority, on the one hand, and the growth of national monarchies and the rural revolution on the other, were a notable degradation of warfare and an un-



precedented outbreak of persecution. Here are the main elements of a fresh movement of armed expansion—landless, rightless, demoralised masses of men, and governing classes in need of fresh fields for easy exploitation. Henry VIII and Elizabeth were not the first arbitrary rulers to gain popularity by pointing their victims to opportunities of compensation. They had broken the barons; that was matter for gratitude, for in a sparse agricultural population local is always felt more than central tyranny. It was they, and not the people, who drove out Popery. Under temptations of general profit, as well as under threats of general danger, military force is quickly concentrated in a single national centre. Thus, the royal house grew rich and strong and proud, so that, under the later Tudors and the Stuarts, England came near submission to a pure tyranny.

Evidently, the easiest field for the use of this new force of monarchy lay outside the national boundaries. The growth of restraints within the State, and of a national spirit, for a time stimulate licence without. As in ancient days, while the process of internal consolidation was conditioned by growing enlightenment and freedom, the process of expansion was not subject to any such checks and balances. The rivalries that arose in the years of national settlement in Europe,

especially the rivalry of England with the other two great Atlantic States, Spain and France, were taken as sanctioning a resort to extremes of savagery which would not have been thought of in internal relations. From being a Roman dispensation throughout a great part of the known world, supported by the most sacred sanctions, law had come to be regarded almost as a mere emanation of local sovereignty. Regard for a rudimentary moral code had been extended from the village community to the confines of the nation; but here, in spite of Christian professions, it reached its limit, or at least became seriously weakened. Within each nation the development of wealth and population continued steadily; but, in the relation of these nation-states with each other and the outside world, humane considerations were at a discount. For centuries after their discovery, the new worlds of the West and the East were regarded by statesmen, as well as swash-bucklers, as lying outside civilisation.

The firm establishment of military monarchy was quickly followed by the emergence of capitalism. Enterprise and ambition grew rapidly under the stimulus of possibilities of wealth "beyond the dreams of avarice," that is, beyond the scope of local usury. The broadening of the market and the sources of supply involved a broadening of economic



and political bases. This development was hurried and accentuated by the inflow of bullion from Central and South America. The Spaniards went for gold; they found only silver, but in such quantities as to upset completely the existing European currencies. The laziest countryside was aroused by this mysterious appreciation of its crops and stock. Thus the new Money Economy was confirmed and extended—a bridge toward the Credit Economy of to-day. Trade increased rapidly, but the chief aim of statecraft in the next century and a half was to procure an ever larger import of the precious metals. In the general spread of capitalistic organisation thus produced, and the national rivalries excited by dazzling visions of treasure going a-begging beyond the ocean, the island state of England grew in national self-consciousness and self-confidence, in commercial experience and maritime skill, and in the reserves which enabled her in the eighteenth century to adopt the sweeping changes known as the Industrial Revolution. To her insularity, and its influence in the hardening of national character and narrowing of national purposes, much of England's phenomenal success must be attributed.

The State, then, was ready; the great merchants were ready. A further reason for the readiness of the common people to leave home

and risk death on strange seas lay in the consequences of the oppression, extortion, and profligacy of the Tudor Court. For a time, the rural population dispossessed by evictions and the decline of arable farming found recompense in the activity of the new cloth manufactures. But, when Henry VIII launched out upon his monstrous career of robbery at home and bloodshed and wasteful entanglement abroad, wholesale ruin fell upon the country-folk who composed the great body of the nation. The mob of nobles and courtiers to whom the monastic lands were given raised rents, confiscated stock, laid hold of the commons, and mercilessly evicted the helpless tenants. Thus, while the old fountains of relief were closed, a new mass of pauperism was created. Not content with such triumphs of rapacity, the King proceeded to the theft of the guild lands and successive debasements of the currency. Insurrections in the eastern and southern counties were repressed by foreign mercenaries; the hanging of Ket at Norwich marks the failure of the popular resistance. Elizabeth reformed the currency (further debased by the Ministers of Edward VI) in time to save English credit; but, by the laws for the regulation of labour and the relief of distress which are the economic landmarks of her reign, the revolution was deepened and fixed.



The justices assessed wages at so low a level that employers voluntarily raised the rate. Starvation pay, supplemented from the poor rate, became the rule. Combinations of labourers were effectively broken up. Runaway journeymen and recalcitrant apprentices were imprisoned. Servants could not quit town or parish without licence; masters taking servants without a testimonial were fined; absentees from work were fined; a servant who forged a testimonial was flogged; one who assaulted his master was imprisoned for a year or more.

It is not difficult to connect this régime of oppression and robbery with an outburst of adventure which reproduced the chief features of outlawry in earlier feudal times. Steady, settled country life was becoming impossible at the very moment when fables of the golden East and true tales of loot in the Spanish Main began to echo through the land.

This demoralisation shows itself, as might be expected, in the character of the Elizabethan maritime adventurers. These first expansionists began with buccaneering, at the outset in the English Channel. "Huguenots from the French shores joined forces with Devonshire sea-dogs from Dartmouth or Bideford, and plundered impartially all shipping that passed up into what were called the Narrow Seas. . . . It was a fierce life, a state of war

without its rights for the victims or its duties for the conquerors. We cannot doubt that bitter passions, religious hate, greed, sheer love of violence and bloodshed, were only too easily fed in these buccaneering exploits. . . . English and Huguenot corsairs swept the Channel and the Bay of Biscay. Tremaynes, Stukeleys, and Cobhams, scions of famous West-country houses, continued to spend their money in fitting out craft of twenty or fifty tons with cutlasses and guns and reckless men only too glad to learn the art of using them. Fishermen abandoned their favourite grounds off Kinsale or in the Iceland seas, and took to the more profitable trade of piracy; and throughout the West, from Bideford round to Exmouth, the sea-dog's life was the envy of every young fellow of spirit" (Woodward; *Expansion of the British Empire*). At the same time, some more daring fellows were doing for the more distant lands what the Northmen did for the England of Alfred. Drake, twenty years before, had set the example by plundering the coast towns of Spanish South America, and, having received the secret support of Queen Elizabeth all along, had been knighted for his pains.

Hispaniola and the Spanish Main offered a happy hunting-ground to British hooligans. "To England, the war (with Spain) is throughout an industry. . . . As we now



put our money into railways or what not, so then the keen men of business took shares in the new ship which John Oxenham or Francis Drake was fitting out at Plymouth, and which was intended to lie in wait for the treasure galleons, or make raids upon the Spanish towns in the Gulf of Mexico. The two countries were, formally, not even at war with each other" (Seeley; *The Expansion of England*). For forty or fifty years after their first settlement, the Bahamas were a hot-bed of wreckers and pirates. Captain Morgan had his headquarters in the British colony of Jamaica; Charles II pocketed the royal share of the loot, and knighted the master of the black flag. "Our early maritime heroes were all pirates; and even after the Government determined on putting down the practice, and actually hanged numbers of adventurers who became a scandal to it, mainly because they had originally been sent out by Government, and had been old-fashioned enough to strain their commission—even after this, a preliminary apprenticeship in this lucrative and invigorative business was no bar to the subsequent employment of a buccaneer, who had abandoned this special calling, in Church and State. The first chairman of the East India Co., Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, was 'an ancient buccaneer.' Paterson, the reputed

founder of the Bank of England, is sometimes said to have been a missionary in the Antilles, sometimes described as a pirate, and it has been suggested that he was probably both by turns" (Thorold Rogers; *Economic Interpretation of History*). Buccaneers soon lost even the semblance of political excuse; and for a century or more England had good reason to repent (though Spain, amid the ruins of her attempt to corner the silver supply, had better) the royal policy which was long represented as a fit way of vindicating British independence and Christianity pure and undefiled—a policy to which we now trace back the careers of scoundrels like Morgan and Kidd.

In a less martial and more strictly commercial type, the Elizabethan spirit embodied itself in the trade in negro slaves, initiated by John Hawkins (another of the good Queen's knights) in 1562. Hawkins, who may be called the father of our transatlantic trade, was, indeed, in high favour with the Government, and was accounted a highly estimable fellow. His first expedition consisted of three small ships carrying only a hundred men, with whom he bought or caught three hundred negroes, and sold them to the hated Spaniard in San Domingo. His second venture, in 1564 (the year of Shakespeare's birth), consisted of four ships and one hundred and



seventy men, and was attended, as he proudly said, "with great profit to the venturers, as also to the whole realm, in bringing home both gold, silver, pearles, and other jewels great store." The third voyage, in 1567, took five ships—one commanded by Francis Drake, and two lent from the Royal Navy. So the increase went on. We need not attempt here to describe the horrors of slave-hunting and the "middle passage" across the Atlantic. There can be little doubt that the evil of slave labour, which had already existed in the Spanish colonial system for half a century, and with which the Spanish Government endeavoured to cope by regulative injunctions, was immensely aggravated by the application to it of British trading methods, otherwise only applied to dead commodities. For two centuries of Imperial development there was practically no sign of compunction in regard to this immense iniquity—that was to be a product of the brief cosmopolitan period in the history of English political thought. In 1662 the African Company was formed in London, and occupied the mouth of the Gambia. This direct attack on the Dutch traffic in slaves for the British American plantations led to the Anglo-Dutch war of the following four years (1663-67), in course of which the American coast from Nova Scotia to Florida fell to England. In

1689 the Company's monopoly was removed, and every Englishman was free to become a slave-trader. In twenty years the sale of negroes reached 25,000 annually; a century later this number was quadrupled. Probably not less than a million slaves were imported into the colonies in the course of a century. By the Treaties of 1713, which marked the achievement by Britain of primacy among the Western Powers, she obtained the formal assent of Spain to the slave trade with Spanish America, and it became "a central point in English policy" (Lecky: *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*). "From this date," says Seeley, "we took the leading share and stained ourselves beyond other nations in the monstrous and enormous atrocities" of this traffic. The direct atrocities of the negro slave trade are, however, but a part of the cost of a system by which the natural evolution of large tracts of sub-tropical countries, both in Africa and America, has been injured and a series of mischiefs produced the gravest that are recorded in human history.

While Drake's piratical voyage round the world, the supreme achievement of Elizabethan adventure, had flung England into open conflict with Spain for supremacy, it had also attracted British cupidity towards the hoary and jewelled East; and it was there that British Imperialism first crystallised in



the form which at length gave the title of Empress to an English Queen. Gilbert, Hayes, and Raleigh, in their premature attempts to find vacant lands for settlement by emigration and cultivation, had shown how much more difficult is colonisation than freebooting. Joint-stock capitalism, in the infant shape of the East India Company (which, however, might rather be described as a highly capitalised merchant guild), was now to show that, if England did not yet want, because she did not need, colonies properly so-called, she was quite ripe for the race after dependencies and dividends.

During the first half of the three centuries in which British influence has been brought to bear upon India, it was governed by a trading and non-political policy. The merchants of London absolutely controlled the Company, though royalty watched over its rights in the background. Climatic and other conditions in India forbade colonisation, even in the modified sense of "plantation." Self-defence on distant seas had to be provided for at a time when the State had no naval force to apply to such a task; but, beyond this, the astute patricians did not wish to burden the venture with military or political obligations. They simply wanted to tap the wealth—not the gold treasures, but the spices and cloths—of the East, to obtain a series of "open



markets" without territorial responsibility. At first they found the islands more accessible; but Dutch antagonism, based on a military and territorial policy, diverted them to the Indian mainland.

A very different Hindostan, in some respects, from that which afterwards came under British sway. The earliest adventurers, navigators and merchants, coming through perils of stormy seas, armed rivals, and piracy, from a far, small country still raw, unlearned, disunited and undeveloped, had found upon the Mogul throne at Delhi, Akbar, the chivalrous and learned contemporary of Queen Elizabeth and Henry IV of France, whose reign is the highest point of native Indian rule. This great monarch, who was just dead at the time of the first expedition of the East India Company, had consolidated the petty Hindu and Mohamedan States, as much by diplomacy as by force; had established political equality between the different races, respecting the humane side of the Hindu traditions and institutions, and founded a land revenue system and other details of government which survive in essence to this day. The governors and friends of the Company were as pacific as a Cobden could have wished. Sir Thomas Roe, an ambassador sent to the Mogul Court in 1615 to combat Portuguese influence and help the



British factories, wrote: "War and traffic are incompatible. At my first arrival I understood a fort was very necessary; but experience teaches me we are refused it to our advantage. If the Emperor would offer me ten, I would not accept one."

A series of unprofitable years, during which the Mogul Empire was being undermined by dissension and intrigue, brought about a change of temper. The Civil War at home favoured a certain demoralisation in these far-distant, feeble, and scattered trading stations; and afterwards, as the trade grew more valuable, to keep up quasi-imperial appearances came to be the most obvious way of justifying the maintenance of the monopoly. In 1635 Charles I had granted a licence to a rival company, on the ground, among other things, that the East India Company had not established fortified posts. Four years later Fort St. George was established at Madras; and shortly afterwards a new charter was obtained, giving the Company power to make peace or war with any non-Christian people, to establish fortifications, export arms duty free, arrest traders infringing its monopoly, and exercise civil and criminal jurisdiction in India. In 1640 a Surgeon Boughton, by medical services to a daughter of the Mogul, obtained facilities for the Bengal trading stations; but the purely



mate traders and buccaneers of the Kidd type. But in Sir Josiah Child they found a hard, persistent, and resourceful enemy. Child, who had been an office-boy in the City, rose by his abilities to be the head of the greatest trading corporation of the time, one of the most wealthy and powerful personages in the land, and the founder of a new commercial imperialism.

It was a favourable juncture. A king who shamelessly begged for foreign money and aid for the furtherance of his designs against his people was just the man to foster schemes of Imperial adventure and aggression; the people who could not destroy the Jacobite tyranny except by means of a foreign army and a foreign prince were just the stuff to be victimised by men like Child and his colleague Cook. "The whole breed of our statesmen," says Macaulay of this period, "seems to have degenerated. . . . Vicissitudes so extraordinary as those which mark the reign of Charles II can only be explained by supposing an utter want of principle in the political world. . . . Profligacy became a test of orthodoxy and loyalty, a qualification for rank and office. The excesses of that age remind us of the humours of a gang of foot-pads revelling with their favourite beauties at a flash-house." Sir Josiah Child knew where his strength lay. The people might

shout, rival traders might scheme: it mattered little so long as the authority of Whitehall stood behind the India House. When the interlopers became really troublesome, Charles's enthusiasm was stimulated with a gift of £10,000. James was no less royally treated, and every Court favourite had his or her price. Child's brother John was made a baronet and General of the British forces in the East. The expenditure of nearly £100,000 in bribes procured the renewal of the old privileges in 1693. Two years later the Company was indicted for corruption; in 1708 it was obliged to amalgamate with the rival body which had maintained the opposition to it, and thenceforward its worst difficulties at home were ended. It was now solidly connected with the State; and the more romantic and speculative interest, which led in 1720 to the episode of the South Sea Bubble, was diverted to another field, where the trade in negroes offered for a giddy moment greater profits than the trade in tea.

In India the Company prospered for half a century more by refraining from intervention or aggression. A brief spasm of interference with native rulers in 1684 had resulted so disastrously as to be a warning. But French and other European rivals whom bribery could not reach nor threats restrain were now exciting increasing jealousy, and turmoil



among the native peoples offered new temptation. By 1740 the Mogul Empire had fallen to ruin; the provinces had been devastated by Persian and Afghan invaders, and the Mahrattas had risen to power. Here was a situation irresistibly tempting to the wilder youth equally of the French and the English Companies, bored to death with the mere handling of goods amid the unnatural limitations of an Indian trading station. Almost at the same time the fever of adventure and intrigue broke out in both corporations, in the rival personalities of Clive and Dupleix. Dupleix had the advantage of age and experience; he had already discovered the native susceptibility to military prestige and the military capacity of the sepoy under European training. His ambition stuck at nothing, and, as Governor of Pondicherry, he wielded the full local power of France. He soon controlled native authority in the Deccan and Carnatic, and was planning further conquests, when he was suddenly called home. Clive, on the other hand, then but a boy clerk at Madras, was soon to show how social disintegration evokes military genius.

We have again reached low-water mark in the public and private morality of England, a time when organised religion was well-nigh dead, and organised education hardly existed; when high society was profligate, and ruthless

laws were answered by criminal terrorism; when the early stages of the Industrial Revolution were imperceptibly shifting the basis of the national economy, and adventure abroad was taken to compensate for political stagnation under a disciplined and powerful oligarchy at home. The successful development which culminated with the Peace of 1713 had left Britain the first Power in the world; but "it secularised and materialised the English people as nothing had ever done before. Never were sordid motives so supreme, never was religion and every high influence so much discredited, as in the thirty years that followed" (Seeley). Scotland was still a distant and little-known land; only in 1710 "men were leaving off armour which had hitherto been worn by every one who could afford it as a useful precaution in a barbarous and therefore a warlike society" (Buckle). When the struggle with France was resumed, and Pitt was in the midst of his efforts after a world empire, there was an end of political lethargy, but there was no moral revival. In the general programme of war against France all round the world, to beat her out of India became an important aim. In 1746, two years before the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the Madras station was destroyed by the French, and Clive, among others, was made prisoner. Five years later



he had his revenge in the siege of Arcot, followed by a complete humiliation of Dupleix.

Thus the way was cleared for Pitt's plans for direct Crown rule in India, which, says Green, "when he proposed them, were regarded as insane"; and these designs received a decisive stimulus in 1756 by the coincidence of the crime of the Black Hole of Calcutta, committed by an ally of the French, with the outbreak of the Seven Years' War in Europe. Corrupt and treacherous in diplomacy, Clive never lacked courage, and the victory of Plassey made him dictator in Bengal. The young adventurer who, as leader of a boyish gang of window-breakers, had terrorised the shopkeepers of Market Drayton, overturned in a few years the peaceful, commercial, and non-territorial policy of the past century and a half. At the Peace of Paris, in 1763, France gave up all right to military settlement, and so removed European rivalry. The south of the peninsula was now conquered, and a specious plea for complete imperialisation was based on the need of abolishing the corruption of the Company's officers. That the Company was pretty thoroughly demoralised, and that Clive and the like of Clive were not the men to put things right, may equally be seen in the records of the time, which make a shameful picture of extortion and robbery by British traders, to the ruin and terror of the

unprotected natives. Beside Clive, the other great instrument of the imperialisation of India was Warren Hastings, also a clerk of the Company, who rose rapidly to be Governor-General of Bengal, laid the basis of the present Civil Service, and by routing Hyder Ali destroyed the last possibility of a strong native government. He was tried in Westminster Hall on charges of gross cruelty, extortion, and the wrongful suppression of free native tribes, but was acquitted.

Enough has been said to show that, whether good or bad, empire-building in this supreme case was not inevitable, was not a necessary result either of national defence or the expansion of the national economy. On the contrary, what we find is a reflection of the ills of English society, the opening of a new battlefield for the working out of European quarrels and for military and commercial adventure. For the first time England was committed on the large scale to absolute dominion over a community alien in race, history, religion, and interest—a far-distant peninsula having a population ten times as large as that of the ruling State, and impossible of white colonisation.

Meanwhile, the West was showing expansion of a strongly contrasted type. In North America settlement by and for agricultural and industrial cultivation led to a steady and soundly directed development. I say



“cultivation” because the word sums up the contrast between this regeneration of an old stock in a new world and the establishment of absolutism in Asia. But the cultivation of the land is only the basic activity of colonial life. The best part of American colonisation was founded by communities of men and women distinguished by religious zeal and independence of character. It was an extension of some of the purest and hardest types of British manhood. It represented the spirit of More's *Utopia*, as the European statecraft against which it was a practical protest represented the spirit of Machiavelli's *Principe*. It was a great movement away from Empire toward Democracy; if it had been otherwise the British Islands might to-day be a small dependency of a kingdom of North America. The extinction of the North American Indians, which Seeley likened to the attack of a party of hunters upon a herd of antelopes, is not to be forgotten. But it is not possible to regard these nomads with quite the same respect, not to say awe, which any rational mind must feel before the ancient civilisation of Hindostan. The early experiments of Frobisher, Gilbert, and Raleigh were not successful; but they set a high example in their deliberate search for unoccupied lands for pacific colonisation, in an age when most Englishmen who crossed the seas were freebooters. The first American terri-

tory successfully developed, that of Virginia, was a plantation, owned at the outset by a chartered company, afterwards to be worked by slave labour. The four New England States were colonised (1622-33) pacifically—save for two Indian wars in Connecticut—by Puritan settlers. New York, New Jersey, and Delaware were, it is true, taken from the Dutch; but, self-government being grafted upon existing institutions, no serious sting was left behind. On the other hand, Pennsylvania, bought by the Quaker William Penn from his royal debtor Charles II, was one of the noblest social experiments in history. If other American colonies had been founded in the same spirit and of like material, the difficulty with France might have been more easily rectified, and at least America would not have been made, like India, an arena for the settlement of a European feud.

That there was as much of the temper of independence in New England as in Pennsylvania, if less of the gentler humanities, Great Britain was to learn when, in 1783, she was compelled to give her American colonies complete independence. The policy of trade ascendancy and monopoly—which had been supreme since Charles II mounted the throne, and which was enshrined in the Navigation Acts and other measures making English ships the sole carriers and England the sole depot or market for colonial trade—was a crude



expression of the idea later to be enshrined in the phrase "Trade follows the Flag." Monopoly was the essence of British trade in India and elsewhere. That it could not be imposed upon a few small communities—only 1½ millions of people all told, in the middle of the eighteenth century—set the world thinking. The struggle with France cost France Canada, but it cost us the United States. That England thought it more profitable (that is what it comes to) to hold India conquered than North America free must seem strange to any man who now studies the facts with open eyes. To-day, when the territorial expansion of the British Empire has ceased, we may say that the lesson has come home; for, while thought of India is a reminder of great tasks, great duties, great perils yet to be borne, the free, self-governing Dominions and Commonwealths of Britons across the seas give good ground for pride in what has been accomplished and hope of the future.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BALANCE OF POWER

THRICE in our story of the Westward swarm we have seen a great settlement and equilibrium established, and at length broken by internal decay and external attack; thrice

we have seen an economic basis of a settled society established, only to be transformed—the slave economy into a land economy, and this into an economy of trade currency. At each stage the breadth of the picture expands, and, however dark it may yet be, takes on some more hopeful colour. Rome made an empire wider than the old despotisms of the Nile and Euphrates valleys; its collapse wrought terrible havoc, yet the fate of Europe has never been like that of the ancient Levant and North Africa. Feudalism covered a larger area than Roman Viceroyalties could effectively govern; its collapse, and the end of the Mediæval Empire, brought long anarchy, but not such as that of eight centuries earlier. Slavery and serfdom have passed; the era of free labour and free thought has dawned. We have now to trace the establishment of a fourth, a much wider and more firmly-based, equilibrium—a settlement shared in some measure by the whole world, a peace often and gravely threatened, it is true, and subject to many grave problems, but sustained by a richer variety of living forces, of interest and intelligence alike, than any that preceded it.

We have seen that the new imperialism offered a temptation of increasing returns to the governing and moneyed classes of the Atlantic seaboard States. But this opportu-



ity was only slowly developed, and it did not reach the greater part of Europe. There the territorial greed of absolute monarchs, expressed in matrimonial and contra-matrimonial intrigues, and subserved by growing wealth, ever-larger mercenary forces, and a new type of statesmanship joining cynical craft to real constructive power, characterises the process of national consolidation and rivalry, from the time of the Emperor Charles V, Francis I, and Henry VIII of England down to the French Revolution. Wars of religion merge into wars of royal succession, and these into wars of trade and empire. Beneath them all, there is the same spirit of rapacity, cloaked in a cunning which must yet be accounted better than mere force, and supported with an ability that left some admirable by-products for the consolation of long-suffering peoples. Thus, from the foundation of British diplomacy by Henry VII, England was engaged for centuries in a shrewd game of beggar-my-neighbour with the three great Powers of the Continent, France, Spain, and the Empire, taking a partner now on one side, then on the other, and always for a price.

France was traditionally and generally the enemy, but every combination was unstable, and an opportunism usually based on economic considerations ruled supreme. Reformation England remained formally the ally of perse-



cuting Spain. The Holy League of 1511, to enable Venice and the Empire to drive France out of Italy, saw the first definite entanglement of England in European rivalries since the loss of her continental possessions. Wolsey had irons of his own in the fire which he fanned between Hapsburg and Valois; but according to the ideas of the age he was well defending English interests. Queen Mary's marriage to Philip of Spain found Parliament reluctant to quarrel again with France, and few save the shippers of the Channel would echo her famous apostrophe on the loss of Calais. Elizabeth gave a fresh turn to the policy of the Balance of Power by enlisting the aid of the Scottish Reformers; and, having found new friends among the Dutch and French Protestants, she dared at length openly to flout Spain by posing as defender of the new faith and Queen of the Western Seas. At the same time, the alien economic influence represented by old Lombard Street and the Hansa Steelyard was thrown off. With a new pride, England turned her face to the ocean, never again to think of continental possessions.

It was the treasure-hunt that determined the development of English sea power. From the time of Henry III, the Crown had realised the value of a command of the Channel, but a regular navy was a late idea



By the death of Henry VIII there was a fleet of seventy sail, and the Woolwich and Deptford dockyards had been founded. His two successors, however, let the ships decay; and Elizabeth's effective navy only numbered some thirty vessels, under captains badly paid, though bold and skilful. Drake was able to bring another forty, private ships mounted with guns for buccaneering work, out of the Channel ports; and these were sufficient to dispose of the 130 vessels of the Spanish Armada, ill-handled and suitable only for Southern seas, even had not winds and waves proved kindly cruel. The combination of religiosity and money-hunting became flagrant under the Stuarts. Cromwell's foreign policy was more honest, but hardly less materialistic. He first effectively put down piracy in the near seas. With the Navigation Monopoly Act of 1651, and the consequent war with Holland, trade interests for the first time explicitly directed British arms. Holland had her revenge upon Charles, the pensioner of Louis, in 1689, when she gave a Dutch king to England and made her part of the league against France. Under William III there was at least a steady intent in English policy—that of preventing the union of France and Spain, our powerful rivals, under the Bourbon family; and, to British merchants as well as to the lesser continental States,

what was called the preservation of the balance of power seemed the beginning if not also the end of political wisdom. The merchants, indeed, had cause for reflection, as the struggle was carried through the Low Countries, Spain, Lombardy and to the Danube, and it became evident that Marlborough was fighting less for any political aim than from ambition and a passion of strategy and tactics, seasoned with payments from contractors and foreign States.

The Treaty of Utrecht, by which the War of the Spanish Succession was terminated in 1713, made no substantial alteration in the map of Europe, though it did really establish the monarchical equipoise. Its most material result to England, the Asiento Contract for the monopoly of the slave trade to the Spanish colonies, was a degrading sequel to a terribly costly quarrel. The war added forty millions sterling to what had been a nominal national debt, but it had the good effect of strengthening the pacific reaction which enabled Walpole to take the first steps toward free trade, and favoured another momentous development in the political experience of the world—the passage to aristocratic and middle-class power in Parliament, and Cabinet responsibility under the two-party system. James I had written a book to prove that divine right of kings to



dispose of their country as though it were a private farm which was most fully proclaimed at the Court of Louis XIV. The French peasants were not, the English yeomen were, well enough off to rebel. Cromwell and his Puritan cavalry said the decisive word on this subject for England. It was finally elaborated in the Bill of Rights after the second Revolution and the banishment of the Stuarts; and the first dull Hanoverians did not dare or care to dispute it. The Jacobite risings of 1689, 1715, and 1745 showed that the old sentiment lingered on in the remoter parts of the country, but offered as little evidence of divine rightfulness as did the transatlantic imbecilities of George III and Lord North of the sagacity that can alone commend kingly rule. An era of rationalism in which the spirits of Renaissance and Reformation were blended had come, and in its dry light the only choice for royalty was to modernise itself or disappear.

As we look eastward, the Europe of this period takes a gloomier aspect. Through ages of warfare with the Spanish and German branches of the Hapsburgs, the territory of France extended into Flanders and Alsace, under a monarchy unequalled for splendour and arrogance. But the glory of court and camp costs dear. Hereditary absolutism, whatever



heights it may attain, is doomed because it cannot perpetuate its abilities; and the degeneracy of the Bourbons synchronised with the flood of eighteenth century scepticism. A prophet might have seen the guillotine at the end of this road. The absentee landlords for whom it was disgrace to be dismissed from Versailles to their estates saw nothing. Enjoying the largest, richest, and most homogeneous estate in the Western world, Louis XV and his courtiers could never be content. Territorial greed, extravagant display, and predatory militarism ruined the work of great Ministers like Colbert and Turgot. The loss of Canada to England (1759) was ill compensated by the gain of Lorraine, Alsace, and Corsica (1766-68). Ideas brought home from the free soil of the New World and sown in the hot-bed of native grievance contributed to the terrible harvest of the Revolution.

The United Provinces (Holland) enjoyed in the seventeenth century, largely through the vigour of their municipal life, a sudden but brief efflorescence not unlike that of the ancient city-states of Greece at their height, or the North Italy of the Renaissance; and, as in those cases, the strange association of sublime art and profane plutocracy again appeared. Spain, drunk with fanaticism, having staked her trade and industry on the issue of universal empire, could yet not



keep out of European broils, and, with the loss of her Italian and other outlying possessions, sank into a miserable lethargy. Italy had given freely of her best and worst, and was reaping a bitter return. Soldiers of fortune pillaged the cities that soldiers of fortune had made. Milan, Parma, Naples, Sicily passed from hand to hand, pawns in the royal family game. Worst of all, Germany was a field of perpetual warfare from the Baltic to the Alps. Here Bourbon humbled Hapsburg (it was cheaper to keep the army abroad than at home); here Spain assailed the Northern heretics, and Kings of Sweden, Denmark, France, and England shared the federal power.

The separatist spirit was the cost to Germany of her pre-eminence in the work of the Reformation. In the Thirty Years' War (1619-48) millions of lives were destroyed, and the country was covered with ruined villages and towns. In an uncultivated land without traditions and centres of self-government, or in a flat agricultural region, the answer to this anarchy would have been autocracy. Germany was none such; yet the growth of military States like Prussia and Austria is very comprehensible. The Hohenzollerns, heirs of the estate of the old Teutonic knights, shrewd, frugal, industrious, unblushingly self-confident, survived



the inroads of Poles, Swedes, and Russians, took to themselves a crown in 1700, and with it the representation of northern and Protestant Germany against the Catholic and Austrian south. The Wars of the Polish Election (1733) and the Austrian Succession (1740-48) greatly weakened Austria, and brought Prussia, under Frederic II, "the Great," author, philosopher, organiser, and fighter, the Duchy of Silesia and a place in the circle of the Great Powers. In the Seven Years' War (1756-63) against Austria, Poland, and Sweden, Frederic showed his military skill and won a lukewarm aid from England and Russia. This sounds enough; and yet a century later, long after London and Paris had composed their graver differences, Vienna and Berlin had not finished their long feud. Ocean-borne commerce was the chief factor in the more rapid constitutional and social progress of the Western nations.

Meanwhile, a new State, of very different constitution, character, and destiny was arising between Asia and Europe. Three circumstances explain the fact that Russia is to-day the one absolute monarchy left in the Western world, and the one country in which famine and revolution are chronic. The first is the structure of the land, a vast plain falling into three zones—rich wheat-fields and prairies in the south, forests and clearings in the centre



and frozen tundras in the north. With only a few fat-scattered cities, with no considerable trading class till the nineteenth century, and a poor nobility dependent on servile agriculture, the Tsardom found no counterpoise in national affairs, though, till lately, it has had to make terms in local administration with the peasant communes now in course of destruction. Secondly, the long and cruel sway of the Mongols favoured the growth of absolutism, as did the aggressions of Poland in the fifteenth century. The third factor is the influence, unbroken for a thousand years, of the Russo-Greek Church, with its splendid ritual and fixed dogma, its determined opposition to intellectual freedom and progress. We talk of the dead hand of feudalism in Western Europe; the dead hand in Russia is that of the Byzantine Emperors. Peter the Great put a Western veneer upon the life of his court, but could do no more. Blocked on the Baltic by Sweden, Russia expanded southward and eastward until the eighteenth century, when she took Finland, Livonia, Esthonia, and large parts of Lithuania and Poland, while reaching through Georgia into the heart of Asia. Centuries of warfare with Sweden and Poland, with Napoleonic France, with Turkey and her allies, and with the mountaineers and tribesmen of the Asiatic borderlands, have not availed to make the



Russians a warlike or, in the ordinary sense, a patriotic people. They have given birth to few great soldiers. Consciousness of nationality is feebly developed; and the crisis of a foreign war has more than once been seized as an opportunity of revolt against a hated Government. A certain dull obstinacy of resistance, together with the hard natural conditions of this strange land, served, nevertheless, to break the greatest conqueror the world has ever seen.

Such, in the briefest outline, is the history of the steps Europe had taken during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, toward the territorial settlement which is essential to any stable civilisation, and the balance of national powers which was the only method, since all authority of European extent disappeared, of guaranteeing peace and progress. One must, no doubt, be very far removed from these blind and reckless times, so full of cynicism, licence, and slaughter, to see in them any progressive tendency. Would, then, the conclusion that millions of men sacrificed their lives for nothing, except to satisfy the whims of greedy monarchs and much-decorated generals, be any easier? For every effect, there must be an adequate cause, in human affairs as in the physical world. Ignorance, greed, hate, lust of fighting, a bestial obedience—these explain much, but



by no means all. Old Kaspar of Blenheim suits a lazy humour :—

“ They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun! . . .

“ ‘But what good came of it at last?’
Quoth little Peterkin.
‘Why, that I cannot tell,’ said he,
‘But ’twas a famous victory.’”

Little Peterkin’s question remains; and there is no history till it is answered.

It is true that the treaties of the time show little change for so much loss. The mistake is to regard this as no result at all. At whatever insane and even suicidal cost obtained, it is a very material result. Uncertain tenures and claims were tested by the rule in which they had risen, the rule of power. One after another, a number of uncertain combinations of these arbitrary tenures had been tried. The greater national units had proved their vitality and capacity for progress. Neither Papist nor Calvinist could henceforth lord it over Europe. The divine right of Hapsburg and Bourbon was as unequal as the blood-fury of a Charles XII or the calculation of a Frederic to establish a European empire. That is the negative result. There was something positive, too. The ancient régime could go no further. War had left it bankrupt.



But the common people were awaking to new methods of life. Every one of these competing nations represented the possibility of a different contribution to a possible union of Europe. Forces had arisen, especially in the West—Parliament, machine manufactures, Ministers not of the king but of the Commons, newspapers—which were beginning to shape a new governing power. The costs of aggression were now plainly advertised in figures of taxation and national debt. They were steadily increasing at the time when taxpayers and investors were beginning to scrutinise them most jealously. The currency must no longer be debased—the bankers see to that; and the enemy cannot be held to ransom or tribute. War has brought about an equipoise of great monarchies. It is not enough. There must be a balance of power, a sound settlement, within the State, before there can be a true balance and union of States. So, echoed from Puritan England to revolted America, and back, there rings out in Paris the challenge to the next great forward step—national freedom and self-government, in a word, Democracy. It is the death-knell of arbitrary rulers, the notice-to-quit to all absentee landlords, however noble.

There is yet one dominant element in the period which we must attempt to place before we pass on to examine the work of the



nineteenth century. It is summed up in one terrific word—Napoleon. If democracy makes for peace, how came this prince of the powers of death to be its herald? Was the Bastille pulled down in order that the bones of Frenchmen might be strewn from Cadiz to Moscow? In one of his early journals, Renan seeks to explain obstructive institutions and movements in history as securities for proper digestion in the body politic, without which "it would move too quickly, would not sufficiently fathom each possibility." The movement of humanity can, moreover, only be even when some equality of condition has been established throughout the world; meanwhile, it proceeds by fits and starts, now rushing forward, now falling back to bring up the laggards, and again going forward with mischievous jolt and jar. The inequalities of a century ago in Europe were unimaginably gross. Napoleon drove the ploughshare of the Revolution across and across this stony field, sowing in every bloody furrow old seeds of hate with the new seeds of liberty, equality, fraternity.

Before he came to power, France had secured her frontiers, and vindicated her right to a republic, against the enraged coalition whose interference had provoked the worst excesses of the Terror, and was to provoke a yet more injurious reaction. From defence of

the republic to the expansion of its area, from this to a campaign of revenge by the forcible conversion of other States, and from this to the dream of a modern Cæsarism and the final awakening at Waterloo—so the fever ran. The better inspiration was a new thing in the annals of conquest; the worse was only new in the fire-like speed with which it spread. This feverish speed was Napoleon.

Everything about him is of interest, but there is only one thing essential for us to know and understand—his representative quality. An alien and a parvenu, having no dogmatic prepossession, revolutionary or other, pursuing only one and that a selfish aim, he did yet represent in certain ways the time and the people; there, and not in any miraculous quality we call genius, lies the secret of his success, the rational explanation of his career. It was the end of an age, a doomed age, beginning with great monarchs and little soldiers, and closing with great soldiers and little monarchs. A people without political experience was called to a work of political reconstruction. But first there must be a great clearance of débris; then, this people must learn from the only teacher, experience, in what democracy consists and does not consist. The logic of conquest had to be worked out in their blood. Like them and



with them Napoleon stood between the past and the future, with something of both in him. The vigour and pride of the Revolution were given into his hands, and he spent them without any kind of scruple. To these he added an inhuman energy, in which all the blood feuds of his native Corsica seem to blaze out afresh, and a power of sacrificing all to one aim, which put to scorn the feebleness and dissensions of the surrounding monarchies.

He served an ancient, because essentially predatory, art of war with new guns and a new strategy. He was a modern man and a man of the people in this limited sense: he incarnated the grosser side of the thwarted proletarian, his daring, grasping vigour and self-confidence, his mechanical skill, his common sense, directness, and thoroughness, his contempt of phrase-mongers and "hereditary asses" (as he called the Bourbons). He converted a nation into a military Trust; the millionaire of warfare, we might call him. But here is the distinction: the millionaire belongs to the new time in proportion as he is engaged in making things. Napoleon had only to destroy the old régime and the spirit of conquest with which the Revolution had become infected. His methods were those of the modern man of business, and there lay his success. His aims were those of the old-

time monarchies; and there he was foredoomed to failure. So far, and only so far, was he right in calling himself the Child of Destiny.

CHAPTER IX

NAPOLEON

WHEN the Swiss were holding their mountains against Austria and Burgundy; when Italian or German citizens held their walled towns, and the Dutch revived the ancient Babylonian experiment of digging canals against invasion, they were in the stage which we may call the late mediæval defensive. The increasing use of gunpowder, with the consequent disappearance of body armour and the old fortification, initiated a period of offensive militarism. After the invention of the bayonet by Vauban in 1641, and of the flint-lock, adopted by France in 1648, the pikeman gave way to the musketeer. Artillery was multiplied and lightened. Condé and Turenne, in the battles of seventeenth-century France on the Rhine and Dutch frontiers, anticipated the motto "L'audace, et toujours l'audace," marching rapidly, breaking the old sanctity of "winter quarters," practising novel and daring methods of



attack according to the character of the ground. Frederick II, whom his father (proud possessor of giant grenadiers) had caned for lack of interest in the Potsdam drill-ground, showed in the organisation a moving commissariat and regular horse batteries, as well as in the tactics of his startling descent on Silesia, that some of these lessons could be carried yet further. The French flint-lock, lightened and otherwise improved between 1777 and 1800, could fire three and even six shots a minute. At the same time the use of fulminate of mercury was discovered, and cannon were designed for their different purposes. Napoleon exhausted these possibilities, alike of personality and armament, and in this, as in his political aims, we recognise that he belonged not to the beginning, but the end of an age.

He was twenty years old, and still in Ajaccio, when the great explosion of 1789 occurred. Burke's provocative *Reflections* and the dispersion of the émigrés were followed in 1791 by the Austro-Prussian Declaration of Pilnitz, a virtual notice of war on the Republic. The actual declaration against Austria came from Louis XVI in the following spring; and in July, Prussia entered the field. The old royal army of France suffered a series of reverses; and this failure, while it aggravated the anti-royalist passion, and,

as the allies advanced, led to Danton's policy of terrorism and the September massacres, also actuated the establishment of a popular army whose singular inspiration it was to "make tyrants tremble," and punish any people "so obstinately attached to its state of brutishness" as not to be willing to throw over its "prince and privileged castes" (Decree of December 15, 1792). This was something utterly new, different in every way from the orthodox army of the time, hired and impressed, with its gaudy uniforms, formal drill, and "gentlemen" officers. That the "armed doctrine," as Burke called it, proved an extraordinary inspiration, the occupation of Belgium, Savoy, and the Middle Rhine before the end of the winter eloquently testified.

But the mere enthusiast in war is a broken reed. Dunkirk, Wattignies, Wissembourg, Tourcoing, Fleurus were won by overwhelming numbers, and the relentless energy of Carnot, "organiser of victory." The rebels of Vendée and the south were crushed by the same use of the power of conscription and requisition. It must always be remembered that the Revolution and the Republic were threatened by three enemies at once—foreign invasion, insurrection, and treason like that of Dumouriez. Even so, there cannot be any just judgment upon this time of



general upheaval and wild words and deeds without something of the sympathy which moved Wordsworth as he walked among the villages of France,—

“ And found benevolence and blessedness
Spread like a fragrance everywhere ”—

which held him even through the Reign of Terror, and only broke down when—

“ Frenchmen had changed a war of self-defence
For one of conquest, losing sight of all
Which they had struggled for.”

Bonaparte first appears as an actor in the quickly-changing drama in August 1793, a young artillery officer commanding the guns before Toulon. The king had been executed seven months before; and England was in arms with the Austrians and Prussians against the Republic—a Coalition doomed to failure by the restriction of British effort to the colonies and the high seas, and by the more base preoccupations which consummated the two partitions of Poland between the Central and Eastern Powers, in 1793 and 1795. Prussia, thus consoled, abandoned the German territories west of the Rhine, and for ten years stood out of the conflict. General of artillery with the successful army in Italy, and defender of the Convention with his “whiff of grapeshot” against the Paris insurgents in October 1795, Napoleon re-

turned to Italy in full command six months later, and definitely opened his career of conquest. Marked as much by rapacity, terrorism, and deception, as by power of organisation, manœuvring skill, and quick seizure of opportunity, the campaign fitly terminated in the Peace of Campo Formio, October 1797, by which France obtained the Rhine frontier and shared with Austria the spoil of Venice, destroying the most ancient of existing republics. The pillage of Switzerland—the event which did most to turn the poets and thinkers of England and Germany against France—and the conquest of Egypt occupied the summer of 1798. Nelson's destruction of the French fleet off the Nile scotched this adventure and Napoleon's power of mischief on the sea; but, like our colonial victories, it did not arrest his dominance in Europe, or the unscrupulous ambition which emerged triumphant in the plot of November 1799, the establishment of the Consulate, and the gradual destruction of representative institutions in France.

After two years of manœuvring, Pitt succeeded in dragging Russia and Austria into the Second Coalition. The Tsar rejected the British proposal that the restoration of the Bourbons should be demanded—a blunder of Pitt's which did much to consolidate Napoleon's power. The general basis of the



alliance, therefore, was that France should be driven within her previous frontiers. These shifty partners had yet much to learn. For a time they were victorious alike on the Rhine and in North Italy. But while, under one master, France was rising to its fullest military strength under the conscription law of September 6, 1798, its enemies were enfeebled by childish jealousies. Russia having sacrificed Suvoroff's victories to pique, and retired from the campaign, Napoleon broke the Austrian forces at Marengo (June 14, 1800), and posed more confidently than ever as the man of glorious destiny. While Moreau routed the Archduke John's army in the defile of Hohenlinden (Dec. 3), the brief Franco-Russian alliance, masquerading as a League of Neutrals, was abruptly ended by the coincidence of the assassination of the Emperor Paul with Nelson's victory at Copenhagen (April 2, 1801). Neutrals had only too good ground of complaint against British naval policy; but it was not to a half-insane Tsar and a military adventurer who recognised no restraint of law or honour that they could look for protection. A pause now ensued. France had lost Egypt; she might have relinquished Holland and Spain and Italy and yet remained, with the Scheldt, the Rhine, and the Alps for frontiers, the strongest State in Europe. But Napoleon was already

entertaining vaster designs, which he hinted at in threats of a "revival of the grandeur of ancient Rome"—a new Rome against a new Carthage.

Dreaming of Augustan glory, he was sufficiently awake to know that, now as in old time, this involved not merely the destruction of the last shadow of republican forms, and an autocratic concentration of national power, but economic changes no less far-reaching. Under the Republic, France had risen spontaneously in defence of its territory and the Revolution. The reaction upon neighbouring lands and the first development of the spirit of conquest had found in Bonaparte its financier as well as its engineer. He made these wars pay their way by systematic extortion from the conquered peoples. "It was not in vain that we had so long sought temporary palliatives to our deficits in the spoliation of nations, vanquished enemies, or allies. These criminal expedients of a Government reduced to the last extremity were about to become the regular and normal system. There was no longer the excuse of the old distress; but the Government wished at the expense of foreigners to spare the taxpayers who had it in their power to give or withdraw their support. It became, therefore, customary to consider as our natural tributaries all nations who were incapable



of self-defence. And this system of exaction, at first only a consequence of war, began to be regarded as its chief end. Bonaparte henceforth indulged in the chimerical dream of keeping the people content with war by giving them Europe to devour" (Lanfrey: *History of Napoleon*, where the predatory side of his career is illustrated from the text of his proclamations and other documents).

To humble Spain or Venice was one thing however, to humble England quite another. A widening programme of conquest meant a widening revenue, a new navy, and a quick-moving administration. Ultimately, perhaps, foreign loot might redeem these luxuries; immediately, France must pay for them. Moreover, there must be no more mobs of hungry desperadoes in Paris—perhaps the only thing the First Consul really feared. Bonaparte set to work, therefore, with cool impetuosity, to amend and centralise French taxation, education, and local government; to establish a national bank; to placate the Pope, and make the clergy servants of the State; to create a Court and a press by which he could hypnotise the people into accepting his schemes as their own. The Peace of Amiens (March 25, 1802), by which France momentarily gave up Rome and Naples, while England restored her colonial conquests during the war, except Ceylon and

Trinidad, gave time for these changes to bear fruit.

It was a fleeting pact. In May, 1803, England again declared war, and seized several colonies; while Napoleon fastened armies upon Hanover and Naples, and extorted contributions of men and money also from Holland, Switzerland, and Spain (72 million francs in one year from Spain alone). His foul murder of the Duc d'Enghien upon a sham charge of conspiracy, and his assumption of the titles of Emperor (Dec., 1804) and King of Italy (May, 1805) provoked the new Tsar, Alexander I, to the initiation of a Third Coalition, in which Austria and Sweden were persuaded to join. Prussia, however, was still resolutely irresolute. At last England's sea power was to be seriously challenged. While Pitt was defending to the Tsar the annoying "right" of searching neutral ships, which was and continued to be one of the most arbitrary weapons of the British Admiralty, Napoleon was organising his ingenious plan for a junction of French fleets in the West Indies, and a combined dash back to Boulogne, where a force of invasion was to be picked up. Whatever it may have been worth—Whitehall does not seem to have been alarmed, and Napoleon afterwards said that the Boulogne army was only intended to deceive Austria—Calder's victory



off Finisterre put an end to the threat; and Trafalgar (a victory for the gunners, in the main; its price, ten thousand lives—and Nelson's) finally determined England's supremacy at sea. These events led, however, to another style of warfare, which, though ultimately ruinous to France, brought England also into dire straits—the embargo upon British goods under the "Continental system," and the consequent Orders in Council establishing the Continental blockade.

Napoleon had from the outset understood that his arch-enemy must be struck at through her commerce. But his economic knowledge does not seem to have bettered the ignorant Protectionism which had accompanied the rise of the Republic, and had produced several ineffectual decrees for the seizure of British goods. Under the Berlin decree of November, 1806, trade with the British Isles was forbidden, and British subjects, goods, and letters were declared seizable. Three months later, a retaliatory blockade was proclaimed by England—a foolish measure, which led to a rupture with the United States, and greatly aggravated domestic suffering and discontent. Whether the Continent was starved into revolt against Napoleon, or whether other causes chiefly contributed to excite the rising of peoples to effect what their rulers had so signally

failed to accomplish, need not here be discussed. What is certain is that England was saved from peril of starvation and revolution not by Ministerial measures actuated as much by a monopolistic as a defensive spirit, but, in the first place, because, in his ignorance of economic law, Napoleon actually helped her to the one commodity she could not do without—corn. “At the time when Napoleon was about to order British and Colonial goods to be confiscated or burnt all over his vast empire, he sought to stimulate exports to our shores. Why? Because such exports would benefit his States, and enable public works to be carried out. We may go even further, and say that Napoleon believed the effect of sending those exports to our shores would be to weaken us. His economic ideas were those of the crudest section of the old Mercantile School. He believed that a nation’s commercial wealth consisted essentially in its exports, while imports were to be jealously restricted, because they drew bullion away. Destroy Britain’s exports, and allow her to import whatever his own lands could well spare, and she would bleed to death” (Holland Rose: *Napoleonic Studies*, chs. vii and viii). Four other factors helped to carry England through her economic crisis: the increase of wealth due to the recent industrial inventions; improvements in



agriculture encouraged by the rise of prices; the opening of the South and Central American markets in 1808, after the Spanish rising, and of the Russian market in 1812; and the development of smuggling, due to the rise of prices on the Continent, and to the fact that most British exports were not bulky for their value.

Thwarted in his designs on India, North America, and all that rests on naval power, the great soldier, who from his birth on one island to his death on another never understood the sea, turned back to challenge what remained of independence in Europe to mortal combat. Six weeks carried his army from Boulogne to the Danube; in two months more Ulm had been captured with 60,000 men, Vienna entered, and the Russians and Austrians cut in two at Austerlitz with a loss of 27,000 men. As Napoleon stood, a new Emperor of the West, with a ring of subject States and appanages and a royal family of his own around him, the news of the death of Pitt (Jan., 1806) may well have completed his satisfaction in the collapse of the Third Coalition. Prussia remained, a futile court amid a disorganised and hopeless people. Playing adroitly on the rival interests in Hanover, Bonaparte first removed the danger of English co-operation, then smashed the Prussian forces at Jena and

Auerstadt (Oct., 1806), and a fortnight later, after rifling the tomb of Frederic the Great, triumphantly entered Berlin. Here was another land to squeeze for men and money. The army numbered 600,000 men; but it was no longer wholly French—France had been exhausted by forestalled conscriptions—and it had lost all its republican character. France was, indeed, no longer to Napoleon anything more than his chief province and military base. In the length and breadth of the Continent, there was now left only one great independent Power. Thus far, the conqueror had always posed as the liberator of peoples; and, as he advanced to the Vistula, the Poles hailed him as their avenger, and helped to destroy, at Friedland (June, 1807), the last resisting force that could be brought against him. But it is precisely from this moment that the reaction against the Empire of the peoples that had hoped all of the Republic must be counted.

In the perspective of a century's unceasing study, the victories leading to the Tilsit treaty are seen to be the culminating point in this marvellous career. The Star of conquest stood at the zenith. Never in the world's history had the force of one man so dominated the imagination of millions. Never, assuredly, had gun and bayonet, horse and cannon been put to such use; "the art of



war, one may say, had reached its last limit" (Thiers: *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*). The passionate revulsion that delivered the ideals and powers of revolutionary France into the hands of a young Corsican had seemed a miracle, yet that was a small beginning. A dozen years and a hundred blood-soaked battlefields had made him general of generals, king of kings, absolute master of a wider realm than had ever acknowledged one allegiance, angel or devil of universal legend, the supreme incarnation of the glory of war. The more the bloodshed, the deeper the worship, the deeper the fear, and the wilder the frenzy of self-immolation. The splendour of the Star was yet unclouded; but it moved downward. The rest of Napoleon's story is one of occasional victories and recurring failure, of infatuation deepening to madness, of growing physical and mental exhaustion, broken by desperate sallies, and a last rush to utter ruin.

The bargain with the Tsar, made on a raft in the Niemen on June 17, 1807, had provided for the dismemberment of Prussia, and the enlistment of the Scandinavian and Iberian States against England, as preliminaries to a partition of the world between France and Russia. Canning's prompt seizure of the Danish fleet checked the Baltic move; and when Junot entered Lisbon he found

that the Portuguese fleet had escaped. Then, at last, the decisive factor which all the courts of Europe had failed to discover made its appearance. The people in arms had made Napoleon; the peoples in arms were to humble him. The first national rising took place in the mountains of Spain and Portugal in the summer of 1808; and the victories of Baylen, Vimiero, Corunna, and Talavera, though long fruitless, sent a tremor of hope through the ravaged continent, brought British arms effectively into the land struggle, and, by locking up 300,000 of Napoleon's troops in the peninsula, seriously weakened his force in the north-east. The dead bones were stirring too, in Prussia, where the last relics of serfdom were only abolished in 1807. Stein's land and local government reforms, followed by Von Humboldt's educational measures, and Scharnhorst's invention of universal military service—adding to a small active army a reserve, a *landwehr* or militia, and a *landsturm* or mass levy—produced a radical transformation. No less striking was the change of mind which converted Schiller and Fichte from academic exponents of anti-patriotism into apostles of the new spirit of nationality.

The Prussian revolt was momentarily submerged by the humiliation of Austria at Wagram, the annexation of Oldenburg,



Hamburg, and other German districts, and the misery caused by a final effort to make the embargo on British trade effective. Where, however, a particularly feeble Hohenzollern could not yet dare all, Russia could; and when, in the Tsar's refusal to confiscate certain neutral ships, the hands of East and West met over his head, Napoleon decided to stake his fate upon the Moscow campaign. France, impoverished in blood and wealth, was tired of war. The best counsellors groaned; yet who could resist the brilliance of this Imperial reception at Dresden, where submissive kings and princes jogged elbows with arrogant officers, and a mob was always waiting to catch a glimpse of the superman whose word was Europe's law? A cosmopolitan army of 617,000 men had been drawn from every part of the continent; and, of these, 448,000 men, with 1,372 pieces of cannon, thousands of caissons of artillery and ambulance, and many herds of cattle, commenced the fateful passage of the Niemen on June 24, 1812.

Mystery stood upon the very threshold of this silent realm. Where was the expected enemy? Through swamps and prairies, past interminable forests, the Grand Army sought it, to find a few flying peasants, or deserted camp-fires, to catch a distant glimpse of Cossack outposts. Why did the Tsar not

send proposals of peace? Weeks passed, and no word came from the Russian camp. Where was the enemy? Could he, the man who had always attacked, the man whose genius was speed, be expected to stand there and wait on the defensive? And, again, where was the enemy? The Sphinx of the North made no reply to these questions; a grim sky seemed to say eternally that Russia neither expected, nor asked, nor offered anything. At last, a town was found amid the immensity of this implacable land: Vitepsk—deserted, save for one Russian soldier asleep under a hedge. What next? Napoleon wavered. To-day he would stay and “organise Poland”; hospitals were set up, soon to be filled, and soon then to be abandoned, without even food, and forgotten, a horrible thing. Then he would go on, on to Moscow. “Decided, he jumps up suddenly, as though to leave no time for further uncertainty, and, full of the plan which must give him victory, strides to his maps. They show him Smolensk and Moscow, the great Moscow, the holy city!—names that he repeats complacently, and that seem to quicken his eagerness. With this, the very spirit of war seems to possess him. His voice hardens, his glance sparkles, his gestures become wild. We keep away from him, for fear as much as respect; but, at last, his plan



is made, his determination taken ! ” (Séгур : *La Campagne de Russie*).

His determination ! Is, then, the will of one man for ever to triumph over all human rights ? The Sphinx has two more of her silent words to say. “ At last, I have them ! ” cried Napoleon, as the Grand Army faced the fortress of Smolensk ; but at nightfall, when, after a brief resistance, the Russians retired, columns of smoke were seen rising, then sparks, then an all-embracing sea of flame. What do the soldiers think, or do they never think ? Napoleon still has their measure, rains decorations upon them, and speeches : “ This fight was the finest in our military history ; the soldiers who heard him were men with whom one could conquer the world ; those killed had died an immortal death.” But, in the foul, crowded hospitals, hunger and agony reign ; in the stillness of his quarters Napoleon cannot evade the questions : What is this new terror,—the fruit of accident, of despair, or of design ? With Charles XII in his mind, he hesitates again, and again goes forward. On August 28 the advance guard enters Viazma, only to find it in flames.

At length, on September 5, the Russians turn : it is Borodino. On the night before the battle, Bonaparte is in a fever. “ He seems to be reflecting on the vanity of glory.

‘What is war? A business of barbarians, in which the whole art consists in being the strongest at a given point.’” During the terrible struggle he hesitates over his orders, shows an astonishing lethargy, refuses reserves, retires to his tent. “Let him return to the Tuileries,” exclaims Ney, furious, “and leave us to be generals for him!” It is a half-victory, and at what a cost—forty-three generals killed and wounded; 50,000 Russian and 30,000 French losses. Ségur recalls two old sayings of Bonaparte, the first in Italy fifteen years before: “Health is indispensable to war, and nothing can replace it”—the other at Austerlitz: “I shall be good for war for six years more; then I must stop.” Now, dragging a tired body over the stricken field, he could pity his broken victims. Many years afterwards, the distinguished Frenchman, De Vogüé, wrote: “I was talking one day with the Russian priest of Borodino, and he spoke of the prospects of the coming crops, adding carelessly: ‘In my childhood, the corn was much richer here; our land had been so well manured.’”

Not far from Moscow, a German engineer, on the Tsar’s order, was experimenting with a great balloon from which a rain of explosives was to be poured upon the ogre of the West. Rostopchin knew a better weapon



than any such novelties in the art of war. Let "the Red Cock" crow: revolution and invasion could be burnt up in the same flames! Forgetting all their sufferings, their losses, their doubts and fears, in a spasm of pride and relief, the invading host poured into the city, only to be driven out by a blinding smoke. The conqueror of the world had been beaten by a gang of incendiaries.

Obstinate against all reasoning, hoping against hope that Alexander would bow to his majesty, distracting himself with the rules of the Comédie Française and the latest novel, Napoleon held his ground for two months, king of the ashes of Muscovy. Then the Sphinx spoke her final word. The first snow fell, and with it the last illusion of the Grand Army. On October 19, its remains, 100,000 men, with 550 cannon and many carts-full of spoil, turned westward, with Kutusoff's Cossacks ever at its heels. The battle of Malo-Jaroslavetz diverted it into a route already ravaged, marked by dead bodies, and now a frozen desert. As the hospitals established in the summer were passed, the wounded inmates came out and stood by the road, begging not to be abandoned. Theirs was not the worst fate. At Krasnoy, in the middle of November, the retreat became a flight, heroic Ney always holding the rear,—a flight of spectres through

fog and driving snow. In this shadow of an army, this band of tattered fugitives, misery conquered the last semblance of order, and with it all humane scruples disappeared. At every step men fell by the way: there was, there could be, no help. Cold, hunger, deadly weariness, wounds, and sickness broke all semblance of manhood. Baggage carts were driven pitilessly through the demoralised mob of infantry and camp-followers. In the passage of the Beresina (Nov. 26-28) the rush for the frail bridges carried thousands to their doom in the icy river; while, overhead, the explosion of shells and a burst of storm caught up oaths and cries of despair into an infernal chorus. Of 80,000 men, 60,000 survived this débâcle.

Napoleon left the army secretly, reaching Paris on December 19. The remnant struggled on to the frontier through the worst of the winter, leaving circles of dead at every bivouac, almost incapable of fighting, with bloodshot eyes and bursts of hysterical laughter, dragging itself through the snow, reduced to unspeakable savagery. Before Vilna was reached, 30,000 men more had perished. At Ponari, the treasure-boxes were pillaged; Ségur says that ten million francs in gold and silver disappeared. When the Russian pursuit ceased, at Kalish, there remained of the Grand Army two Kings,



a Prince, eight Marshals, a few Generals on foot without suite, a thousand infantry and cavalry, including some hundreds of the Old Guard, still armed, and 24,000 broken fugitives, with streaming hair and bandaged limbs, blind and dumb from weakness and despair. Such has ever been the harvest of war; but never, perhaps, has the tragedy of Nature's vengeance upon human pride been so swift and overwhelming.

When I say Nature, I do not only mean that part of it which appears in frost and fire and the vastness of the Russian plain. The evil nature of war itself is against warfare on the Napoleonic scale. Whether then or now, it breaks down of its own weight. There is an inner and fatal impossibility. De Bloch illustrated it by showing that, as between two Great Powers of to-day, war would develop into a ruinous deadlock, through the very perfection of armaments, and the immensity of the forces engaged. We may illustrate it from the starvation of the Grand Army. There is in every war machine a feud, as it were, between its two sides, the combatant and the commissariat. The mercenary armies which sprang up on the collapse of feudalism came nearest to solving the problem, for all their fighting was brigandage and rapine; "War must feed war" was their motto. The transition to

permanent armies, for which regular arrangements had to be made in times of peace, necessitated a special organisation of supplies. Thus, Gustavus Adolphus introduced the system of "magazines," or centres of provisioning; while, in France, the furnishing of food, clothing, and munitions was farmed out to contractors, and *vivandières* began to be attached to the camp. Frederick the Great remarked that "the basis of the organisation of armies is victualling. With the bayonets one may win battles, but it is economic conditions that decide the result of a war."

But Napoleon drew, first from France, then from the conquered lands, armies such as had never been seen on the soil of Europe. He used the conscription like a thumbscrew, anticipating and extending the regular calls till the unhappy wretches had to be brought up in handcuffs, while they deserted in thousands. How were such hosts to be fed? The old "magazine" system paralysed the movement of troops. The French Revolution made a breach in it by the decrees of 1792-1793 authorising the levy of "contributions" and the seizure of the enemy's goods, and declaring the private property of all Frenchmen liable to seizure for the needs of national defence. Bonaparte, scorning the infant precepts of international



law, carried this change to its logical issue, and restored to warfare, in a thinly veiled form, its ancient character of wholesale brigandage.

The first beneficiaries were his soldiers; he looked after them as generals had never done before, and they repaid him with an unprecedented attachment. "Soldiers!"—so he appealed to them—"you are half starved and half naked. I am about to lead you into the most fertile valleys of the world. There you will find flourishing cities and a land of abundance. There you will gather honour, glory, and riches. Will you, then, fail in courage?" This spirit of predatory adventure, and this only, made possible the great victories on which his fame was built. Taine (*Les Origines de la France Contemporaine*) gives details showing that, in the three years ending December 1798, requisitions and confiscations in Belgium, Holland, Germany, and Italy, amounted to two milliards (£80,000,000). "In all the wars that made Napoleon Emperor," says Be Bloch, "the French armies fed themselves exclusively by means of contributions and requisitions. So the war of 1805 was made. In 1806 and 1807 the Prussians were not only subjected to requisitions, but also to contributions amounting in three years to 245,091,800 thalers (about £37,000,000). The war indemnities

paid to France independently of these direct fines amounted to another 1,020 millions of francs (£40 millions). During the campaigns of 1809, 1812, 1813, and 1814, Napoleon practised the same system. But, as the troops could no longer be fed exclusively with supplies obtained from the inhabitants, in all these campaigns money raised as 'contributions' had to be spent in purchases. During the wars of 1808 and 1814 in Portugal and Spain, the French armies supplied themselves also by means of requisitions and contributions; but there, as in Russia, they suffered horrible privations" (*La Guerre*, vol. iv).

The ambition of Cæsar cannot be sustained by the methods of the bandit. Napoleon fell between these two stools. At the opposite ends of Europe, the man of victory found obstacles against which he could make no adequate provision. In a poor, hard land, occupied by a sparse, hardy people, war cannot feed war. The rule which Moltke borrowed from Napoleon, to march separate and fight united, was tried. Marauding bands scoured the country far and wide of the main army. But this led to a fatal relaxation of discipline, and at the same time gave the guerilla fighters of Spain and Russia their opportunity. We have seen how the Grand Army degenerated into a barbarian horde. The greatest war machine ever made



had broken down under a demand lighter than any considerable army might have to meet in a European war to-day.

The stoutest manhood of France was destroyed. "In one year," says Taine, "1,300,000 men were called up, and most of them perished in the campaign of 1814. . . . Between 1804 and 1815, Napoleon sent to their death more than 1,700,000 Frenchmen born within the limits of olden France, to whom must be added probably 2,000,000 of men born outside those limits and killed by him under the name of allies or enemies." From first to last, this modern Minotaur probably devoured five million human beings. Neither base enough to limit himself to campaigns of extortion and brigandage possible only in Central Europe, nor patient and sober enough to learn the slow craft of empire-building; blind to the nobler sides of human nature; understanding neither the minor economics of a modern commissariat, which might have saved him in Russia, nor the major economics of international trade, which might have shown him England's weak spot, the greatest of conquering soldiers succeeded at last only in proving that the conquest of Europe had become impossible.

The final flickers of his genius need not detain us. Before the survivors of the Moscow expedition could reach home, he was

getting a new army of 350,000 men into the field. At Lützen and Bautzen, the allied Prussians and Russians were beaten back. But the infatuation exhibited in repeated refusals of generous terms of peace brought Austria into the coalition, and in the supreme struggle of Leipzig (Oct. 16-19, 1813), Napoleon's power was shattered. On March 30, 1814, the allies proclaimed his deposition, foolishly restored the Bourbon Court, and forthwith set to work upon the reconstruction of the Balance of Power. The famous Congress of Vienna, which included six reigning monarchs and the most famous of European statesmen, was, indeed, still in session when, on March 1, 1815, Napoleon, having broken from his exile in Elba, landed near Cannes with a handful of men. He came, he said, to save France from the Bourbons and the returning émigrés, and not to undertake any new warfare. Within the month he stood victorious in Paris. The Allies were slow in moving, and it was not till the middle of June that the final conflict came. At Quatre Bras, on June 16, Wellington repulsed Ney; on the 18th, at Waterloo, Blücher's Prussians came up in time to make decisive the French rout. A month later, Napoleon gave himself up to the commander of the *Bellerophon*. He died at St. Helena on May 5, 1821, talking to the end of his battle-fields: "I am going



to rejoin Kléber, Desaix, Lannes, Masséna, Bessières, Duroc, Ney. . . . They will feel again the intoxication of human glory. . . . We will talk of what we have done, we will talk shop (*de notre métier*) with Frederic, Turenne, Condé, Cæsar, Hannibal. . . . Unless" (with an odd smile), "up there as down here, they are afraid of seeing so many soldiers together."

A Frenchman can best write his epitaph. De Tocqueville put it most briefly—"He was as great as a man can be without virtue"; and Thiers, no harsh judge, thus concluded his long story: "Never was resort to one man more justifiable than in 1800. Yet, after a few years, this sane man became mad, mad with another madness than that of 1793, but not less disastrous; immolated a million men on the field of battle; drew Europe upon France, which it left conquered, blood-soaked, despoiled of the fruit of twenty years of victory, desolated, only having some germs of modern civilisation to cherish. Who, then, could have foreseen that the sagacious of 1800 would be the insensate of 1812 and 1813? Yes, one might have foreseen it by recalling that omnipotence carries in itself an incurable insanity. So, in the great life where there is so much to learn for soldiers, administrators, statesmen, let citizens in their turn learn one thing—that

it is never good to deliver the fatherland to one man, no matter whom, no matter in what circumstances."

CHAPTER X

THE NEW EQUILIBRIUM

WE left Metternich and Talleyrand, Hardenberg, Nesselrode, and Wellington, in accordance with the will of their royal masters and the bargains made during the late stages of the war, re-shaping the map of Europe with a view to establishing "a system of durable equilibrium." Though much of the work of the "Holy Alliance" has had to be undone, at incalculable cost, they were the unwitting pioneers of a new era, a new statecraft, and an international balance quite other than that of their immediate design.

There were four chief weaknesses in the post-Napoleonic settlement. (1) It was the arbitrary work of a monarchical league against the spirit of the Revolution. Lands were bargained away and parcelled out without any pretence of consulting the inhabitants. It soon appeared, however, that two related forces which had received a bloody baptism on the recent battlefields had come to stay—Nationality and Democracy; and the political history of the nineteenth century is very

largely concerned with the triumph of these principles, and consequent changes of territory and government. (2) When the four allies of 1815 concluded a compact, to which France was afterwards admitted, for "the surety of their States and the general tranquillity of Europe," to be maintained by periodical meetings of rulers and statesmen, they were establishing a system of International Concert which has vitally affected the politics of Europe, and has been partially extended to the relations of all the civilised States of the world. (3) Turkey was not represented at the Congress, and was not affected by it. The United States, having in 1814 agreed with England to abolish the slave trade, asked only to be let alone. Asia was unaffected; Africa beyond the coast was still almost *terra incognita*. But it was soon found that the Balkan Peninsula could not be ignored, that the scramble of the European States for territory in Africa and Asia constantly threatened a conflict in which the European balance would have been destroyed, and that America could not permanently refuse to join the family of nations. The gradual settlement of the overseas swarm, completing the effective occupation of the earth, created, in its relations with the mother countries on the one hand and the coloured races on the other, a thousand grave problems.

As the great work of the nineteenth century was the establishment of a European Concert, so the twentieth century seems destined to effect a world-wide settlement and equilibrium. (4) It was impossible to anticipate the sweeping transformation of the economic activities of all the great nations, and their social and political life, which the past century has witnessed. The Industrial Revolution has, in fact, changed the face of the globe, producing at first an immense increase, then a no less momentous arrest of population, a new education and mobility, a vast augmentation of wealth and comfort along with much misery and discontent; knitting the peoples together by bonds of common interest and experience, while creating fresh occasions of jealous rivalry; developing both property and labour into international forces, dependent on a Credit Economy; setting up new ideals and means of peace, and altering effectively the whole machinery of war. A rapid glance at the interplay of these factors in contemporary civilisation will complete our task.

The political development of Europe continued to be most rapid in the West, where first the Industrial Revolution confirmed the earlier progressive trend; slower in the Central States, broken and ravaged in the conflicts of centuries; and most tardy in the East, where the Turk remained, and conquests in the South



and East confirmed the arbitrary character of the Russian State. For forty years, there was no great war on the Continent; but there was an abundance of revolutionary outbreaks of the spirit of national democracy. The old Cosmopolitanism had proved woefully insufficient. What was true in it could not be destroyed, indeed; the ideal of brotherhood had, in the eighteenth century, taken a place from which it could never be dethroned in the minds of thinking men. But, long before Spencer and Darwin began to elucidate the processes of evolution, Napoleon left Europe face to face with this radical lesson—that a pious dream, an academic culture are no basis for a federation of the world; that societies grow by regular organic stages, and only so; that if a world-unity is to be attained, it must be through a political and economic association of well-established groups, each freely contributing to the life of the whole. Cosmopolitanism was a mind without a body. Its realities were as much beyond the common mass of men as their realities were strange to the cultured few. Goethe said he did not know what patriotism meant, and was glad to be without it. But the vulgarisation of a sentiment must not blind us to its real bases. The interests and influences that make a nation are the same that, in variable proportion, have made other social groups, both

smaller and larger. We judge these sentiments of social growth—clannishness, parochialism, provincialism, nationalism, patriotism—as useful when they are supporting a true function in a developing society, without obstructing larger forms of union. When a stage is reached in which vital relationships outreach the early limits, when, for instance, labour and capital are equally governed by a world market, and law, administration, and culture overpass national boundaries, there is an inevitable, if slow, widening of sympathies and common interests. The vogue of Imperialism in England and Germany represents, in part, a perception that baronial towers and city gates are not the only ancient barriers which fail to define the real interests of to-day. National growth embodies a partly instinctive, partly conscious sense, at first that any union was better than chaos, and afterwards that the union must be popular, not monarchical or oligarchical, must express a homogeneity, a mobile equilibrium of interests. So regarded, Internationalism is the fulfilment, not the negation, of Nationalism, and therein differs from the academic Cosmopolitanism of the eighteenth century.

Instead of liberating Europe for an era of humane democracy, under republican and federal forms, the perverted Revolution had delivered it over to a new tribe of military and



autocratic "saviours." For reasons already traced, it was certain that the revulsion toward authority would be most extreme in Russia, Prussia, and Austria; and from these States the military and autocratic spirit radiated throughout the century. It was in the Mediterranean and Atlantic seaboard States that the liberationist movement made most rapid progress. Here Western democratic aid was an effective factor; thus, while protesting against despotic intervention in Portugal, Canning elicited from the United States the famous Presidential warning against aggression in the New World which has come to be known as the Monroe Doctrine (1823), and afterwards, in a brilliant interval of British foreign policy, procured the recognition of Greek independence. The "July" revolution of 1830, which established a quasi-constitutional system under the Orleans family in France, followed by the achievement of national independence in Belgium, and the reform of parliament in England, marked the gathering of progressive forces in the West, and the failure of the reactionary alliance.

For Central Europe there was to be no short cut to unity and freedom. How, in 1848, Young Italy arose, really united for the first time in three thousand years, how, amid chaos of defeat, Piedmont became the "pole-star of Italian patriots," how Bourbon and Austrian

rule was gradually ended, the Roman and Venetian difficulties overcome, and the kingdom firmly established as we now have it, is an oft-told tale. But there is here a new type in the portrait-gallery of warfare, new, and yet, so rapid is the contemporary movement, a type already passing beyond the understanding of the early twentieth century; for, as an Italian writer says, "the generations pass, men's minds take new directions, and the facts of experience become as lanterns hung up in abandoned streets." The generation of Kossuth and Herten, Mazzini and Garibaldi is past and half-forgotten; there are still battles to be fought for freedom, but they are fought in other ways. Sad, grey, sophisticated, taught from school up to think of ourselves as "Titans staggering" under the weight of a predestined orb, we must go back to the most ancient scenes of European history to recover the secret of conquering youth.

That was Garibaldi's secret—and we may take him for type of the soldier of liberty, as we took Napoleon as the typical predatory conqueror, and as we shall take Bismarck as a type of modern statecraft lying between these extremes. No Perfect Knight, he, indeed: he was melodramatic, loved too much the red shirt and brigand hat; quarrelled with Mazzini, the thinker of the movement, quarrelled with Cavour, without whose state-



craft the cause could not have been won; sometimes even sulked in his tent; was only a great master of irregulars, not a great general. If you please. And, when all is said, Garibaldi stands first in the heart of his people, before Mazzini, and far before Cavour or Victor Emmanuel—rightly first, because there is no human quality above perfect honesty and perfect devotion to a high aim. Youth and inspiration never faded in him; and so he made youthful errors and achieved impossible victories, passed through the fire of many battlefields in two hemispheres, was shipwrecked, wounded, condemned to death, imprisoned, exiled, betrayed, humiliated, but never turned aside from his purpose of making Italy one and free. It is natural to think of him as a sailor, the son and grandson of Mediterranean sailors, with the simplicity and strong will that the sea breeds. One day he sails in his father's felucca from the palmy, flower-buried shore of Nice for Rome, carrying with him already something of the bitterness of the disinherited—"like the Jews, we had grown up without a country." The world will never cease to wonder and to dream over the ruins of the Imperial City—the vast relics of the Empire, its baths and temples, the tremendous skeleton of the Colosseum, the broken arches and columns and statues, the remains of imperial villas and tombs, the wonders of papal Rome, of St. Peter's and

the Lateran, the palaces and gardens, city walls and gates, the monstrous fountains, the churches, cloisters, and shrines. But one needs to stand beside the muddy Tiber, to watch the sunrise behind the Pincian Hill, the sunset behind St. Peter's and the Castle of St. Angelo, to look over the desert of the Campagna to the brooding heights of the Alban and Sabine Hills, to look and watch with the eyes of an Italian, and an Italian of seventy years ago, to understand what Rome meant then to her disinherited children.

In January, 1834, Garibaldi landed at Genoa, and, disguised as a peasant, put his hand to forty years of work and risk for "Young Italy." His first conspiracy brought him promptly a death sentence; but he got away to the New World, and we have glimpses of him buccaneering for Rio Grande and Monte Video, escaping by a hair's breadth all manner of death, commanding squadrons, driving cattle, teaching mathematics, and at last sailing home to the tocsins of '48, with the first of his Italian Legions. The memories of three centuries of slavery and division, of foreign tyranny and priestly corruption, were to be wiped out. Alas! old Chaos is not so easily disposed of. Within six months the Lombard movement was drowned in blood. Rome called its champion from the northern mountains; and, on February 8, 1849, when Garibaldi, as a deputy of the Constituent



Assembly, took part in the proclamation of the Republic, the end again seemed near.

But "Jesuitry, allied as always with the autocrats of Europe," recovered itself, and the commander of the defence was soon in full flight across the Apennines with a dwindling army, and the dogs of Austria, France, Spain, and Naples at his heels. Years of exile followed this extraordinary escape; the soldier took to the sea again; we see him working as a candle-maker in New York. On the outbreak of war against Austria in 1859, Cavour summoned him to Turin, and, on the bloody fields of Magenta and Solferino, Lombardy was won, at the cost of Savoy and Nice, the price of French patronage, paid with the consent of their peoples, however. The States of Central Italy were next in revolt; then, with the march of "The Thousand" from Marsala, Sicily was free, and Naples followed. Victor Emmanuel was at length King of Italy; but the heart of the kingdom was still to win. In 1866, Austria, now sufficiently troubled with the rising power of Prussia, ceded Venice; and it was as a by-product of the Franco-German war that the temporal power was finally broken. Twice Garibaldi had marched upon the capital, twice been captured and imprisoned. But Sedan is a great word that changes many things; the chassepots of Mentana no longer "worked wonders"; France, for twenty-one years, with one short

interval, protector of the Papacy, must now look nearer home. And so on September 20, 1870, Italian troops entered into their own.

Germany achieved a very different unity—that of a Federal Empire—in a very different way. An economic liberation made the political conquest possible, yet it is often forgotten or underestimated. Stein and Hardenberg had laid down the principles of a moderate Free Trade; Prussia's example was copied by one State after another, and, till the eve of the Franco-German War, this tendency was supreme. The inclusion, between 1819 and 1836, in the Zollverein, or Customs Union, of practically all the other German States, except Austria, contributed greatly to the growth of common interest and feeling; and the abolition of an almost incredible network of tariff barriers gave the stimulus to trade and population without which Bismarck's scheming could have been of no avail. The need of new revenue for the Imperial Government, so as to relieve the separate States from an increase of their "matricular" contributions, in the economic crisis following the war of 1870, was the chief factor in the adoption of the Protectionist system in Germany, as in the United States the chief factor was the costs of the Civil War. Political reform lagged, and yet lags. The revolution of 1848 had compelled most of the Germanic governments to con-



cede parliamentary assemblies with a wide suffrage. The Austrian throne was shaken by revolts in Vienna, and in Italy, Hungary, and Bohemia. Nothing saved the Hapsburgs but the racial diversity of their subjects; and though, with Russian aid, the Hungarian insurgents were suppressed, lasting peace was only obtained by the grant of autonomy under a difficult federal system which has been constantly threatened by race strife. The divisions of North and Central Germany were of a different character, but hardly less obstinate.

They are based upon facts of geography. The only naturally united part of the Empire is that to which the work of unification fell—the North German plain, with Berlin at its centre, the whole German seacoast at its back, and a preponderantly agricultural interest. South of this, there is a relatively homogeneous strip—the Kingdoms of Saxony and Bavaria, divided by the Thuringer Wald. To the south of these into the Alpine passes, and westward across the Rhine, lie borderlands severed by nature, by early tribal settlements and remains of Roman influence, by the westward trend of the Rhine commerce and the eastward course of the Danube, by the division of these highways among feudal princelings, by the contest between the Papacy and the Reformation, by dynastic rivalries of France and Austria, and finally by diverse industrial development. Here are the causes

of the particularism against which Bismarck's "mailed fist" and his tariff policy were successively directed; here are a dozen of the reasons why, in the third quarter of the last century, the democratic idea sank into a movement of federal union under Prussia, and an unprecedented effort of military organisation designed to cement this union by confirming the expulsion of Austria and establishing the new industrial forces in safe possession of both sides of the great national river.

Armaments had undergone great changes since the Napoleonic wars. The percussion rifle, patented in England in 1807, supplanted the flint-lock during the 'twenties. In 1836 the German Dreyse produced his improved needle-gun, which "behaved perfectly" in the hands of the Prussian infantry against the Saxon and Baden insurgents of 1850. The conical bullet, invented by the French Captain Minié in 1849, gave greatly improved accuracy of fire in the Crimean campaign, when Armstrong cannons were first used. The American Civil War witnessed the introduction of the breach-loader and the magazine rifle. The sterner application of universal service in 1859-62 had given Prussia the strongest army on the Continent; and her advantage in 1866 from the rapid fire of her needle-guns startled all Europe. France immediately adopted an improved Chassepot.

Shrapnell, the first explosive projectiles (the invention of an English colonel, first used in the Peninsular campaign), were improved; and the rifling of the bore of cannon gave a further range and accuracy. Prussia had learned another lesson in the campaign against Austria; and her superiority in artillery was one of the chief factors in her success in 1870.

“There is no doubt”—thus Busch, in his *Bismarck*, reports his master as saying in a gloomy moment, and the Chancellor does not seem to have disavowed the words—“there is no doubt that I have caused unhappiness to great numbers. But for me, three great wars would not have taken place; 80,000 men would not have been killed, and would not now be mourned by parents, brothers, sisters, widows, and sweethearts. I have settled that with God; but I have had little if any pleasure from all I have done.” The three wars, whose death-toll is here so inadequately stated, were those of 1864, about the Danish Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, which then passed to Austria and Prussia; that of 1866, after the expulsion of the Austrians, when, in a seven weeks' campaign, Hanover, Saxony, and Hesse were occupied, and Austria suffered a crushing defeat at Königgrätz (Sadowa); and the Franco-German War of 1870. In establishing the King of Prussia in the Presidency of a German Confederation from which Austria



was finally excluded, Bismarck sought to soften the blow, already foreseeing a graver struggle. In 1867 the twenty-two North German States adopted what was substantially the present Imperial constitution—a legislature, consisting of a Federal Council of State rulers, and a Reichstag based on universal suffrage; control of the Executive, of foreign affairs, the army, and the power of declaring war being in the hands of the Prussian King and Chancellor. By a separate Convention, the Southern States anticipated their incorporation in the Empire by placing their armies at Prussia's disposal. Over the whole land the same system of conscription and stern discipline prevailed.

So prepared, Bismarck hurried on the conflict by which he designed to put a final limit upon French influence and to establish the hegemony of Prussia in Central Europe. The trivial episode of a Hohenzollern candidature for the Spanish throne was skilfully engineered by the man who despised sentiment, and put all his faith in "blood and iron," to lead to an overt quarrel. Not content with the regular press bureau of the Berlin Foreign Office, Bismarck had an agency of his own through which he tuned the German journals with provocative communications. The incomparable "Buschlein" was one of his men; in his revelations we see the Chancellor constantly engaged in these journalistic intrigues,



“working up the Spanish question,” threatening reluctant papers with a withdrawal of subsidies, issuing here inflammatory attacks on the French, and there nasty sidethrusts at his Imperial master, William I. The publication in a carefully edited form of a telegram from the King of Prussia declining a further interview with the French Ambassador, Benedetti, was the last touch. The French Government regarded this as a deliberate insult, Germans regarded it as a well-merited rebuff closing a series of insults. A little later, Bismarck indulged in this significant reminiscence: “I have not seen Moltke looking so well for a long time past. That is the result of the war. It is his trade. I remember when the Spanish question became acute he looked ten years younger; afterwards, when I told him that the Hohenzollern had withdrawn, he suddenly looked quite old and infirm; and when the French showed their teeth again, Moltke was once more fresh and young. The matter finally ended in a *diner à trois*—Moltke, Roon and I—which resulted” (here the Chancellor smiled a cunning smile) “in the Ems telegram” (Busch, I, 226).

Despite knowledge of the superior force of Prussia, and, as has since been shown, against the feeling of the great majority of the French people, Gramont and the Empress had their way: war was declared on July 19, 1870.



The British Government immediately offered its mediation to both Powers; it was refused by Napoleon, to the great chagrin of Gladstone, with whom Anglo-French friendship was a point of principle. The French never got beyond the frontier, though their sole hope lay in a rapid dash into South Germany, which might have brought Austria and Italy into the field. "Week after week passed; stories reached the German frontier stations of French soldiers made prisoners while digging in potato-fields to keep themselves alive. Absence of whole regiments that figured in the official order of battle, defective transport, stores missing or congested, made it impossible even to attempt the inroad. The Emperor, to whom alone the entire data of the military and diplomatic services of France were open, was incapable of exertion or scrutiny, purposeless, distracted with pain, half-imbecile" (Fyffe: *Modern Europe*). On August 4, the German Southern Army drove back the defenders of Weissenburg, and two days later overwhelmed McMahan at Wörth, the Northern and Central armies crushing Frossard at Spicheren on the same day. The courage of the French soldiers was of the highest; but nearly all the generalship, as in the bold rapidity of movement shown at Mars-la-Tour (Aug. 16), and the concentration of artillery at Gravelotte (Aug. 18), was on the German side. After this double



defeat, Bazaine shut up his army in Metz. The Emperor retired upon Paris, but, urged by the Empress to save the dynasty, turned back with McMahon to attempt the relief of the besieged army. Caught at Sedan by a German force twice as strong, Napoleon capitulated after a day's desperate fighting (Sept. 2). On September 4, Gambetta and Favre proclaimed the Third Republic, the Empress flying to a long exile in England.

The siege of Paris lasted from September 20 to January 28. Meanwhile, Gambetta had made heroic efforts, even after Bazaine's base surrender of Metz, with 170,000 men and vast stores (Oct. 28), to organise new popular levies. These sacrifices were in vain. Bismarck wanted to hurry things by a summary vengeance on the irregulars in the country and on the obstinate Parisians; but his counsel was not taken. On February 26, 1871, preliminaries of peace were signed, which gave to the victors Alsace (except Belfort), with Eastern Lorraine, Metz, and Strasburg, and an indemnity of five milliards of francs (£200,000,000). The Germans had suffered 28,600 killed in battle, 12,000 by disease, and 100,000 wounded; the French 150,000 killed, 150,000 wounded, and 600,000 prisoners.

At such a cost, Europe, as a diplomatist put it, lost a mistress and gained a master. About Bismarck's mastery there was not



to be a shadow of doubt. King William had already been crowned at Versailles as first German Emperor (Jan. 17, 1871), by the will of the federal armies and with the assent of the princes. The third and greatest of Bismarck's wars had completed his life-work. He remained long in office, to counteract the liberal influence of the Emperor Frederic and his wife, to see a more typical Hohenzollern into the saddle, to combat Socialism, to bow to Clericalism, to establish Protectionism, to found the alliance with Austria (1879), in which four years later Italy became a partner.

It was left to the Emperor William II, in the year of Bismarck's death (1898), to initiate the building of a great German navy, which was to produce some such counterpoise to British naval power as the German army had set against France's power on the Continent. This double rivalry has not resulted in war, though war has often been threatened; but it has stereotyped the system of universal compulsory military service throughout the Continent, and, aggravated by commercial competition, has grievously injured Anglo-German relations. For twenty years French life was poisoned by a passionate desire for "the revenge"; but with the springing-up of a new generation, and an increasing disparity between the French and German populations, common sense prevailed. The



turning-point may be dated from the fall of General Boulanger (1891), and the liberation of Captain Dreyfus (1899). Thenceforth, the Republic has stood steadily for international peace and social progress.

In 1891 the Franco-Russian Alliance was concluded as a balance to the Triple Alliance. In 1904 England and France terminated a long era of jealousy by a territorial give-and-take and a popularly supported "Entente Cordiale." Shortly afterwards (1907), England and Russia settled old quarrels in Asia, and began to act in unison in European affairs. These connections, together with England's old alliance with Portugal, and the relationships of her royal family with Spain, Norway, and Denmark, were regarded in Germany as the result of a "policy of encirclement" deliberately conceived by King Edward. It would be juster to consider them as the logical fruit of the political policy of Bismarck, to which, though with increasing hesitation, the German Empire is still committed. The Iron Chancellor was as great in political as Napoleon in military strategy; he was greater in honesty, patriotism, and constructive achievement. He has been credited with much that comes from quite other sources, especially from the expansion of industry and trade that accompanied, but were not created by, political unity. And, after all, his work is sunk in this general result—that Europe

is partitioned between two vast systems of armed alliance, beneath whose oppressive weight the forces of education, trade, and democracy are preparing a sounder and more stable union. Scorning democracy and humane ideals, Bismarck had, despite himself, contributed in no small measure to the growth of the United States of Europe.

Two centres of disturbance on the Continent remained. After many efforts to throw off the worst tyranny now remaining in the world, the subject peoples of the Russian Tsardom have yet to win their personal and national liberties; and the Balkan lands under the Turkish Sultanate have been a running sore throughout the past century. Russia lost territory by the Crimean War, but succeeded in her second aim of preventing the Ottoman Empire from being "broken up into republics to afford a refuge to the Mazzinis and Kossuths of Europe." This object continued to inspire her policy; and thus we find Russia alternately attacking and patronising the Sultanate. The treaty of 1856 at last recognised Turkey as in the comity of nations, established what was henceforth to be known as the Concert of Europe, and, under forms of "non-intervention," introduced the principle of collective pressure upon the Turkish State. The Concert proved much more effective in limiting Russian aggression than in staying Ottoman cruelty. After the



Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, the Berlin Treaty gave complete independence to Servia, Montenegro, and Roumania, and closed the Dardanelles to Russian warships. It cut Bulgaria into two parts, which were, however, reunited in 1885, and have since become a completely independent kingdom, and placed Bosnia and Herzegovina under the occupation of Austria, which finally absorbed them while Turkey was engaged in the domestic crisis of 1908-9. Greece, between the jealous fears of Austria, the hostility of Russia, the indifference of England, obtained no satisfaction, and drifted slowly toward a disastrous campaign against Turkey in 1897, which placed Crete in the custody of a lesser Concert of maritime Powers.

A Kurdish proverb advises the farmer to stay his shears till the fleece is ready. For some time after the Russo-Turkish war, Abdul Hamid contented himself with the task of accumulating treasure at his Palace. In 1891 he opened an overt campaign for the destruction of the Christian peoples in his realm. In the massacres of 1894, "the Armenians were absolutely hunted like wild beasts," as one of the British agents, Mr. Shipley, said; the Italian Consul-General estimated that 50,000 persons were slaughtered in this first onslaught. The Concert had become impotent because the Tsar, patron of "the Assassin," was supported by his fellow Em-

perors in forbidding intervention; while, with France tied to Russia, and Italy to Germany and Austria, England did not dare to act for herself. In September 1895 a new massacre was perpetrated under the eyes of the Ambassadors in Constantinople, followed by butcheries in Asia Minor which, according to the British official reports, destroyed 30,000 lives, and ruined the Armenian provinces.

Never have British policy and the morals of Europe sunk so low as at this time, when Prince Lobanoff was allowed to veto any coercive action because "Russia could not consent to the formation of a new Bulgaria on her (Transcaucasian) frontier." Nicholas II, newly crowned, had not yet stood trembling with fright among the baillies of Aberdeen and the keepers at Balmoral; was still in the eyes of an easily blinded world the great White Tsar, mysterious, omnipotent. A single Power, supposed to be Italy (it is one of the secrets of recent history) suggested that the Dardanelles should be forced, and the Sultan seized in his Palace. "Any British Minister," replied Lord Rosebery, "who engages in a European war, except under the pressure of the direst necessity, except for interests directly and distinctly British, is a criminal to his country and his position." So the pro-Armenia agitation of Mr. Gladstone was extinguished; and the Sultan set his forces to a campaign of revenge in Crete



and Thessaly. The same union of Sultan, Tsar, and Kaiser doomed Macedonia to fruitless insurrection, and a prolonged internecine warfare (see H. N. Brailsford's *Macedonia*). At length, in 1908, a new and decisive factor appeared on the scene. Coached by civilian exiles, and spurred on by fear of an effective European intervention, a band of young Turkish officers raised the banner of revolt in Monastir, and frightened Abdul Hamid into conceding a Constitution. A reactionary conspiracy followed, but it was quickly suppressed, the Sultan deposed and imprisoned, and the new Parliament assured an effective support. It must be long ere the lands governed from Constantinople can be brought near to the general European level; but thenceforth there was a hope and means of progress that had never before existed.

The position of the Sultan of St. Petersburg had, in the meantime, been shaken, though less decisively. The Manchurian campaign (February 1904 to October 1905) was the first war fought by Great Powers under thoroughly modern conditions. General Kuropatkin's revelations have shown that certain timber concessions on the Korean border, in which the Russian Court was deeply interested, played a prominent part in its causation; in a larger view it represented the rivalry of two old autocracies, one of which, however, had rapidly modernised itself, for the heritage

of East Asiatic suzerainty. The frightful effect of the new weapons was exhibited in the destruction of the Russian fleet, the disaster of Liao-Yang, the siege and fall of Port Arthur, and the yet greater débâcle of Mukden. Altogether, two and a half million men were placed in the field, in nearly equal proportion, by the two combatants.

The Japanese reports show 470,000 casualties (80,000 killed or dead of disease, 170,000 wounded, 221,000 sick); the Russian reports 140,000 killed and wounded, 345,000 sick, 40,000 missing, and 31,000 prisoners. The battle of Mukden, when 350,000 men were engaged for three weeks on a frontage of fifty miles, with losses aggregating 163,000, was probably the largest and most destructive in modern history. The war shook the Tsardom to its foundations, provoking military and naval mutinies, and revolutionary outbreaks, in fear of which Nicholas II conceded to Russia the form of parliamentary institutions. It showed the world the connection between oppression at home and war abroad, and taught neutral fishermen, ship-owners, and investors that no quarrel can be distant enough for them to escape injury. Thus, considerations of business reinforced the feeble promptings of humanity, offended by the "bloody Sunday" massacre. And, while Japan won the homage due to efficiency and stoic courage, she, too, had to learn a



hard lesson. Russia was left at the end of the war with a national debt of a thousand million pounds sterling. But, even if it could have paid, there was no possibility of extorting, an indemnity, since there was no possibility of occupying the Russian capital and seizing the treasury and administration. The Treaty of Portsmouth was a confession that, in the twentieth century, war cannot pay, as well as a warning to European States to abandon their baser designs upon the now awakened East.

In the story of the extension of the European equilibrium to the remainder of the world, the most considerable chapters are those relating the colonisation of North America, and the growth of the British Empire, which now embraces nearly a quarter of the population of the earth. The three centuries of British Imperial history may be roughly divided into four unequal periods of development. The first two we have already noted—an experimental stage which we may count as extending from the East India Company Charter of 1600 to the Union of Scotland and England in 1707, or to the Peace of Utrecht and the Anglo-Spanish Slave Trade Compact of 1713; and a period in which England was absorbed in the struggle with France which gave her Canada and India, and with the policy of high taxation, trade restriction, and coercive sovereignty which lost her the American colonies. A third

step carries us through the Napoleonic struggle to the final repeal of the Corn Laws in 1849. Commercialism was now ripening rapidly; and England's success as a trading State led to a temporary decline of political imperialism. The solidest gain of this period consisted in the settlement (1788-1840) of the Australian colonies.

Finally, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the trade supremacy due to prior industrial development, and encouraged by free trade and popular education, was checked by the appearance of powerful foreign rivals, the first result being, during the 'seventies, 'eighties, and 'nineties, a fever of territorial expansion with the object of "staking out claims for posterity," and in the hope that trade would "follow the flag." The chief extensions of the Empire were in Africa, where the Southern hinterlands, inclusive of the two Boer Republics, were conquered, and huge territories entirely populated by native races were subjected in the west and in the east-centre (Nigeria alone having an area of 450,000 square miles, and a population estimated at 30 millions); while Egypt was occupied under a nominal Turkish suzerainty, and the Soudan, after campaigns against successive Mahdis, was held as the joint property of England and Egypt. The territories of British India were also greatly extended. In the last fifteen years of the century, the population



of the Empire was estimated to have increased from 300 to 400 millions, and its area from eight to twelve million square miles, while British naval expenditure rose from £11,000,000 to £25,000,000 a year. So far from being, as was said, a "record reign of peace," the sixty-four years of Queen Victoria's reign—marked early by the Crimean campaign and the Indian Mutiny (1857)—witnessed some forty Imperial wars or expeditions, in which China was opened to the opium traffic, and Sikhs, Burmese, Afghans, Chitralis, Egyptians, Soudanese, Abyssinians, Kaffirs, Zulus, Basutos, Matabeles, Mashonas, Bechuanas, Nigerians, and Maoris were taught the superior merit of high explosives. The Queen died amid painful echoes from the South African battlefields, crying on her death-bed, "Oh, that peace may come!"

Something more than a reign and a century ended with the passing of this venerated figure. Many factors contributed to a reaction under "Edward the Peacemaker." One, and not the least, lay in the discovery that the conquest of 50,000 Dutch farmers had required a campaign of two and a half years, an army of 250,000 men, and an expenditure almost equal to the cost to England of all the other wars of the Victorian era (I estimate this at about £280,000,000, of which the Crimean War accounts for £116,000,000). Reflection on these facts speedily produced one of the most notable

vindications of British statesmanship and democracy, in the granting of self-government to the Boer States, followed by the establishment of a Union of South Africa under a Boer Premier.

To the same years dates the great settlement with France (August 8, 1904), a compact between two democratic States made after a prolonged period of peace without immediate outside pressure, and, so, like neither the arbitrary rearrangements of power and territory occasionally made by councils of autocratic rulers, nor the treaties closing the wars of the past. For twenty years, the words Egypt, Newfoundland, Morocco had stood for problems supposed to be well-nigh insoluble; and behold! as with a magician's wand, a wholesale diplomatic clearance of questions of territory and trade, of "honour and vital interests." The way had been prepared by a series of arbitral treaties among the West European Powers, led by France and England, as the way for these had been prepared by the first Hague Peace Conference in 1899. While the spirit of pacific reconstruction was thus "in the air," the costs of empire-building were brought home in various forms to thinking men. The trade return had been signally disappointing; and the self-governing colonies had made it clear that they could not be counted on to share any further burdens of Imperial adventure. The rise of Japan, with



which England concluded in 1902 a military and political alliance, and the appearance of Young Turkey, put a new aspect upon the problems of Asiatic rule; ravages of famine and plague, and sporadic conspiracy against holders of outposts in a far land impossible of British colonisation, recalled Seeley's conclusion as to the necessary lack of common interest, save in trade, between India and England. What, then, remained? Duty, the hardest duty of world-rule to-day. Its first implication was evidently that the problem should not be aggravated by further increase of the "child peoples" under Anglo-Saxon tutelage. Accordingly, a decade has passed without war in, or addition of territory to, the British Empire. The basis of Imperial peace is laid.

Meanwhile, the North American Republic has grown from strength to strength. Only once has this great experiment been threatened with destruction. Freed from dynastic rivalries and feudal obstructions, from religious strife and military ambition, the States had kept one evil heritage from the Old World, the morbid revival of patriarchal agriculture in the sub-tropical region around the Gulf of Florida. Nominally on a question of union or disruption, the Civil War of 1861-65 really represents the last effort to found a state openly on slave labour. The slaves had, in fact, increased from half-a-million at the time of the

Revolution to four millions on the outbreak of the war. The South was beaten less by the badness of its case than its lack of men. At the end of the struggle, its armies were outnumbered by nearly six to one. Yet it required four years' conflict, with the loss of a million lives and two thousand million pounds sterling, to attain the end which, a few years before, might have been reached by an easy monetary transaction. Such, in our time, is the cost of the appeal to the sword.

CHAPTER XI

THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE

THE new political equilibrium is strengthened by four of the most notable developments of the past half-century. These are (1) the ceaseless advance in the quality and quantity of armaments, by which the character of warfare has been completely transformed; (2) the full establishment of an international Credit economy, by which the commercial life of the civilised nations is being steadily unified, while each is threatened with injury from any breach of the peace; (3) the reinforcement of older elements of international culture and law by the power of organised Labour, now, like organised Capital, a force of international character; and (4) the general tendency among Western nations toward



an arrest of population, which removes the impetus to warfare formerly supplied by a surplus of "food for powder," marks the proximate end of the swarming process, and imposes a new sense of the value of the lives on which the future of Western civilisation must depend.

1. In death-dealing efficiency, the improvement in arms since the Franco-German War has thrown all the inventions of all previous history into the shade. It began with the production of the Martini-Henry, Berdan, Gras, and Werder rifles. A double revolution marked the year 1886, when smokeless powder and the Lebel small-bore magazine gun were adopted in France. The Mannlicher, Mauser, Lee-Metford, and other models followed, each giving greater range, rapidity, and accuracy of fire. In artillery there have been similar changes; the new steel processes have made possible a continuous enlargement of cannon, and the use of high-explosive projectiles, while there are now many types of quick-firing machine-guns. The development of naval power, from the *Merrimac* and *Monitor* of fifty years ago to the latest "super-Dreadnoughts," is still more prodigious. One fact will serve to illustrate the effect of invention in this field. In the twenty years following the "Navy scare" of 1884, Great Britain spent £450,000,000 in

the effort to maintain a fleet stronger than any two possible rivals. In 1905, the Admiralty, in its scheme of concentration, admitted that most of this expenditure was then represented mainly by scrap-iron, 115 vessels of the classes of "unprotected" and "protected" cruisers being condemned as practically useless except for "police" purposes. This clearance was, however, only the beginning of a new and higher level of competition, opened by the laying-down of the "Dreadnought" in October 1905. Since then another fleet has become obsolete. The modern British Navy has never fought a battle; but it has cost more in money than the whole of the British campaigns of the past century.

The most considerable attempt to show the effect in actual hostilities of these changes is that of the Polish banker and economist Jean de Bloch (1836-1902), author of the huge six-volume work on modern warfare already cited, and founder of the Museum of War and Peace at Lucerne. De Bloch's conclusions were that, as between Powers of nearly equal strength, warfare will in future be a suicidal deadlock, a struggle without possibility of decisive result, and ruinous to both parties; that other means of settling international disputes must therefore be found; and that, as these vast armaments are need-



less for defence and useless for aggression, those who rely upon them are visionaries.

His evidence pointed most clearly to two facts: the first, that the history of war exhibits a gradual removal of combatants to greater distances from each other, so that neither in the better nor the worse qualities it evokes is the struggle what it used to be; the second, that science gives great comparative advantages to the defence, in the power of long-range, quick-firing rifles and guns (from ten to forty times more effective than those used in 1870 and 1877), and in the new art of entrenchment. Throughout history earthworks have been used; but earthworks which an enemy could safely approach within two or three hundred paces were a trifling obstacle compared with those of to-day, planned to permit of gradual retirement, and fronted with a fire zone of a thousand yards across which effective rifle fire can be maintained at the rate of twenty shots a minute. The army of a great State would now be an immensely larger force than ever took the field in the past, consisting of the manhood of a nation, not a mercenary surplus. It would be a body of educated men, an army of engineers. Its infantry lines and battery positions would be invisible. The invader must come into the open if he is to accomplish anything; he would find his cavalry



useless against entrenched infantry, and would experience a difficulty which would not be experienced by the defence in supplying himself with the very heavy and powerful shells now needed for artillery. Battle in the open would mean annihilation; yet it is only by assault that entrenched positions can be carried. The attacker would be forced to entrench himself; so the science of the spade reduces battles to sieges, and campaigns become a long deadlock between stationary forces, and a game of hide-and-seek between mobile forces. The spirit of resistance will be encouraged by the fact that a conqueror must make greater sacrifices than the defenders. The volunteer of democracy has proved himself, man for man, a match for the regular soldier, mercenary or conscript. Guerilla fighting will no longer be without order or method; it will be scientifically equipped, and moved by a spirit of nationality stronger than ever before known. Railways will be easily destroyed and roads blocked.

Warfare will drag on more slowly than ever. The numbers of men and the field of operations will be so large that the genius of the best generals will be incapable of controlling them. Even with a railway base, an army of 200,000 men cannot move quickly, especially since they cannot any longer live on the



country; and the dispersion necessitated by modern fire makes the direction of such a mass difficult and hazardous. The hey-day of warfare lay in the infancy of firearms, when, with small, mobile armies, a bold and calculating commander could direct quick marches, sudden changes of plan, feints, turning movements, cavalry charges, strategical demonstrations of all kinds. But this strategy is as dead as Bonaparte. Even a Moltke could not manipulate the European army of to-day.

There is a notable inadequacy in Buckle's treatment of the decline of military genius (in his chapter on "The Comparison of Moral and Intellectual Laws"). Of his two great generalisations—that in early societies primary economic factors (climate and food supply, in particular) are absolutely dominant, while in civilised societies intellectual acquisitions are the supreme and only permanent factors of progress—the first is much the more safely established; but both require more examination than he gives them. In ancient times, as Buckle shows, militarism commanded the best talent of the peoples; and he adds: "in the modern world this identical profession, including many millions of men, has never been able since the sixteenth century to produce ten authors who have reached the first class, either as writers or



thinkers." This method of glorifying intellectual influences seems unjust and unsound, for why should a soldier in any age be tested by his power to write a book? Economic influences are as dominant as ever in history, though their character has changed. Soldiers of genius no longer appear because the environment is unfavourable, the demand has failed. Othello's occupation's gone. The mechanism of war has killed the art of war; and this mechanism is itself doomed because, while it can reap no recompense, its cost in use is likely to bring its owners to the pit of bankruptcy, famine, and revolution.

This argument might be illustrated in detail from the American Civil War, the Austro-German, Franco-German, Russo-Turkish, and Boer campaigns. We have little evidence of what the results of conflict between the naval monsters of the twentieth century may be, for the destruction of the Spanish fleets off Santiago and Manila, and of the Russian fleet in the strait of Tsushima, would be better described as battues than battles. But the principles established by De Bloch apply here, with, possibly, greater force, especially since the appearance of four instruments which he did not live to see—wireless telegraphy, the aeroplane, the dirigible balloon, and the marine internal combustion engine. There will be the same choice,



for States of nearly equal strength, between inaction in harbour and annihilation in the open; while (failing an agreement to respect private property) a swarm of privateersmen will destroy the maritime commerce on which the combatant nations depend. The old conditions of dashing attack and personal valour, all the strategy of Nelson, are gone with the old wooden sailing ships. Half-a-dozen battles would now destroy fleets that have cost hundreds of millions to build and could not be speedily replaced. One such convulsion would shake European society to its foundations.

The substantial truth of these views is no longer disputed. It was stated tersely by the Russian Emperor in his famous rescript of 1898 summoning the first Hague Peace Conference: "The financial charges consequent on increasing armaments strike at public prosperity in its very source. The intellectual and physical strength of the nations, labour and capital, are for the major part diverted from their natural application and unproductively expended. Hundreds of millions are devoted to acquiring terrible engines of destruction which, though to-day regarded as the last word of science, are destined to-morrow to lose all value, in consequence of some fresh discovery in the same field. National culture, economic progress,

and the production of wealth are either paralysed or checked in their development. Moreover, in proportion as the armaments of each Power increase, so do they less and less fulfil their object. The economic crises due in great part to the system of excessive armaments, and the continual danger which lies in this massing of war material, are transforming the armed peace of our days into a crushing burden which the peoples have more and more difficulty in bearing. It appears evident, then, that, if this state of things were prolonged, it would lead inevitably to the very cataclysm which it is desired to avert, the very horrors of which make every thinking being shudder in advance."

2. For forty years there has been no war in Western, Central, and Northern Europe; and, with the exception of the Cuban campaign, North America has enjoyed unbroken peace. During this period, the commercial intercourse of the world has undergone a revolution in character, as important as its increase in extent, if less obvious. The increase is, indeed, as much the result of the development of an elaborate Credit system as of the new manufacturing processes and improved communications. But a Credit economy is immensely more sensitive than a cash economy. Commodities and bullion



are more susceptible than ever. Fragments of a penny on the price of grain may divert millions of pounds' worth of trade from one country to another; and these fractional changes may arise from some local and apparently trifling disturbance thousands of miles away from the market which registers them. The material conveniences of our time—division of labour, joint-stock trading, improved transport, telegraphs and cables, newspapers—have all increased this sensitiveness, and, by its very nature, credit feels it more quickly than material wealth. So long as peace continues, the advantages of "paper" more than compensate for this weakness. Even the speculation on stock and share and produce exchanges, which so easily degenerates into gambling, has served the trading class by levelling out variations in prices due to natural causes. Insurance, being a substitute for a reserve of capital, not only protects against loss, it increases borrowing power. Banks draw from the unused surplus of wealth in the community immense funds which, being lent out or made the basis of commercial credit, lead to the greater development of trade. The smooth working of the central administration and local authorities, as well as of manufactures and trade, depends to-day upon this power of easy borrowing.

The rapid development of the United

States, the British colonies, and countries like Argentina is wholly due to it. Thus, an extension to foreign countries of the proprietary interests of the creditor nations has taken place which must deeply affect the policy of these nations. The amount of British investments abroad probably exceeds £3,000 millions, a sum equal to one-third of the estimated value of private property in the United Kingdom (see F. W. Hirst, *The Stock Exchange*, and Chiozza Money, *Riches and Poverty*); and this sunk capital yields an income of some £80 millions a year to persons living there. The investment of foreign capital in the United Kingdom amounts to hundreds of millions sterling. France holds about a half of the Russian debt of £1,000 millions. In these and other cases, the connection between investment and policy resulting either in war or peace is clear. The policy of Britain has been injuriously disturbed by financial influences when it was in contact with wealthy lands feebly held, generally by native tribes. The complete partition of Africa closed this period of belligerent expansion. Foreign investment in settled countries must favour the organisation of peace. It may produce incidental evils: the French loans to Russia have bolstered up a corrupt and cruel government, while ensuring an interim balance of power



in Europe. But it serves the growth of a more rational world-order in two ways: it reminds powerful sections of one community of their material interest in the peace and welfare of another, perhaps a "rival," State; and it reminds any would-be belligerent that, in a day when the value of national capital has become so largely dependent upon international credit, the old rewards of successful warfare cannot be reaped.

An Anglo-German war, for instance, would destroy not only the regular volume of exports and imports, so vital to the prosperity of both peoples; invasion would destroy English property in Germany and German property in England; above all, it would destroy the sensitive mechanism of credit on which the economic life of both countries depends. The cash reserves, already so small for the structure of credit they have to uphold, would be further diminished. There being no certainty as to the issue of such a conflict, and only too much certainty as to its ruinous cost, State securities in both countries would fall rapidly. Foreign countries would call in their balances from London and Berlin, which, in turn, would be compelled to realise their foreign loans. The withdrawal of credit and loanable capital, the interruption of supplies, and the withdrawal of labour would starve trade and manufacture; and



the rise of taxation and prices, coupled with falling wages and reduced employment of those not actively engaged in the war and the war industries, would produce distress, deepening to panic. If there were any victor in such a conflict, and if he succeeded in occupying the enemy's capital, he would find the wealth due to credit flown, and the immediately seizable capital scarcely sufficient to pay for the investments lost by his own countrymen, let alone the costs of the war.

But, long before this, the forces of organised labour in both countries would have been mobilised for revolt, and neighbouring Powers would be ready for an effective intervention.

3. The political and economic union of nations described above has been further strengthened by the growth of an international legal, legislative, and administrative system, which, although still in its infancy, has already reached a considerable elaboration.

We have seen that conciliation and arbitration were occasionally used in very early times to prevent or end disputes. As a settled quasi-legal process, International Arbitration may be dated (as may the unofficial Peace Movement in which Victor Hugo, Bastiat, Cobden, Bright, and Elihu Burritt were the first great figures) from the period following the Napoleonic wars. It has steadily increased in definiteness and authority. The



first stage consisted in the addition of an arbitration clause to commercial and other treaties, and the evolution of a regular procedure through occasional arbitrations. Then arbitration treaties proper began to be negotiated, in the 'eighties. A great leap forward was made when the first Hague Conference (1899) established a Permanent Arbitration Court, with a detailed code, which was amended and enlarged at the second Conference (1907). From 1822 to 1900 there were enacted 125 Arbitration treaties; in the subsequent decade, 180 agreements of very much larger scope have been signed. The Anglo-French Treaty of October 14, 1904, became a model, which all the leading nations have since followed. During the nineteenth century, 212 arbitral awards were made, and every one was executed, though several (the *Alabama*, Samoa, Venezuela, and Alaska) disputes were of a grave character. When, in 1910, the Hague Court quietly settled the long-standing Newfoundland fisheries dispute, no doubt remained either of the utility or the authority of this international judiciary.

Meanwhile, the parent body, with a Third Conference in view, has assumed the position of a permanent institution representative of the whole civilised world. In 1899, delegates of 26 independent States met in the

“House in the Wood” in the Dutch capital, and astonished the sceptics by the spirit with which they commenced the difficult business of international legislation. In 1907 there were 230 delegates from 43 States; among other results of their labours were an agreement to establish an International Naval Prize Appeal Court (the first international body having power to over-rule national jurisdictions)—for which a Conference of naval Powers sitting in London has since projected a Code; various further amendments of the rules of warfare; and a resolution against the forcible collection of debts till arbitration has been resorted to or refused. No Power being ready with a practical formula, and Germany being hostile, the armaments problem was dismissed in a pious resolution. It must be long ere the Hague Conferences can assume a parliamentary character; but they mark a vast advance upon previous “Concerts,” and a distinct step toward world-federation. Probably the tasks hitherto confided to special international congresses will be more and more frequently referred to the regular meetings for which Mr. Carnegie has built a palatial home at the Hague.

Many institutions for a common supervision of international commerce had been founded before this development; and they are, therefore, still scattered about the world, in Berne,



Brussels, Paris, London, Washington. These bodies, including the International Postal and Telegraph, and Railway Unions, Sanitary Commission, Copyright Union, and similar bodies, each having a permanent bureau and head-quarters staff, will, no doubt, be gradually concentrated in a business-like manner.

This extensive official apparatus is supported by an ever-increasing number of non-official institutions and movements, some of which, indeed, receive governmental aid. Only a few of the more important can here be named. The Inter-Parliamentary Union, founded in 1888, now includes several thousand deputies of the leading nations; it has its permanent bureau and annual conference, and does important preparatory work for the Hague Conferences. The Pan-American Bureau, handsomely housed in Washington, was established in 1890 to encourage commercial and friendly relations between the twenty-one American republics, which jointly maintain it. The Peace Movement, with its hundreds of local societies, has its permanent bureau in Berne, and its annual national and international congresses. The Institut du Droit International, and the International Law Association, founded in 1873, have done valuable pioneering work. The Anglo-German Friendship Committee may be named as

a type of many bodies aiming to improve the relations of particular countries. Civic and educational visitations, professional congresses, auxiliary languages, "co-operative" holidays, international newspapers, and the international Trade Union and Socialist movements, representing millions of humble toilers who have hitherto been content to leave high politics to the Foreign Offices—these are among the most characteristic phenomena of the time; and they do not exhaust the list of influences by which the social organisation of the world is being remodelled on a basis of reason and amity. It is difficult to think that, against such a variety of forces, the interests of the small numbers of men who profit by war and preparations for war can long prevail.

4. Finally, a physiological change is taking place in the most advanced societies of the world, the character and most momentous consequences of which can here be only very cursorily indicated. A generation ago, the falling birth-rate of France used to be the subject of ominous comment. The Republic was doomed, it used to be said, by the greatly superior increase of German population, and, therefore, of German military power; nothing could save it, for was not this the sum of all the multifarious decadence that Paris flaunted in the face of a nobly prolific world? It now



appears that, slowly, almost imperceptibly, the world, prolific Germany included, has begun to follow the perilous example of republican France. "A decreasing birth-rate," says the British Registrar General, "is a feature common to nearly all European countries, and also to the principal Colonial States. The effect on the growth of population has been to some extent modified by the concurrent decline in the death-rate; but it is obvious that the death-rate cannot decline indefinitely" (75th *Annual Report*, Cd. 4961 of 1910). The following figures show that, in the period and in the countries named, there has been a fall in the rate of natality averaging about 16 per cent.

BIRTH-RATES PER THOUSAND OF POPULATION

	England & Wales.	German Empire.	France.	Italy.	Austria.
1881-85 . . .	33·5	37·0	24·7	38·0	38·2
1886-90 . . .	31·4	36·5	23·1	37·5	37·8
1891-95 . . .	30·5	36·3	22·3	36·0	37·4
1896-1900. . .	29·3	36·0	21·9	34·0	37·3
1901-05 . . .	28·1	34·3	21·2	32·6	35·6
1907	26·3	32·3	19·7	31·5	33·8
Fall	7·2	4·7	5·0	6·5	4·4
Percentage of Fall on 1881- 1885 figure .	21·5 %	12·8 %	20·2 %	17·1 %	11·5 %

In some countries, the gain by the falling death-rate is still superior to the loss by fewer births; elsewhere, as in England and some British Colonies, the rate of "natural" increase of population (*i.e.* without counting immigration) is declining so steadily that it threatens soon to reach the vanishing point. The following tables show the decline in the rates of birth, death, and natural increase per thousand of population since the year (1876) when the birth-rate in England stood at its maximum :

	England.		Prussia.	
	1876.	1909.	1876.	1909.
Births	36·3	25·6	40·7	32·9
Deaths	20·9	14·5	25·4	17·8
Increase	15·4	11·1	15·3	15·1

	Australian Commonwealth.		New Zealand.	
	1871.	1908.	1871.	1908.
Births	38	26	40	27
Deaths	13	11	10	10
Increase	25	15	30	17



As the Local Government Board laconically observes, "the death-rate cannot decline indefinitely." In the most advanced countries, indeed, it cannot now be expected to decline very considerably, for the chief gains have been achieved in the saving of infant life, and the higher age-average of the population (due to fewer births) implies a higher mortality rate. When the minimum mortality point has been reached, the natural increase of population will probably have ceased altogether.

In brief, we seem to be within calculable distance of the day when, in all the most civilised countries, there will be some such balance of vital economy as already obtains in France, a balance which neither legislation nor exhortation is likely very greatly to disturb. At the same time, the coloured peoples of Africa, Asia, and America will continue to multiply, in some cases—as in India, with the progress of measures of famine prevention and sanitation—at, perhaps, an accelerated rate. One conclusion springs irresistibly, imperatively, from this view of the near future. The extension of military and naval service is one of the most potent influences in depressing the birth-rate; their reduction would be a corresponding stimulus. Whether the great White States can continue indefinitely to bear the burden of competitive

armaments, or no, they can only continue to indulge in the exercise of these armaments in actual warfare at the cost of their estates and their civilising work in Africa and Asia, at the risk of inviting a new swarming movement like that which, sixteen hundred years ago, destroyed the hard-won Roman Peace. To-day, the leadership of the white races is nowhere challenged; but a new era of bloodshed would undermine both the moral authority and the military power of Europe and America. Our royal rhetoricians and facile journalists invent and discard such phrases as "the Yellow Peril" too rapidly to realise the modicum of truth they contain. There is no immediate "peril," but there is a "colour problem" as complex and pressing, in its way, as the problem of poverty which threatens within the gates. The caricaturists were partly right: France, so long as there was a question of "la revanche," was overshadowed by Germany's more rapidly increasing population. By the same logic, the hegemony of the white races, as they approach to a stable economy of population, must depend upon their developing a greater unity of action, a higher and more mobile equilibrium, and in ensuing true civilisation, which is the making of civil persons in civil societies.

To sum up: So far from being based upon



unchangeable passions, the nature of man as “a social animal” is based upon material and moral interests which have undergone deep changes, irregular, indeed, but in a certain general order and direction. We can trace these changes both in the structure and the function of successive societies established in course of the swarming process by which the earth has been filled. These stages of settlement have been modified by the environment provided by the natural conditions of the place and the social conditions of the time. Thus, in early times, in certain places (rich river valleys surrounded by arid or mountainous regions), the conditions favoured the rise of a Slave economy, reflected—for structure always responds to function—in despotic and predatory governments. In a later time, and a more developed environment, the claims of rival communities now counting equally with physical conditions, a Land economy arises—that is, the prevalent types of capital and labour consist of land and serfs—with a political structure dominated by feudal nobles. Yet later, on a favourable seaboard, a trade, or Money, economy arises. Slavery and serfdom are dead of inefficiency; agricultural land gradually gives place to commerce as the chief form of wealth and source of power. The government is an oligarchy, and the

main aim of its policy is to obtain national stocks of bullion. This economic condition has, however, no sooner become general among a group of neighbouring and fairly equal societies than it begins to develop an elaborate system of credit. The Credit economy stimulates the organisation of labour, which again is reflected in a series of quasi-democratic governments impelled toward an organisation of settled peace, by way of armed alliances, arbitration treaties, common administrations, and quasi-legislative congresses; while the most startling result of the conjoint influences of this era of industrial democracy is an arrest of the growth of population.

The outward and the inner growth of any organism progress together, and ceaselessly modify each other. Thus, through these types of society, an evolution of warfare is discernible. In a Slave economy, the property power, threatened with diminishing returns, seeks to maintain itself by slave raids and extortion of tribute. In a Land economy, such as that of feudal Germany, where authority gathers in small local units, there is constant petty conflict, while the motive of larger warfare is to obtain new domains for regular rent and revenue. The field of war is, however, already restricted by the concurrent growth of similar communi-



ties. This proximate check leads to a wider search for new lands unoccupied or feebly held. This is the last stage of the swarm. Barter, impossible over great distances, passes away. The hunt for "precious metals," needed for a standard of exchange, becomes the cause of predatory expeditions, and collisions between monarchies claiming divine right to lay up gold by the sale of black men. But legitimate commerce presently becomes supreme; and, after many painful readjustments of political power, creates at last a civilisation dependent upon domestic and international peace.

In speaking of these as chronological stages of evolution we are, of course, using a convenient fiction. There was a Trade economy, with democracy on a small scale, in ancient Greece; there were elements of the Land and Credit economics in ancient Rome; while the highest ideal of human unity was spoken into deaf ears eighteen hundred years ago. The irregularity of the progress of societies differently situated and constituted has, indeed, been one of the fertile causes of warfare. This was especially the case in early times, when a small martial people was tempted to assail a splendid but rotten empire (Greece and Persia), or the rulers of a powerful empire to enslave small neighbouring peoples (Babylonia and Judæa). Even in very recent

times, the clash of acutely different property systems has resulted in war (slave labour *v.* free labour in the United States; mining interests *v.* patriarchal agriculture in the Transvaal); but such cases are becoming rarer through the equalisation of conditions and interests due to the rapidity of modern communications. A kindred motive to warfare has been found in the demoralisation produced by the collapse of an established politico-economic system. Centuries of anarchy followed the break-up of the ancient empires. The collapse of feudal authority in Europe led to an outbreak of rapacity and persecution, which merged into the so-called wars of religion and a series of dynastic struggles. In its turn, absolute monarchy proved itself utterly inadequate to the task of securing a steady increase and just division of property in expanding societies, and its dying struggles led to a series of revolutions and wars of national liberation.

Each of these crises of transition has been favourable to the appearance of great soldiers; but, generally speaking, military ambition and genius have been very minor factors in the causation of war. Napoleon, for a short time, dominated the course of events, because he was able to turn the weapons of the new industrialism to predatory use in regions still divided and oppressed by a dying Land



economy. The further development of armaments by industrial science has for ever forbidden any such reversion to type. On the other hand, certain conjunctions of circumstances in early times help to explain the appearance of great pioneers of the peace idea ; but, while it is impossible to imagine the cause of social progress without its prophets and martyrs, its thinkers and artists, it was only when the long fermentation of a thousand elements had produced a favourable environment that the previsions of these rare minds could be assimilated by the mass of men, and so become expressed in stable institutions. The great task of the twentieth century, whether we regard domestic or external, moral or economic, needs, is seen to be the removal of the fear of war, and the burdens of preparation it entails, by the organisation of a settled peace.

Such then, in all too brief outline, is the history of the human swarm and its settlement. By many other paths, man's progress from a state of war toward a state of peace may be traced; it is the writer's hope, by limiting this essay to a consideration of certain fundamental principles of organic growth, to have provided a serviceable introduction to such further studies.

NOTE ON BOOKS

No history of the economics of warfare exists, so far as the writer knows. The student must be content for the present to gather his information from a thousand sources—general histories (*The Cambridge Modern History*, *The World's History* in eight volumes, edited by Dr. H. F. Helmolt, and Seignobos' three-volume sketch may be recommended as containing much of the best English, German, and French scholarship), histories of particular periods or countries, biographies of great commanders, and histories of particular campaigns, like Oman's *Peninsular War* and Kinglake's *Crimean Campaign*. Other general works have been named in the text of this volume. Herbert Spencer's *Descriptive Sociology*, the publication of which is being continued by his trustees, contains much detail of military history. Prof. O. W. Oman's *History of the Art of War* is an invaluable fragment; designed to cover ancient and modern times also, only one volume has actually appeared (1898) dealing with the period A.D. 400-1400. Grose's *Military Antiquities* is an important source. De Bloch's *La Guerre* presents a mass of evidence, some historical: vol. i. deals with the mechanism of war, vol. ii. with Continental conditions, vol. iii. with naval warfare; and the remaining three volumes with various economic and social aspects of the subject. A summary of thesis and evidence has been published in English: *The Future of War* (Ginn). Among modern military works may be mentioned Col. J. F. Maurice's *War* (with a commented list of books), Hamley's *Operations of War*, Clausewitz's *War*, Moltke's *Tactical Problems, 1858-82*, Von der Goltz' *The Nation in Arms*, Creasy's *Decisive Battles*, Adams' *Great Campaigns*, Colomb's *Naval Warfare*, Mahon's *Sea Power in History*, Dilke and Wilkinson's *Imperial Defence*, and General Sir Ian Hamilton's *Compulsory Service*. Jablonski's *Histoire de L'Art Militaire*, a half of which deals with Roman times, is useful for its quotations from Xenophon, Polybius, Cæsar, Napoleon. Prof. Guglielmo Ferrero's *Militarism* contains several chapters of historical value.

On the growth of International Law, see the works of Hall, Wheaton, and Walker. *The Two Hague Conferences*, by Wm.



I. Hull, places the results of these assemblies in the briefest possible compass. *International Tribunals*, by Evans Darby, is a complete record; Gaston Moch's *Histoire Sommaire de l'Arbitrage Permanent* is the best brief review (Monaco: Institut de la Paix). The International Library (Ginn), edited by Edwin D. Mead, contains, among other valuable volumes, *The Great Design of Henry IV*, Bridgman's *World Organisation*, Channing's *Discourses on War*, and Sumner's *Addresses on War*. *The Great Illusion*, by Norman Angell, deals trenchantly with the economic difficulties of aggressive warfare in our time. Among other works may be mentioned Kant's *Zum Ewigen Frieden*, the last chapters of A. R. Wallace's *Darwinism*, Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*, J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism*, *The Burden of Armaments* (Cobden Club), *War and Its Alleged Benefits*, and *La Fédération de l'Europe*, by J. Novicow (Alcan); *The Arbiter in Council*, edited by F. W. Hirst; *The Human Harvest*, by Prof. David Starr Jordan; and among reference books *L'Annuaire de la Vie Internationale*, by A. H. Fried; *The Peace Year-book* (National Peace Council, St. Stephen's House, London, S. W.), which gives a fuller bibliography; *The Navy Annual*, and *The Statesman's Year-book*. Among a host of novels of warfare, Erekmann-Chatrion's *The Conscript*, Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and *Sevastopol*, Zola's *La Débâcle*, and the Baroness Von Suttner's *Lay Down Your Arms* have enjoyed an immense vogue.

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