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Warfare in St. Augustine's De Civitate Dei

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WARFARE
IN
ST. AUGUSTINE'S DE CIVITATE DEI

RICHARD A. SCHUCHERT, S.J.

"Si autem ipsum bellum est Mars:
utinam, quam manifestum est quod
non sit deus, tam non sit et bel-
lum, quod uel falso uocetur deus."
(vii. 14)

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VITA AUCTORIS

Richard Albert Schuchert, S. J., was born in Toledo, Ohio, January 31, 1914. He attended the Cathedral Chapel Parochial School in that city from 1920 to 1928. He then received part of his secondary education in the high school department of St. Charles College, Catonsville, Maryland, from 1928 to 1931, after which time he attended the St. John's University High School of Toledo, Ohio, where he graduated in 1932. After three years of college studies at St. John's University he entered the Society of Jesus, August, 1935, at the Milford Novitiate, Milford, Ohio, where he was enrolled as an undergraduate in Xavier University, Cincinnati. After receiving there the degree of Bachelor of Arts in June, 1938, the author was transferred to West Baden College, West Baden Springs, Indiana, an extension department of Loyola University of Chicago, and he was enrolled in the Graduate School of that University.

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PART ONE

CHAPTER I

ST. AUGUSTINE - PHILOSOPHER OF WAR

Competition is of the order of nature; and fighting seems to be part of the order of irrational life. Lower species find their respective ends in supporting higher species. Plants feed on the slime of the earth, changing it into their own substance, which in turn provides food for the animal kingdom. Hardier vegetation crowds out the more tender; stronger or more clever animals destroy the weaker. Man with the weapon of his intelligence, subjugates to his own end the whole tangible universe.

Yet throughout this process the laws of the most high Creator and Governor are strictly observed, for it is by Him the peace of the universe is administered. For although minute animals are produced from the carcass of a larger animal, all these little atoms, by the law of the same Creator, serve the animals they belong to in peace. And although the flesh of dead animals be eaten by others, no matter where it be carried, nor what it be brought into contact with, nor what it be converted and changed into, it still is ruled by the same laws which pervade all things for the conservation of every mortal race, and which brings things that fit one another into harmony.¹

Paradoxically, fighting is part of the disorder of rational life.² For rational beings, persons, have a natural right to work out their own destiny unmolested. Regardless of accidental differences, all men are by nature coordinated with respect to

their ultimate end. They are not to be coercively subordinated one to the other.

This is prescribed by the order of nature: it is thus that God has created man. For "let them," He says, "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every creeping thing which creepeth on the earth." ((Gen., 1:26)) He did not intend that His rational creature, who was made to His image, should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation, - not man over man, but man over the beasts.)

Fighting between human beings, endowed with intelligence and free will, is a moral issue. Therefore, Christian thinkers from the earliest centuries of our era have concerned themselves with the morality of fighting between individuals, and the still greater issues involved in strife between social groups, and between nations.

Roman Military Life

The rise of Christianity is co-extensive with the career of imperial Rome. The good order of the Empire was preserved under the ubiquitous threat of the Roman sword. The Orient was held to the Occident, the Euphrates was joined to the Tagus. Roman legions policed the world, and Roman triremes swept the seas. This powerful grip on the world necessitated the drafting of vast manpower into the army.

Military service was a lively issue among Christian moralists, especially during those three centuries when the Roman insignia stood for a pagan, morally corrupt society, which persecuted the saints of God. Christian apologists fell into two

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schools: extreme pacifists on the one hand; and on the other, more moderate writers who, seeing ultimate good in the Pax Romana, could justify the military service which protected it. Among the intransigent pacifists were numbered Tertullian, Lactantius, and Origen.⁴ The intransigents, however, were never in the majority; nor did their influence on this point exceed their number, as we know from the very early approved cult of the Roman warriors and martyrs, St. Sebastian in the West and St. George in the East.

When Christians came forth from the catacombs and rubbed their eyes in the sudden sunshine of imperial favor, any denunciation on principle of all warfare was hardly heard again. Far from being the enemy of the saints, the emperor and his army became as a rule the champions of orthodox Christianity against sick paganism and troublesome heresy. Approximately one hundred years after the cessation of the Christian persecutions St. Augustine wrote his De Civitate Dei.

St. Augustine on War

Aurelius Augustinus, Bishop of Hippo in Africa, Father and Doctor of the Universal Church, has many titles to fame, as canonized saint, father of many monastic institutes, theologian, philosopher, man of letters, controversialist, orator, grammarian, autobiographer. The facts of his dissolute youth, his intellectual Aeneid, his conversion, his priestly and episcopal activities, are too well known to bear a dull cataloguing here.

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His prodigious writings have been the marvel of scholar and general reader alike.

The Bishop of Hippo never wrote a book on war; yet he is the outstanding Christian philosopher of war. The purpose of this essay is to present a comprehensive exposition of St. Augustine's writings on war in his greatest work, De Civitate Dei. This synthesis of all texts in the De Civitate Dei relating to war will be helpful and even necessary as a preliminary step to an exhaustive study of Augustinian writings on the subject. The investigation will follow this order: a summary and appreciation of the City of God as a whole, then of the part played by warfare in that work. These chapters constitute Part One. A detailed analysis and synthesis of the Augustinian doctrine on war in the De Civitate Dei constitutes Part Two, which is divided into four chapters: War in its actuality, its causes, its results, and finally, war governed by Divine Providence according to Augustine's theory. Two appendices deal with the related subjects of patriotism, and of suicide in the face of military disaster.

It is frequently said: St. Augustine was a powerful intellectual force, but he had no philosophical system. It seems better to say that he had a system, which wants systematization. Augustine, the busy bishop, never enjoyed in his mature years the horarium, the leisure provided for writing, which is part of university life. No wonder that his works lack the rigid geometry found in the writings of an Aquinas or a Kant. Augustine

was addressing himself ordinarily to the people, and not to any learned society. Augustine's composition displays to high degree the grace of Plato and the fervor of St. Paul. His works were generally produced in quick order, as occasion demanded. Augustine used to dictate to his scribes, who immediately took up the task of copying the product for distribution through all of Christendom. In this way it happened that the City of God, began in 413, was published in installments strung out through the years 417-426.

As will be seen, war plays a prominent part in the histories of the City of God and of the city of earth. To preserve a proper perspective in the following investigation it must be borne in mind that Augustine's comments on the subject of war are by no means limited to the De Civitate Dei. There are very explicit and practical discussions of warfare to be found in his extant correspondence, in the book Contra Faustum, in sermons, and in exegetic works.⁵

Augustinian Influence

Augustine's popularity and his influence on Christian thought requires no lengthy comment. The Confessions, says T. R. Glover, is "a book which among all books written in Latin stands next to the Aeneid for the width of its popularity and the hold it has upon mankind."⁶ Eginhard, biographer of Charlemagne, tells us that the emperor, listening to reading during his dinner, "was delighted by the books of St. Augustine, and

especially by those which are entitled the City of God."⁷

St. Augustine is author of the traditional Christian doctrine on war and peace. The broad moral questions involved in warfare - declaring war, waging war, and ending war by treaty - have been answered by him for all time. "Later writers have codified his thoughts, have developed this point or that or have defined the applications of his judgments. Others have treated of certain factors of human society which were unknown to him, or of the mutual rights and duties of men and nations to which new political conditions have given rise. But none, in the orthodox Christian tradition have altered the main body of teaching which he elaborated."⁸

Perhaps one part of Augustine's doctrine has been dropped somewhere in the development of Christian teaching, and that is his unswerving insistence on the direct intervention of Divine Providence in determining the outcome of any war. This point will be treated at length in Chapter Seven.

Even superficial reading in the Christian tradition as recorded by Catholic leaders through the ages shows the unity of their doctrine with that of Augustine. Read Gratian, Aquinas, Hostiensis, Antoninus of Florence, Raymond of Pennafort, Monaldus, Angelo Carletti, Johannes Lupus, all of whom rank as master theologians, philosophers, or canonists of the Middle Ages. In the modern world the tradition has been carried on, and has been restated to fit the changing conditions brought on by many revolutionary epochs and movements - the disruption of Christendom,

geographical discovery followed by the conquest of primitive races and establishment of far flung empires, growth of nationalism and of rival royal houses, the commercial and industrial revolutions. In this modern era are the names of Vittoria, Cajetan, Soto, Cano, Suarez, Vasquez, John de Lugo, Liguori, Belarmine. In the last one hundred years have come a litany of Neo-Scholastics - all reiterating the Augustinian doctrine; their natural leaders have been the Roman Pontiffs, from Pius IX, who saw the worst of nineteenth century "storm and stress" to Pius XII, generally recognized as the only passionately disinterested force in a world gone mad.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. xix. 12
2. Peace, says A., is "the tranquillity of order." (xix. 13) It is the supreme good in this life. "Peace is a good so great, that even in this earthly and mortal life there is no word we hear with such pleasure, nothing we desire with such zest, or find to be more thoroughly gratifying." (xix. 11) It is a corollary of man's social nature, and therefore, fighting among human beings is the result of disordered nature. "There is nothing so social by nature, so unsocial by its corruption, as this ((human)) race." (xii. 27)
3. xix. 15
4. Cf. Batiffol, "Les Premiers Chrétiens et la Guerre," p. 11 ff.; Monceaux, "St. Augustin et la Guerre," p. 1.
5. For a brief but very satisfactory account, cf. Wright, "St. Augustine and International Peace."
6. Glover, Life and Letters in the Fourth Century, p. 195.
7. Eginhard, Vita Karoli, Cap. xxiv, "... delectabatur et libris Sancti Augustini, praecipueque his qui De Civitate Dei praetitulati sunt." - quoted from Eppstein, The Catholic Tradition of the Law of Nations, p. 67.
8. Eppstein, op. cit., p. 65. Wright says (loc. cit.), "The encyclopedic work of Grotius (De Jure Belli et Pacis)... contains no less than 178 separate references to the works of Augustine."

CHAPTER II

SURVEY OF THE DE CIVITATE DEI

The De Civitate Dei answers the most comprehensive, most important question in the mind of man: What is the world all about? It is a complete synthesis, a "philosophy of history." Why was man dropped down on this planet whirling through the universe? What sort of destiny is man to work out in the short time of his life flowing from one eternity to another?

The City of God is great in the scheme of its composition and great in the circumstances under which it was written. Early in the fifth century, the world was falling apart, like a cask without hoops, which allows its contents to run off wastefully into the gutter. At the beginning of the "Dark Ages" the City of God appeared, to show civilized men how to gather up what could be salvaged, and how to add to that a new, spiritual force, capable of rebuilding a humane society. St. Augustine's program was eventually adopted; and the world matured again in the Christian culture of the Middle Ages. Augustine was the fifth century link between classical past and Christian future. If any single book may be called the link between two world eras, that book is the City of God.

The Two Cities

Contrary to its title, City of God, this work is really a

tale of two cities; for it includes an account of opposing forces - the Civitas Dei and the civitas terrena.¹

The keynote is struck in the opening lines of Augustine's own preface:

The glorious city of God is my theme in this work, which you, my dearest son Marcellinus,² suggested, and which is due to you by my promise. I have undertaken its defence against those who prefer their own gods to the Founder of this city, - a city surpassingly glorious, whether we view it as it still lives by faith in this fleeting course of time, and sojourns as a stranger in the midst of the ungodly, or as it shall dwell in the fixed stability of its eternal seat, which it now with patience waits for, expecting until "righteousness shall return unto judgment,"³ and it obtain, by virtue of its excellence, final victory and perfect peace. A great work this, and an arduous; but God is my helper. For I am aware what ability is requisite to persuade the proud how great is the virtue of humility, which raises us, not by a quite human arrogance, but by a divine grace, above all earthly dignities that totter on this shifting scene. For the King and Founder of this city of which we speak, has in Scripture uttered to His people a dictum of the divine law in these words: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."⁴ But this, which is God's prerogative, the inflated ambition of a proud spirit also affects, and dearly loves that this be numbered among its attributes, to

"Show pity to the humbled soul,
And crush the sons of pride."⁵

And therefore, as the plan of this work we have undertaken requires, and as occasion offers, we must speak also of the earthly city, which, though it be mistress of the nations, is itself ruled by its lust of rule.

The idea of two commonwealths, opposed one to the other on eternal issues, was nothing new. Christ Himself frequently pointed out the perpetual antagonism between them. "My Kingdom is not of this world," he told Pilate, the representative of Roman sovereignty. This concept of two kingdoms, or cities, is

frequent in Scripture, notably in St. John and in St. Paul.⁶ Original with Augustine, however, was his grandiose development of the idea.

What persons belong to the city of God, and who belong to the city of earth? The division, in general, is clear enough - the good are citizens of the heavenly commonwealth, and the wicked are citizens of the earthly. Incorporation in the one or other city is determined by a man's ultimate object of love, - whether he subordinate every other interest to the love of God, or to the love of himself.

Accordingly, two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self.⁷ The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the witness of conscience. The one lifts up its head in its own glory; the other says to its God, "Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of mine head."⁸ In the one, the princes and the nations it subdues are ruled by the love of ruling; in the other the princes and the subjects serve one another in love, the latter obeying, while the former take thought for all. The one delights in its own strength, represented in the persons of its rulers; the other says to its God, "I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength."⁹

In particular, however, the two cities are not arithmetically distinguished. Certain sub-groups of mankind are hard to classify without ambiguity. Nowhere does Augustine clearly define his "cities," nor is he always consistent in terminology. Therefore, any attempt to determine the question with strict precision on a sole basis of Augustinian texts can lead only to a labyrinth of conflicting expressions. We can say that the author satisfied himself with his grand idea - an idea perfectly

clear, if somewhat confused; indeed, he actually varied the elements of his concepts to serve the immediate end of his rhetorical polemic.

Summary of the De Civitate Dei

In an oft quoted passage of the Retractationes¹⁰ St. Augustine lays down in a few words the plan of the De Civitate Dei. After the sack of Rome by Alaric (A. D. 410) the author busied himself in composition through several years before

the great work of the City of God was at last completed in twenty-two books. Of these books, the first five were occupied with the refutation of such persons as believe that human prosperity depends upon the worship of the many gods whom the pagans have been in the habit of worshipping, and who maintain that it is the prohibition of pagan worship which accounts for the origin and the diffusion of evils in the present day. The following five books are directed against those who, while they admit that these evils have been, and always will be, the attributes of humanity, and that the amount of the evils varies with places, times, and persons, yet argue that the worship of many gods and the sacrifices offered in worship to them possess a value in relation to the life after death. In these ten books then those two futile opinions, which are antagonistic to Christianity, find their refutation. But as I did not wish to be accused of having merely controverted the doctrines of other people, without enunciating my own, this is the object of the second part of this work, which is contained in twelve books. It is true indeed that, when necessity occurs, I do enunciate my own doctrines in the ten earlier books, and do controvert the doctrines of my adversaries in the twelve later books. In the second half of the work the first four of the twelve books contain the origin of the two cities, the City of God and the city of this world; the second four contain their process or progress; the third four, the final books, their appointed ends. It is so that, while the twenty-two books are all occupied with the description of both cities, yet they derived their title from the better city, and were called by preference, "The City of God."¹¹

It is clear that the author began writing with the intention of issuing merely a polemic; and indeed, "contra Paganos" has always been part of the full title.¹² Yet through the years the thing grew on him, even as he handled it, into more than a polemic, - into a complete synthesis of both the negative and the positive arguments for Christianity.

The De Civitate Dei may be summarized as follows:

Paganism is incapable of giving man real peace and happiness either in this world or in the next. Alaric's sack of Rome, terrible as that calamity was, does not justify the pagans in blaming Christians for alienating the old patronal deities of Rome. The blessings and the ills of this life have at all times been the lot of good and bad people alike. As a matter of fact, respect for Christian shrines softened the barbarity of the invaders. Even before the advent of Christ, the pagan gods could not protect the Romans from the greatest calamity of all - moral corruption, - and from the many temporal evils narrated in Roman history. The glory of the Empire is not to be ascribed to Jove or any other, lesser deity, but rather to the one, true God, by Whose power alone earthly kingdoms are established and preserved. Nor is a blind Fate, or Destiny, (fatum) the explanation. The lust for glory of the early Romans guided by the Providence of a free, personal God explains the Roman ascendancy.

Paganism cannot prepare the soul for eternal happiness. The popular mythology, as stated by Varro, the greatest of pagan theologians, abounds in contradictions. Platonism is facile princeps among philosophies, approaching nearest to Christian truth. Yet the demon worship which is part of that system leads to shameless and superstitious acts done in the name of religion. As a matter of fact, good demons (i. e., angels) desire that the worship of latria be reserved for God alone. Jesus Christ is the only efficacious mediator between God and men.

And therefore, ((the author says at the central turning point of his work)) in these ten books, though not meeting, I dare say, the expectation of some, yet I have, as the true God and Lord has vouchsafed to aid me, satisfied the desire of certain persons, by refuting the objections of the ungodly, who prefer their own gods to the Founder of the holy city, about which we undertook to speak. Of these ten books, the first five were directed against those who think we should worship the gods for the sake of the blessings of this life, and the second five against those who think we should worship them for the sake of the life which is to be after death. And now, in fulfilment of the promise I made in the first book, I shall go on to say, as God shall aid me, what I think needs to be said regarding the origin, history, and deserved ends of the two cities, which, as already remarked, are in this world commingled and implicated with one another.¹³

The history of the world is the story of Divine Providence drawing ultimate good out of the struggle between the two cities. The struggle began with the creation of the angels and their division into good and bad. Genesis relates the origin of the visible world, the creation and fall of man. Death resulted

from Adam's sin. But man was to be regenerated, and the citizens of the heavenly city to rise from the grave. The disintegration of man's nature following original sin led to division of the human family into the opposing cities, whose historical development is marked off into four great periods of time:

- (1) from the creation to the deluge (Noah),
- (2) from the deluge to the kings (David),
- (3) from the kings to the Incarnation (Christ),
- (4) from the Incarnation to the end of the world.

Both cities seek their end in happiness, but only the people of Christ know the nature of true peace and happiness. At the end of the world shall come the general judgment, and the final separation of the two cities, all of which has been liberally foretold in Holy Scripture. The city of earth will be punished eternally in hellfire; and no argument of unbelief can disprove this terrifying end. The triumphant City of God will enjoy everlasting peace in heaven; for the saints will share the ecstasy of the soul in the eternal vision of God.

Characteristics of the De Civitate Dei

Due to the fact that composition of the De Civitate Dei was strung out over many years, there are features about the work which make it at times drag along too slowly for the taste of

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modern quick-readers. The work is interspersed with repetitions and digressions. The author may suddenly reopen a question supposedly settled on a previous page. Again, he seems to labor over certain arguments which are perfectly evident to us now, looking backward to the fifth century. For example, the corruption of pagan Rome is exposed many times over with concrete evidence.¹⁴ The impotence of Roman deities is demonstrated with prolixity.¹⁵ Notably, as regards warfare, the subject of this thesis, does St. Augustine repeat himself.

Random examples of the author's discursiveness are his considerations on the authority of the Septuagint;¹⁶ on prophecies concerning Christ made by the Erythrean and other Sybils;¹⁷ on human freaks and monstrosities - Pygmies, Skiopodes,¹⁸ Cynocephali, Hermaphrodites.¹⁹ Augustine works like the gleaner, who wanders far afield, yet never fails to return with a handsome sheaf to add to the shock and thus increase the total harvest.

Some of the arguments advanced are no longer persuasive; some few are absolutely invalid by modern scientific standards. A few points appear extremely naive to the pundit. Biblical scholars no longer reckon the age of the world with exclusive respect to Old Testament chronology.²⁰ The existence of antipodes could now be denied only by a madman.²¹

Influence of the De Civitate Dei

Undoubtedly Augustine's writings, as they were published,

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exerted a powerful influence on his contemporaries.²² The prestige of his De Civitate Dei in following ages would make an interesting historical study; for certainly it affected institutions like the Papacy of Gregory the Great and the medieval Church, the Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne. It affected the development of Catholic doctrine, v. g., the Mystical Body of Christ; it helped to mold the great works of utopian thought which mark the stream of European literature.²³

At the present time the De Civitate Dei commands much more than mere historical interest. Christian thinkers and leaders suggest the same remedy for the modern world's troubles as did the Bishop of Hippo for the ancient world's. Augustine pointed to a new society and a new way of life already in existence, alone capable of restoring tranquillity. It was the supernatural life of all those incorporated in the Civitas Dei. He urged his compatriots to turn to the Christian religion:

This, rather, is the religion worthy of your desires, O admirable Roman race, - the progeny of your Scaevolus and Scipios, of Regulus, and of Fabricius. This rather covet, this distinguish from that foul vanity and crafty malice of the devils. If there is in your nature any eminent virtue, only by true piety is it purged and perfected, while by impiety it is wrecked and punished. Choose now what you will pursue, that your praise may be not in yourself, but in the true God, in whom is no error. For of popular glory you have had your share; but by the secret providence of God, the true religion was not offered to your choice. Awake, it is now day; as you have already awakened in the persons of some in whose perfect virtue and sufferings for the true faith we glory: for they, contending on all sides with hostile powers, and conquering them all by bravely dying, have purchased for us this country of ours with their blood; to which country we invite you, and exhort you to add yourselves to the number of the

citizens of this city, which also has a sanctuary of its own in the true remission of sins.²⁴

This is essentially the theme of Papal utterances for the past hundred years. The De Civitate Dei, says Wellldon, "is a book which breathed hope into a despondent, and faith into a sceptical, society, and which turned men's eyes away from the grave of a dead or dying world to the resurrection of a living and conquering Christ. The De Civitate Dei made its appeal at its publication, and may make the same appeal now, to an age crying aloud for reconstruction. Civilization itself awaits a new inspiring ideal of life. It halts between revolution and revelation. It seeks half unconsciously, yet only too pathetically, for moral and spiritual assurance. It lifts its eyes from earth to heaven, and as yet the answer of heaven is not made clear to it. There is, perhaps, no more urgent need than that a new Augustine should restore to the world its confidence to-day, as he restored it fifteen centuries ago. It may still prove that the true source of confidence lies, and must forever lie, in the City of God."²⁵

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Cp. the "Meditation on Two Standards" in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. The D. C. D. might have been written as an epic amplification of the simple points for consideration prescribed by Loyola.
2. The same Marcellinus to whom A. addressed himself by letter on the subject of war. Cf. Wright, "St. Augustine and International Peace."
3. Ps., 94:15
4. Jas., 4:6; I Pet., 5:5.
5. Virgil, Aen., vi. 854.
6. I John, 2:15-17; Apoc., 3:12; 21:2, 10; Gal., 4:25-26; Heb., 11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14.
7. "Fecerunt itaque civitates duas amores duo, terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei, caelestem uero amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui." In the works of ascetical writers this is a most frequently quoted sentence from A., perhaps second only to that in Conf. 1: "fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te."
8. Ps., 3:3.
9. (Ps., 18:1) xiv. 28.
10. Retract., ii. 43. 2.
11. The translation is quoted from Welldon, p. vii. The original appears at the head of practically every Latin edition of the D. C. D.
12. Sancti Aurelii Augustini, Episcopi Hipponensis, De Civitate Dei contra Paganos Libri XXII.
13. x. 32.
14. See esp. Book I, passim.
15. See esp. Books II, III.
16. xviii. 42-43.
17. xviii. 23.

18. So called "because in the hot weather they lie down on their backs and shade themselves with their feet." xvi. 8
19. ibid.
20. xii. 11
21. xvi. 9. "But as to the fable that there are Antipodes, that is to say, men on the other side of the earth, where the sun rises when it sets to us, men who walk with their feet opposite ours, that is on no ground credible. . ."
22. A letter to A. from Macedonius, "vicar" of Africa, testifies to the apologetic value and the immediate ascendancy of the D. C. D.: "Explicui tuos libros ((sc., the first three)). . . injecerunt manum, ereptumque aliis sollicitudinum causis, suis vinculis illigarunt. . . ut ego anceps sim quid in illis magis mirer, sacerdotii perfectionem, philosophiae dogmata, historiae plenam notitiam, an facundiae jucunditatem, quae ita imperitos etiam illicere potest, ut donec explicent non desistant, et cum explicaverint, adhuc requirant. Convicti namque sunt impudenter pertinaces, jam inde a bonis, quae memorant, saeculis pro naturae rerum obscuritate contigisse pejora, falsosque omnes illitis quadam dulcedine felicitatibus suis, per quas non ad beatitudinem, sed ad praerupta sunt ducti: haec vero nostra praecepta, et simplicis verique Dei mysteria, praeter vitam perpetuam quam purissimis virtutibus pollicentur, etiam haec saecularia et necessario qui nati sumus eventura mitigare. Et usus es validissimo exemplo recentis calamitatis, etc." Ep., cliv. Cf. Bright, Lessons from the Lives of Three Great Fathers, p. 264-5.
23. The D. C. D. "has been, if not the primary motive, yet at least the potent auxiliary, of such books as Bishop Otho's 'Chronicon,' or, as he practically calls it, the 'Book of the Two Cities, Babylon and Jerusalem,' of Dante's 'De Monarchia,' of Bacon's 'New Atlantis,' of More's 'Utopia,' of Vico's 'Scienza Nuova,' of Leibnitz's 'De Jure Suprematus.'" - Welldon, p. 1.
24. ii. 29
25. Welldon, p. lvi.

CHAPTER III

ROLE OF WARFARE IN THE DE CIVITATE DEI

Warfare occasioned the City of God. Alaric the Goth and his Roman army of barbarians had ravaged the imperial city; the hearts of civilized men, and of all patriotic Romans, were dismayed.¹ North Africa - including Augustine's see of Hippo - was immediately jammed with Italian refugees, who had fled to the safety of other shores, away from immediate danger of being trapped in by the rebellious legions.

The pagans among the refugees loudly blamed the Christian religion for Rome's disaster. Some of the most arrogant complaints came from heathens who had actually saved their skins in the debacle by seeking sanctuary in the temples dedicated to the martyrs of Christ. The Goths had respected these shrines. St. Augustine saw through the cowardly pretence of the pagans. He saw that their complaints were just another case of putting into practice the Roman household proverb: "pluvia deficit, causa Christiani sunt."² Of these refugees he says that

in their mad and blasphemous insolence, they used against His name those very lips wherewith they falsely claimed that same name that their lives might be spared. In the places consecrated to Christ, where for His sake no enemy would injure them, they restrained their tongues that they might be safe and protected; but no sooner do they emerge from these sanctuaries, than they unbridle these tongues to hurl against Him curses full of hate.³

This "mad and blasphemous insolence" was too much for a

saint and a fighter like Augustine. He was tied up with the affairs of his own diocese; his genius was being constantly requisitioned to help in solving the internal problems of the universal Church. Yet Augustine was not too busy to refute these wild charges of a dying, but stubborn, paganism. In the Retractiones he writes:

Meanwhile ((A. D. 410)) Rome was destroyed by the invasion of the Goths under Alaric. It was an overwhelming disaster. The votaries of the many false gods, or the pagans (to give them their usual name), in their effort to make out that the Christian religion was responsible for the overthrow of Rome, began to blaspheme the true God with even more than their habitual bitterness and virulence. This circumstance it was which led me in my zeal for the House of God to set about writing my treatise on the City of God, as a reply to their blasphemies or their errors. The work occupied me during several years; for there were many other claims which came in the way, and, as it would not have been right to postpone them, the task of satisfying them made a prior demand upon me. However, the great work on the City of God was at last completed in twenty-two books.⁴

"Opposition" - the Key to History

The City of God is the story of two cities ranged in opposite camps, one against the other. If any one word may be called the key to understanding the moral universe, I believe that the word is opposition. The history of rational creatures is the history of opposed forces clashing. Even before the visible world was created, opposition had developed among those beings of pure intelligence - the angels. Various oppositions in the course of time have developed among human beings. All great movements - religious, political, military, scientific,

literary, philosophical - have been precipitated by the opposition of some forceful, adverse ideology.

Nevertheless, the forces of evil in the moral order, which fight the forces of good, cannot frustrate the ultimate purpose of the universe, which is the external glory of God. Strife only intensifies and more clearly reveals God's glory; for the Designer and Creator, infinitely wise and infinitely powerful, draws good even from the evil opposing Him.⁵

For God would never have created any, I do not say angel, but even man, whose future wickedness He foreknew, unless He had equally known to what uses in behalf of the good He could turn him, thus embellishing the course of the ages, as it were an exquisite poem set off with antitheses. For what are called antitheses are among the most elegant of the ornaments of speech. They might be called in Latin "oppositions."⁶

Let the reader judge whether St. Augustine, philosopher of history, holds that "opposition" is the key to the world's development.

In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians ((6:7-10)) the Apostle Paul also makes a graceful use of antithesis, in that place where he says, "By the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." As, then, these oppositions of contraries lend beauty to the language, so the beauty of the course of this world is achieved by the opposition of contraries, arranged, as it were, by an eloquence not of words, but of things. This is quite plainly stated in the Book of Ecclesiasticus ((33:15)), in this way: "Good is set against evil, and life against death; so is the sinner against the godly. So look upon all the works of the Most High, and these are two and two, one against another."⁷

In general, then, the City of God is at war with the city of earth; while the city of earth is also at war with itself, one part contending with another. St. Augustine mentions the fight between Cain and Abel, symbolic of the war raging between the two cities; the fight between Romulus and Remus, symbolic of the internal war of the earthly city. All the main lines of opposition in the moral universe are defined in the De Civitate Dei. An analysis of Augustine's somewhat involved account reveals the following:

- (1) The wicked contend with themselves,
with the good, and
with one another.
- (2) The perfectly good (in facto esse) are at peace with themselves, and with all others.
- (3) The imperfectly good (in fieri) contend with themselves, and with one another: They contend with one another
 - (a) righteously, on the same points in which they resist themselves;
 - (b) unrighteously, in their unregenerate carnal lusts.

St. Augustine's own words:

The quarrel, then, between Romulus and Remus shows how the earthly city is divided against itself; that which fell out between Cain and Abel illustrated the hatred that subsists between the two cities, that of God and that of men. The wicked war with the wicked; the good also war with the wicked. But with the good, good men, or at least perfectly good men, cannot war; though, while only going on towards perfection, they war to this extent, that every good man resists others in those points in which he resists himself. And in each individual "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh."⁸ This spiritual lusting, therefore, can be at war with the carnal lust of another man; or carnal lust may be at war with the spiritual desires of another, in some such way as good and wicked men are at war; or, still more certainly, the carnal lusts of two men, good but not yet perfect, contend together, just as the wicked contend with the wicked, until the health of those who are

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under the treatment of grace attains final victory.⁹

The City of God, therefore, is at peace with itself, held together by the bond of divine charity. The city of earth, operating on the centrifugal principle of hate, suffers constant turmoil. Its chaotic fragments can present only a very superficial united front, - the accidental bond of common hatred against the Civitas Dei.¹⁰ Internal peace characterizes the heavenly city; war characterizes the earthly city. So it is in time, and in eternity.¹¹

So far in the present dissertation, St. Augustine has been considered only as a moralist discussing spiritual and supernatural warfare. How then does he come to speak of physical war - the war of swords carried on by the nations, or by political factions within a nation? It would seem, furthermore, that subjects of the heavenly city are just as much involved in the hatred and confusion of human wars as are subjects of the earthly city. The evidence apparently contradicts what has been said about the peace of the saints.

In the De Civitate Dei Augustine has two principal occasions for speaking formally and explicitly of physical warfare, viz., in the first part (especially Books I-IV) when treating of the sack of Rome by Alaric; and in the last part (especially Books XVIII-XIX) when tracing out the history of the civitas terrena. In other passages throughout the entire work it is sometimes hard to determine whether the author refers primarily to physical or moral warfare. Frequently he uses physical war to symbolize the moral.

Why good people must inevitably be caught in the throes of war, indiscriminately with the wicked, is a real puzzle. It is fully unraveled only by a mind sharing the supernatural outlook of St. Augustine. Recourse must be had to divine revelation. In this life the citizens of both sides are mixed together, like the wheat and the tares of Christ's parable. The City of God has not attained full measure of peace; for "it still lives by faith in this fleeting course of time, and sojourns as a stranger in the midst of the ungodly."¹²

The Right of War

St. Augustine's doctrine on the right of war must be inserted here. Otherwise, the reader might run through long sections of this study and only conclude that Augustine must have been a pacifist. But he was not a pacifist, in the sense of being opposed on philosophic or religious principles to the use of military force for any purpose whatsoever. As a Christian he loved peace; as a Christian he also loved justice. In the whole course of the De Civitate Dei it has not occurred to the author that he ought to demonstrate man's natural right to wage ^{just} wars.¹³

In the same breath, therefore, Augustine admits the overwhelming misery of war and the necessity of just wars. Concerning Rome's imperialistic campaigns, he says:

If I attempted to give an adequate description of these manifold disasters, these stern and lasting necessities, though I am quite unequal to the task, what limit could I set? But, say they ((sc., Roman imperialists)), the wise man will wage just wars. As if he would not all the rather lament the necessity of just wars, if he

remembers that he is a man; for if they were not just he would not wage them, and would therefore be delivered from all wars. For it is the wrong-doing of the opposing party which compels the wise man to wage just wars; and this wrong-doing, even though it gave rise to no war, should still be matter of grief to man because it is man's wrong-doing. Let every one, then, who thinks with pain on all these great evils, so horrible, so ruthless, acknowledge that this is misery. And if any one either endures or thinks of them without mental pain, this is a more miserable plight still, for he thinks himself happy because he has lost human feeling.¹⁴

In another place St. Augustine calmly mentions that conquered enemies had been put to the sword "by the custom and right of war."¹⁵ Here "jus belli" evidently refers to legal right as well as to authentic natural right.

But what of the divine law promulgated from Mount Sinai, when God thundered: "Thou shalt not kill?" To this precept there are two classes of exceptions: the first class is contained in a further divine law, which applies generally; the second class refers to any special commission from God, which can apply only individually. Included in the general law is the right of war, along with the right to execute public justice within the State. In the second category are such cases as the one of Samson, who pulled down the house on himself and his enemies.

However, the same divine authority has made certain exceptions to its own law that men may not be killed. The exceptions, whom God commands to be killed, are of two kinds, according as the homicide is justifiable either by a general law, or by an express commission given for a time to a private person, in which case the individual, who owes obedience to God's command, does not himself do the killing, - but is just like a sword in the hand of him who uses it. Accordingly those men by no means violate the precept "Thou shalt not kill," who wage war at the command of God; or who

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in conformity with His laws represent in their persons the public authority (i. e., government in conformity with right reason), and in this capacity punish criminals with death. And Abraham is not only not guilty on the charge of cruelty, but is even applauded for his piety, because he was ready to slay his son, not out of passion, but out of obedience. It is even reasonably asked whether we are to consider Jephthah's slaying his daughter when they met, as being done at the command of God; since Jephthah had vowed to sacrifice to God whatever he first met in his victorious return from battle. Likewise, Samson, since the collapse of the building crushed both himself and his enemies, is excused only on the ground, that the Spirit Who habitually wrought miracles through him, had given secret orders to this effect. With these two exceptions, therefore, - made either by a just law that applies generally, or by a special intimation from God Himself, the principle of all justice, - whoever kills a person (himself or another) is guilty of murder.¹⁶

Consequently, a soldier acting under official orders, not only is permitted to kill, he must kill! If, however, the soldier acts beyond orders in killing, he immediately becomes a murderer.

The soldier who has slain a man in obedience to the authority under which he is lawfully commissioned, is not accused of murder by any law of his state; nay, if he has not slain him, it is then he is accused of treason to the state, and of despising the law. But if he has been acting on his own authority, and at his own impulse, he has in this case incurred the crime of shedding human blood. And thus he is punished for **doing without orders the very thing he is punished for neglecting to do when he has been ordered.**¹⁷

Furthermore, the believing Christian who reads the Bible as the revelation of God is forced to conclude that war in itself is not contrary to the natural law. Under certain conditions, men have an innate, natural right to fight with deadly weapons in defence of other natural rights. The Author of human nature cannot contradict Himself by commanding something contrary to

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nature. He allows His creatures to use war as a means of furthering His ends; He has frequently commanded them to do so. St. Augustine cites many such cases from the Old Testament, for example: "Joshua the son of Nun succeeded Moses, and settled in the land of promise the people he had brought in, having by divine authority conquered the people by whom it was formerly possessed."¹⁸

Summary

Composition of the De Civitate Dei was occasioned by an act of war - Alaric's sack of Rome; and war in the moral order is the central theme of the entire work. St. Augustine takes a sweeping, apocalyptic view of the everlasting opposition between the City of God and the city of earth - Christ and Antichrist. Physical warfare (the immediate interest of this dissertation) is discussed at length by St. Augustine in two important sections of the work, viz., where he speaks of the sack of Rome, and where he narrates the history of the civitas terrena. There can be no doubt that the author concedes a natural right of man to wage public wars which are just; for war of its very nature is not opposed to the moral law.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. St. Jerome can hardly be accused of any special pleading for pagan Rome. Yet he wrote in 410 to the "Virgo Christi Principia": ". . . terribilis de Occidente rumor affertur, obsideri Romam, et auro salutem civium redimi, spoliatosque rursum circumdari, ut post substantiam, vitam quoque perderent. Haeret vox, et singultus intercipiunt verba dicantis. Capitur Urbs, quae totum cepit orbem: imo fame perit antequam gladio, et vix pauci qui caperentur, inventi sunt. Ad nefandos cibos erupit esurientium rabies, et sua invicem membra laniant, dum mater non parcat lactenti infantiae, et recipit utero, quem paulo ante effuderat. 'Nocte Moab capta est, nocte cecidit murus ejus.' (Isai. 15.1). 'Deus, venerunt gentes in haereditatem tuam, polluerunt templum sanctum tuum. Posuerunt Jerusalem in pomorum custodiam: posuerunt cadavera sanctorum tuorum escas volatilibus caeli, carnes sanctorum tuorum bestiis terrae. Effuderunt sanguinem eorum tanquam aquam in circuitu Jerusalem, et non erat qui sepeliret.' (Ps. 78.1 et seqq.).

Quis cladem illius noctis, quis funera fando
 Explicet, aut possit lacrymis aequare dolerem?
 Urbs antiqua ruit, multos dominata per annos;
 Plurima, perque vias sparguntur inertia passim
 Corpora, perque domos, et plurima mortis imago.
 (Virgil. 1.II Aeneid.)."

- Migne, P. L., Tomus XXII, col. 1094.

2. ii. 3
3. i. 3
4. Retract., ii. 43. 1. Another part of the same passage was quoted above in Ch. 2, p. 11.
5. "Opposition" in the Christian philosophy of life, as described, differs vastly from the "opposition" found in the exaggerated dualism of the Manicheans, and from the "opposition" in the monistic dialectic of the Hegelians. The question of God's drawing good from evil will be treated at length in Ch. 7.
6. xi. 18. Italics added. "Antitheta enim quae appellantur in ornamentis elocutionis sunt decentissima, quae Latine appellantur obposita, uel quod expressius dicitur, contraposita."
7. ibid. Italics added. "Quadam non verborum, sed rerum eloquentia contrariorum obpositione saeculi pulchritudo

componitur."

8. Gal., 5:17
9. xv. 5
10. The unrest of the wicked and the peace of the saints is philosophically explained by the nature of the good coveted by either party. The wicked seek material, temporal, extended goods, which must eventually be atomized and evaporated in being shared with others. The quest for more and more of such goods is necessarily a selfish, envious, and violent quest. The saints, on the other hand, seek heavenly, eternal, spiritual goods, which are actually increased and intensified on being shared with a partner. Hence, the quest for spiritual good is necessarily altruistic, zealous, and peaceful. (loc. cit.)
11. Cf. xix. 10, 11, 28
12. i. Praefatio
13. Elsewhere A. has proven the right of just war. Consult the works referred to in Ch. 1, p. 4.
14. xix. 7. Italics added. The causes which can justify war will be considered in detail in Ch. 5.
15. i. 24. Italics added.
16. i. 21. I have revised Dods' faulty translation.
17. i. 26.
18. xviii. 11

PART TWO

INTRODUCTORY

The following chapters, constituting Part Two, will be concerned with physical warfare. Unless otherwise noted, the term war will be used to signify either the whole or any element of what is expressed in the following definition: "a contention carried on by force of arms between sovereign states, or communities having in this regard the right of states. The term is often used for civil strife, sedition, rebellion properly so called, or even for the undertaking of a state to put down by force organized bodies of outlaws."¹

In this dissertation no attempt will be made at criticizing the Augustinian views on war. The purpose is rather to perceive distinctly the nature of the views expressed in the De Civitate Dei. As a matter of fact, St. Augustine's teaching has been thoroughly tested by the centuries; for the most part it has been judged sound.

The City of God does not necessarily represent the definitive mind of the Bishop of Hippo, even though it is the work of his intellectual maturity. Neither does the City of God represent his complete mind on the subject of war. Consequently, the picture of warfare in the following chapters will sometimes lack balance and symmetry; it will be marred with several lacunae.

The fault, if it lies anywhere, must be imputed to the De Civitate Dei itself, whose author has much to say on certain aspects of warfare - like the ethics of war, - and practically nothing to say about other aspects - for example, military tactics. We must bear in mind that Augustine was writing a polemic against paganism, and an exposition of the Christian way of life, - not a treatise on physical war.

In quoting St. Augustine I have freely lifted texts from their contexts, frequently using them for a purpose not primarily intended by the original; many times, perhaps, my own purpose was not even explicitly present to the mind of the author. Yet the interpretation put on them is sound, I think, and was always implicit to the mind of the great doctor.

In seeking to appreciate the concrete decisions of St. Augustine the reader must see them against the background of conditions prevailing in ancient warfare. Peace-loving citizens of the present age might find many opinions a little to bellicose; and so they would be, were Augustine to apply them literally in the world today, when the disastrous results of war have been multiplied many times. The author himself teaches that the evils consequent on warfare must always be balanced against the good cause for which a nation fights. The legions of antiquity fought their enemy in a single field. First they hurled stones and javelins, then advanced for closeup combat with sword and fist. Such was the military engagement which Augustine knew. What could he realize about modern total war? Did he comprehend

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even the possibility of passionate hatred being artificially spawned on the populace through mass propaganda? of sixty-ton mechanical dinosaurs? of unannounced torpedoes? of stratospheric projectiles which fail to distinguish soldier from housewife? of 10,000,000 people uprooted from their homes? of famine stalking a continent?

Nevertheless, in spite of the tremendous difference in methods of fighting, there are still many striking parallels between the fifth century world and the twentieth century world. No attention will be directed to the parallels in the present study, since any adequate analysis is work for the student of both ancient and current history. Similarities which might safely be pointed out are so evident as to clamor for attention by themselves.

Note to the Introductory:

1. Macksey, "War"

CHAPTER IV

WAR IN ITS ACTUALITY

"If I attempted," remarks Augustine, "to give an adequate description of these manifold disasters ((wars)), these stern and lasting necessities, though I am quite unequal to the task, what limit could I set?"¹ The misery of actual combat is well symbolized in an incident narrated in the De Civitate Dei:

Many had been moved by the story of the soldier, who, on stripping the spoils of his slain foe, recognised in the stripped corpse his own brother, and, with deep curses on civil wars, slew himself there and then on his brother's body.²

Misery comes from disorder, from lack of peace. When creatures are out of their natural place they throw awry that "well-ordered concord," that "tranquillity of order," which is the essence of peace. "Order is the distribution which allots things equal and unequal each to its own place."³ Still, even the creature at war retains its own nature; and whatever is of nature has order, and consequently a degree of peace, even though it be distorted with pain. The very misery of those at war implies the existence of peace, since misery is only the natural (orderly) result of anyone's being out of order.

Augustine sums up the argument:

As, then, there may be life without pain, while there cannot be pain without some kind of life, so there may be peace without war, but there cannot be war without some kind of peace, because war presupposes the existence of some natures to wage it, and

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these natures cannot exist without peace of one kind or other.⁴

Dialectic of this sort is small comfort to the victims of war. But it is not intended to minimize the evils. It is acknowledged theorizing, pure speculation. The argument is just a specific facet of the whole Augustinian answer to the problem of evil, namely, that evil has no positive existence, but is the want of something required by nature (privatio boni debiti). It is the explanation of evil which St. Augustine received from the Platonists, the explanation accepted also by Aristotle, and later taken over into the Christian tradition. This explanation of evil justifies philosophically the optimism of the Western world, in spite of the fact that Christendom has been shaken periodically with terrible catastrophes.

The Evils Connected with War

But for all that, Augustine in no way makes light of the evils of war. As the human family expanded, and sought living space in further parts of the world; as the human intellect learned more of nature's secrets and devised ways to harness natural forces, the conditions of war became more and more destructive. St. Augustine clearly saw that sad truth, as is evidenced by the contrast which he points out between the formation of the earlier Assyrian Empire on the one hand and the later Roman Empire on the other:⁵

The city of Rome was founded, like another Babylon, and as it were the daughter of the former Babylon, by which God was pleased to conquer the whole world,

and subdue it far and wide by bringing it into one fellowship of government and laws. For there were already powerful and brave peoples and nations trained to arms, who did not easily yield, and whose subjugation necessarily involved great danger and destruction as well as great and horrible labour. For when the Assyrian kingdom subdued almost all Asia, although this was done by fighting, yet the wars could not be very fierce or difficult, because the nations were as yet untrained to resist, and neither so many nor so great as afterward; forasmuch as, after that greatest and indeed universal flood, when only eight men escaped in Noah's ark, not much more than a thousand years had passed when Ninus⁶ subdued all Asia with the exception of India. But Rome did not with the same quickness and facility wholly subdue all those nations of the east and west which we see brought under the Roman empire, because, in its gradual increase, in whatever direction it was extended, it found them strong and warlike.⁷

Augustine relates many concrete examples of the woes connected with war, all of which could be boiled down into General Sherman's curt observation that "war is hell." Perhaps no war in history was fought under the same peculiarly sad circumstances as those in the Roman war for the Sabine women. A few sentences here and there from Augustine's description bring this out.

The Romans, then, conquered that they might, with hands stained in the blood of their fathers-in-law, wrench the miserable girls from their embrace, - girls who dared not weep for their slain parents, for fear of offending their victorious husbands; and while yet the battle was raging, stood with their prayers on their lips, and knew not for whom to utter them. . . neither their grief nor their fear could be freely expressed. For the victories of their husbands, involving the destruction of fellow-townsmen, relatives, brothers, fathers, caused either pious agony or cruel exultation. Moreover, as the fortune of war is capricious, some of them lost their husbands by the sword of their parents, while others lost husband and father together in mutual destruction.⁸

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The long peace during the reign of Numa Pompilius (B. C. 715-672) became tedious to the Romans, and so a fight was picked with the city of Alba Longa to bring an end to peace: "but with what endless slaughter and detriment of both states!" Alba was the city "which had been founded by Ascanius, son of Aeneas, and which was more properly the mother of Rome than Troy herself. . . ."

If two gladiators entered the arena to fight, one being father, the other his son, who would endure such a spectacle? who would not be revolted by it? How, then, could that be a glorious war which a daughter-state waged against its mother? Or did it constitute a difference, that the battlefield was not an arena, and that the wide plains were filled with the carcasses not of two gladiators, but of many of the flower of two nations; and that those contests were viewed not by the amphitheatre, but by the whole world, and furnished a profane spectacle both to those alive at the time, and to their posterity, so long as the fame of it is handed down?

"In the conflict both inflicted and received such damage, that at length both parties wearied of the struggle. It was then devised that the war should be decided by the combat of three brothers near of age from each army:¹⁰ from the Romans the three Horatii stood forward, from the Albans the three Curiatii." Their combat, with its aftermath, is one of the most famous legends in Roman history.

Two of the Horatii were overcome and disposed of by the Curiatii; but by the remaining Horatius the three Curiatii were slain. Thus Rome remained victorious, but with such a sacrifice that only one survivor returned to his home.¹¹

"And to this combat of the three brothers there was added another atrocious and horrible catastrophe."

For as the two nations had formerly been friendly (being related and neighbours), the sister of the Horatii had been betrothed to one of the Curiatii; and she, when she saw her brother wearing the spoils of her betrothed, burst into tears, and was slain by her own brother in his anger.¹²

Then St. Augustine gives the reader a little look into the reactions of his own warm heart:

To me, this one girl seems to have been more humane than the whole Roman people. I cannot think her to blame for lamenting the man to whom already she had plighted her troth, or, as perhaps she was doing, for grieving that her brother should have slain him to whom he had promised his sister. For why do we praise the grief of Aeneas¹³ over the enemy cut down even by his own hand? . . . I demand, in the name of humanity, that if men are praised for tears shed over enemies conquered by themselves, a weak girl should not be counted criminal for bewailing her lover slaughtered by the hand of her brother.¹⁴

The most calamitous war in Roman history was the second war against Carthage, during which Hannibal, gathering momentum as he moved through Spain, over the Appenines and across Gaul, burst then through the Alps to spread slaughter and destruction down the length of Italy. After Cannae, Hannibal shipped off to Carthage three bushels of gold rings, indicative of the number of Roman nobility slain. "And the frightful slaughter of common rank and file . . . , numerous in proportion to their meanness, was rather to be conjectured than accurately reported." Such was the scarcity of Roman manpower after the battle of Cannae that slaves and criminals were readily manumitted to fill up the decimated legions.¹⁵

"But among all the disasters of the second Punic war there occurred none more lamentable, or calculated to excite deeper

complaint, than the fate of the Saguntines," besieged by Hannibal.

In the eighth or ninth month, this opulent but ill-fated city, dear as it was to its own state and to Rome, was taken, and subjected to treatment which one cannot read, much less narrate, without horror. And yet, because it bears directly on the matter in hand,¹⁶ I will briefly touch on it. First, then, famine wasted the Saguntines, so that even human corpses were eaten by some; so at least it is recorded.¹⁷ Subsequently, when thoroughly worn out, that they might at least escape the ignominy of falling into the hands of Hannibal, they publicly erected a huge funeral pile, and cast themselves into its flames, while at the same time they slew their children and themselves with the sword. . .¹⁸

Augustine calls attention to the very special misery of civil wars, beginning with the agrarian movement of the Gracchi and continuing down to the final victory/of Octavius over Antony and to the stabilization of the Empire. This lengthy historical account included in the De Civitate Dei is a notable example of the way in which the author gently maneuvers the facts of history to strengthen his polemic.¹⁹ The main purpose of the historical narrative is identical with the purpose of the first ten books, namely, to show that the Christian religion could not be held responsible for Rome's deplorable condition (fifth century, A.D.) since calamities as great were regularly experienced long before the advent of Christ. The atrocities of the Civil Wars were usually part of the legalized reprisals perpetrated by the new party come into power. Since the proscriptions constitute a result of war, rather than a part of actual combat, they are left for detailed consideration in Chapter Six.

A conquering general of ancient times, when he had captured

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a city, had ordinarily only two courses of action open to him: either slaughter the captives or enslave them, either put them to the sword or put them in chains.²⁰ The sword, of course, was much the easier of the two.

Fimbria, "the veriest villain among Marius' partisans," destroyed Troy more fiercely than the Greeks had done centuries before. "But Fimbria from the first gave orders that not a life should be spared, and burnt up together the city and all its inhabitants."²¹

Speaking of the trustworthiness of Virgil's account of the Grecian sack of Troy, Augustine is unwilling to determine whether or not in this particular case the poet is narrating the literal truth. "Perhaps Virgil, in the manner of poets, has depicted what never really happened?" he says; then at once, to correct any possible wrong impression, he adds: "But there is no question that he depicted the usual custom of an enemy when sacking a city."²² Very deliberately St. Augustine calls slaughtering captives part of the right of war.²³

To authenticate the picture which he paints, Augustine cites regarding this custom the testimony of Caesar himself (in a speech before the Roman Senate) describing the fate of conquered cities.

Virgins and boys are violated, children torn from the embrace of their parents, matrons subjected to whatever should be the pleasure of the conquerors, temples and houses plundered, slaughter and burning rife; in fine, all things filled with arms, corpses, blood, and wailing."²⁴

The coarseness of army life in wartime, the wild excitement

of battle, the flow of human blood, have always let loose in men the lust of animal passions. That is one of the unhappy by-products of even the holiest of wars. The wholesale violations of women by Alaric's soldiers in the sack of Rome exemplifies that tendency. Augustine describes at length in the first book of the De Civitate Dei this brutality of the victorious Goths.

Christian Mitigation of War

It is only to be expected that the supernatural character of Christianity would mitigate somewhat the rigors of pagan war-faring. Building up his argument, the author finds it very profitable to indicate frequently the amenity of "sanctuary," honored at Christian shrines even by the barbarians. With telling sarcasm he points out that "they who most impardonably calumniate this Christian era, are the very men who either themselves fled for asylum to the places specially dedicated to Christ, or were led there by the barbarians that they might be safe. . ."²⁵ According to Augustine this phenomenon never occurred before.

There are histories of numberless wars, both before the building of Rome and since its rise and the extension of its dominion: let these be read, and let one instance be cited in which, when a city had been taken by foreigners, the victors spared those who were found to have fled for sanctuary to the temples of their gods; or one instance in which a barbarian general gave orders that none should be put to the sword who had been found in this or that temple.²⁶ Did not Aeneas see

Dying Priam at the shrine
Staining the hearth he made divine?²⁷

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Furthermore, says Augustine, the practice of the Romans themselves, supposedly civilized by their own profession, was no better. And this was all the more surprising, because the Romans were accustomed to epitomize their world mission in the famous line of Virgil:

To spare the vanquished and subdue the proud;²⁸
they found their chief praise in the boast that they preferred
rather to forgive than to revenge an injury.²⁹

Was it possible that conquering Rome did grant sanctuary, and that the historians failed to record the fact? This explanation is rejected. "Is it to be believed," says Augustine, "that men who sought out with the greatest eagerness points they could praise, would omit those which, in their own estimation, are the most signal proofs of piety?"³⁰

Fabius, before taking Tarentum,³¹ did not prohibit slaughter or captivity in any temple. Not even the gentle Marcellus granted sanctuary:

Marcus Marcellus, a distinguished Roman, who took Syracuse, a most splendidly adorned city, is reported to have bewailed its coming ruin, and to have shed his own tears over it before he spilt its blood. He took steps also to preserve the chastity even of his enemy. For before he gave orders for the storming of the city, he issued an edict forbidding the violation of any free person. Yet the city was sacked according to the custom of war; nor do we anywhere read, that even by so chaste and gentle a commander orders were given that no one should be injured who had fled to this or that temple. And this certainly would by no means have been omitted, when neither his weeping nor his edict preservative of chastity could be passed in silence.³²

The personnel of Alaric's army was drawn from the barbarian

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nations on the frontiers. They did not possess the long tradition of the highest human culture and civilization which the world had ever seen. And yet these ruffians in sacking the City, distinguished themselves actually in that very virtue to which the Romans gave their lip service.

For in the sack of the city they ((i. e., Christian shrines)) were open sanctuary for all who fled to them, whether Christian or Pagan. To their very threshold the bloodthirsty enemy raged; there his murderous fury owned a limit. Thither did such of the enemy as had any pity convey those to whom they had given quarter, lest any less mercifully disposed might fall upon them. And, indeed, when even those murderers who everywhere else showed themselves pitiless came to these spots where that was forbidden which the licence of war permitted in every other place, their furious rage for slaughter was bridled, and their eagerness to take prisoners was quenched.³³

Summary

In brief, therefore, when speaking of actual combat, St. Augustine goes to great length pointing out the general misery of war. Slaughter or slavery awaited the conquered. Bloody fighting released the brute passions of the combatants. The Christian religion, however, mitigated the horrors of war, notably by introducing the convention of sanctuary, so well exemplified in the conduct of Alaric's barbarous troops.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. xix. 7
2. ii. 25
3. xix. 13
4. ibid.
5. A. unifies his picture of world history by considering it as the development of two great empires - Assyria and Rome:
 "Now among the very many kingdoms of the earth into which by earthly interest or lust, society is divided (which we call by the general name of the city of this world), we see that two, settled and kept distinct from each other both in time and place, have grown far more famous than the rest, first that of the Assyrians, then that of the Romans. First came one, then the other. The former arose in the east, and, immediately on its close, the latter in the west, I may speak of other kingdoms and other kings as appendages of these." (xviii. 2)
6. Ninus: "the legendary eponymous founder of Nineveh. If he lived at all his date is problematical." (c. 2000 B. C.) - Welldon, I, p. 155, note 5.
7. xviii. 22
8. iii. 13
9. iii. 14
10. "de tergeminis hinc atque inde fratribus." Dods repeatedly translates "three twin-brothers. . ." which seems to be a contradiction in terms. Livy says (i. 24): "Forte in duobus tum exercitibus erant trigemini fratres nec aetate nec viribus dispares."
11. iii. 14
12. ibid.
13. Aen., x. 821, of Lausus:
 "at vero ut vultum vidit morientis et ora,
 ora modis Anchisiades pallentia miris,
 ingemuit miserans graviter dextramque tetendit,
 etc."
14. iii. 14

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15. iii. 19.

16. sc., that the pagan gods did not protect Rome and her allies from material disaster. v. inf.

17. in Livy, xxi. 6-14.

18. iii. 20

19. For the most part A. cites Sallust as his authority. Sallust is "uir disertissimus" (viii. 3), "nobilitatae veritatis historicus" (i. 5). Livy is also an important source.

20. To the point is an interesting etymological description of the word servus (servant) in the D. C. D., xix. 15: Origo autem uocabuli seruorum in Latina lingua inde creditur ducta, quod hi, qui iure belli possent occidi, a uictoribus cum seruabantur serui fiebant, a seruando appellati."

21. iii. 7

22. i. 4. Italics added.

23. i. 24. "uictos. . . iure belli ferire potuerunt."

24. Quoted in Sallust, De Conj. Cat., 51: "rapi virgines, pueros, diuelli liberos a parentum complexu, matres familiarum pati quae uictoribus collubuissent, fana atque domos spoliari, caedem, incendia fieri, postremo armis, cadaveribus, cruore atque luctu omnia compleri."

25. iii. 31

26. "The Benedictine editors correct A. here: . . . Arrian relates that Alexander the great, after the capture of Tyre, spared the lives of his enemies who had fled to the temple of Herakles ("De Exped. Alexand.," vii. 24); Xenophon ("Agesil.," ii. 13), Cornelius Nepos ("Agesil.," 4), and Plutarch ("Agesil.," 19) that Agesilaus, after the battle of Coronea, spared the lives of those who had fled to the temple of Pallas Itonia." - Welldon, I, p. 6, note 1.

27. i. 2. "uidi Hecubam centumque nurus Priamumque per aras sanguine foedantem quos ipse sacrauerat ignis."
(Aen., ii. 501-2)

28. op. cit., vi. 853: "parcere subjectis et debellare superbos"

29. Sallust, Catil., 9: "accepta injuria ignoscere quam persequi malebant."

30. i. 6

31. Cf. Livy, xxvii. 15-16; Plutarch, "Fabius Maximus," 21-22.

32. i. 6

33. i. 1

WAR IN ITS CAUSES

No nation can for any length of time be absolutely secure from the danger of war. So remarks Augustine in commenting on a passage from the prophecy of Nathan:

"And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant him, and he shall dwell apart, and shall be troubled no more; and the son of iniquity shall not humble him any more, as from the beginning, from the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel."¹

Augustine refuses to interpret this prophecy as pointing to any period of Jewish national history, not even to the reign of Solomon, during which peace lasted through forty years; and not even to the era of Ehud, the judge, when peace continued eighty years. The prophet actually said, that "the son of iniquity (i. e., "the foreign enemy") shall not humble him any more." Scripture does commend the peace of Solomon's Jerusalem as a shadow of that great peace to come; but it was only a shadow, because temporal and short-lived. Consequently, the peace of the prophecy must be referred to the eternal Jerusalem, the City of God:

The place of this promised peaceful and secure habitation is eternal, and of right belongs eternally to Jerusalem the free mother, where the genuine people of Israel shall be. . . .²

The reason for this interpretation:

In the very great mutability of human affairs such great security is never given to any people, that it should not dread invasions hostile to this life. . . . Whoever hopes for this so great good in this world,

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and in this earth, his wisdom is but folly.³

In another passage Augustine expresses the very same sentiments, this time in connection with preserving peace in the civic community:

If, then, home, the natural refuge from the ills of life, is itself not safe, what shall we say of the city, which, as it is larger, is so much the more filled with lawsuits civil and criminal, and is never free from the fear, if sometimes from the actual outbreak, of disturbing and bloody insurrections and civil wars?⁴

Remote Causes of War

Why is war the universal lot of nations? Why is war (we could almost say) the inevitable lot? War is an abomination to most men. Hence, there must be some causes reaching deep into human nature, powerful enough to draw men of every generation into the maelstrom.

Difference of language, which hinders free social intercourse between peoples, naturally breeds mutual suspicion, and thus constitutes one remote cause of international war.

And the world, as it is larger, so it is fuller of dangers, as the greater sea is the more dangerous. And here, in the first place, man is separated from man by the difference of languages. For if two men, each ignorant of the other's language, meet, and are not compelled to pass, but, on the contrary, to remain in company, dumb animals, though of different species, would more easily hold intercourse than they, human beings though they be. For their common nature is no help to friendliness when they are prevented by diversity of language from conveying their sentiments to one another; so that a man would more readily hold intercourse with his dog than with a foreigner.⁵

The practical mind of Roman rulers appreciated the

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difficulty, and consequently, "endeavoured to impose on subject nations not only her yoke, but her language, as a bond of peace.

. ." Augustine comments:

This is true; but how many great wars, how much slaughter and bloodshed, have provided this unity!

The fundamental cause of all war is, of course, sin - regardless of the justice of any nation's reasons for taking up arms; "for even when we wage a just war, our adversaries must be sinning."⁶ Some human individual, or group, has caused every war by their personal sin. A terrifying indictment!

And God was not ignorant that man ((sc., Adam)) would sin, and that, being himself made subject now to death, he would propagate men doomed to die, and that these mortals would run to such enormities in sin, that even the beasts devoid of rational will, and who were created in numbers from the waters and the earth, would live more securely and peaceably with their own kind than men, who had been propagated from one individual for the very purpose of commending concord. For not even lions or dragons have ever waged with their kind such wars as men have waged with one another.⁷

But if peace is the greatest blessing of this life,⁸ what can drive men to lock arms in deadly combat? The answer may at first sight be surprising, yet it reveals one more ironic paradox of our nature. Men fight because they desire peace.

This truth is well illustrated in the case of an irate man who will roar at his wife, scold and thrash his children, only to secure peace in his own home - the kind of peace, of course, which panders to his egoism. The thing works out between nations as well as between individuals. The analogy is perfect. One nation bullies another, and the other fights back - each side fighting for the peace which is more to its own liking.⁹

In other words, a country's peace is disturbed before the country actually begins to fight, and by its fighting the country wants only to restore that peace which enables her to enjoy a greater measure of temporal goods.

For it ((sc., civitas terrena)) desires earthly peace for the sake of enjoying earthly goods, and it makes war in order to attain to this peace; since, if it has conquered, and there remains no one to resist it, it enjoys a peace which it had not while there were opposing parties who contested for the enjoyment of those things which were too small to satisfy both. This peace is purchased by toilsome wars; it is obtained by what they style a glorious victory. Now, when victory remains with the party which had the juster cause, who hesitates to congratulate the victor, and style it a desirable peace?¹⁰

Restless craving for peace is rooted deep in human nature. Be it through love of other men or through fear of them, everyone desires the security of peace with his associates. Augustine speaks of "the sweetness of peace which is dear to all."¹¹ However, the will to power in the individual, if unbridled, will reject equality with other men under the dominion of God. Pride seeks undue personal power over others - and so the harmony of reasonable order is thrown off key. Nations acting seriously out of harmony are soon at war.

How much more powerfully do the laws of man's nature move him to hold fellowship and maintain peace with all men so far as in him lies, since even wicked men wage war to maintain the peace of their own circle, and wish that, if possible, all men belonged to them, that all men and things might serve but one head, and might, either through love or fear, yield themselves to peace with them! It is thus that pride in its perversity apes God. It abhors equality with other men under Him; but, instead of His rule, it seeks to impose a rule of its own upon its equals. It abhors, that is to say, the just peace of God, and loves its own unjust peace; but it cannot help loving peace of

one kind or other. For there is no vice so clean contrary to nature that it obliterates even the faintest traces of nature.¹²

And again:

Whoever gives even moderate attention to human affairs and to our common nature, will recognize that if there is no man who does not wish to be joyful, neither is there any one who does not wish to have peace. For even they who make war desire nothing but victory, - desire, that is to say, to attain to peace with glory. For what else is victory than the conquest of those who resist us? and when this is done there is peace. It is therefore with the desire of peace that wars are waged, even by those who take pleasure in exercising their warlike nature in command and battle. And hence it is obvious that peace is the end sought for by war. For every man seeks peace by waging war, but no man seeks war by making peace.¹³

So true is this, that even seditious persons break the peace only in order to set up another peace more to their liking. And the conspirators, so long as they fight, can hope for no successful issue unless they keep the peace with their fellow-conspirators. Even an individual of such unrivaled strength that he needs no comrades must keep some shadow of peace with those whom he cannot kill.¹⁴

The brutality incidental to working out one's desire for domination is softened in worthy leaders by the natural virtue of desire of true glory. High-minded men "strive not to displease those who judge well of them." They will take no underhanded or excessively cruel measures to promote their own cause. On the other hand, "he who is a despiser of glory, but is greedy of domination, exceeds the beasts in the vices of cruelty and luxuriousness. . . . It was Nero Caesar who was the first to

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reach the summit, and, as it were, the citadel of this vice.¹⁵

So great was his luxuriousness, that one would have thought there was nothing manly to be dreaded in him, and such his cruelty, that, had not the contrary been known, no one would have thought there was anything effeminate in his character.¹⁶

The lust for ruling found in individual men has been given much space here, because it is a powerful motivating force in the careers of tyrants, who are themselves a cause of civil wars.¹⁷

Summing up the matter of fundamental causes for war, we find that St. Augustine in the De Civitate Dei comments at length on several: diversity of language, personal sin in general, man's natural desire for peace, and the inordinate will to power.

Norm of War Morality

The above mentioned causes will operate, as has been said, regardless of the morality of any particular nation's struggle. Of themselves, they cannot justify recourse to arms. What the state needs, therefore, is an objective criterion by which to judge its own case. Before the proper authorities declare war, the national conscience must be formed, as dispassionately as possible under the circumstances, if any claims of justice are to be made.

In the Roman Empire there were two rival ethical systems which bid against each other for popular support, and which did manage to divide between themselves almost all thinking men

outside the Christian fold. The two philosophies were Stoicism and Epicureanism.

The Stoic philosopher saw in virtue its own reward - virtue for virtue's sake, - for by living in conformity with natural law, he attained his highest perfection. The norm of moral action lay in the measure of personal glory accruing to the virtuous. Personal glory became, however, not only a directive norm but also the motive of action; and in this way it came out, for example, that suicide in the face of misfortune was considered a virtuous deed, more praise-worthy than submitting to disgrace.

The Epicurean philosopher made pleasure his norm of virtue. He aimed at exercising vital functions not with pleasure, but for pleasure. The traditional cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance were good in so far as they were the means of insuring maximum pleasure from any self-indulgence.

In the eye of St. Augustine, one system was no better than the other. He rejected both vain glory and pleasure as universal standards of moral conduct. It follows, therefore, that he discards them as standards of war morality. Augustine's repudiation of Stoic and Epicurean ethics is evident from the tenor of the following passage.

Philosophers, - who place the end of human good in virtue itself, in order to put to shame certain other philosophers (Epicureans), who indeed approve of the virtues, but measure them all with reference to the end of bodily pleasure, and think that this pleasure is to be sought for its own sake, but the virtues on account

of pleasure, - are wont to paint a kind of word-picture, in which Pleasure sits like a luxurious queen on a royal seat, and all the virtues are subjected to her as slaves, watching her nod, that they may do whatever she shall command. . . . But I do not think that the picture would be sufficiently becoming, even if it were made so that the virtues should be represented as the slaves of human glory; for, though that glory be not a luxurious woman, it is nevertheless puffed up, and has much vanity in it. Wherefore it is unworthy of the solidity and firmness of the virtues to represent them as serving this glory, so that Prudence shall provide nothing, Justice distribute nothing, Temperance moderate nothing, except to the end that men may be pleased and vain-glory served.¹⁸

In treating of the moral order, St. Augustine emphasizes finis rather than norma. He looks first to the supreme good of man, and from that concept argues back to good acts. "Morals, or what are called by the Greeks ἠθικῆ," is that part of philosophy

in which is discussed the question concerning the chief good, - that which will leave us nothing further to seek in order to be blessed, if only we make all our actions refer to it, and seek it not for the sake of something else, but for its own sake. Therefore it is called the end, because we wish other things on account of it, but itself for its own sake.¹⁹

But the matter of approach or of emphasis in the speculative side of ethics will make little difference in the practical side. Human acts are the means to an end; the rule of conduct is based on the final goal. The norm will be necessarily a function of the end.

Christian morality is heteronomous in so far as it recognizes God as creator, lawgiver, and ultimate end. The system is illumined by positive divine revelation; yet it is not so esoteric that man cannot arrive at its truth (at least in

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essentials) by using his native power of reason. St. Augustine sees in Platonism a close approach to Christian morality, for

Plato determined the final good to be to live according to virtue, and affirmed that he only can attain to virtue who knows and imitates God, - which knowledge and imitation are the only cause of blessedness. . . . and therefore he would call him a philosopher who loves God; for philosophy is directed to the obtaining of the blessed life, and he who loves God is blessed in the enjoyment of God.²⁰

In Book Nineteen the author considers at length the Christian system of morality. Here he uses synonymously the terms supreme good, beatitude, ultimate end, peace, tranquillity of the final order. In general, "life eternal is the supreme good, death eternal the supreme evil, and. . . to obtain the one and escape the other we must live rightly."²¹

In this, then consists the righteousness of a man, that he submit himself to God, his body to his soul, and his vices, even when they rebel, to his reason, which either defeats or at least resists them; and also that he beg from God grace to do his duty, and the pardon of his sins, and that he render to God thanks for all the blessings he receives.²²

But the purpose of this dissertation is not to establish principles of general ethics. We are satisfied in knowing that St. Augustine's moral thought was dominated by the truth that human acts must be ordered to an ultimate, absolute, and transcendental good, namely God. Guided by this rule of life, the Saint can justify a people's going to war for either of two reasons - to protect the safety of the state, or to protect its honor. He cites with approbation (if with some little qualification) the words of Cicero.

I am aware that Cicero, in the third book of his

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De Republica,²⁵ if I mistake not, argues that a first-rate power will not engage in war except either for honour or for safety.²⁴

The question of safety requires elucidation:

What he has to say about the question of safety, and what he means by safety, he explains in another place, saying, "Private persons frequently evade, by a speedy death, destitution, exile, bonds, the scourge, and other pains which even the most insensible feel. But to states, death, which seems to emancipate individuals from all punishments, is itself a punishment; for a state should be so constituted as to be eternal. And thus death is not natural to a republic as to a man, to whom death is not only necessary, but often even desirable. But when a state is destroyed, obliterated, annihilated, it is as if (to compare great things with small) this whole world perished and collapsed." Cicero said this because he with the Platonists, believed the world would not perish.²⁵

Unfortunately for us (as also for the student of Cicero) the author does not explain what is connoted by "honour," nor does he quote Cicero any further. Aberrations over points of honor have probably caused more unjust wars than concern for national safety. The former will generally call for aggressive war, the latter for defensive war. We can only gather some clew to an explanation from Augustine's own citation of Cicero's Republic: "nullum bellum suscipi a civitate optima, nisi aut pro fide aut pro salute." Now the word fides ("honour") could be translated as fidelity, faithfulness, uprightness, honesty, conscientiousness; it may also mean a promise, engagement, plighted word, assurance; or help, aid, assistance.²⁶

Evidently, then, the "honour" of a state refers principally to treaties which oblige the parties concerned to render mutual assistance. This interpretation is further supported by the

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author's account of the fatal dilemma of Saguntum. Indeed many nations have perished in the predicament of trying to decide which to protect first - the national safety or the national honor. Great powers have collapsed before the problem. But the plight is especially distressing for small countries allied to a great power, when the power deserts its tiny ally, or is forcibly kept from giving effective aid in a crisis. Augustine narrates the example of Saguntum in the Second Punic War. Should this Spanish city, when besieged by Hannibal, have broken faith with Rome, her ally, in order to save her life? Or was the better course that which she actually took, namely, to keep faith with Rome and perish utterly?

It is reasonably asked whether the Saguntines did right when they chose that their whole state should perish rather than that they should break faith with the Roman republic; for this deed of theirs is applauded by the citizens of the earthly republic. But I do not see how they could follow the advice of Cicero, who tells us that no war is to be undertaken save for safety or for honour; neither does he say which of these two is to be preferred, if a case should occur in which the one could not be preserved without the loss of the other. For manifestly, if the Saguntines chose safety, they must break faith; if they kept faith, they must reject safety; as also it fell out.²⁷

Definitely St. Augustine did not include under "honour" those egotistic, selfish, ambitious, covetous, vainglorious motives frequently advanced to justify any sort of Jingoism. When speaking of the war between Rome and Alba Longa (the same mentioned above in Chapter Four, p. 38 et sqq.) he suddenly cries out:

Why allege to me the mere names and words of "glory"

and "victory?" Tear off the disguise of wild delusion, and look at the naked deeds: weigh them naked, judge them naked. Let the charge be brought against Alba, as Troy was charged with adultery. There is no such charge, none like it found: the war was kindled only in order that there

"Might sound in languid ears the cry
Of Tullus and of victory."²⁸

This vice of restless ambition was the sole motive to that social and parricidal war, - a vice which Sallust brands in passing; for when he has spoken with brief but hearty commendation of those primitive times in which life was spent without covetousness and every one was sufficiently satisfied with what he had, he goes on: "But after Cyrus in Asia, and the Lacedomians and Athenians in Greece, began to subdue cities and nations, and to account the lust of sovereignty a sufficient ground for war, and to reckon that the greatest glory consisted in the greatest empire;"²⁹ and so on, as I need not now quote. This lust of sovereignty disturbs and consumes the human race with frightful ills. By this lust Rome was overcome when she triumphed over Alba, and praising her own crime, called it glory. For, as our Scriptures say, "the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth."³⁰ Away, then, with these deceitful masks, these deluding whitewashes, that things may be truthfully seen and scrutinized. Let no man tell me that this and the other was a "great" man, because he fought and conquered so and so. Gladiators fight and conquer, and this barbarism has its meed of praise: but I think it were better to take the consequences of any sloth, than to seek the glory won by such arms.³¹

Governments, as a matter of fact, have always acknowledged the validity of these two reasons: safety and honor. Even where the cause of war is unjust, a government must through its propaganda endeavour to justify its extreme measures by citing one or the other in its own favor. If the cause is not exalted and idealistic, at least to all appearances, popular enthusiasm lags, and the fight is lost.

Imperialistic War

Augustine in the De Civitate Dei has much more to say in condemning unjust causes of war than he has in explaining just causes. The Saint roundly damns aggression used by any sovereignty to build up a world empire. Where justice is violated, empire building, naked, stripped of any pious pretensions, is brigandage and nothing more. The make-believe justice of most imperialistic wars is neatly exposed in the anecdote of Alexander and the pirate.

Set justice aside then, and what are kingdoms but fair thievish purchases? because what are thieves' purchases but little kingdoms? for in thefts, the hands of the underlings are directed by the commander, the confederacy of them is sworn together, and the pillage is shared by the law amongst them. And if those raggamuffins grow up to be able enough to keep forts, build habitations, possess cities, and conquer adjoining nations, then their government is no more called thievish, but graced with the eminent name of a kingdom, given and gotten, not because they have left their practices, but because that now they may use them without danger of law: for elegant and excellent was that pirate's answer to the great Macedonian Alexander, who had taken him: the king asking him how he durst molest the seas so, he replied with a free spirit, "How darest thou molest the whole world? But because I do it with a little ship only, I am called a thief: thou doing it with a great navy, art called an emperor."³²

A few pages later Augustine lays the brand of his condemnation on war for empire. This time, Ninus, founder of the Assyrian Empire calls forth the writer's censure. To emphasize the seriousness of his denunciation, Augustine has prefaced it with a quotation from the historian Justinus:³³

"In the beginning of the affairs of peoples and nations the government was in the hands of kings, who were raised to the height of this majesty not by courting

the people, but by the knowledge good men had of their moderation. . . It was the custom to guard rather than to extend the boundaries of the empire; and kingdoms were kept within the bounds of each ruler's native land. Ninus King of the Assyrians first of all, through new lust of empire, changed the old, and as it were ancestral custom of nations. He first made war on his neighbours, and wholly subdued as far as to the frontiers of Libya the nations as yet untrained to resist."³⁴

Every new conquest only whetted the appetite of Ninus for more and more subjects to rule and to exploit.

"Ninus established by constant possession the greatness of the authority he had gained. Having mastered his nearest neighbours, he went on to others, strengthened by the accession of forces, and by making each fresh victory the instrument of that which followed, subdued the nations of the whole East."³⁵

Then follows Augustine's blunt censure of much high-handed procedure:

But to make war on your neighbours, and thence to proceed to others, and through mere lust of dominion to crush and subdue people who do you no harm, what else is this to be called than great robbery?³⁶

The author remarks, and marvels at the fact, that Ninus' Empire endured through 1240 years, which was longer even than eternal Rome had lived to that time; and now indeed the City had fallen to the enemy. Other great empires in world history have not shared the longevity of Assyria. Some have cracked wide apart immediately on the death of the conqueror; and such was the fate of the Macedonian Empire of Alexander.

After Alexander of Macedon, who is also styled the Great, had by his most wonderful, but by no means enduring power, subdued the whole of Asia, yea, almost the whole world, partly by force of arms, partly by terror, and, among other kingdoms of the East, had entered and obtained Judea also, on his death his generals did not peaceably divide that most ample kingdom among them for a possession, but rather

dissipated it, wasting all things by wars.³⁷

Roman Wars

In accord with the general purpose of his work, Augustine was interested primarily, of course, in Roman history. The Roman wars, therefore, claim most of his attention. As controversialist, he speaks now of one war, now of another, following the immediate demands of his argument. It will be more convenient for us, however, to rearrange his comments on Rome's military activity according to strict chronological order.

The immemorial war of the Romans for the Sabine women was unjust from the start. The Sabines had refused to give their young women to the Romans; whereupon, the Romans carried them off forcibly. The enraged parents demanded the return of their daughters, to which Rome unjustly replied with a declaration of war.

Had Rome only played her game differently, the outbreak of hostilities might have been legitimate. Augustine is of the opinion that "the Romans might more justly have waged war against the neighbouring nation for having refused their daughters in marriage when they first sought them, than for having demanded them back when they had stolen them."

There might have been some appearance of "right of war" in a victor carrying off, in virtue of this right, the virgins who had been without any show of right denied him; whereas there was no "right of peace" intitling him to carry off those who were not given to him, and to wage an unjust war with their justly enraged parents.³⁸

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The Sabine War was aggressive, but can hardly be called imperialistic. Wars for empire came later; and, in general, they were unrighteous. The point may be disputed as to whether the origins of Roman expansion are morally approvable. Judging the case on Cicero's two valid reasons for going to war, namely, to protect the nation's safety or to protect its honor, it is clear that the Romans had no obligations of alliance with other cities before actually setting out on their career of conquest. But do not territory, glory, and wealth pertain to honor? These could never have been acquired save by constant and unintermitting wars. True enough! They could not have been. And yet - "Why must a kingdom be distracted in order to be great? In this little world of man's body, is it not better to have a moderate stature, and health with it, than to attain the huge dimensions of a giant by unnatural torments, and when you attain it to find no rest, but to be pained the more in proportion to the size of your members?"³⁹ Clearly this is not the fides of which Cicero speaks.

On the issue of national safety, suspicion falls even on the Roman excuse of fighting purely in self-defence. It cannot be denied that Roman prosperity soon excited the envy of rival states, and tempted them to violent aggressions. Nevertheless, Augustine narrates one example which shows that fighting is not always so necessary for the maintenance of safety as men sometimes are willing to think.

But, in Numa's reign, I would know whether the long peace was maintained in spite of the incursions of

wicked neighbours, or if these incursions were discontinued that the peace might be maintained? For if even then Rome was harassed by wars, and yet did not meet force with force, the same means she then used to quiet her enemies without conquering them in war, or terrifying them with the onset of battle, she might have used always, and have reigned in peace with the gates of Janus shut.⁴⁰

Suppose for the sake of argument that by international war the Romans had actually subdued all hostile nations beyond the frontiers, still the Empire would not have had peace. Vast size and complexity of structure, even while insuring external order, at the same time invite internal strife - war between factions of the citizens themselves.

For though there have never been wanting, nor are yet wanting, hostile nations beyond the empire, against whom wars have been and are waged, yet, supposing there were no such nations, the very extent of the empire itself has produced wars of a more obnoxious description - social and civil wars - and with these the whole race has been agitated, either by the actual conflict or the fear of a renewed outbreak.⁴¹

Rome's violent internal disruptions began with the abortive agrarian movement lead by the Gracchi brothers.⁴² Thereafter, civil strife fills the pages of Roman history with accounts of continual slaughter. These civil wars were "more distressing, by the avowal of their own historians, than any foreign wars."⁴³ They were "absolutely ruinous to the republic." One war gave birth to the next, "so that a concatenation of unjustifiable causes lead from the wars of Marius and Sylla to those of Sertorius and Catiline," then to Lepidus and Catulus, to Pompey and Caesar, and finally to Octavius and Antony.

Foreign wars and civil wars are closely dovetailed. The

successful issue of one can easily occasion an outbreak of the other. External conquest and security provide the setting for internal factions to fight over the spoils of victory.

World Political Ideal: Small Nations at Peace

Unjust war is undeniably a curse - a thing with which good men want no part. St. Augustine, at any rate, leaves no doubt in the reader's mind about his own aversion for chauvinism in the foreign policy of any nation.

But perhaps it is displeasing to good men to fight with most wicked unrighteousness, and provoke with voluntary war neighbours who are peaceable and do not wrong, in order to enlarge a kingdom? If they feel thus, I entirely approve and praise them. 44

It really is possible to settle disputes amicably. Arbitration is not to be despaired of even in major differences. The nations involved must genuinely desire to keep issues off the military plane. They must meet each other half way; they must be ready to accept an impartial decision.

The following biblical episode of Abraham and Lot - the judicial device which they used to preserve the peace - may appear extremely naive when applied to disputes between world powers; for between Abraham and his nephew the disturbance was only a family squabble. Yet it does point the way to what can be peaceably accomplished between reasonable parties.

On Abraham's return out of Egypt to the place he had left, Lot, his brother's son, departed from him into the land of Sodom, without breach of charity. For they had grown rich, and began to have many herdmen of cattle, and when these strove together, they avoided in this way the pugnacious discord of their

families. Indeed, as human affairs go, this cause might even have given rise to some strife between themselves. Consequently these are the words of Abraham to Lot, when taking precaution against this evil, "Let there be no strife between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Behold, is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself from me: If thou wilt go to the left hand, I will go to the right; or if thou wilt go to the right hand, I will go to the left."⁴⁵ From this perhaps, has arisen a pacific custom among men, that when there is any partition of earthly things, the greater should make the division, the less the choice.⁴⁶

Neither Abraham nor Lot controlled thereafter the whole of Canaan. Without a fight neither one could have gained complete control. In the same way, but on larger scale, without aggressive war there could be no great empires. Without the fear of attack there would be no powerful alliances or coalitions of sovereign states drawn together for mutual protection. Universal trust and interchange of concessions provide the stuff out of which to build satisfactory international peace.

Even the necessity of winning just wars ought not to be an unmixed cause for rejoicing on the part of good men. For they know that but for the sins of individual persons, the necessity of warring could have been avoided. But for the sins of individual members the whole human family could live in harmony, spread through all the world and gathered together into small commonwealths.

Sallust evidently sees the point when he rhapsodizes on "the golden age" of early Roman monarchy, when men had leisure for the better things in life.

"At first the kings (for that was the first title of

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empire in the world) were divided in their sentiments: part cultivated the mind, others the body: at that time the life of men was led without covetousness; every one was sufficiently satisfied with his own!"⁴⁷

Often enough national expansion has been initiated only as a result of just wars, as, for example, when another nation's unprovoked aggression is warded off, and then a punitive expedition succeeds to the extent of subjugating the former aggressor. It is more than conceivable, however, that ambitious leaders sometimes hope for just such an opportunity to develop, - that they even manipulate the stream of events to create the opportunity. That sort of finesse is wicked. "Your wishes are bad," says Augustine, "when you desire that one whom you hate or fear should be in such a condition that you can conquer him."⁴⁸

Without war, then, the world would in all likelihood be constituted politically of very many small, independent commonwealths, - communities strong enough to protect their citizens against the forces of nature, and large enough to give full scope to man's social instinct. But no commonwealth would be so large as to excite enviable attack, nor so powerful as to be tempted by auto-suggestion into a career of conquest. With this sort of balance, Augustine thinks, human affairs would be more happy.

Let me ask, then, whether it is quite fitting for good men to rejoice in extended empire. For the iniquity of those with whom just wars are carried on favours the growth of a kingdom, which would certainly have been small if the peace and justice of neighbours had not by any wrong provoked the carrying on of war against them; and human affairs being thus more happy, all kingdoms would have been small, rejoicing in neighbourly concord; and thus there would have been very many kingdoms of nations in the world, as there are very many houses of citizens in a city.

Therefore, to carry on war and extend a kingdom over wholly subdued nations seems to bad men to be a felicity, to good men necessity. But because it would be worse that the injurious should rule over those who are more righteous, therefore even that is not undubitably called felicity. But beyond doubt it is greater felicity to have a good neighbour at peace, than to conquer a bad one by making war.⁴⁹

Summary

In summary of Chapter Five we see, therefore, that St. Augustine, who admits the right of war, is very stringent in defining causes for which that right may licitly be exercised. No country can ever feel absolutely secure from the necessity of warfare, because sin is always throwing awry the whole order of nature, and in this way forcing nations to protect their rights militantly. Men desire peace, and when they fight, they fight only for the kind of peace which is more to their liking. A state may rightfully declare war either to protect its own safety or to protect its honor. War of aggression can hardly ever be justified, and this holds for the wars which built the Roman Empire. In the case of Rome (as also of many other empires) success on foreign fields gave ambitious and selfish factions something to fight about right at home. If mankind lived sinlessly, in accord with right reason, there would be in the world the happy political situation of numerous small nations living side by side in lasting peace.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. II Sam., 7:10-11. "Et ponam locum populo meo Israel, et plantabo illum, et inhabitabit seorsum, et non sollicitus erit ultra; et non adponet filius iniquitatis humiliare eum, sicut ab initio a diebus, quibus constitui iudices super populum meum Israel." - xvii. 12.
2. xvii. 13
3. *ibid.* Italics added.
4. xix. 6
5. This and the immediately following quotations are from xix. 7.
6. xix. 15. "Nam et cum justum geritur bellum, pro peccato e contrario dimicatur;"
7. xii. 22. Dods calls attention to the lines from Juvenal:
"Sed iam serpentum maior concordia, parcit
cognatis maculis similis fera; quando leoni
fortior eripuit vitam leo? quo nemore umquam
expiravit aper maioris dentibus apri?
Indica tigris agit rabida cum tigride pacem
perpetuam, saevis inter se convenit ursis.
ast homini ferrum letale incude nefanda
produxisse parum est, etc. Sat., xv, 159-66"
8. Cf. sup., note 2 to Ch. 1, p. 8.
9. xix. 12
10. xv. 4
11. xix. 11
12. xix. 12
13. *ibid.* Italics added.
14. *ibid.*
15. v. 9
16. *ibid.* Nero - cuius fuit tanta luxuries, ut nihil ab eo putaretur uirile metuendum; tanta crudelitas, ut nihil molle

habere crederetur, si nesciretur."

17. xiv. 15
18. v. 20
19. viii. 8
20. ibid. For Plato's doctrine here referred to, see Gorg., 470 D and 508 B; Phileb., 11B and C.
21. xix. 4
22. xix. 27
23. De Republ., iii. 23. The passage cited is not included in the extant part of Cicero's work.
24. xxii. 6
25. ibid.
26. Cf. F. Leverett, Latin Lexicon (Philadelphia: 1850), p. 336.
27. xxii. 6. Cf. Ch. 4, p. 37.
28. Aen., vi. 814
"Tullus in arma uiros et iam desueta
triumphis Agmina."
29. Cat. Conj., ii
30. Ps., 10:3
31. iii. 14. For a further discussion of this specious honor see Appendix B. It is also interesting to note that Cicero (l. c.) makes revenge an honorable cause for war. Such war would be punitive in nature. The fragment reads: "Illa iniusta bella sunt, quae sine causa suscepta. nam extra ulciscendi aut propulsandorum hostium causam bellum geri iustum nullum potest.
32. iv. 4. I have quoted here the 17th century English version by John Healey.
33. Justinus - "a historian who lived probably in the time of the Antonines - i. e., in the latter half of the second century A. D. His voluminous History, which is still extant - 'Historiarum Philippicarum Epitome' in forty-four volumes - (mirabile dictu!) itself an abbreviation of the Universal History of Trogius Pompeius, a contemporary of Livy, . . ." - Welldon, I, 155, note 1.

34. iv. 6

35. ibid.

36. ibid.

37. xviii. 42

38. ii. 17

39. iii. 10

40. ibid.

41. xix. 7

42. iii. 24

43. This and the immediately following quotations are from iii. 30.

44. iv. 14

45. Gen., 13:8,9

46. xviii. 20

47. iii. 10. The quotation is from Sallust, Conj. Cat., ii.

48. iv. 15

49. ibid.

CHAPTER VI

WAR IN ITS EFFECTS

St. Augustine's most pessimistic comments on war are associated with war's effects. A moralist who admits the absolute right of just war, and the contingent possibility of waging such a war, he betrays, nevertheless, almost a touch of cynicism in reviewing the actual results of combat. In the following pages we shall see first what Augustine has to say in the abstract about war's aftermath, and then how his ideas worked out in Roman history according to his own interpretation of that history.

Vanity of Temporal Power

Temporal power and solid happiness are by no means co-terminous in the experience of mankind. One does not necessarily imply the other: and right there is explanation of the sad disillusionment of many a conqueror with the world at his feet. Contented happiness is always the goal, but it proves to be a will-o'-the-wisp if sought for in sheer power over others, especially if the power is unjustly attained.

Felicity, however, is certainly more valuable than a kingdom. For no one doubts that a man might easily be found who may fear to be made a king: but no one is found who is unwilling to be happy.¹

If temporal sovereignty is frequently useless as a source of happiness in this life, it is in itself of no avail whatsoever, for good or bad, toward winning happiness in the next

life. Addressing his remarks, as usual in the De Civitate Dei, to die-hard Roman pagans, and fashioning his argument on their concepts, Augustine says:

nor is sovereign power to be reckoned a benefit, because in a little time in every man, and thus in all of them one by one, it vanishes like a vapour. For what does it matter to those who worshipped the gods under Romulus, and are long since dead, that after their death the Roman empire has grown so great, while they plead their causes before the powers beneath? Whether those causes are good or bad, it matters not to the question before us. And this is to be understood of all those who carry with them the heavy burden of their actions, having in the few days of their life swiftly and hurriedly passed over the stage of the imperial office, although the office itself has lasted through long spaces of time, being filled by a constant succession of dying men.²

Nevertheless, it is very advantageous for a country to be ruled by just lords, who respect the rights of God and man. But even in this case mere exercise of power fosters happiness in the people, rather than in the rulers. For the sound moral conduct of such rulers is sufficient for their felicity in this life; and afterwards it enables them to enter into eternal joy. "In this world, therefore, the dominion of good men is profitable, not so much for themselves as for human affairs."³

Wicked masters, on the other hand, can enjoy only an apparent dominion, and their selfish administration is in the long run harmful only to themselves, and not to the people held in servitude. Sinful men are slaves. Good men, even in chains, are free.

But the dominion of bad men is hurtful chiefly to themselves who rule, for they destroy their own souls by greater licence in wickedness; while those who are put under them in service are not hurt except by their

own iniquity. For to the just all the evils imposed on them by unjust rulers are not the punishment of crime, but the test of virtue. Therefore the good man, although he is a slave, is free; but the bad man, even if he reigns, is a slave, and that not of one man, but, what is far more grievous, of as many masters as he has vices; of which vices when the divine Scripture treats, it says, "For of whom any man is overcome, to the same he is also the bondsman."⁴

St. Augustine reverts to the same thought in a later part of the City of God:

"Every man who doth sin is the servant of sin."⁵ And thus there are many wicked masters who have religious men as their slaves, and who are yet themselves in bondage; "for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." And beyond question it is a happier thing to be the slave of a man than of a lust; for even this very lust of ruling, to mention no others, lays waste men's hearts with the most ruthless dominion.⁶

Empire unrighteously gained can make no more than a show of felicity. This is only one aspect of that common experience of all who cannot settle down to quiet enjoyment of ill-gotten gain; for they are constantly nettled by the necessity of finding means to protect and increase their goods. Such wealth is not only a burden to conscience, but also a source of physical annoyance.

Although I should like first to inquire for a little what reason, what prudence, there is in wishing to glory in the greatness and extent of the empire, when you cannot point out the happiness of men who are always rolling, with dark fear and cruel lust, in warlike slaughters and in blood, which, whether shed in civil or foreign war, is still human blood; so that their joy may be compared to glass in its fragile splendour, of which one is horribly afraid lest it should be suddenly broken in pieces. That this may be more easily discerned, let us not come to nought by being carried away with empty boasting, or blunt the edge of our attention by loud-sounding names of things, when we hear of peoples, kingdoms, provinces.

But let us suppose a case of two men; for each individual man, like one letter in a language, is as it were the element of a city or kingdom, however far-spreading in its occupation of the earth. Of these two men let us suppose that one is poor or rather of middling circumstances; the other very rich. But the rich man is anxious with fears, pining with discontent, burning with covetousness, never secure, always uneasy, panting from the perpetual strife of his enemies, adding to his patrimony indeed by these miseries to an immense degree, and by these additions also heaping up most bitter cares. But that other man of moderate wealth is contented with a small and compact estate, most dear to his own family, enjoying the sweetest peace with his kindred neighbours and friends, in piety religious, benignant in mind, healthy in body, in life frugal, in manners chaste, in conscience secure. I know not whether any one can be such a fool, that he dare hesitate which to prefer. As, therefore, in the case of these two men, so in two families, in two nations, in two kingdoms, this test of tranquillity holds good; and if we apply it vigilantly and without prejudice, we shall quite easily see where the mere show of happiness dwells, and where real felicity.⁷

If, therefore, the very blessings of victory frequently prove to be vain and illusory, it is all the more true that certain unmistakably evil effects always lie in the wake of warfare. For one thing, every part of the world arming itself against another part for sheer lust of conquering is itself already held in moral bondage by its lust. If after conquering, the nation is inflated with pride, then its victory is absolutely life-destroying.⁸

Conquest of one section of humanity by another hardly promotes the safety, the good morals, or the dignity of the human beings associated with either party.

For I do not see what it makes for the safety, good morals, and certainly not for the dignity, of men, that some have conquered and others have been conquered, except that it yields them that most insane pomp of human glory, in which "they have received

their reward,"⁹ who burned with excessive desire of it, and carried on most eager wars. For do not their lands pay tribute? Have they any privilege of learning what the others are not privileged to learn? Take away outward show (Jactantia), and what are all men after all but men?¹⁰

Futility of Warfare

The utter futility of most warfaring is evident in the fact that even great victories can fail to settle issues. The war is won, but the peace is lost. The wars of one generation are often renewed by the next; the old wounds are again opened up before having time to heal thoroughly.¹¹

No nation can "abidingly rule over those whom it has victoriously conquered." Even where the domination of the conqueror is inclined toward benevolence, still it is relatively short-lived; for perpetuity of active control contradicts the very nature of temporal sovereignty.¹² Everything in this material world passes away with time.

Does it take too much stretching of the imagination to see in this fact a psychological explanation for that human tendency which persuades men to submit to unavoidable slavery rather than to part with life itself as a desperate escape?

For the vanquished succumb to the victorious, preferring any sort of peace and safety to freedom itself; so that they who chose to die rather than be slaves have been greatly wondered at. For in almost all nations the very voice of nature somehow proclaims, that those who happen to be conquered should choose rather to be subject to their conquerors than to be killed by all kinds of warlike destruction.¹³

Very likely, the conquered subconsciously realize that their sorry plight cannot last forever, that they can hasten the day

of turning tables only by stubbornly clinging to life. Present sufferings courageously borne invariably increase the national vitality.

Summarizing what Augustine has to say in the abstract about war's effects, we see that he considers brute power to be vain, since it rarely means happiness in this life, and is of absolutely no avail toward happiness in the next life. The slavery and the freedom that do affect solid happiness are moral in nature; the vicious man is truly a slave, while the virtuous man is truly free. Unrighteously won empire is not even a temporal blessing, for it lays upon a nation all manner of anxious cares. Conquest which leads to overweening pride destroys a nation. No such victory can foster the safety, good morals, or dignity of humanity. War hardly ever settles permanently the issues for which it was fought. Perpetuity of dominion contradicts the nature of temporal sovereignty; and nations will suffer enslavement, in preference to annihilation.

Wars of Rome

In his own preface to the De Civitate Dei St. Augustine undoubtedly refers to Rome in saying that the earthly city, "though it be mistress of the nations, is itself ruled by its lust of rule."¹⁴ Most of the author's remarks in the abstract (as reviewed in the first part of this chapter) can be concretely verified in episodes retailed by him from the classical historians.

If war as a rule is futile, the external wars of the Roman kings were not the exception. These struggles were practically bootless. The legendary glory of monarchical Rome had been sadly over-rated by Latin patriots, Augustine thought. He speaks of those times as

the much-praised epoch of the state which extends to the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus in the 243^d year, during which all those victories, which were bought with so much blood and such disasters, hardly pushed Rome's dominion twenty miles from the city;¹⁵ a territory which would by no means bear comparison with that of any petty Gaetolian state.¹⁶

Monarchy, at any rate, sank into tyranny; the kings were expelled. But republicanism did not become firmly established until the deposed king Tarquin was crushed in his fight with Etruscan allies to regain the throne. Conscription of money and manpower in support of these regal wars, falling heavily on the underprivileged Plebeians, was one of the major grievances leading to their secession from the Patricians (494 B. C.). The historian Sallust is quoted as authority in this passage:

"After that ((sc., the Tuscan War and defeat of Tarquin)), the patricians treated the people as their

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slaves, ordering them to be scourged or beheaded just as the kings had done, driving them from their holdings, and harshly tyrannizing over those who had no property to lose. The people, overwhelmed by these oppressive measures, and most of all by exorbitant usury, and obliged to contribute both money and personal service to the constant wars, at length took arms, and seceded to Mount Aventine and Mount Sacer, and thus obtained for themselves tribunes and protective laws."¹⁷

Effects of the Punic Wars

The Titanic struggle of ancient times for control of the West was that between Rome and Carthage, continued intermittently through four generations (264-146B. C.).¹⁸ This was a fight to the death between two world powers with conflicting ideologies - Carthage representing Asiatic caste society, despotism, and sensuality; Rome representing European civil equality, republicanism, and disciplined frugality.

In such a struggle smaller nations were forced to fall in with one ideology or the other. They could not hope to maintain neutrality without being crushed between the two monsters.

In the Punic wars, again, when victory hung so long in the balance between two kingdoms, when two powerful nations were straining every nerve and using all their resources against one another, how many small kingdoms were crushed, how many large and flourishing cities were demolished, how many states were overwhelmed and ruined, how many districts and lands far and near were desolated!¹⁹

The Punic Wars were the closest thing to modern totalitarian war that the ancient world could produce. As in all total war, results were disastrous for both sides.

How often were the victors on either side vanquished! What multitudes of men, both of those actually in arms and of others, were destroyed! What huge navies, too,

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were crippled in engagements, or were sunk by every kind of marine disaster! Were we to attempt to recount or mention these calamities, we should become writers of history.²⁰

The final effects of this lengthy struggle may be summed up by saying that defeated Carthage was completely demolished, while victorious Rome was completely demoralized.

But when the last Punic war had terminated in the utter destruction of Rome's rival, . . . then the Roman republic was overwhelmed with such a host of ills, which sprang from the corrupt manners induced by prosperity and security, that the sudden overthrow of Carthage is seen to have injured Rome more seriously than her long-continued hostility.²¹

In detail, Augustine lists the evil internal results to Rome as troublesome seditions, bloody civil wars, plunder and proscription, moral corruption through sensuality and cruelty born of soft living and unbridled lust for power.²²

Asiatic luxury proved far more destructive than foreign armies. Augustine mentions a few curious details about what constituted that eastern luxury:

It was at that time also²³ that the proconsul Cn. Manlius, after subduing the Galatians, introduced into Rome the luxury of Asia, more destructive than all hostile armies. It was then that iron bedsteads and expensive carpets were first used; then, too, that female singers were admitted at banquets, and other licentious abominations were introduced.²⁴

It would be hard to find a more damning portrayal of depraved Roman life than that which the author (with rhetorical finesse) puts in the boastful mouths of the pagans:

But the worshippers and admirers of these ((pagan)) gods delight in imitating their scandalous iniquities, and are nowise concerned that the republic be less depraved and licentious. Only let it remain undefeated, they say, only let it flourish and abound in resources;

let it be glorious by its victories, or still better, secure in peace; and what matters it to us? This is our concern, that every man be able to increase his wealth so as to supply his daily prodigalities, and so that the powerful may subject the weak for their own purposes. Let the poor court the rich for a living, and that under their protection they may enjoy a sluggish tranquillity; and let the rich abuse the poor as their dependents, to minister to their pride. Let the people applaud not those who protect their interests, but those who provide them with pleasure. Let no severe duty be commanded, no impurity forbidden. Let kings estimate their prosperity, not by the righteousness, but by the servility of their subjects. Let the provinces stand loyal to the kings, not as moral guides, but as lords of their possessions and purveyors of their pleasures; not with a hearty reverence, but a crooked and servile fear. Let the laws take cognizance rather of the injury done to another man's property, than of that done to one's own person. If a man be a nuisance to his neighbour, or injure his property, family, or person, let him be actionable; but in his own affairs let every one with impunity do what he will in company with his own family, and with those who willingly join him. Let there be a plentiful supply of public prostitutes for every one who wishes to use them, but specially for those who are too poor to keep one for their private use. Let there be erected houses of the largest and most ornate description: in these let there be provided the most sumptuous banquets, where every one who pleases may, by day or night, play, drink, vomit, dissipate, Let there be everywhere heard the rustling of dancers, the loud, immodest laughter of the theatre; let a succession of the most cruel and the most voluptuous pleasures maintain a perpetual excitement. If such happiness is distasteful to any, let him be branded as a public enemy; and if any attempt to modify or put an end to it, let him be silenced, banished, put an end to What sane man would compare a republic such as this, I will not say to the Roman empire, but to the palace of Sardanapalus, the ancient king who was so abandoned to pleasures, that he caused it to be inscribed on his tomb, that now that he was dead, he possessed only those things which he had swallowed and consumed by his appetites while alive?²⁵

Effects of the Civil Wars

The history of serious bloodshed, rioting, and plunder in Roman internal affairs begins with the crushing of the Gracchi.²⁶

The fight of Gaius and Tiberius Gracchus for their proposed agrarian reforms set a fatal precedent for future bloody elections and for recourse to arms in practical politics. The Temple of Concord had been erected in the forum as a memorial to the punishment and death of the brothers. Ironically, it proved no safeguard at all against further bloodshed; for the social, servile, and civil wars of the later Roman Republic were full of blood curdling atrocities.²⁷

A big factor in the downfall of the Gracchi was their lack of organized military support. Having learned an historical lesson from that failure, political factions in Rome thereafter sought leaders always from men with high army commands. In this way opportunity came to such rascals as Marius and Sulla, whose civil wars, Augustine thinks, were far more disastrous than any foreign invasion of Rome.

What fury of foreign nations, what barbarian ferocity, can compare with this victory of citizens over citizens? Which was more disastrous, more hideous, more bitter to Rome: the recent Gothic and the old Gallic invasion, or the cruelty displayed by Marius and Sylla and their partisans against men who were members of the same body as themselves? The Gauls, indeed, massacred all the senators they found in any part of the city except the Capitol, which alone was defended; but they at least sold life to those who were in the Capitol, though they might have starved them out if they could not have stormed it. The Goths, again, spared so many senators, that it is the more surprising that they killed any. But Sylla, while Marius was still living, established himself as conqueror in the Capitol, which the Gauls had not violated, and thence issued his death-warrants; and when Marius had escaped by flight, though destined to return more fierce and bloodthirsty than ever, Sylla issued from the Capitol even decrees of the senate for the slaughter and confiscation of the property of many citizens. Then, when Sylla left, what did the Marian faction hold sacred or spare, when they

gave no quarter even to Mucius, a citizen, a senator, a pontiff, and though clasping in piteous embrace the very altar in which, they say, reside the destinies of Rome? And that final proscription list of Sylla's, not to mention countless other massacres, despatched more senators than the Goths could even plunder.²⁸

Marius was leader of the popular party, which even in his day had degenerated into the Roman mob yelling for bread and circuses. With reference to his sanguinary policy Augustine says: "Every one whose salutation Marius did not answer by giving his hand, was at once cut down before his face."²⁹

Sulla was the "avenger" chosen by the senatorial party to redress the wrongs perpetrated by Marius. But Sulla's "rule was so cruel, that, in comparison with it, the preceding state of things which he came to avenge was regretted."³⁰ The terror of bloody purges swung back and forth several times, as one party or the other gained temporary control of the City. For example, Augustine says of Sulla's revenge over Marius:

For of this vengeance, which was more destructive than if the crimes which it punished had been committed with impunity, Lucan says: "The cure was excessive, and too closely resembled the disease. The guilty perished, but when none but the guilty survived: and then private hatred and anger, unbridled by law, were allowed free indulgence."³¹ In that war between Marius and Sylla, besides those who fell in the field of battle, the city, too, was filled with corpses in its streets, squares, markets, theatres, and temples; so that it is not easy to reckon whether the victors slew more before or after victory, that they might be, or because they were, victors.³²

Atrocity stories are nothing new in the world as handy means of propaganda. Even Augustine, saintly and learned bishop, makes plentiful use of such stories to color his unflattering picture of pagan Rome. Sulla provided good material in the way

he disposed of some of his enemies.

For one was torn to pieces by the unarmed hands of the executioners; men treating a living man more savagely than wild beasts are used to tear an abandoned corpse. Another had his eyes dug out, and his limbs cut away bit by bit, and was forced to live a long while, or rather to die a long while, in such torture. Some celebrated cities were put up to auction, like farms; and one was collectively condemned to slaughter, just as an individual criminal would be condemned to death.³³

But the laws of nature cannot be violated forever with impunity; and Sulla, making a savage beast of himself, destroyed his own cause.

For that victory ((over Marius)) was not so conducive to his exaltation to power, as it was fatal to his ambition; for by it he became so insatiable in his desires, and was rendered so arrogant and reckless by prosperity, that he may be said rather to have inflicted a moral destruction on himself than corporal destruction on his enemies.³⁴

The futility of combat as a means of obtaining a just peace is well illustrated in this war of Marius and Sulla. If a struggle is primarily one between brute forces, and if full vengeance is sought after one side's victory, then the peace which follows is likely to be worse than actual belligerence.

These things ((viz., Sulla's atrocities)) were done in peace when the war was over, not that victory might be more speedily obtained, but that, after being obtained, it might not be thought lightly of. Peace vied with war in cruelty, and surpassed it: for while war overthrew armed hosts, peace slew the defenceless. War gave liberty to him who was attacked, to strike if he could; peace granted to the survivors not life, but an unresisting death.³⁵

Not only were all the citizens demoralized as a result of imperial prosperity and domestic discord, but the Roman Republic itself "had become entirely extinct," even though its administration did remain republican in name for many years. At least

this was the studied opinion of a patriot and astute politician like Cicero.³⁶ St. Augustine cites the great orator's opinion from the De Re Publica, in which dialogue Cicero uses Scipio³⁷ as his mouthpiece to say that, since a "people" is "an assemblage associated by a common acknowledgment of law, and by a community of interests," it follows that "a republic, or 'weal of the people,' then exists only when it is well and justly governed."³⁸ Later in the same dialogue Cicero says in his own name: "'For it is through our vices, and not by any mishap, that we retain only the name of a republic, and have long since lost the reality.'"³⁹

St. Augustine aptly styles liberty "the fit companion of virtue."⁴⁰ Abuse of Roman civil liberty, its degeneration into license, led naturally to the abolition of constitutional liberty. Dictatorship under an imperator was alone capable of restoring some kind of order to the Roman chaos. Caesar Augustus, first dictator to be hailed as Roman Emperor, is characterized by Augustine as a man "who seems to have entirely deprived the Romans of liberty, - a liberty, indeed, which in their own judgment was no longer glorious but full of broils and dangers, and which now was quite enervated and languishing, - and who submitted all things again to the will of a monarch, and infused as it were a new life into the sickly old age of the republic, and inaugurated a fresh regime."⁴¹

By way of digression, it is interesting to note that Augustine was not blind to the crimes of nations other than Rome. Rome exercised no world monopoly on the evils and the

atrocities consequent on war. As an example, we can read his account of the action of Mithridates, who massacred all alien Roman citizens within his realm, because of strained diplomatic relations with Rome at the time:

I can by no means be silent regarding the order given by Mithridates, king of Asia, that on one day all Roman citizens residing anywhere in Asia (where great numbers of them were following their private business) should be put to death: and this order was executed. How miserable a spectacle was then presented, when each man was suddenly and treacherously murdered wherever he happened to be, in the field or on the road, in the town, in his own home, or in the street, in market or temple, in bed or at table! Think of the groans of the dying, the tears of the spectators, and even of the executioners themselves. For how cruel a necessity was it that compelled the hosts of these victims, not only to see these abominable butcheries in their own houses, but even to perpetrate them: to change their countenance suddenly from the bland kindness of friendship, and in the midst of peace set about the business of war: and, shall I say, give and receive wounds, the slain being pierced in body, the slayer in spirit!⁴²

Good Effects of War

Strange but true it is, that Augustine finds only two good effects of war to comment on at any length, in striking contrast to his prolix remarks on the evil results. First, he sees in the insecurity arising from a strong rival country, potentially belligerent, one of the greatest natural safeguards of national morality. Secondly, he sees in the common danger arising from actual foreign war a compelling motive for the maintenance of union at home.

According to Sallust, Roman civic virtue flourished in the period immediately following the expulsion of the kings, i. e.,

"while the city was occupied with the serious Tuscan war and Tarquin's vengeance." Virtue then lapsed, but was restored between the second and third Punic wars to its highest peak in Roman history. Once again the motive was fear, since the second war against Carthage, though successful, had not been decisive.⁴³

During the half century of peace between the second and the third Punic wars (B. C. 201-149) Cato the censor kept harping on his "Delenda est Carthago." In later years, however, he was ably opposed by the younger Scipio;⁴⁴ for Scipio "feared security, that enemy of weak minds, and he perceived that a wholesome fear would be a fit guardian for the citizens. And he was not mistaken: the event proved how wisely he had spoken."⁴⁵

It is plain that St. Augustine was more interested in the moral results of war, which might be termed indirect effects. He had not much to say about the legal technicalities of drawing up and signing treaties which lay down the direct and formal effects of war.

As regards international contracts, the Roman hero, Regulus, provides by his own actions both good and bad example: - the bad example, in his vainglorious spirit of revenge against his country's enemy; the good example, in his fidelity to plighted oath in international affairs.

In 256 B. C. Carthage sued for peace terms with Rome, who had defeated her in the field. Regulus, commander of the Roman expeditionary force, sent his beaten enemy such severe terms that Carthage could do nothing more than reject them. Thus the war was dragged out through fifteen more years (256-241).

Regulus was "an incontestably great man, who had before ((his capture)) conquered and subdued the Carthaginians, and who would have put an end to the first Punic war, had not an inordinate appetite for praise and glory prompted him to impose on the worn-out Carthaginians harder conditions than they could bear."⁴⁶

Under the circumstances, even Augustine can apparently find some explanation for the harsh attitude. He does not hesitate to call Regulus "an incontestably great man" (vir plane magnus). And the general is justly famous for his conduct when taken prisoner later in that same war. His mission to Rome on behalf of his captors and his voluntary return to certain death in compliance with his sworn oath is one of the best known stories in classical literature of ideal stoic conduct. Augustine's version:

Marcus Attilius Regulus, a Roman general, was a prisoner in the hands of the Carthaginians. But they, being more anxious to exchange their prisoners with the Romans than to keep them, sent Regulus as a special envoy with their own ambassadors to negotiate this exchange, but bound him first with an oath, that if he failed to accomplish their wish, he would return to Carthage. He went, and persuaded the senate to the opposite course, because he believed it was not for the advantage of the Roman republic to make an exchange of prisoners. After he had thus exerted his influence, the Romans did not compel him to return to the enemy; but what he had sworn he voluntarily performed. But the Carthaginians put him to death with refined, elaborate, and horrible tortures. They shut him up in a narrow box, in which he was compelled to stand, and in which finely sharpened nails were fixed all round about him, so that he could not lean upon any part of it without intense pain; and so they killed him by depriving him of sleep. With justice, indeed, do they applaud the virtue which rose superior to so frightful a fate.⁴⁷

What Regulus, an individual, did in observing an oath sworn to

a foreign power, any collection of individuals, any nation, must also do, if there is to be any mutual trust in international affairs.

Rome, however, in spite of the capture and execution of her commander, eventually won this First Punic War and dictated heavy terms to the enemy. Carthage, deeply humiliated, could think only of revenge, and worked along till the moment came when she felt strong enough again to repudiate the treaty. From this broken treaty came the Second Punic War, when the Carthaginian home government ignored Roman protests, and refused to check the military activity of Hannibal in Spain:

For when Hannibal had broken treaty with the Romans, he sought occasion for provoking them to war, and accordingly made a fierce assault upon Saguntum. When this was reported at Rome, ambassadors were sent to Hannibal, urging him to raise the siege; and when this remonstrance was neglected, they proceeded to Carthage, lodged complaint against the breaking of the treaty, and returned to Rome without accomplishing their object.⁴⁸

It was necessary for the Romans to give their old enemy another sound beating.

To go from classical to biblical history, we find the patriarch Abraham setting a praiseworthy example of disinterestedness in the distribution of spoils after a successful campaign.

Abraham migrated, and remained in another place of the same land, that is, beside the oak of Mamre, which was Hebron. Then on the invasion of Sodom, when five kings carried on war against four, and Lot was taken captive with the conquered Sodomites, Abraham delivered him from the enemy, leading with him to battle three hundred and eighteen of his home-born servants, and won the victory for the kings of Sodom, but would take nothing of the spoils when offered by the king for whom he had won them. He was then openly blessed by Melchizedek, who was priest of God most High, etc.⁴⁹

As one preservant of international peace, and as a help to the just settlement of all armed conflicts, Augustine suggests the remembrance of our common brotherhood in Adam, the first man. Human brotherhood is the work of God Himself, for

God created only one single man, not, certainly, that he might be a solitary bereft of all society, but that by this means the unity of society and the bond of concord might be more effectually commended to him, men being bound together not only by similarity of nature, but by family affection. And indeed He did not even create the woman that was to be given him as his wife, as He created the man, but created her out of the man, that the whole human race might derive from one man.⁵⁰

Too often men completely disregard, even propagate theories directly contrary to, the biological unity of human origins; yet

human nature has nothing more appropriate, either for the prevention of discord, or for the healing of it, where it exists, than the remembrance of that first parent of us all, whom God was pleased to create alone, that all men might be derived from one, and that they might thus be admonished to preserve unity among their whole multitude.⁵¹

Summary

In summary, this rather pessimistic sixth chapter stands as follows: Augustine has some universal observations on the evil effects of war, from which we rightly conclude with him that most warfaring is vain and futile. Rome's wars throughout her history verify Augustine's general statements, especially the momentous Punic Wars, as a result of which Carthage was utterly demolished and Rome was utterly demoralized. Of good effects only two are named - preservation of domestic concord, and of the national virtue. As regards international covenants, Regulus did wrong in laying unbearably heavy, vengeful, peace terms

on defeated Carthage; later he was most honorable in keeping his sworn pledge to his Punic captors. Abraham's conduct in refusing the spoils of victory is praiseworthy. As a motive toward peace with justice, mankind ought to remember its common brotherhood in the first man, Adam, single progenitor of the race.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

1. iv. 23
2. iv. 5
3. iv. 3
4. (IIPet., 2:19) iv. 3
5. John 8:34
6. xix. 15
7. iv. 3
8. xv. 4
9. Matt., 6:2
10. v. 17
11. iii. 14
12. xv. 4
13. xviii. 2
14. The entire preface is quoted above, Ch. 2, p. 10.
15. ". . . vix illud imperium intra viginti ab Urbe milia dilataverint;"
16. iii. 15
17. ii. 18. The quotation is from Sallust, Hist., i. 9.
18. I call this "the Titanic struggle" because it was more totalitarian than even the Persian wars of Greece.
19. iii. 18
20. ibid.
21. iii. 21
22. i. 30
23. sc., at the time of the Punic wars. To be exact, the expedition of Manlius against the Gallogrecians (Gallograeci)

was B. C. 189.

24. iii. 21. Cf. Livy, xxxix. 6. - "Luxuriae enim peregrinae origo ab exercitu Asiatico ((i. e., Manlii)) invecta in Urbem est. Il primum lectos aeratos, vestem stragulam pretiosam, plagulas, et alia textilia, et quae tum magnificae supellectilis habebantur, monopodia et abacos Romam advexerunt. Tunc psaltria sambucistriaeque, et convivalia alia ludorum oblectamenta addita epulis; epulae quoque ipsae et cura et sumptu majore apparari coeptae. Etc."
25. ii. 20. Sardanapalus (668-625) united Assyria and Babylonis. His epitaph: "Haec habeo, quae edi quaeque exsaturata libido hausit. . ." - Cic., Tusc. Disp., v. 35, 101.
26. iii. 24
27. iii. 26. In iii. 23 A. calls such wars "discordiae civiles vel potius inciviles." Dods has the idea, but his English is hardly a translation of the original: "discords which are erroneously called civil, since they destroy civil interests."
28. iii. 29
29. iii. 27. "In ipsius autem Marii oculis continuo feriebantur quibus salutantibus dexteram porrigere noluisset."
30. ii. 24
31. Luc., Pharsal., ii. 142-6
32. iii. 27
33. iii. 28
34. ii. 24
35. ibid. The testimony of A. on this bloody period of Roman history is strung out to wearisome length. One slaughter is worse than the preceding.
36. ii. 21 contains this discussion of Cicero's opinion of the Roman republic. No military man was Cicero, whose political moves were always strictly constitutional.
37. Scipio Africanus, the Younger, who burnt and ploughed under Carthage.
38. Cic., De Re Publ., l. 25
39. op. cit., v. 2. A., however, freely admits that by common

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usage of the term the Roman people did constitute a true re-
public, even though it was thoroughly vitiated by injustice.
Cf. xix. 24.

40. i. 31

41. iii. 21

42. iii. 22

43. ii. 18

44. P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica Corculum, the man mentioned in
note 37, supra. The Scipios and their varied official
activities are with some difficulty kept distinct in the
reader's mind. A. confuses them in the text of the D. C. D.

45. i. 30. Cf. i. 31.

46. iii. 18

47. i. 5

48. iii. 20

49. xvi. 22. Cf. Gen., xiv.

50. xii. 21

51. xii. 27

CHAPTER VII

WAR GOVERNED BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Detailed consideration of the actuality, antecedents, and consequences of war demands finally a view of war as a whole and of war's place in the universe. This cycloramic view is best attained through the eyes of the one, supreme Being, Who sees the vicissitudes of human life from His vantage point of eternity. The active interest of God in the issues of war, and consequently in the history of the nations, reaches into the heart of St. Augustine's thought in the De Civitate Dei. Chapters Two and Three above have already summarized the Saint's "philosophy of history," - the working out by free, intelligent beings of God's designs for His own glory and for the ultimate beatitude of His loyal creatures.

However, on this point most writers admit that Augustine's thought has not been part of the Christian tradition. Theologians have not gone the whole way in following his doctrine of direct intervention by God in the wars of mankind. During certain eras of biblical history God did regularly intervene; but in these latter times, He ordinarily does not. Christian thinkers after Augustine incline to say that war is the direct doing of free men, who act, nevertheless, with God's permissive will. War constitutes a genuine penal sanction of the divine moral law. But it is a natural sanction, - not a penalty for sin

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imposed arbitrarily on mankind by the Supreme Lord of the universe. With this explanation the doctrine of Providence is saved, while Augustine's extreme interpretation regarding war is ruled out.¹

For the purpose of this thesis I understand the term Providence to mean "God Himself considered in that act by which in His wisdom He so orders all events within the universe that the end for which it was created may be realized."²

Providence - An Augustinian Conviction

Scattered through the De Civitate Dei are some striking passages, which by their compactness and clean cut wording show that the man who wrote them adhered absolutely to the doctrine of Providence.

He ((i. e., God)) created; all else was created; and, both for being and well-being, all things need him who created them.³

For he who denies that all things, which either angels or men can give us, are in the hand of the one Almighty, is a madman.⁴

If God's dominion covers all things in general, it must include the beginning, duration, and issue of wars:

we worship that God. . . who, when the human race is to be corrected and chastised by wars, regulates also the beginnings, progress, and ends of these wars;⁵

As to war's length:

Thus also the durations of wars are determined by Him as He may see fit, according to His righteous will, and pleasure, and mercy, to afflict or to console the human race, so that they are sometimes of longer, sometimes of shorter duration.⁶

And as regards victory or defeat, Augustine says that the subjection of a conquered people

does not take place without the providence of God, in whose power it lies that any one either subdues or is subdued in war; that some are endowed with kingdoms, others made subject to kings.⁷

Referring to the worldly success of a beast like the Emperor Nero:

Nevertheless power and domination are not given even to such men save by the providence of the most high God, when He judges that the state of human affairs is worthy of such lords. The divine utterance is clear on this matter; for the Wisdom of God thus speaks: "By me kings reign, and tyrants possess the land."⁸

There can be no doubt, therefore, of St. Augustine's conviction that God is as much concerned with the wars of His creatures as with their other activities.

It goes without saying that the Providence preached by St. Augustine was that of the one, true God of the Christians. Never did he have room in his mind for thoughts of power ascribed to the myriad classical deities worshipped for centuries by the Roman world.⁹ Indeed, the fundamental issue driving him to write the De Civitate Dei was that charge of intransigent paganism that Rome now lay in ruins because she had forfeited the protection of her ancient gods by the national apostasy of Christianity. The slur was too much for the Bishop of Hippo to let pass unchallenged. He has refuted the charge, and with what success is clear from the fact that since the moment he lay down his pen this serious objection has not been heard again.

To review all the evidence piled up about this point would be to quote the largest part of the first ten books of the

City of God. The review would be of little interest (except for the historian), because the question is definitely settled in the minds of all men.

One proof might be quoted as an example of Augustine's argumentation. His evidence is drawn from no less a light than the poet Virgil, who narrates how the patronal deities had actually been entrusted to the protection of the Romans, rather than the Romans entrusted to the deities. Let the author's own rhetoric and dialectic handle the matter:

And these be the gods to whose protecting care the Romans were delighted to entrust their city! O too, too piteous mistake!¹⁰

The stage is set with a reminder to the Romans of the genius of Virgil,¹¹ and of their own veneration for him. Then the action begins:

Well, in this Virgil, I say, Juno is introduced as hostile to the Trojans, and stirring up Aeolus, the king of the winds, against them in the words,

"A race I hate now ploughs the sea,
transporting Troy to Italy,
And home-gods conquered" . . .¹²

And ought prudent men to have entrusted the defence of Rome to these conquered gods? But it will be said, this was only the saying of Juno, who, like an angry woman did not know what she was saying. What, then, says Aeneas himself, - Aeneas who is so often designated "pious?" Does he not say,

"Lo! Panthus, 'scaped from death by flight,
Priest of Apollo on the height,
His conquered gods with trembling hands
He bears, and shelter swift demands!"¹³

Is it not clear that the gods (whom he does not scruple to call "conquered") were rather entrusted to Aeneas than he to them, when it is said to him,

"The gods of her domestic shrines
Your country to your care consigns?"¹⁴

If, then, Virgil says that the gods were such as these, and were conquered, and that when conquered they could not escape except under the protection of a man, what madness is it to suppose that Rome had been wisely entrusted to these guardians, and could not have been taken unless it had lost them! . . . Would it not be wiser to believe, not that Rome would never have fallen into so great a calamity had not they first perished, but rather that they would have perished long since had not Rome preserved them as long as she could? For who does not see, when he thinks of it, what a foolish assumption it is that they could not be vanquished under vanquished defenders, and that they only perished because they had lost their guardian gods, when, indeed, the only cause of their perishing was that they chose for their protectors gods condemned to perish? Their poets, therefore, when they composed and sang these things about the conquered gods, had no intention to invent falsehoods, but uttered, as honest men, what the truth extorted from them.¹⁵

The serious, ponderous argumentation is occasionally lightened when Augustine has opportunity to poke fun at his antagonists; as, for example, when he says that the realm had been more prosperous in early times with fewer gods; "but the greater she became, the more gods she thought she should have, as the larger ship needs to be manned by a larger crew."¹⁶ In another place he wonders: "And yet where was this host of divinities, when . . . Rome was taken and burnt by the Gauls? ((B. C. 390)) Perhaps they were present, but asleep? For at that time the whole city fell into the hands of the enemy, with the single exception of the Capitoline hill; and this would have been taken, had not - the watchful geese aroused the sleeping gods!"¹⁷

If, therefore, the heathen gods were impotent, it remains that only the will of the living God directs the course of the

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nations. The Christian concept of divine providence stands midway between the extremes of fatalism and indeterminism, and it has nothing in common with either extreme.

The cause, then, of the greatness of the Roman empire is neither fortuitous nor fatal, according to the judgment or opinion of those who call those things fortuitous which either have no causes, or such causes as do not proceed from some intelligible order, and those things fatal which happen independently of the will of God and man, by the necessity of a certain order. In a word, human kingdoms are established by divine providence. And if any one attributes their existence to fate, because he calls the will or the power of God itself by the name of fate, let him keep his opinion, but correct his language.¹⁸

Lyrical and deeply thoughtful is the following description of Providence, - a description which ends on the central note of this chapter, namely, God's guidance of the nations.

God, therefore, supreme and true, with His Word and Holy Spirit (which Three are One), one God omnipotent, creator and maker of every soul and every body; in Whose communion those are happy who rejoice in verity, not vanity;¹⁹ Who made man a rational animal, of soul and body; Who, when man sinned, neither allowed him to go unpunished, nor deserted him without mercy; Who has given to the good and to the wicked, existence in common with stones, vegetable life in common with trees, sensuous life in common with brutes, intellectual life in common with angels alone; from Whom is every variety, every species, every order; from Whom are measure, number, weight; from Whom is everything which has its own nature, of whatever kind, of whatever value it be; from Whom are the seeds of forms and the forms of seeds, and the changes of seeds and of forms; Who gave both to the flesh its origin, beauty, health, reproductive fecundity, disposition of members, and salutary harmony of parts; Who gave also to the irrational soul its memory, sensation, and appetite, but to the rational soul, in addition, spiritual memory, intelligence, and will; Who has left, - not to speak of heaven and earth, angels and men, - but not even the inwards of the tiniest, most contemptible animal, nor the pin-feather of a bird, nor the little blossoms of the grass, nor the leaf of a tree, without its mutual fitness of parts - a kind of peace as it were: - it can never be believed that such a God would

will to exclude the kingdoms of men, their conditions of dominion or thralldom, from the laws of His providence.²⁰

War and the Problem of Evil

How, then, can benevolent Providence connive at the monstrous evil of war, at the sins of greed and bestiality which are inevitable by-products of chauvinism? The human intellect, lowest in the order of intellectual being, bottled up in the narrows of time and space, cannot view to its own satisfaction the broad issues of eternity; hence the mystery involved in the Christian doctrine of divine Providence. But the divine intellect does comprehend the totality of being, - past, present, future - in one grand vision. In His supreme wisdom God acts "according to the order of things and times, which are hidden from us, but thoroughly known to Himself."²¹

God does not positively will evil; His free creatures will evil. But God's designs are not frustrated by the malice of men; for He always manages to draw ultimate good from evil, thus more clearly revealing the splendor of His wisdom and His power against the black background of sin.

For God would never have created any, I do not say angel, but even man, whose future wickedness he foreknew, unless He had equally known to what uses in behalf of the good He could turn him, thus embellishing the course of the ages, as it were an exquisite poem set off with antitheses."²²

It is true that wicked men do many things contrary to God's will; but so great is His wisdom and power, that all things which seem adverse to His purpose do still tend toward those just and good ends and issues which He Himself has foreknown.²³

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The sins of men and angels do nothing to impede the "great works of the Lord which accomplish His will." ((Ps., 3:2)) For He who by His Providence and omnipotence distributes to every one his own portion, is able to make good use not only of the good, but also of the wicked.²⁴

Peace is the blessing of God; war, the chastening of God.

Like all temporal things, both peace and war fall to the lot of righteous and wicked men alike. Of the former lot St. Augustine says:

I readily admit that peace is a great benefit; but it is a benefit of the true God, which, like the sun, the rain, and other supports of life, is frequently conferred on the ungrateful and wicked.²⁵

Evils, however, are sometimes very difficult to reconcile with the divine goodness. Still, most men easily follow St. Augustine when he says, "It is with justice, we believe, that the condition of slavery is the result of sin."²⁶ What all men do not easily grasp is the mystery of why God indifferently permits the good and bad to be scourged with war. The fact that sufferings do come from God is clear in Augustine's mind.²⁷ Every solidly religious Christian accepts the reason behind his own sufferings. Certainly he has a better explanation than those unbelievers who taunt the pious for their patience in adversity. Referring to the Gothic sack of Rome, the author asks,

What, then, have the Christians suffered in that calamitous period, which would not profit every one who duly and faithfully considered the following circumstances? First of all, they must humbly consider those very sins which have provoked God to fill the world with such terrible disasters; for although they be far from the excesses of wicked, immoral, and ungodly men, yet they do not judge themselves so clean removed from all faults as to be too good to suffer for these even temporal ills. For every man, however

laudably he lives, yet yields in some points to the lust of the flesh. Though he do not fall into gross enormity of wickedness, and abandoned viciousness, and abominable profanity, yet he slips into some sins, either rarely or so much the more frequently as the sins seem of less account.²⁸

Immediately follows another reason, - namely, the lassitude and sluggishness of otherwise good people, who shirk the social responsibility of actively preserving the national morality.

But not to mention this ((sc., venial sin)), where can we readily find a man who holds in fit and just estimation those persons on account of whose revolting pride, luxury, and avarice, and cursed iniquities and impiety, God now smites the earth as His prediction threatened? Where is the man who lives with them in the style in which it becomes us to live with them? For often we wickedly blind ourselves to the occasions of teaching and admonishing them, sometimes even of reprimanding and chiding them, either because we shrink from the labour or are ashamed to offend them, or because we fear to lose good friendships, lest this should stand in the way of our advancement, . . . So that, although the conduct of wicked men is distasteful to the good, and therefore they do not fall with them into that damnation which in the next life awaits such persons, yet, because they spare their damnable sins through fear, therefore, even though their own sins be slight and venial, they are justly scourged with the wicked in this world, though in eternity they quite escape punishment. Justly, when God afflicts them in common with the wicked, do they find this life bitter, through love of whose sweetness they declined to be bitter to these sinners.²⁹

In the same passage are laid down two "principal" ends of God in chastising His friends along with His enemies: (1) to punish the faithful for their smaller sins, (2) to test and prove their virtue.

(1) They are punished together, not because they ((sc., the good)) have spent an equally corrupt life, but because the good as well as the wicked, though not equally with them, love this present life; while they ought to hold it cheap, that the wicked, being admonished and reformed by their example, might lay hold of life eternal.

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(2) there is another reason why the good are afflicted with temporal calamities - the reason which Job's case exemplifies: that the human spirit may be proved, and that it may be manifested with what fortitude of pious trust, and with how unmercenary a love, it cleaves to God.

Kingdoms are given to saints and sinners; but genuine felicity is not so given, because it is reserved for the good. Sovereignty and felicity, as explained in the preceeding chapter, are by no means co-terminous. St. Augustine evidently thinks that God's granting of temporal power to his friends is more a concession to their weakness than a reward for valor in His service.

Felicity He gives only to the good. Whether a man be a subject or a king makes no difference: he may equally either possess or not possess it. And it shall be full in that life where kings and subjects exist no longer. And therefore earthly kingdoms are given by Him both to the good and the bad; lest His worshippers, still under the conduct of a very weak mind, should covet these gifts from Him as some great things. And this is the mystery of the Old Testament, in which the New was promised: those who were spiritual, understanding even then, although not yet openly declaring, both the eternity which was symbolized by these earthly things, and in what gifts of God true felicity could be found.³⁰

Providence and the Hebrews

Historically, God has given dominion to all kinds of peoples, to all kinds of persons. He has favored the nations which worshipped Himself; He has favored the nations which fell down before idols fashioned by their own hands. He has favored beneficent men; He has favored scoundrels. In the record books of the world the name of every God-fearing nation and ruler can be balanced with the name of some infidel nation and ruler.

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He, therefore, who is the one true God, who never leaves the human race without just judgment and help, gave a kingdom to the Romans when He would, and as great as He would, as He did also to the Assyrians, and even the Persians, by whom, as their own books testify, only two gods are worshipped, the one good and the other evil, - to say nothing concerning the Hebrew people, of whom I have already spoken as much as seemed necessary, who, as long as they were a kingdom, worshipped none save the true God. . . And the same is true in respect of men as well as nations. He who gave power to Marius gave it also to Caius Caesar; He who gave it to Augustus gave it also to Nero; He also who gave it to the most benignant emperors, the Vespasians, father and son, gave it also to the cruel Domitian; and, finally, to avoid the necessity of going over them all, He who gave it to the Christian Constantine gave it also to the apostate Julian. . .³¹

The most evident example of divine intervention in the development of nations is provided, of course, by the Jews. As a people they have experienced almost every possible vicissitude from the hands of God. Furthermore, their national history illustrates how God draws good from evil.

Therefore, that it might be known that these earthly good things, after which those pant who cannot imagine better things, remain in the power of the one God Himself, not of the many false gods whom the Romans have formerly believed worthy of worship, He multiplied His people in Egypt from being very few, and delivered them out of it by wonderful signs.³² ((Here follows a litany of pagan gods, all of whose alleged blessings the Hebrews enjoyed, while they worshipped only the true God.)) . . . Without the mad rites of Mars and Bellona they carried on war; and while, indeed, they did not conquer without victory, yet they did not hold it to be a goddess, but the gift of their God. . . in a word, everything for which the Romans thought they must supplicate so great a crowd of false gods, they received much more happily from the one true God. And if they had not sinned against Him with impious curiosity, which seduced them like magic arts, and drew them to strange gods and idols, and at last led them to kill Christ, their kingdom would have remained to them, and would have been, if not more spacious, yet more happy, than that

of Rome. And now that they are dispersed through almost all lands and nations, it is through the providence of that one true God; that whereas the images, alters, groves, and temples of the false gods are everywhere overthrown, and their sacrifices prohibited, it may be shown from their books how this has been foretold by their prophets so long before; lest, perhaps, when they should be read in ours, they might seem to be invented by us.³³

A neat epitome of the whole national Jewish history can be constructed by patching together passages of the De Civitate Dei, especially in the latter books. Emphasis in the account is always on God's active intervention, with the outcome of wars being particularly stressed.³⁴

The Christian's explanation of Jewish history since the time of Christ is this: Jesus, the Son of God Incarnate, is the Messiah promised through patriarchs and prophets. However, He was repudiated as Messiah, and killed, by His own people, because of the spiritual nature of His kingdom. Not many years after this national apostasy and official deicide, God punished the Jews by smashing their political structure, by starving and slaughtering millions, and by scattering the survivors to the four winds.³⁵

The Jews continue to pay the penalty of their crime; they shall keep on paying till close to the end of time, when as a people they will be converted to the Saviour Whom they now reject.

But that those carnal Israelites who are now unwilling to believe in Christ shall afterward believe, that is, their children shall (for they themselves, of course, shall go to their own place by dying), this same prophet ((Osee)) testifies, saying, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an altar, without a priesthood, without manifestations."³⁶ Who does not see that the Jews are now thus? But let us hear what

he adds: "And afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall be amazed at the Lord and at His goodness in the latter days." Nothing is clearer than this prophecy, in which by David, as distinguished by the title of king, Christ is to be understood, "who is made," as the apostle says, "of the seed of David according to the flesh."³⁷

God is not mocked. The obstinate stubbornness of the people chosen to be the means of establishing and spreading the City of God cannot frustrate God's purpose. More than once in ancient times He punished the race for their lack of cooperation; by the very act of punishing them He obtained His end. The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus was no exception; for the fleeing Jews carried with them all over the world their sacred books of prophecy, thus spreading knowledge of the Messiah, and guaranteeing the authenticity of those very documents to which Christians appealed in defending their own position. This providential guarantee has already been mentioned in a passage quoted in the preceding section of this chapter.

But the Jews who slew Him, and would not believe in Him, because it behoved Him to die and rise again, were yet more miserably wasted by the Romans, and utterly rooted out from their kingdom, where aliens had already ruled over them, and were dispersed through the lands (so that indeed there is no place where they are not), and are thus by their own Scriptures a testimony to us that we have not forged the prophecies about Christ.³⁸

The whole story of the degradation of Jewry is explained in a single epigram quoted by St. Augustine from the writings of Seneca: "victi victoribus leges dederunt."³⁹

Providence and the Romans

Not so strikingly, but none the less surely, secular

history also witnesses to divine Providence. The Romans extended their dominions only by the will of God, though they did not even know Him. However, had they worshipped the true God in faith and good living, they would have had a much better kingdom though perhaps not so widely extended.⁴⁰

Their wars were of long or short duration, as God saw fit to make them. Of short wars Augustine mentions the war of the Pirates (B. C. 66), the Third Punic War (150-146), the war of the fugitive gladiators (73-71), the Social War (90-88); of long wars: the Second Punic War (218-202), First Punic War (264-241), Mithridatic War (88-63), Samnite Wars (343-290).⁴¹

The fortunes of individual military leaders were regulated by God. Temporal prosperity or adversity was sent indifferently to pious and impious Romans. Metellus and Regulus were both good men, but experienced widely divergent fates. On the one hand, "Metellus, the most highly esteemed of all the Romans, who had five sons in the consulship, was prosperous even in this life." On the other, Regulus was captured in war and cruelly tortured to death; his story has been narrated in Chapter Six.

Marius and Catiline were both profligates; yet Marius won earthly prosperity, and Catiline did not. Marius was not molested in the midst of his "bloody bliss;" while Catiline, "the worst of men, reduced to poverty and defeated in the war his own guilt had aroused, lived and perished miserably."

This interlocking of fortunes is permitted by God for two reasons: (1) to make us indifferent toward temporal prosperity, which is neither an unmixed good (since it is often given even

to wicked men, like Marius) nor an absolute evil (since good men, like Metellus, have been granted eminent success); (2) to show us that unclean spirits are neither to be supplicated nor feared for any supposed power over the distribution of blessings or calamities, since they could not prevent the happiness of their enemy Metellus, nor secure the happiness of their servant Catiline.⁴²

These case histories are all taken from pre-Christian Rome. But God continued to favor the Roman people, and individual Roman emperors, after Christianity had become the official religion. Consider the career of Constantine:

For the good God, lest men, who believe that He is to be worshipped with a view to eternal life, should think that no one could attain to all this high estate, and to this terrestrial dominion, unless he should be a worshipper of the demons, - supposing that these spirits have great power with respect to such things, - for this reason He gave to the Emperor Constantine, who was not a worshipper of demons, but of the true God Himself, such fulness of earthly gifts as no one would even dare wish for. To him also He granted the honour of founding a city, a companion to the Roman empire, the daughter, as it were, of Rome itself, but without any temple or image of the demons. He reigned for a long period as sole emperor, and unaided held and defended the whole Roman world. In conducting and carrying on wars he was most victorious; in overthrowing tyrants he was most successful. He died at a great age, of sickness and old age, and left his sons to succeed him in the empire.⁴³

Then almost immediately God sent woes to the successors of Constantine:

But again, lest any emperor should become a Christian in order to merit the happiness of Constantine, when every one should be a Christian for the sake of eternal life, God took away Jovian far sooner than Julian, and permitted that Gratian should be slain by the sword of a tyrant.⁴⁴

To complete the enumeration of various types of rulers in the Christian Empire we can see what God permitted to happen to the apostate Julian,

whose gifted mind was deceived by a sacrilegious and detestable curiosity, stimulated by the love of power. And it was because he was addicted through curiosity to vain oracles, that, confident of victory, he burned the ships which were laden with the provisions necessary for his army, and therefore, engaging with hot zeal in rashly audacious enterprises, he was soon slain, as the just consequence of his recklessness, and left his army unprovisioned in an enemy's country, and in such a predicament that it never could have escaped, save by altering the boundaries of the Roman empire. . .⁴⁵

"The one true God clearly directs and governs these affairs as He pleases: and if sometimes His reasons be hidden, are they therefore unjust?"⁴⁶

Gothic Sack of Rome

Because of their sins, the Romans deserved severe chastisement, and they took it within the lifetime of St. Augustine himself. The punishment came from the barbarian armies which swept down on the City shortly after the turn of the fifth century. God saw fit to manifest His power by so arranging events that He could freely choose between two barbarian generals for an executioner to scourge Rome. There was either Radagaisus, the demon worshipper, or Alaric, the demon hater. Radagaisus and his army were the last hope for restoration of paganism in Rome.⁴⁷ But the Lord chose Alaric; whereas Radagaisus He rejected and crushed.

When Radagaisus, king of the Goths, having taken up his position very near to the city, with a vast and

savage army, was already close upon the Romans, he was in one day so speedily and so thoroughly beaten, that, whilst not even one Roman was wounded, much less slain, far more than a hundred thousand of his army were prostrated, and he himself and his sons, having been captured, were forthwith put to death, suffering the punishment they deserved.⁴⁸

God's purpose:

For had so impious a man, with so great and so impious a host, entered the city, whom would he have spared? what tombs of the martyrs would he have respected? in his treatment of what person would he have manifested the fear of God? whose blood would he have refrained from shedding? whose chastity would he have wished to preserve inviolate? But how loud would they not have been in the praises of their gods! How insultingly they would have boasted, saying that Radagaisus had conquered, that he had been able to achieve such great things, because he propitiated and won over the gods by daily sacrifices, - a thing which the Christian religion did not allow the Romans to do! For when he was approaching to those places where he was overwhelmed at the nod of the Supreme Majesty, as his fame was everywhere increasing, it was being told us at Carthage that the pagans were believing, publishing, and boasting, that he, on account of the help and protection of the gods friendly to him, because of the sacrifices which he was said to be daily offering to them, would certainly not be conquered by those who were not performing such sacrifices to the Roman gods, and did not even permit that they should be offered by any one.⁴⁹

Only five years after the threat of Radagaisus had been turned aside, Rome was actually captured; but she was taken by a soldier who bore a certain reverence for the Christian religion. It was Alaric at the head of his Gothic legions. The God of the Christians caused that

when Rome was to be taken, it should be taken by those barbarians who, contrary to any custom of all former wars, protected, through reverence for the Christian religion, those who fled for refuge to the sacred places, and who so opposed the demons themselves, and the rites of impious sacrifices, that they seemed to be carrying on a far more terrible war with them than with men. Thus did the true Lord and Governor of things both

scourge the Romans mercifully, and, by the marvellous defeat of the worshippers of demons, show that those sacrifices were not necessary even for the safety of present things; so that, by those who do not obstinately hold out, but prudently consider the matter, true religion may not be deserted on account of the urgencies of the present time, but may be more clung to in most confident expectation of eternal life.⁵⁰

St. Augustine did not gloat over Rome's downfall. He was a patriotic Roman citizen. The fifth century world was a sorry looking mess; yet the Bishop of Hippo knew that the moral force necessary to breathe new life into Latin civilization was already at hand. That new force was the Catholic religion. Solidly optimistic, the great Doctor expected the best, for he was aware that reconstruction waited only on the will of God. He says,

the Roman empire is afflicted rather than changed, - a thing which has befallen it in other times also, before the name of Christ was heard, and it has been restored after such affliction, - a thing which even in these times is not to be despaired of. For who knows the will of God concerning this matter?⁵¹

Summary

Concerning divine Providence, therefore, St. Augustine teaches that God watches over all activities of His creatures, directing even free wills according to His eternal design. Mankind's warfaring is not beyond the pale of His loving care. After disposing of any claims to providential power on the part of pagan divinities, Augustine proves and expounds the providence of the true God. The age-old problem of evil is more baffling than ever to the human intellect when it looks at the supreme

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temporal evil - warfare. Yet in the light of sound philosophical and theological truths, war is seen to be a chastisement sent by God to punish the wicked, to purge and try the good. Sacred history testifies to the direct intervention of God in the Hebrew nation, while secular history shows the same influence on the Romans. Both Jews and Romans had been punished for their sins by defeat in war. Regarding the Jews, St. Augustine interprets their own prophecies to mean that they shall not be delivered from servitude till near the end of time, when they will be converted to their rejected Saviour. For the Romans, who had already officially accepted Christ as the Messiah, Augustine even in the fifth century held to the hope of God's restoring western civilization.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

1. Read P. Monceaux, L'Église et le Droit de Guerre, pp. 25-71. Monceaux says: "Yet there is also a weak point in Augustin's theory which must be noticed. His system would imply the constant and direct intervention of God in the affairs of this world; hence his philosophy of war. On this hypothesis all would be plain and certain, as in the days of Moses or King David. But the God of the Gospel is more discreet; and He is a God of Peace who no longer ordains war. Consequently the human conscience is left to itself to decide whether or not a war is just. And unfortunately the ideal of justice varies greatly with the consciences of different people, particularly when adversaries with divergent interests confront one another. What is wanted to give the Augustinian theory its full value in practice is an objective foundation for the criterion of justice. Several theologians who were the heirs and disciples of Augustine saw this weak point: they thought to find the necessary guarantee in the arbitration of God's representative on earth - the Church or the Pope. The solution is evidently not easy to find; for we are still looking for it." - Quoted in translation from Eppstein, The Catholic Tradition of the Law of Nations, p. 80.
2. Walker, "Providence"
3. x. 15. "Ille enim fecit, haec facta sunt, adque ut sint et bene se habeant, eius indigent, a quo facta sunt."
4. x. 14. "Omnia quippe, quae praestare hominibus vel angeli vel homines possunt, in unius esse Omnipotentis potestate quisquis diffitetur, insanit."
5. vii. 30. "illum Deum colimus, . . . qui bellorum quoque ipsorum, cum sic emendandum et castigandum est genus humanum, exordiis, progressibus, finibusque moderatur."
6. v. 22. "Sic etiam tempora ipsa bellorum, sicut in eius arbitrio est iustoque iudicio et misericordia vel adterere vel consolari genus humanum, ut alia citius, alia tardius finiantur."
7. xviii. 2. "Hinc factum est, ut non sine Dei providentia, in cuius potestate est, ut quisque bello aut subiugetur aut subiugetur, quidam essent regnis praediti, quidam regnantibus subditi."
8. v. 19. "Etiam talibus tamen dominandi potestas non datur nisi summi Dei providentia, quando res humanas iudicat"

talibus dominis dignas. Aperta de hac re vox diuina est loquente Dei sapientia: Per me reges regnant et tyranni per tenent terram." (Job, 24:30)

9. vide iii. 12. "Sub hoc tot deorum praesidio (quos numerare quis potest, indigenas et alienigenas, caelites, terrestres, infernos, marinos, fontanos, fluuiales, et, ut Varro dicit, certos adque incertos ((cf., vii. 17)), in omnibusque generibus deorum, sicut in animalibus, mares et feminas?) - sub hoc ergo tot deorum praesidio constituta Roma etc."
10. 1. 3
11. ibid. Tribute to Virgil: "quem propterea paruuli legunt, ut uidelicet poeta magnus omniumque praeclarissimus adque optimus teneris ebibitus animis non facile oblivione possit aboleri, secundum illud Horatii:
Quo semel est imbuta recens seruabit odorem
Testa diu -" (Epist., l. 2, 69-70)
12. "Gens inimica mihi Tyrrhenum nauigat aequor
Ilium in Italiam portans uictosque penates."
(Aen., l. 72)
13. "Panthus Othryades, arcis Phoebique
sacerdos,
Sacra manu uictosque deos paruumque
nepotem
Ipsa trahit cursuque amens ad limina
tendit?"
(Aen., ii. 319-21)
14. "Sacra suosque tibi commendat Troia
penates?"
(Aen., ii. 293)
15. 1. 3
16. iii. 12
17. ii. 22
18. v. 1
19. "cuius sunt participatione felices, quicumque sunt ueritate non uanitate felices."
20. v. 11. I have revised Dod's translation of this passage.
21. iv. 33
22. xi. 18
23. xxii. 2

24. xiv. 27
25. iii. 9
26. xix. 15. Slavery in a generic sense to include subjugation in war.
27. vide i. 1.
28. i. 9
29. ibid.
30. iv. 33
31. v. 21
32. "If thou go out to war against thy enemies, and see horsemen and chariots, and the numbers of the enemy's army greater than thine, thou shalt not fear them: because the Lord thy God is with thee, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt. . . Hear, O Israel, you join battle this day against your enemies, let not your heart be dismayed, be not afraid, do not give back, fear ye them not: Because the Lord your God is in the midst of you, and will fight for you against your enemies, to deliver you from danger." - Deut., 20:1, 3, 4 (*italics added*) The whole Ch. 20 of Deuteronomy contains laws relating to war.
33. iv. 34
34. Political and military aspects of Jewish national history can be traced as follows in the D. C. D. Moses to David: xvi. 43; xvii. 2. Kingdoms of Israel and Judah: xvii. 21; xvii. 23. Babylonian Captivity to advent of Christ: xviii. 45.
35. A. holds this interpretation. Read xvii. 18, in which he says: "Tu autem, inquit, Domine, misere mei et resuscita me, et reddam illis." ((Ps., 91:10)) Quis hoc iam neget, qui Iudaeos post passionem resurrectionemque Christi de sedibus suis bellica strage et excidio funditus eradicatos uidet? Occisus enim ab eis surrexit et reddidit eis interim temporariam disciplinam, excepto quod non correctis seruat, quando uiuos et mortuos iudicabit. . . Iudaei autem Christum quem sperant, moriturum esse non sperant. Ideo quem lex et prophetae adnuntiauerunt, nostrum esse non putant, sed nescio quem suum, quem sibi alienum a mortis passione confingunt."
36. Osee, 3:4
37. (Rom., 1:3) xviii. 28

38. xviii. 46
39. vi. 11. The quotation is from Seneca's De Superstitione, not extant. Cf. Welldon, I, 269, note 3. The same work is quoted at length in vi. 10-11.
40. iv. 28
41. v. 22
42. ii. 23
43. v. 25
44. ibid.
45. v. 21. A. D. 363. Julian lost his life on this expedition against the Persians.
46. ibid. "Haec plane Deus unus et uerus regit et gubernat, ut placet: et si occultis causis, numquid iniustus?" The translation is my own.
47. Radagaisus, or Radagast, marched on Rome and was overwhelmingly defeated (405) by Stilicho, barbarian champion of the Emperor Honorius. A. calls the invader "rex Gothorum," but his army seems to have been composed of Vandals, Suevi, and Alani.
48. v. 23
49. ibid.
50. ibid.
51. iv. 7

EPILOGUE

Two major aspects of St. Augustine's doctrine on war impress themselves deeply on the reader of the De Civitate Dei. First, there is the author's concern about justice in war. Second, there is his uncompromising, unfailing trust in a benign Providence directing the issues of war. Unjust wars are the bane of human society. They throw mankind into confusion, for war is a disruption of that tranquillity of order which is the essence of peace. Even just wars can be called just only in so far as they are an attempt to restore by coercion the order disturbed by an act of unjust aggression. In the hands of the Creator war is a kind of horribile flagellum. The supreme Lord and Lawgiver of the universe directs the lash where He wills - to awaken sinners, to punish the incorrigible, to try the saints.

The principles of justice are enuntiated in the De Civitate Dei, and applied to form judgments on the wars of human history. The author positively censures almost every secular war recounted by him in his work. The man who condemned these wars was himself almost a personification of the turmoil in his own age. Augustine's father was a pagan; his mother, a Christian Saint. From them respectively he may be said to have inherited his turbid carnal lust, and his keen zest for the good things of the soul. In the process of his intellectual and spiritual development he struck every chord in the diapason. During his own lifetime he saw on the imperial throne the apostate Julian and

the pious Theodosius. Such was the man who preached incessantly to soldiers, to rulers, to heretics, the doctrine of justice in war.

After the fall of Rome, St. Augustine became the great consoler of the Christians. Not only did he protect them from the renewed attack of the pagans, but he filled the Christians with faith and hope for a better life to come, - security in this world for their children, in the next world for themselves and for their children. To stand on the sideline and exhort others to take courage is an office comfortable enough. Yet this was not to be always the position of the Bishop of Hippo. Some time before his death, he had the opportunity to try at first hand the efficacy of his own teaching, for he too was victimized by war.

On hearing reports about the success of Alaric, other restless barbarian legions had moved in from the frontiers for their share of the loot. Over the Alps and Apennines, through Spain, across the Sea, and along the coast of Mauretania surged the Vandals and Alani under Genseric. It was Hannibal's route in reverse. St. Augustine in his De Civitate Dei had inveighed against the outrages perpetrated in the Roman wars of aggression. He had deplored the recent calamities fallen upon the city of Rome. Just twenty years after that event, the same outrages and calamities were being repeated in Africa; in many ways they were even more dreadful.

A few weeks before the end came for Augustine, the city of Hippo was besieged by Genseric. This was the See for which he

had spent himself through thirty-five laborious years, working to cure his people of paganism, Manichaeism, and Donatism. Within the walls of the episcopal city (defended by a pathetically inadequate force of legionaries under Count Boniface) were gathered many refugees, among them close friends and colleagues of Augustine. The aged, tired out Bishop continued in his office of consoler. Possidius says that one day at table Augustine said to the company:

"Noveritis me hoc tempore nostrae calamitatis id Deum rogare, ut aut hanc civitatem ab hostibus circumdatam liberare dignetur, aut si aliud ei videtur, suos servos ad perferendam suam voluntatem fortes faciat, aut certe ut me de hoc saeculo ad se accipiat."²

Augustine took sick of a deadly fever; and before the Saint had been dead many weeks, Hippo Regius collapsed. North Africa was to be no longer the great font of Christian intellectual life. There would not come from Africa another Athanasius, or Jerome, or Cyprian, or Augustine. Christian Africa became thoroughly vitiated with barbarism and Arianism, and two hundred years after the death of St. Augustine the country was cut down by the sword of Mohamet. Yet the cause for which Augustine fought has never been lost. Nor can it be lost. That cause is the eternal City of God.

Notes to the Epilogue:

1. Boniface, to whom A. had addressed several personal letters on the subject of war. cf. Ch. 1, p. 5.
2. Possidius, Vita Augustini, xxix. Valuable and interesting primary sources for details of the Vandal incursion and the last days of A. are available in Migne, P. L., xxxii.

APPENDIX A.

PATRIOTISM

"It is a duty of virtue to live for one's country, and for its sake to bear children," St. Augustine remarks.¹ Clearly he places patriotism among the moral virtues. But "there is no true virtue except that which is directed toward that end in which is the highest and ultimate good of man."² To qualify as genuine virtue, therefore, patriotism must be subordinated to that highest and ultimate good, viz., the glory of God.

The ancient world failed to attain a clear notion of this sublime subordination of patriotism to a still higher, absolute good. The Jews, helped by divine revelation, were an exception. The ancients were almost by necessity totalitarians. The concept of a supernatural end was non-existent among them. Ideas of a natural future life, and of a transcendent Absolute, were either positively false or ineffectually obscure and confused.

Nevertheless, for preserving good order in society, some kind of anchor or point of reference is required. Ancient peoples beyond the pale of positive Revelation accepted what they had at hand, namely the state, and fashioned it into a working kind of absolute. When the state, however, becomes a god, the cult of that god is going to produce some moral monstrosities. Totalitarianism always does.

Unfortunately for us St. Augustine has not developed at length in the De Civitate Dei any positive doctrine on the

virtue of patriotism. We must be content, therefore, to determine his mind on the subject from accounts of the natural and worldly "virtue" of patriotism as practiced by the Romans, whose motives were limited by what they could see and feel.

The desire of "freedom and the desire of human praise compelled the Romans to admirable deeds."³ First, they made their country free by expelling the tyrannical kings. Next they made their country dominate the world. At the beginning

it was their greatest ambition either to die bravely or to live free; but when liberty was obtained, so great a desire of glory took possession of them, that liberty alone was not enough unless domination also should be sought.

To lord it over others, they were pleased to realize, was the peculiar genius of the Romans:

"But Roman thou, do thou control
The nations far and wide;
Be this thy genius, to impose
The rule of peace on vanquished foes,
Show pity to the humbled soul,
And crush the sons of pride."⁴

No one denies that the lust of praise accounts for most of the heroic deeds of Roman patriots narrated by the historians and poets. In one passage of the De Civitate Dei St. Augustine recalls many of these legends:⁵

Brutus courageously put to death his own sons, who opposed the best interests of their country by plotting for the restoration of King Tarquin.⁶

Another Roman chief, Torquatus, slew his son, not because the son fought against his country, but because on being challenged by an enemy he joined battle through

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youthful impetuosity, contrary to express orders of Torquatus, the general. And therefore, Torquatus killed him "notwithstanding that his son was victorious, lest there should be more evil in the example of authority despised, than good in the glory of slaying an enemy."⁷

Furius Camillus, after freeing his country from the yoke of the Veientes, was condemned by political enemies. Nevertheless, when his ungrateful country was later threatened by the Gauls, Camillus returned from voluntary exile to save the Romans once again.⁸

C. Mucius Scaevola in the presence of Lars Porsenna, whom he had failed to assassinate, "reached forth his right hand and laid it on a red-hot altar, saying that many such as he saw him to be had conspired for his destruction." King Porsenna, terrified at the thought of such daring, immediately sued for peace with the Romans.⁹

Curtius, spurring on his steed, threw himself completely armed into a precipitous chasm opened in the Forum. For the oracles had commanded the Romans to throw into that gulf the best thing which they possessed; and they could only understand thereby that, since they excelled in men and arms, the gods had commanded that an armed man be cast headlong into the abyss.¹⁰

The Decii, father and son, sacrificed themselves in different wars, "consecrating themselves in a form of words,

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... that falling, and pacifying by their blood the wrath of the gods, they might be the means of delivering the Roman army."¹¹

M. Pulvillus, when engaged in dedicating a temple to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, received with indifference the false report of his son's death. Political enemies had sent the message to agitate him so that he should go away, leaving the honor of dedicating to his colleague in the consulship. But rather than interrupt the ceremonies, "Pulvillus even ordered that his son should be cast out unburied, the love of glory having overcome in his heart the grief of bereavement."¹²

Regulus freely returned to his death at Carthage, "because (as he is said to have replied to the Romans when they wished to retain him) he could not have the dignity of an honorable citizen at Rome after having been a slave to the Africans."¹³

"Valerius, who died when he was holding the office of consul, was so poor that his funeral expenses were paid with money collected by the people."¹⁴

L. Quintius Cincinnatus, "who, possessing only four acres ((jugera)) of land, and cultivating them with his own hands, was taken from the plough to be made dictator." After conquering the enemy, he abdicated his high office and went quietly back to the plough.¹⁵

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Fabricius preserved his integrity against the enticing offers of Pyrrhus, "who promised him the fourth part of his kingdom," if Fabricius should forsake Rome. But he preferred to abide at Rome in poverty as a private citizen.¹⁶

Augustine readily admits that "so far as regards human and temporal glory, the lives of these ancient Romans were reckoned sufficiently worthy."¹⁷ Nevertheless, he says elsewhere, "even the love of praise is a vice;" and "they who restrain baser lusts. . . by desire of human praise, or, at all events, restrain them better by the love of such praise, are not indeed yet holy, but only less base."¹⁸

Every other consideration, therefore, the Roman subordinated to the love of reputation. The early patriots as a rule pursued the honor of men through praiseworthy deeds. In later times they sought honor by nefarious deeds. But at all times the grand passion was honor and glory. Augustine quotes the words which Sallust has put in the mouth of Cato:

"Do not think," he says, "that it was by arms that our ancestors made the republic great from being small. Had that been the case, the republic of our day would have been by far more flourishing than that of their times, for the number of our allies and citizens is far greater; and, besides, we possess a far greater abundance of armour and of horses than they did. But it was other things than these that made them great, and we have none of them: industry at home, just government without, a mind free in deliberation, addicted neither to crime nor to lust. Instead of these, we have luxury and avarice, poverty in the state, opulence among citizens; we laud riches, we follow laziness; there is no difference made between the good and the bad; all the rewards of virtue are got possession of by intrigue."¹⁹

The Roman's devotion to country was, therefore, a matter of utility. Even at its best it aimed for the goods of this life. Consequently, God in His providence rewarded the Romans adequately by granting in abundance those temporal blessings which they craved. For, if God had

withheld from them the terrestrial glory of that most excellent empire, a reward would not have been rendered to their good arts, - that is, their virtues, - by which they sought to attain so great glory. For as to those who seem to do some good that they may receive glory from men, the Lord also says, "Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward."²⁰ So also these despised their own private affairs for the sake of the republic, and for its treasury resisted avarice, consulted for the good of their country with a spirit of freedom, addicted neither to what their laws pronounced to be crime nor to lust. By all these acts, as by the true way, they pressed forward to honours, power, and glory; they were honoured among almost all nations; and at this day, both in literature and history, they are glorious among almost all nations. There is no reason why they should complain against the justice of the supreme and true God, "they have received their reward."²¹

Augustine, in a further step, boldly points out various Roman leaders who shielded their crimes behind a screen of patriotism. The crimes were often prompted by personal ambitions, not the public weal. They wanted it bruited abroad, however, that parricides, exilings, confiscations, and wars were prompted only by their love of Rome. Or, in the words of Virgil,

Ut cumque ferent ea facta minores
Vincit amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido.²²

For example, at the very beginning of the Republic, Junius Brutus (the same who slew his sons) disgraced and exiled his colleague in the Consulship, L. Tarquinius Collatinus, an injustice which Augustine tags as "detestable and altogether profitless for the state."²³ Then at the very end of the

Republican period came Julius Caesar, in whose praise Sallust actually says

that he wished for a great empire, an army, and a new war, that he might have a sphere where his genius and virtue might shine forth.²⁴

Such knavery cannot qualify as patriotism in any sense of the word. It is psuedo-patriotism.

Love of country as a moral virture in the strict sense is limited practically to good Christians. The reign of Theodosius the Great (379-395) provides a fine example of how a man can equably combine the service of country and the service of God. St. Augustine evidently considers him the ideal ruler, being patriotic and Christian.

Theodosius not only preserved during the lifetime of Gratian that fidelity which was due to him, but also, after his death, he, like a true Christian, took his little brother Valentinian under his protection, as joint emperor, after he had been expelled by Maximus, the murderer of his father. He guarded him with paternal affection, though he might without any difficulty have got rid of him, being entirely destitute of all resources, had he been animated with the desire of extensive empire, and not with the ambition of being a benefactor. It was therefore a far greater pleasure to him, when he had adopted the boy, and preserved to him his imperial dignity, to console him by his very humanity and kindness. . . ((After victories over his enemies, Theodosius)) overthrew the statues of Jupiter, which had been, as it were, consecrated by I know not what kind of rites against him, and set up in the Alps. And the thunderbolts of these statues, which were made of gold, he mirthfully and graciously presented to his couriers, who (as the joy of the occasion permitted) were jocularly saying that they would be most happy to be struck by such thunderbolts. The sons of his own enemies, whose fathers had been not so much by his orders as by the vehemence of war, having fled for refuge to a church, though they were not yet Christians, he was anxious, taking advantage of the occasion, to bring over to Christianity, and treated them with Christian love. Nor did he deprive them of their property, but, besides allowing them to retain it, bestowed on them additional

honours. He did not permit private animosities to affect the treatment of any man after the war. He was not like Cinna, and Marius, and Sylla, and other such men, who wished not to finish civil wars even when they were finished, but rather grieved that they had arisen at all, than wished that when they were finished they should harm any one. Amid all these events, from the very commencement of his reign, he did not cease to help the troubled church against the impious by most just and merciful laws, which the heretical Valens, favouring the Arians, had vehemently afflicted. Indeed, he rejoiced more to be a member of this church than he did to be a king upon the earth. . . And what could be more admirable than his religious humility, when, compelled by the urgency of certain of his intimates, he avenged the grievous crime of the Thessalonians, which at the prayer of the bishops he had promised to pardon, and, being laid hold of by the discipline of the Church, did penance in such a way that the sight of his imperial loftiness prostrated made the people who were interceding for him weep more than the consciousness of offence had made them fear it when enraged? These and other similar good works, which it would be long to tell, he carried with him from this world of time, where the greatest human nobility and loftiness are but vapour.²⁶

If Theodosius was a good ruler, it was because he carried out in his administration the maxims blended into the following portrait of the ideal emperor. Princes are truly happy, says Augustine,

if they rule justly; if they are not lifted up amid the praises of those who pay them sublime honours, and the obsequiousness of those who salute them with an excessive humility, but remember that they are men; if they make their power the handmaid of His majesty by using it for the greatest possible extension of His worship; if they fear, love, worship God; if more than their own they love that kingdom in which they are not afraid to have partners; if they are slow to punish, ready to pardon; if they apply that punishment as necessary to government and defence of the republic, and not in order to gratify their own enmity; if they grant pardon, not that iniquity may go unpunished, but with the hope that the transgressor may amend his ways; if they compensate with the lenity of mercy and the liberality of benevolence for whatever severity they may be compelled to decree; if their luxury is as much restrained as it might have been unrestrained; if they prefer to govern depraved desire rather than any nation whatever; and if they do all

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these things, not through ardent desire of empty glory, but through love of eternal felicity, not neglecting to offer to the true God, who is their God, for their sins, the sacrifices of humility, contrition, and prayer. Such Christian emperors, we say, are happy in the present time by hope, and are destined to be so in the enjoyment of the reality itself, when that which we wait for shall have arrived.²⁷

This description is enough to show us that St. Augustine recognized true patriotism to be a matter of living for one's country as well as dying for it. True patriotism is an unselfish devotion to country, imbued and transformed with devotion to the interests of God.

NOTES TO APPENDIX A.

1. xix. 1. "Pertinet quippe ad uirtutis officium et uiuere patriae et propter patriam filios procreare."
2. v. 12
3. v. 18
4. v. 12 "Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(Hae tibi erunt artes) pacique imponere mores,
Parcere subiectis et debellare superbos."
5. v. 18
6. Cf. Livy, ii. 5.
7. ibid., viii. 7
8. ibid., v. 19 sqq.
9. ibid., ii. 12.
10. ibid., vii. 6.
11. ibid., viii. 9; x. 28.
12. ibid., ii. 8.
13. A. recounts or refers to the story of Regulus at least nine times in the D. C. D.
14. Livy, ii. 16.
15. ibid., iii. 26 sqq.
16. ibid., xii. "Periocha"
17. v. 18
18. v. 13
19. v. 12. Dods' version reads: "I do not think etc."
Welldon's text reads: "Nolite existimare etc."
20. Matt., 6:2
21. v. 15
22. Aen., vi. 823. D. C. D., iii. 17.

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23. iii. 16. "detestanda iniquitas et nihilo utilis rei publicae."

24. (Catil., 54) v. 12.

25. ibid. I have changed Dods' translation.

26. v. 26

27. v. 24

APPENDIX B.

SUICIDE

Sudden and violent reversals of fortune are a consequence of war affecting private individuals as well as the nation itself. In all wars a certain number of persons try suicide as a ready way to escape impending disaster. St. Augustine discusses the question of suicide in connection with an account of the Christian virgins who had been ravished by Alaric's barbarians. His adequate treatment makes a lengthy digression, typical of the author's discursive method.

Naturally the pagans made much of the fact that the Christian God had permitted His faithful servants to be violated. They lingered with special glee over those Christian maidens who had killed themselves to avoid being raped.

Suicide is always morally evil, says the Bishop of Hippo; it is opposed to the precept of the decalog: "Thou shalt not kill." He demonstrates the repugnance with a bit of dialectic exegesis.

It is not without significance, that in no passage of the holy canonical books there can be found either divine precept or permission to take away our own life, whether for the sake of entering on the enjoyment of immortality, or of shunning, or ridding ourselves of anything whatever. Nay, the law, rightly interpreted, even prohibits suicide, where it says, "Thou shalt not kill." This is proved specially by the omission of the words "thy neighbour," which are inserted when false witness is forbidden: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Nor yet should any one on this account suppose he has not broken this commandment

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if he has borne false witness only against himself. For the love of our neighbour is regulated by the love of ourselves, as it is written, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." If, then, he who makes false statements about himself is not less guilty of bearing false witness than if he had made them to the injury of his neighbour; although in the commandment prohibiting false witness only his neighbour is mentioned, and persons taking no pains to understand it might suppose that a man was allowed to be a false witness to his own hurt; how much greater reason have we to understand that a man may not kill himself, since in the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," there is no limitation added nor any exception made in favour of any one, and least of all in favour of him on whom the command is laid!¹

To escape disgrace, disaster, and pain by self-destruction appealed strongly to the old Stoics; but it has no motivating influence on good Christians, who are aware that God chose these very sufferings as the instrument of salvation. Suffering for the Christian is the open sesame to security. Christ, the God-Man declared, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me!"²

Sin, however, is an altogether different thing from suffering. Therefore, to escape sin by self-destruction might easily appeal to an ill-instructed or sentimental Christian. Such evidently was the case of those virgins who killed themselves rather than fall alive into the hands of the barbarians. People remonstrated with Augustine³ that "when the body is subjected to the enemy's lust, the insidious pleasure of sense may entice the soul to consent to the sin, and steps must be taken to prevent so disastrous a result." The author adds: "And is not suicide the proper mode of preventing not only the enemy's sin, but the sin of the Christian so allured?"

As a matter of fact, St. Augustine refused to judge harshly

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the good intentions of those women who did slay themselves in the excitement, the confusion, and the fear caused by Alaric's storming the City. They were moved evidently by a desire to avoid sin; and the Saint defends them by exclaiming that "even if some of these virgins killed themselves to avoid such disgrace, who that has any human feeling would refuse to forgive them?"⁴

Nevertheless, these suicides were materially at fault; and therefore the author can say in the same breath: "And as for those who would not put an end to their lives, lest they might seem to escape the crime of another by a sin of their own, he who lays this to their charge as a great wickedness is himself not guiltless of the fault of folly." This point he proves by several cogent arguments.

Now, in the first place, the soul which is led by God and His wisdom, rather than by bodily concupiscence, will certainly never consent to the desire aroused in its own flesh by another's lust. And, at all events, if it be true, as the truth plainly declares, that suicide is a detestable and damnable wickedness, who is such a fool as to say, Let us sin now, that we may obviate a possible future sin; let us now commit murder, lest we perhaps afterwards should commit adultery? If we are so controlled by iniquity that innocence is out of the question, and we can at best but make a choice of sins, is not a future and uncertain adultery preferable to a present and certain murder? Is it not better to commit a wickedness which penitence may heal, than a crime which leaves no place for healing contrition? I say this for the sake of those men or women who fear they may be enticed into consenting to their violater's lust, and think they should lay violent hands on themselves, and so prevent, not another's sin, but their own.⁵

For it is not lawful to take the law into our own hands, and slay even a guilty person, whose death no public sentence has warranted, then certainly he who kills

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himself is a homicide, and so much the guiltier of his own death, as he was more innocent of that offence for which he doomed himself to die. Do we justly execrate the deed of Judas, and does truth itself pronounce that by hanging himself he rather aggravated than expiated the guilt of that most iniquitous betrayal, since, by despairing of God's mercy in his sorrow that wrought death, he left to himself no place for a healing penitence? How much more ought he to abstain from laying violent hands on himself who has done nothing worthy of such a punishment! For Judas, when he killed himself, on account of his crime, killed a wicked man; but he passed from this life chargeable not only with the death of Christ, but with his own: for though he killed himself on account of his crime, his killing himself was another crime. Why, then, should a man who has done no ill do ill to himself, and by killing himself kill the innocent to escape another's guilty act, and perpetrate upon himself a sin of his own, that the sin of another may not be perpetrated on him?⁶

To resort to suicide, therefore, cannot be justified in sound reason. But what of the Stoic philosophers, and the many brave heroes who guided their lives by the maxims of Stoicism? Are they not to be admired at least for their magnanimity? Classical literature grew fat on examples of stoical suicide. Augustine retells in the De Civitate Dei the story of how the city of Saguntum was besieged by Hannibal. Famine soon wasted the Saguntines, and

when thoroughly worn out, that they might at least escape the ignominy of falling into the hands of Hannibal, they publicly erected a huge funeral pile, and cast themselves into its flames, while at the same time they slew their children and themselves with the sword.⁷

Describing the reign of terror at Rome under Marius, Augustine enumerates many of the City's leading citizens, liquidated by the mad dictator. Two of those proscribed, however, were minded to frustrate the vengeance of Marius: "Catulus escaped the hands of his enemies by drinking poison; Merula,

the flamen of Jupiter, cut his veins and made a libation of his own blood to his god."⁸

Such acts of self-destruction are not to be praised; and far from proving magnanimity, they are a clear sign of cowardice. St. Augustine explodes the stoic bravado by insisting that

if you look at the matter more closely, you will scarcely call it greatness of soul, which prompts a man to kill himself rather than bear up against some hardships of fortune, or sins in which he is not implicated. Is it not rather proof of a feeble mind, to be unable to bear either the pains of bodily servitude or the foolish opinion of the vulgar? And is not that to be pronounced the greater mind, which rather faces than flees the ills of life, and which, in comparison of the light and purity of conscience, holds in small esteem the judgment of men, and specially of the vulgar, which is frequently involved in a mist of error?⁹

The claim of magnanimity for self-killers is heartily lampooned by the story of Cleombrotus, who was enamored of the beauties of immortality described by Plato, - and so after reading the Phaedo he dropped himself into the sea!

And, therefore, if suicide is to be esteemed a magnanimous act, none ought to take higher rank for magnanimity than that Cleombrotus, who (as the story goes), when he had read Plato's book in which he treats of the immortality of the soul, threw himself from a wall, and so passed from this life to that which he believed to be better. For he was not hard pressed by calamity, nor by any accusation, false or true, which he could not have lived down: there was, in short, no motive but only magnanimity urging him to seek death, and break away from the sweet detention of this life. And yet, that he had done something enormous rather than something good, Plato himself (whom he had read) could have told him;¹⁰ for he would certainly have been forward to commit, or at least to recommend suicide, had not the same bright intellect which saw that the soul was immortal, discerned also that to seek immortality by suicide was to be prohibited rather than encouraged.¹¹

Perhaps the most celebrated suicide in all antiquity was Cato, who stabbed himself at Utica to escape the servitude of

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Julius Caesar after the Battle of Thapsus. Cato's death provides an ideal test-case to measure the difference between pagan and Christian morality. Augustine exposes the fallacy involved in defending suicide by the story of Cato; for Cato's example was being appealed to constantly,

not because he was the only man who did so, but because he was so esteemed as a learned and excellent man, that it could plausibly be maintained that what he did was and is a good thing to do. But of this action of his, what can I say but that his own friends, enlightened men as he, prudently dissuaded him, and therefore judged his act to be that of feeble rather than a strong spirit, and dictated not by honourable feeling forestalling shame, but by weakness shrinking from hardships? Indeed, Cato condemns himself by the advice he gave to his dearly loved son. For if it was a disgrace to live under Caesar's rule, why did the father urge the son to this disgrace, by encouraging him to trust absolutely to Caesar's generosity? Why did he not persuade him to die along with himself? . . . The truth is, that his son, whom he both hoped and desired would be spared by Caesar, was not more loved by him than Caesar was envied the glory of pardoning him (as indeed Caesar himself is reported to have said); or if envy is too strong a word, let us say he was ashamed that this glory should be his.¹²

Cato's course of action is in black and white contrast with the action of Regulus, who freely faced the fury of his enemies. Their contrast is high-lighted even further when we remember that Regulus had once defeated and humiliated the Carthaginians, and could expect only savage torture at their hands. "Patient under the domination of the Carthaginians, and constant in his love of the Romans, he neither deprived the one of his conquered body, nor the other of his unconquered spirit."¹³ Cato, on the other hand, had never beaten Caesar: and as a matter of fact, he could expect from his victorious enemy the same amnesty granted to the rest of Caesar's political enemies. Whatever

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else may be said of Caesar, he was one Roman dictator who did not resort to proscription.

Examples even of the best, however, are no substitute for philosophical argument. Concerning self-murder the author says,

we are not inquiring whether it has been done, but whether it ought to have been done. Sound judgment is to be preferred even to examples, and indeed examples harmonize with the voice of reason; but not all examples, but those only which are distinguished by their piety, and are proportionately worthy of imitation. For suicide we cannot cite the example of patriarchs, prophets, or apostles; though our Lord Jesus Christ, when He admonished them to flee from city to city if they were persecuted, might very well have taken that occasion to advise them to lay violent hands on themselves, and so escape their persecutors. But seeing He did not do this, nor proposed this mode of departing this life, though He were addressing His own friends for whom He had promised to prepare everlasting mansions, it is obvious that such examples as are produced from the "nations that forget God," give no warrant of imitation to the worshipper of the one true God.¹⁴

"The wise man, I admit," says Augustine, "ought to bear death with patience, but when it is inflicted by another."¹⁵

Yet when almost everything possible has been said on the subject, there always remains one fact which the Christian apologist cannot explain away with a mere shrug of the shoulders: Many of the martyrs ran ahead of their persecutors' fury and plunged spontaneously into the fires of death. Their action is a real enigma, for it seems to be either a formal exemption to the moral law, or a dreadful moral mis-judgment on the part of persons honored as Saints by the Catholic Church. With this dilemma in mind Augustine pictures his adversaries as objecting that

in the time of persecution some holy women escaped those who menaced them with outrage, by casting themselves into

rivers which they knew would drown them; and having died in this manner, they are venerated in the church catholic as martyrs.

The objection, as proposed, does not seem to refer specifically to those persons who are recorded in church history to have inflicted upon themselves the very means of execution which had been prepared for their public execution on the charge of practicing the Christian religion.¹⁶ But Augustine does seem to have such cases in mind, and he can only reply to the objection:

Of such persons I do not presume to speak rashly. I cannot tell whether there may not have been vouchsafed to the church some divine authority, proved by trustworthy evidences, for so honouring their memory: it may be that it is so. It may be they were not deceived by human judgment, but prompted by divine wisdom, to their act of self-destruction. We know that this was the case with Samson. And when God enjoins any act, and intimates by plain evidence that He has enjoined it, who will call obedience criminal? Who will accuse so religious a submission? But then every man is not justified in sacrificing his son to God, because Abraham was commendable in so doing. . . He, then, who knows it is unlawful to kill himself, may nevertheless do so if he is ordered by Him whose commands we may not neglect. Only let him be very sure that the divine command has been signified. As for us, we can become privy to the secrets of conscience only in so far as these are disclosed to us, and so far only do we judge: "No one knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him."¹⁷ But this we affirm, this we maintain, this we every way pronounce to be right, that no man ought to inflict on himself voluntary death, for this is to escape a guilt which could not pollute him, by incurring great guilt of his own; that no man ought to do so on account of his own past sins, for he has all the more need of this life that these sins may be healed by repentance; that no man should put an end to this life to obtain that better life we look for after death, for those who die by their own hand have no better life after death.¹⁸

St. Augustine's explanation by appealing to some interior divine inspiration would probably seem pretty feeble to his pagan antagonist. But the adversary is forced to admit by the

latter part of the reply that on the question as a whole the Bishop of Hippo will not equivocate: "Hoc dicimus, hoc adserimus, hoc modis omnibus adprobamus, neminem spontaneam mortem sibi inferre debere. . ." And by adding to this statement the decision quoted above concerning suicide as a preventive against one's own sin, we have for the whole question an uncompromising negative answer, and an answer which fits almost every possible contingency.

NOTES TO APPENDIX B.

1. 1. 20. The reader can judge for himself of the consistency of A.'s argumentation. We have seen above (Ch. 3, p. 26-27) that he allowed different classes of exceptions to the law in so far as it prohibits killing other men. We shall see below that God evidently has made particular exceptions to the law in so far as it prohibits killing oneself.
2. Matt., 16:24
3. 1. 25
4. 1. 17
5. 1. 25
6. 1. 17
7. iii. 20
8. iii. 27
9. 1. 22
10. "Quod tamen magne potius factum esse quam bene testis ei esse potuit Plato ipse quem legerat, etc." Dods confuses the thought by translating: "And yet that this was a magnanimous rather than a justifiable action, Plato himself, whom he had read, would ((sic)) have told him, etc." (Italics added.)
11. loc. cit. Welldon gives the name Theombrotus, and adds the following explanatory note: "Cicero tells the same story as A., but he tells it of the Ambraciot Academical philosopher Cleombrotus, upon whose death Callimachus, as he says, composed an epigram: quem ait, cum nihil ei accidisset aduersi, e muro se in mare abiecisse, lecto Platonis libro ("Tusc. Disp.," i. 34, 84). It seems clear that A.'s memory was at fault, . . . The MSS. here practically all give Theobrotus or Theobrutus as the name. . ."
12. 1. 23
13. 1. 24
14. 1. 22
15. xix. 4

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16. St. Appolonia, who leaped into the flames, is a case in question.

17. I Cor., 2:2

18. i. 26

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