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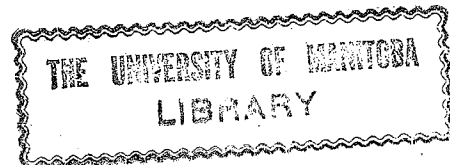
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----- T H E -----

PHILOSOPHY OF WAR

----- A THESIS -----

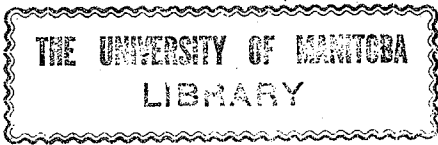
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PHILOSOPHY OF WAR



Of the real nature of the world-wide and unending conflict of human interests called War, and its effects upon human progress, much has been said and written; but with it all, we still only very partially realize the true character of the thing we call war, or the position which it occupies in the economy of nature - which indeed, it has occupied throughout the human period of the earth's story.

The consideration of this subject in its widest and most general aspects would be both profitable and interesting. But we must carefully guard ourselves from attempting too much.

The subject, whether viewed historically, or morally or socially is so vast in its scope, the details essential to its proper comprehension are so numerous and so diverse and its effects are so great and so far-reaching that to attempt to deal with it fully here is simply impossible.

We propose therefore to limit ourselves to the two following points - the ultimate causes of war, and the final effects of war upon human progress, physical, mental and moral.

Probably, nine out of every ten persons question as to the nature and origin of war would reply that war was wicked in its origin that it was destructive and brutalising in its effects, and that it was the duty of all to condemn it utterly and resist its exercise. But this view of war is as inadequate as it is mistaken, a fact which we

cannot too strongly insist upon at the outset of our argument.

War is not always sinful nor the outcome of sin. Further, so far from being the unmitigated curse we are so often called upon to regard it - a blot upon the original condition of things caused by human wickedness, it is often enough an integral part of that original scheme of existence with its own special work to do in the gradual perfection of the scheme .

It is, in fact a "wheel" in the mills of Providence, which, like all other "wheels" in the machinery of nature, has been working - through all the ages, evolving order and progress out of the primeval chaos, and is still helping to bring in that millenium of righteousness and peace for whose coming the world looks and longs with an ever-growing longing -

"When we pass from the animal and the savage states to watch the "working of the struggle for Life in later times, the impression "deepens that, after all, the " gladiatorial theory" of existence "has much to say for itself. To trace its progress further is "denied us for the present, but observe before we close what it "connotes in modern life. Its lineal descendants are two in - "number, and they have but to be named to show the enormous place "this factor has been given to play in the world's destiny. The "first is war, the second is Industry - These in all their forms "and ramifications are simply the primitive struggle continued on "the social and political plane. War is not a casual thing like "a thunderstorm, nor a specific thing like a battle. It is that "ancient Struggle for Life carried over from the animal Kingdom - "which, in the later as in the earlier world, has been so perfect "an instrument of evolution. Along with Industry, and for a time

"before it, war was the foster-mother of civilization. The
 "patron of the heroic virtues, the purifier of societies, the
 "solidifier of states, the military form of this struggle -
 "despite the awful balance on the other side stands out on every
 "page of history as the maker and educator of the human race " (1)

If we wish, then, to see things as they really are, we must
 cease to regard War as an after-thought, or as a perversion, on the part
 of man, of the original plan of the Creator.

For good or for evil, we must accept it, equally with death and
 moral evil, as an essential part of the scheme of creation itself, and,
 as such, doing the work intended for it from the "beginning"

With this fact clearly before us it is plain that we must look
 further afield, if we would discover the real cause, or causes, of war,
 or adequately estimate its effects upon human progress. We do not say
 human "happiness" for, though it would not be difficult, we think, to show
 that the sum total of the world's enjoyment of its existence is multiplied
 by whatever lifts it to a higher level, whether the uplifting agent be war
 of peace, or death itself, we should never lose sight of the fundamental fact
 that the world exists, not to promote human happiness, or as a scene of
 human woe and suffering; it exists as one of the innumerable spheres of
 creative energy which people the depths of space; and in that light we
 must regard it in order to read aright the story of the earth -

"It is so ordered by Nature, that by so striving to live they develop
 "their physical structure; they obtain faint glimmerings of reason;
 "they think and deliberate; they become Man. In the same way, the
 "primeval men have no other object than to keep the clan alive. It
 "is so ordered by Nature that in striving to preserve the existence

(1) Drummond's Ascent of Man Ch. 4 p.268

"of the clan, they not only acquire the arts of agriculture,
 "domestication, and navigation; they not only discover fire,
 "and its uses in cooking, in war, and in metallurgy; they not
 "only detect the hidden properties of plants and apply them to
 "save their own lives from disease, and to destroy their enemies
 "in battle; they not only learn to manipulate Nature and to
 "distribute water by machinery; but they also, by means of the
 "life-long battle, are developed into moral beings " (2)

In seeking for the final causes of war, then, we must go back to the elementary principles which dictate all human action, and which indeed are themselves the result of that interaction of the primal facts of Nature which have, among other results, made Man what he is. To get to the ultimate cause of the war-like spirit in man, to the origin of the passions and the interests which underlie all action culminating in war, it is probable indeed, that we must go back further than man himself - to the prehuman ages of the world's story, to the ages in which the "brute beasts" which dominated the earth carried on war with each other, and indulged, individually and collectively, in the passions and acts which later made human war so terribly cruel and destructive.

The story of life on the earth from its first beginning to the highly organised forms and far-reaching intelligence of the present day has been an unbroken record of bloodshed and war.,

"Nature - red in tooth and claw".

Parallel with the progress of organisation, and accompanying it, we mark an increase of intelligence, we recognise also a development of the emotional nature, which exhibits itself in acts, which in man would be called devilish.

(2) Winwood Reade's Martyrdom of Man p. 464.

Throughout the animal world, from the highest to the lowest we find the "quality of mercy" more often wanting than manifest. How often, indeed, we find animals ready to take advantage of a wounded comrade, like wolves, which devour an injured member of the pack.

Of course there is no essential distinction between the emotions and actions of individuals and those of nations. The impulses which in individuals, lead to personal enmities and quarrels, in nations result in war, and thus, when we see violence and cruelty universally characterize the relations of individual to individual in pre-human times, we are justified in concluding that in these acts of violence and bloodshed we see the beginnings of the spirit which has resulted in war between man and man.

But in working out this great problem, it is noteworthy that, almost from the first we find examples of what we are frequently tempted to call premature developments of the social faculties in animal life. For instance, we have in the *ant* communities qualities both personal and racial exhibited, which curiously parallel and in fact prefigure in almost every particular, the minutest details of human society - its social arrangements, its military organisation.

For purposes of defence mainly, but in some cases for offence also, they possess organised armies of trained soldiers, they carry on regular campaigns against each other, they fight desperate battles which are an exact picture of the hand to hand battles of old times; and, indeed, their entire system, in its social as well as in its military aspect, is grotesquely like that of human society in the middle ages (3)

(3) - See Darwins origin of Species. Ch. 8. on Instincts, also "Lubbock"

Prof. Drummond says " One of the earliest devices hit upon in the course of evolution was the principle of co-operation. Long before men had learned to form themselves into tribes and clans for mutual strength and service, gregariousness was an established institution. The deer had formed themselves into herds, and the monkeys into troops; the birds were in flocks, and the wolves in packs; the bees in hives and the ants in colonies. And so abundant and dominant in every part of the world are these social types to day that we may be sure the gregarious state has exceptional advantages in the upward struggle" (4)

Coming now to more highly organised and, as we understand the phrase, more intelligent animals, we meet with evidences of the growth, not only of an emotional nature in the animal world, but also of the beginnings of a rudimentary moral faculty, which is the complement of all emotional action.

The germs of a moral nature have indeed been claimed for the strange organisations of ant and bee life, with some show of reason; but of the existence in the higher animal of an elementary idea of duty there can be no reasonable doubt (5)

With increased complexity of organization, too, another fact of considerable importance to our purpose, begins to show itself. The destruction of life for purposes of food, once universal, gives place, in an increasing number of cases to vegetable feeding, until, long

(4) Ascent of Man p. 197

(5) See Catalogue of emotions in Prof. Romanes "Mental evolution in Animals"