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UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

ABLY ON INTERNATIONAL WAR AND PEACE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty

Of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of Master of Arts

Department of History

By

Kenneth Leeds Holmes

1925

Preface

This study of Mably's works was undertaken because of the scant treatment thus far accorded the writings of a philosopher, important in his own century, and peculiarly interesting today in view of the present partial realization of many of his plans for the improvement of society. It was at first intended to make the subject of this paper an exposition of Mably's communistic theories. That it is not, is partly due to accident. The reading of his works in the order of their composition, necessitated beginning with his Principes des Négotiations which, though not written first, was designed as an introduction to his first important work, the Droit Public de l'Europe. So strong was his insistence upon the necessity for international peace in that work, and so vital is that subject to the world today, that I resolved to make international peace the subject of this paper. I hope at some future time, to carry out my original intention in connection with a more comprehensive exposition of Mably's philosophy.

It should be noted here that Mably never wrote on international peace as such. His opinions on this subject are expressed always in some other connection, and hence are found scattered throughout his writings.

For this reason, the attitude of Mably on international war and peace has never been made the subject of a monograph. Little information on Mably's theories can be found in available works written in English or German. Such information as there is, generally is based exclusively on one or two of his books, and takes the form of a brief mention of his more striking political, economic, or social theories according to the interest of the author concerned. Though the French authors consulted speak of his works at more length, their treatment is nevertheless general in character. It has accordingly been quite impossible, with the materials available, to find any specific mention of Mably's views on international peace.

The chief source of material for this paper has been the complete edition of Mably's works published posthumously in the Year III (1794-1795), at Paris, by Ch. Debrière and under the direction of Arnoux, Mably's executor. This edition, and the majority of the other works referred to, are in the Louisville Free Public Library, though in some instances, it has been necessary to send elsewhere for material. An extensive, though unsuccessful search has been made for a copy of Guerrier's L'abbé Mably, moraliste et politique (Paris, 1886), which is referred to by many encyclopaedias. It

is doubtful, however, if this work would add much information pertinent to this special subject.

I wish to take this occasion to express my indebtedness to Professor Louis R. Gottschalk of the Department of History, University of Louisville, at whose suggestion this particular investigation was undertaken. His enthusiastic interest and constructive criticism have made its preparation less difficult, and have made possible any meritorious qualities which it may possess.

The preparation of this paper has further been greatly facilitated by the courtesy and cooperation of the Staff of the Louisville Free Public Library.

Louisville, Ky.
May 1, 1925.

K. L. H.

Chapter I

Life of Mably

The life of the abbé¹ de Mably, says Brizard², his eulogist, is best understood by a perusal of his writings. It is equally true that a knowledge of the important facts in his life facilitate an understanding of his philosophy. For this reason, it has seemed desirable to include here a brief sketch of Mably's life.

Gabriel Bonnot de Mably was born at Grenoble, France, March 14, 1709. His elder brother, who was provost-marshal of Lyons and the inheritor of the family fortune, is distinguished chiefly for having had as his children's tutor, one J. J. Rousseau. Rousseau wrote a scheme of study for one of these charges and this may have been connected with the later writing of *Émile*. Mably's younger brother, Condillac, earned some fame as a psychologist.

Mably attended the collège des Jésuites at Lyons, and upon graduation from that institution, entered the seminary of Saint-Sulpice in Paris. This step was taken at the suggestion of his relative, Cardinal de Tencin. After receiving a sub-deaconship, he resolved to give up his ecclesiastical studies,

1. A title conferred by the French on any ecclesiastic who had no other title.

2. The abbé Brizard, *Éloge historique de l'abbé de Mably*. See Mably, *Oeuvres*, Vol. I, p. 116

and left the seminary. He became a member of Mme. de Tencin's literary circle and it was here that he met Montesquieu whom he admired tremendously. At this time, Mably had just written his Parallèle des Romains et des Français, his first work. Mme. de Tencin, impressed by the young abbé's understanding of public affairs, persuaded her brother, whom Fleury had made minister at court, to make Mably his secretary.

The cardinal, having hitherto been occupied with the affairs of the church, was much embarrassed by his ignorance of international affairs. His need of Mably to guide and instruct him was apparently equalled only by Mably's ability to do so. At Mably's instigation, he obtained permission from the king to submit his opinions in writing. This writing and also these opinions were the work of the young secretary. In addition to preparing memoranda and making reports, Mably composed a brief of the treaties since Westphalia for the instruction of his pupil, thus laying the foundation for his Droit public de l'Europe, which appeared in the same year as Montesquieu's Esprit des lois. In 1743, Mably entered into secret negotiations against Austria with the Prussian ambassador at Paris. He also was instrumental in drawing up the treaty

which Voltaire was to discuss with Frederick the Great, and which formed the basis for the Treaty of Bréda, concluded in 1746. Frederick, who seems to have been cognizant of the part which Mably played, is said¹ to have thenceforth had great respect for him. When in 1744 the council had determined upon an offensive against Austria on the Rhine, Mably urged the expediency of making an attack on the Netherlands. This opinion was concurred in by Frederick and gained for Mably considerable prestige at Court. Finally, in 1746, it was he who drew up the instructions for the French plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Bréda. These different tasks decided his entrance upon a political career.

But politics was not to be his field, for immediately he became embroiled with the cardinal over a protestant marriage. This, de Tencin, in his capacity as an ecclesiastic, wished to annul against the advice of Mably who urged him to act in the case rather as a statesman. When the cardinal asserted that to follow such advice would bring dishonor upon himself, Mably, caring more for his liberty than his political future, abruptly left and did not see the cardinal again.

This break with de Tencin marked a turning point in Mably's ideas no less than in his career, as is shown

1. Brizard: See Mably, Oeuvres, Vol.I, p.94

by a comparison of his Parallèle des Romains et des Français, previously mentioned, with his other works which appeared after 1746. In this first book, he claimed for the king "an authority which was peculiar to him and independent of the laws." And, as evidence of his admiration for the ancien régime, he said, "Modern peoples, and particularly the government of the French, show how war, commerce, and the arts can best be combined to make a state truly prosperous." He was in favor of that development which the physiocrats and encyclopaedists advocated, and which royalty stood for; he praised luxury which "distributes excess wealth among the people and brings them into closer contact with each other." But now in 1746, having become better acquainted with the possibilities of absolutism, he looked elsewhere for an ideal¹ and, as will appear, his views changed.

Mably now gave up his public life and retired to the strictest seclusion lest otherwise he forfeit his independence. When the Marshal de Richelieu agreed to secure for him a chair at the Académie Française, he reluctantly accepted the offer. But, when Richelieu had left him, Mably persuaded his brother, Condillac, to cancel the acceptance for him.

¹. Pierre Larousse, Grand Dictionnaire Universel

He feared that any obligation to the Marshal would force him to speak well of the Marshal's ancestor, the illustrious Cardinal de Richelieu, which was against his principles.¹ His sincerity was further decisively, if somewhat caustically, shown when he was approached on the subject of tutoring the dauphin. He answered haughtily that the basis of such tutoring by him would be "that kings are made for the people, and not the people for the kings."² It appears that he was not engaged. He had received a pension of 3,000 livres³ from the government which was the extent of his fortune, and upon this he lived and maintained a single servant whom he regarded as his "unfortunate friend",⁴ even depriving himself of necessities in his old age that this faithful follower might inherit the more.

Though the Parallèle des Romains et des Français, despite the poor arrangement of its contents, met with considerable success⁵ and gave the author a reputation,⁶ it cannot be in fairness included among his important writings, nor is it included in the edition of his

1. Brizard, op. cit., p. 117

2. Ibid., p. 117

3. Larousse, op. cit.

4. Brizard, op. cit., p. 116

5. Nouvelle Biographie Générale, Vol. XXXII, pp. 450-453 (Hereafter referred to as NBG)

6. Dictionnaire de la Conversation et de la Lecture, Vol. XII, pp. 539-540 (Hereafter referred to as DCL)

complete works of the Year III (1794-1795). Writing ten years after its publication, he himself says of it,¹ "No order, no continuity of thought, innumerable repetitions, facts presented in a false light: these were not the only defects caused by my foolishness in trying to make a comparison. I found myself forced to pass over in silence many necessary things in order to describe the history of these peoples, and, what is still much worse, I had to say many things which I ought not to have even thought." Rather than correct this "uncorrectable" comparison, he later wrote two books: one on the Romans, the other on the French. These will be mentioned in their proper places in the chronological account of Mably's works which follows.

His Droit Public de l'Europe, fondé sur les traités, depuis la paix de Westphalie, en 1648, jusqu'à nos jours, first published in 1748, was designed as an exposition of the various engagements entered upon by the European powers.² It was tremendously successful, was taught at the English universities, and translated into many different languages,³ becoming a sort of primer for statesmen.⁴

In 1749, appeared his Observations sur l'histoire de la Grèce, ou des causes de la prospérité et des

1. Mably, *Oeuvres*, Vol. IV, pp. 253-254. Note that hereafter, references to Mably's works will be only by volume and page numbers.

2. VII, 404. 3. NRG, *op.cit.* 4. DCL, *op.cit.*

malheurs des Grecs, which was then considered to be a kind of counterpart to Montesquieu's work on the Romans.¹ After fifteen years, Mably found that his ideas had suffered such changes² as to require a complete revision of this book which appeared in 1766 with the new title: Observations sur l'histoire de la Grèce.³ Only the latter is included in the edition of his complete works mentioned above.

The Observations sur les Romains, published in 1751, contained, for the most part, the ideas already expressed in the Parallèle.⁴ This was followed in 1757 by the Principes des Négociations, which was probably influenced by the Lettres of Cardinal d'Ossat⁵ whom Mably considered a model ambassador.⁶

What is considered his best work in point of style, the Entretiens de Phocion (1763), was awarded a prize of 600 francs by the Société de Berne⁷ and is said to have enjoyed much the same extraordinary popularity as was accorded Rousseau's Discours.⁸ Marmontel, in writing his Belisaire, borrowed from it freely.⁹

His Observations sur l'histoire de France (1765), quite naturally brought upon him the denunciations of the courtiers on account of his not altogether subtle characterization of their kind. It is described as

1. NBG, op.cit.	4. NBG, op.cit.	7. DCL, op.cit.
2. IV, pp.II-III.	5. d. 1603.	8. Larousse, op.cit.
3. NBG, op.cit.	6. NBG, op.cit.	9. DCL, op.cit.

a "masterpiece, the work of sound judgement, profound learning, and enlightening criticism."¹ It was almost entirely copied and spoiled by Thouret in writing his own Observations sur l'histoire de France. Later, it was edited with comments by M. Guizot.²

In refutation of the work of Mercier de la Rivière, Mably wrote his Doutes proposés aux philosophes économistes sur l'ordre naturel et essentiel des sociétés politiques (1768). This was the immediate cause of an invitation from the Poles to draw up for them a new constitution, an invitation which was also given to Rousseau.³ Its result will be noted below.

De la Législation ou Principes des lois was, in a way, a commentary on the Entretiens de Phocion,⁴ and showed Mably's utopian ideal to be very much like that of Morelly.⁵

Mably wrote for the young Duke of Parma a political manual entitled De l'Étude de l'Histoire which was published in 1778.⁶ This, of all his works, has probably the most new and useful ideas.⁷

Before complying with the request of the Poles, mentioned above, Mably spent a year in Poland studying conditions there.⁸ In 1771, he sent his plan to Count de Wielhorski, minister of the Confederation

1. DCL. 2. Ibid. 3. NRG. 4. Ibid.

5. Henri Martin, *Histoire de France*, Vol. X, p. 152.

6. NRG. 7. DCL. 8. NRG.

of Bar, and in July of the next year he completed a reply to objections and questions raised by the Poles.² Both of these writings were published in 1781 under the title: Du Gouvernement et des lois de la Pologne.

In 1783, was published his De la Manière d'écrire l'histoire. This work created a sensation. Mably's criticism of Voltaire was considered scandalous by the people of that day and age, although today it would be generally admitted that Mably was usually in the right. Mably had never pardoned Voltaire for the epigram which he had made in connection with some work of Clément's:

Dont l'écrit froid et lourd, déjà mis en publi,
Ne fut jamais prôné que par l'abbé Mably.³

In the same year, at the request of the American Congress⁴ for suggestions on a constitution for the new republic, he wrote the Observations sur le Gouvernement et les Lois des États-Unis d'Amérique which were published in 1784.

In the Principes de Morale (1784), it was Mably's intention to develop the nature of the passions and the artifices by which they gained control over men.⁴ This work was censured by the Sorbonne.⁵

In 1789, appeared his Droits et devoirs du citoyen. "a treatise --- so vigorous, so original, and so prophetic, that, published after the death of the author,

1. VIII, 240.

2. DCL.

3. Ibid.

4. XI, 152.

5. NRG

it seemed to have been composed for the circumstances."¹

The other and shorter writings of Mably included in the collection of his complete works are: De la situation politique de la Pologne en 1776, Le Banquet des Politiques, De l'Étude de la Politique, Des Maladies politiques et de leur traitement, Du Commerce des grains, De la Superstition, Notre gloire ou nos Rêves, De la paix d'Allemagne, De la mort de l'Impératrice-Reine, L'Oracle d'Apollon, Des Talens, Du Beau, Du Développement, des Progrès et des Bornes de la Raison, Le Compte rendu, La Retraite de M. Necker, Du Cours et de la Marche des Passions dans la Société.

Mably died in Paris, April 23, 1795. After his death, the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres offered a prize for the writing of his eulogy. This prize was divided between the abbé Brizard and the historian Lévesque.²

1. Martin, op.cit., pp. 148-149

2. DCL.

Chapter II

Introduction

It has been said of Mably that he was one of a group of philosophical or at least systematic historians which formed around Montesquieu.¹ He may be included in such a group, but it ought rather to be said of him that he was a historical and systematic philosopher. Mably's writings show that, though he undeniably wrote history and on occasion called himself a historian,² history was merely a foundation upon which his philosophy rested.³ He preferred to be thought of as a publicist,⁴ using the past as an image, or rather a prediction of the future⁵ in an endeavor to show to his fellow-men the road to enduring happiness.⁶ He developed a very complete and, for the most part, practical system of ideas. According to this system, with certain given conditions, there would follow by the action of very definite laws, certain and, hence, easily predictable results, just as surely as an apple, detached from its twig, will fall to the ground instead of starting an aimless flight through space.

Though he does not use the term himself, Mably's works were essentially an exposition of the science of society, and it is with a scientific thoroughness

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica. 4. VII, 441.

2. III, 555.

3. X, 233.

5. X, 233.

6. III, 555.

that he develop~~s~~ his ideas. For the basis of his study, he attempts to discover the intentions of nature, and before making use of generally accepted theories, he examines them in the light of these probable intentions.¹ In addition to this initial accuracy, he finds it necessary to consider with equal attention the many phases of social activity to avoid biased opinions in favor of one particular phase.² To facilitate impartial examination of an institution which stands in such close proximity and relation to the observer as society, it is necessary to stand apart from one's self and the prejudices that have been acquired since childhood.³ When these conditions have been fulfilled, and conclusions as to reasons for existing phenomena have been reached, the suggestions for corrective measures must be applicable to human beings who are actuated by human motives. In other words, it is Mably's intention to be not only accurate, thorough, and broad in his reasoning but also, and especially, practical.

Abiding peace, domestic and international, is that state most conducive to the happiness of man and is in fact the only natural state of man.⁴ It is a state that is at all times desirable, and should be worked for unceasingly. It is fundamentally dependent upon

1. IX, 23. 2. XIII, 148. 3. VIII, 145-146. 4. XII, 68.

the characteristics of man the individual and man in the aggregate or mankind. These characteristics include in part and are susceptible to the influence of various virtues or good motives and of the passions which are generally bad motives though capable at times of being used to attain good ends. The two passions, avarice and ambition, are the most dangerous to peace and are most easily stimulated by wealth. International peace is also fundamentally dependent upon the governments of states. These governments not only affect, and are affected by, men's characteristics, but they are also the final agents which determine for or against international peace. Consequently, before turning to a study of the more definite problems to be solved in ending international war and attaining international peace, we must make an introductory study of mankind and its governments.

Chapter III

Characteristics of Mankind - Virtues and
Passions - Wealth

It is a very extraordinary thing, says Mably, but one which is unfortunately too true, that most men are possessed only of a human face.¹ The majority of citizens are incapable of getting their thoughts above their passions, and have only such passions as can be aroused by some sort of excitement.² Happiness invariably turns their heads: they soon believe that their wisdom and courage, rather than wise laws and political institutions, are responsible for it.³ Even the ancient Romans under Augustus never stopped to consider whether they were free, or if their happiness would last.⁴ Men are by nature hesitant, indifferent, and lazy, and to keep from losing the liberty which they love, have to be continually reminded of its value, and must have easy ways of keeping it.⁵ Anything not of immediate interest never appeals to the masses; even something of general interest will have little effect on them.⁶

These characteristics indicate the normally passive attitude of men toward the state and its affairs. They indicate men's disinclination to take active interest even in those very things which are of advantage to them. The reason for this is to be

1. XV, 33-34. 3. X, 239. 5. III, 9.
2. XV, 16-17. 4. IV, 372. 6. IV, 28.

found in the ideas and habits which are formed and fostered in private life, and which take no cognizance of obligations due society.¹ International peace, depending in large measure for its accomplishment or maintenance upon the activity of the people, is not to be secured or preserved by such indifference. War, on the other hand, where it is to the advantage of some few people, can be successfully undertaken by them under those auspicious circumstances.

These, and other characteristics of mankind, are due to virtues or attributes of the soul and passions which are attributes both of the soul and of the body. Mably agrees with Leibnitz that man as an entity is as perfect as possible considering that he is made up of two such different substances as the soul and the body.² This does not mean that man, as just described, is as perfect as possible. On the contrary, it means that man's ultimate realization of his possibilities would be as perfect as possible. The basis for this realization is found in the promotion of such virtues as justice, prudence, and courage.³ It is in the cultivation of these virtues, that men may expect to secure for themselves enduring order, safety, and peace.⁴

1. XIII, 224. 2. XV, 42. 3. X, 278. 4. X, 100.

As justice, prudence, and courage are fundamental to the realization of peace, so avarice and ambition, the two chief vices,¹ are instrumental in its destruction. These vices find their chief and worst expression through the medium of wealth. The thirst for money obliterates patriotism, and sacrifices all the duties of humanity to luxury,² for men can better stand misfortune than prosperity.³ The institution of private property makes inevitable the belief that expansion at the expense of one's neighbors will increase one's fortune. This is an important cause of foreign wars.⁴ It might be said that Xerxes, to avenge himself for his defeats, sowed seeds of discord in Athens and Sparta by leaving to the Greeks the spoils of Plataea which aroused in them the love for riches.⁵ From that time on, peace between the republics was to be an infrequent and doubtful phenomenon. The riches of the Carthaginians made them ambitious and hence caused them to go to war with other nations. Modern peoples suffer from the effects of wealth to an even worse degree: they go to war to extend, increase, and strengthen their commercial relations⁶ in an endeavor to secure still more wealth. That amount of commerce which does not create luxury nor arouse the passions, and which serves to satisfy

1. IX, 72.

2. X, 56.

3. X, 28-29.

4. XI, 14.

5. IV, 55.

6. VII, 399.

the ordinary requirements of a people, is commendable. When there is an advance beyond this point, trade will be the cause of vices which will ultimately bring about the ruin of the state.¹

We have observed some of the characteristics of mankind, some of the virtues and passions by which mankind is or may be actuated, and have examined in some detail the particular passions, avarice and ambition, in so far as they influence or are influenced by the accumulation of wealth. It has been indicated how these various factors may disrupt the peace of nations. How they may, in general, be prevented from occasioning such a misfortune, must be considered in connection with the discussion of states and their governments.

1. VIII, 234.

Chapter IV

The State

The objective of the state or its government should be the happiness of its citizens. This happiness is based on the observation of the laws at home, and the love of peace in that general society of which the state is a part.¹ As between domestic and foreign affairs, states should be more concerned with their own affairs than with those of their neighbors.² Few states have fallen to the boldness of their neighbors, while those which may attribute their ruin to their own vices are innumerable.³ The state with ten principal vices will be conquered by the state which has but five.⁴

Turning first to these domestic activities of a state which so largely determine its ability to stay at peace with its neighbors, we come immediately to the means of correcting the evil tendencies of mankind mentioned in the preceding chapter.

There is no better agent for regulating the natural characteristics of men, their virtues and their passions, than laws. For this reason, laws are indispensable and should be regarded with the utmost respect.⁵ If they are based on fundamental principles rather than made to apply to temporary conditions, few laws will suffice.⁶ Since men will not of their own

1. VI, 368-369.

2. V, 193.

3. II, 233.

4. XIII, 58

5. X, 201.

6. VIII, 10

accord cultivate those virtues necessary for their enduring happiness, then the government must, by its laws, require it. In view of the certain advantages of moderation, those particular virtues which are most familiar should be the first encouraged, regardless of whether they are the most important or desirable.¹ As the virtues may be thus encouraged, the passions may be in a like manner restricted. In the case of wealth, its acquisition must be checked by law if the state would endure.² The particular form of restriction which is most desirable is the legislative control of the sale and transfer of property, including a denial to the individual of the right to make a will.³ In this way, there can be removed the incentive of the citizens to amass great quantities of wealth, and the state becomes free from that pressure for expansion so dangerous to international amity.

That the laws were all-powerful, Mably was too practical to believe. Man's nature cannot be entirely changed by law. To accomplish this, it is necessary to change their ways of thinking and feeling.⁴ There is consequently the need for education. This, however, should be the business of the state. Deriding the European universities of his day as agents for "poisoning the minds of our young people,"⁵

1. X, 204. 2. X, 196. 3. IX, 142-143. 4. I, 250. 5. IX, 373.

he advocates the more vigorous and less corrupting system of education used by the Spartans. Such an education should include instruction in running, swimming, wrestling, and throwing stones. Besides, the state's pupils should be courageous, able to withstand hardships, and skilled in the use of weapons.¹ In this way, there will be developed vigorous men having an active and healthy² interest in the affairs of the state, and able to take up arms for the defense³ of the state should it be necessary.⁴ In other words, Nably is an exponent of the strenuous life and back-to-nature idea as the basis for good citizenship. An education of this description applied generally among the nations will cause men to carry out the true intents of nature and so will effectively maintain a condition of enduring international peace.

Let us now consider the general relations of the state with its neighbors: what these relations are and what they might be, leaving for a later chapter those special relations which arise during actual hostilities and the peace which follows.

The trouble with statesmen is that, what they would consider morally wrong in private life, they praise as wise and discreet in politics.⁵ Good faith is no less

1. IX, 373.

2. IX, 377.

3. IX, 373.

4. Equally important is the education of women who exert a strong influence on men, and who have a tendency to be indolent. IX, 373.

5. V, 438.

essential among nations than it is among individuals.¹ It is in fact the foundation² upon which society rests, and, consequently, the failure of nations to keep their engagements is far worse than the similar failure of private citizens.

Justice, truth, and moderation are just as surely the principles which determine the real prosperity of a state as injustice, fraud, and ambition are those which bring about its ruin.³ Ambition in the larger state causes disregard for the liberty of the smaller though friendly neighbor⁴ but this same ambition, though temporarily successful, will lead to ultimate disaster. Large provinces and great riches, despite the assertion of our orators, add neither to the happiness of the citizens within nor to security against attack from without.⁵ A state's strength does not depend on the extent of its territory,⁶ while an inordinate ambition is the rock against which the power of the largest states goes to pieces. Mably advises, "if your neighbor acquires another city or province, satisfy yourself with the acquisition of a new virtue."⁸ Such conduct might be expected to result in the realization of that ideal state which was so common in Greece in the days of Lycurgus - Greece, that country

1. VII, 90. 2. V, 333. 3. VIII, 183. 4. X, 29
5. X, 87. 6. VI, 332. 7. VII, 305. 8. X, 168.

full of republics, devoid of pomp and luxury, inhabited by citizen-soldiers who loved nothing but justice, glory, their liberty, and their country. What was it to Greece, if great powers did arise near her?¹

Yet, while human reason accepts the belief of Cicero that states should consider one another merely as different sections of the same city, human passions dictate otherwise.² There is no state, however modest its pretensions, which does not want to expand at the expense of other states. Nothing is more flattering to the passions which stir the human heart, than conquests.³

1. IV,30. 2. XII,64. 3. IV,424.

Chapter V

War and Peace

We have found that international peace is, in general, dependent upon the nature of mankind which influences and which may be modified by its governments. We shall now consider in more detail the character, causes, desirability, and results of war, and, finally, the attainment and preservation of international peace.

While Mably does not desire war, and denies that men are natural born enemies of each other, he does recognize that there are certain circumstances under which nations are justified in making war upon each other.¹ All kinds of war, says he, are equally bad for humanity. God did not create men to hate each other and tear each other to pieces just because they happened to be separated by a river, mountains, or the sea. But, he continues, war is sometimes useful on account of the unfortunate control which the passions have over men. Sometimes natural law makes it even necessary, because it is occasionally the only means a state has of obtaining redress for an injury, obtaining that which legitimately belongs to it, or preventing its own ruin.²

Avarice, ambition, and hate have been the causes

1. XIII, 380; IX, 73.

2. XI, 332-333.

of all these wars which have already sacrificed the lives of so many people. And these same passions will be the cause of a thousand more wars with their consequent changes in the appearance and condition of the earth.¹ These statements are not inconsistent with the opinion that certain wars are justifiable. When a nation has been offended and is entitled to redress, it is safe to infer that the offending nation was actuated by one or more of these passions. Similarly, upon other different occasions, it appears difficult to deny that one or more of the belligerents were actuated by either avarice, ambition, hate, or a combination of these. Admitting the truth of this general statement of the cause of war, we may go further and distinguish between unwarranted and legitimate causes of warfare, according as a nation is the aggressor or the offended party.

Hably indicates that the first warfare was unwarranted by his supposition that, in primitive society, one of the many small groups of people, seeing another group more peacefully inclined, proceeded to show its strength by conquering the peaceful and possibly weaker neighbor. Out of this beginning, there arose further wars, reprisals, and hatreds, culminating in the final control by the victor and enslavement of the vanquished.²

1. XII, 64.

2. XV, 192.

Here was ambition and hatred in action. Avarice was to follow with the advent of riches and the institution of landed property as has been shown above in connection with wealth. Wealth itself may also be considered a cause of war in that it facilitates the maintenance of mercenaries¹ and the undertaking of distant conquests.² Ancient Greece proved that the poverty of the states engaged would at any rate lessen the duration of a war.³ Finally, an important cause of war, and the chief cause of all the great wars of religion, is the spirit of intolerance.⁴

It is in connection with some of the above causes which impel the aggressor to action, that the offended nation finds itself forced to act. As before stated, the preservation of its dignity, property, or safety then become legitimate causes for its engaging in hostilities. But Mably would avoid too remote a pretext for the assertion of offended dignity. For example, he admits the necessity of war for an insult to a nation's ships,⁵ but suggests that it might be as well to omit from treaties the mention of saluting which can cause such important quarrels and yet is really good for nothing.⁶

Mably cites two instances where he thinks war would

1. X, 185. 2. X, 194. 3. loc. cit.
 4. VII, 340. But note that Mably was not in favor of absolute religious toleration. See VIII, 405.
 5. XIII, 380. 6. VII, 121.

be distinctly advantageous. In the first case, he says to the Poles in 1771, that "to make the state truly and continually happy, it would be better to bear the evils of war and even be buried under the ruins of the country, than to consent to an uncertain independence which was guaranteed by an oppressive power (Russia)."¹ Hence, war should be waged to obtain liberty, without which utter destruction is preferable. In the second instance, he considers war would be a welcome purifier of those passions which hold a people in leash. In 1783, he says of the American Colonies, "Perhaps a long war, by causing the Americans to experience alternate defeat and success, would rid them of English ideas² with which they are unfortunately too deeply imbued."

The causes and reasons for war suggest in themselves some of the ways in which it can be prevented. Some general methods of prevention have been indicated in the preceding chapters. Others will be suggested later in connection with maintaining peace. In addition to these, effective means of preventing the outbreak of war between states are to be found in causing the people to feel the burden of war directly through the imposition of new taxes,³ in arousing a national sentiment against war, and in being prepared for war.

1. VIII, 5.

2. The reference here is especially to the commercial traditions of England and the resulting desire for the acquisition of wealth. XV, 209.

3. XV, 119.

Nabli does not assume that the people often fail to feel the financial burden of a war. He believes, however, that an equal distribution of the burden is necessary to arouse popular consciousness to the fact that war is costly. As the desire for wealth is so universal, its loss to the individual, though a good thing in itself, has the advantage of causing opposition to the reason for the loss. When some of the people are exempt, or when the costs of war are defrayed from a fund already set aside for the purpose, or when the gains made by warfare prevent financial sacrifice by the people, this strong and valuable deterrent is inoperative.

To create a national sentiment against war, the following maxims should be instilled in the minds of the people:

(1) Excepting the ruin of the state, war is the worst of evils.

(2) After the conservation of the laws, peace is the greatest blessing.

(3) Any offensive war is unjust; he who advocates it is responsible for the blood of the citizens, and can be brought before the courts as a public enemy. These maxims should be taught by mothers to their children as soon as they are old enough to grasp the meaning.

War is best prevented when the larger states are able to go to war with a reasonable hope of success.¹ Troops are essential, but to make them effective it is not necessary to exercise them against neighboring states. A state must let it be known that it is in a position to attack, while keeping entirely on the defensive.² This does not require an inordinately large army - such an army is the sign either of vanity or ambition.³ The ideal, in Mably's estimation, is the citizen army. For mercenaries he had the utmost contempt. He considers the Swiss fortunate in sending out so many mercenary troops, if they can thereby purge the country of that many undesirables.⁴ Any people who have the right to make their laws will lose it if they buy soldiers for their own defense.⁵ For the maintenance of virtue within the state, and for protection against attack by a neighboring state, a citizen soldiery is indispensable. Any state, Mably concludes, which lacks either the wisdom or the inclination to take this necessary step for its own defense, has no good excuse for complaint against the aggression of other states.⁶

The results of war are always bad. If, for a given state, the war ends in a victory, corruption will be

1. V, 145.

2. XII, 67.

3. VIII, 197.

4. XII, 148-149.

5. XII, 345.

6. XIII, 94.

the result. If the outcome is a defeat, the result will be degradation.¹ Then there is always the danger that some general, upon whom it is necessary to confer great power for the successful prosecution of a war, may, in the event of a successful conclusion, usurp the control of the very government for which he was fighting.² In a monarchy, war will always afford a pretext for increasing the royal prerogative.³ Mably disagrees with those who believe a people having suffered a defeat should think only of avenging it. If the people are impatient with their lack of success, says he, it shows that they still have spirit. But their leaders should not permit that spirit to be used for revenge.⁴ That power which resorts to the use of force against its neighbors will inevitably suffer from that same fear which it would inspire in them. While increasing the number of its enemies, it will arouse the suspicion of its allies. With the belief that it is becoming powerful, it will actually be increasing the dangers to which it is exposed and will be weakening its resources.⁵

But the most usual results, and those common to all participants, successful or not, are economic in character. Trade is injured, agriculture suffers from neglect, and the people are crushed by heavy

1. VIII, 212.

2. XI, 492.

3. VII, 402.

4. VII, 390.

5. X, 90.

taxes which can be collected only with the greatest difficulty.¹ Since money has become the sinew of war, financial ruin is the usual result. For this reason, it is a wonder that any state expects to be the happier and more powerful at the end of hostilities. When in the course of a struggle, the usual sources of revenue no longer suffice, taxes must be increased or loans made. If the revenues from the territory conquered, in the case of a victor, are not sufficient to pay the interest on the state's debts as well as the borrowed principle, it is worse off than if it had made no acquisition at all.² The people, crushed by these economic evils of war, are eager always for peace.³

The best way to bring about peace, says Mably, is to win battles and take towns.⁴ And in the meantime, advantage should be taken of any occasion to separate one's chief enemy from his allies.⁵ Peace should always be made as soon as possible. Any nation should put a limit to its ambition lest too great success lead to its ruin.⁶ The first step toward peace should be taken by the winning state. This will gain for it prestige and save useless expenditure of its resources. But if such an

1. V, 478.

2. VII, 371-373.

3. IV, 463.

4. V, 163.

5. V, 171.

6. VII, 335.

7. V, 173.

opportunity is not seized, the losing state should ask for peace. This should be done in such a way as to maintain its own dignity without occasioning offense to its enemy, and should be undertaken either by its own ministers or by a mediator.¹ Although a mediator must not be expected to be impartial, it is fortunate for humanity that there are generally several neutral states which can be called upon to play this rôle.² Such a request for a cessation of hostilities, when sincere, can always be acceded to by the victor with the assurance that it is to his interest to do so.³

It is worthy of the humanitarian sentiments, which should be the motivating force of a government's activities, at least to start peace negotiations. Even in the face of seemingly unsurmountable obstacles, there is always a chance of success. In any event, there will result a clarification of the issues involved, and the way to later successful negotiations will be made clear.⁴ When there are many powers interested, a peace congress is most desirable.⁵ Separate negotiations are always suspected by one's allies. But in a congress, everything is open, and the rights and pretensions of all the allies involved are brought out. There should have been drawn up

1. V, 175.

2. V, 125; 186. It is interesting to note, as an example of Mably's practical diplomatic attitude, that in case of the suspected infidelity of the mediator, "it is necessary to come to terms with him in order to make him act fairly."

3. V, 169.

4. VII, 320-321.

5. V, 150.

preliminary articles setting forth briefly but clearly the chief demands of the belligerents, when the meeting of a congress has been preceded by the cessation of hostilities. No such procedure is necessary when hostilities continue while a congress is in session, as this continuance proves that the belligerents are not yet tired of war.¹

That the work of the congress may be successful, certain definite principles of procedure should be followed. Simple arguments and modest assertions, made with adequate preparations to prosecute a successful campaign, should make peace seem attractive to an enemy.² There should also be adherence to a definite plan of discussion in order to prevent mediocre and temporary results. All concerned should recognize the fact that states have three rules by which to settle their differences: natural law, the law of nations, and the individual agreements into which they have entered.³ These restricting principles should guide the progress of negotiations. In addition, each individual state should foresee any suspicions liable to arise among its allies on the question of cession or accession of territory. Finally, the negotiations should be made to follow those same principles of cooperation among the allies which resulted in the advantages obtained by

1. V, 180.

2. This is not the advice of an impractical philosopher who does not understand men.

3. V, 152-153.

the war.¹

Mably finds the negotiations which resulted in the Peace of Westphalia the most masterly and profound ever undertaken by mortal men.² He attributes the success of the treaties of Münster and Osnabrück to the fact that, in making them, the framers went back to the causes of the war. Order was restored among the belligerents in such a permanent fashion that no craftiness nor quibbling could disturb it.³ Thus was established a peace which would not start another war.⁴

Mably finds that treaties, properly framed, are a valuable restraint on that ambition and spirit of vengeance which are only too characteristic of all peoples. But they should be made with the intention of their being serviceable for a longer period than the life of a man.⁵ Secret treaties are bad because they tend to inject fraud⁶ and bad faith into negotiations. No treaty should violate the fundamental laws of a country signing it.⁷ It is only too common to see states alienated, sold, and exchanged as if they were no more than so many farms.

1. V, 182-183. 2. V, 191. 3. loc.cit. 4. V, 329. 5. V, 24.
6. Mably's tendency to act the practical diplomat despite his plea for good faith is further shown when he advises (1771) the Poles to approach the Sultan in this fashion: "You must make him think that his disgraced armies need a long war in which to recover their courage, discipline, and reputation. Say that Russia is becoming exhausted, that her finances are becoming disordered, and that she is losing her best troops." IX, 397-398.
7. VI, 190-191 8. VII, 188.