CHAPTER III

RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

Practice. — The trend of scholastic thought was diverted during the Renaissance. This period ushered in the beginning of what may be called modern history. During the later Middle Ages, whatever existed in the form of European unity was destroyed with the collapse of the Empire and the decay of the papacy. States became governed by monarchs who were absolute in both theory and practice. Besides having political power, the monarchs had enormous military strength in their standing armies. This institution of a permanent professional army became increasingly prevalent among the European states.

Concurrent with this development, the system of balance of power appeared. In Italy the petty states found security in this system. Soon the states of central and western Europe took over this institution which they used as a substitute for the system of Empire and papacy. To a certain extent the papacy had been the guardian of international morality and the Emperor had been a means of solidifying the unity of states. The mediaeval political system, however, was destroyed by the decay of feudalism. The states of Europe were thrown into a condition of internation-
al anarchy, which was synchronized with the rise of modern nationalism.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century explorations were made which resulted in the discoveries in the New World. The treatment of the Indians by the Spaniards, Cortez in Mexico, and Pizarro in Peru, and innumerable lesser combats in Latin America raised the objections of such men as Bartholomew de Las Casas. The Humanistic movement which was sweeping over Europe at about this time was questioning the existing customs. The practice of the Spanish conquistadores in conquering the Indians in the New World was to treat them as barbarians outside of the influence of the laws of war which were recognized at that time by the states of Europe. This was also the practice of the Europeans in their treatment of the Turks.

The question of who might declare war was directly related to the waning of the power of the Emperor and of the Pope. The Pope was devoid of any direct political control over the sovereign states of Europe and likewise the Emperor was powerless when it came to an absolute direction of the affairs of these states. It was the sovereign, the absolute monarch, who possessed exclusively the right of war. Such sovereigns as Francis I of France and Charles V of Spain and many other kings and rulers of the states of

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