

*Maxim 4 :* It is not high crimes such as robbery and murder which destroy the peace of society. The village gossip, jealousies, family quarrels, and bickerings between neighbours, meddlesomeness, and tattling, are the worms that eat into all social happiness.

*Maxim 5 :* *Of laws.* The law of honour consists of a set of maxims, written or understood, by which persons of a certain class agree to regulate, or are expected to regulate their conduct. It is evident that the obligation of the law of honour, as such, results exclusively from the agreement, tacit or expressed, of the parties concerned. It binds them because they have agreed to be bound, and for no other reason. He who does not choose to be ranked amongst the subjects of the law of honour, is under no obligation to obey its rules.

The law of nations, so far as it is founded upon the principles of morality, partakes of that authority which those principles possess; so far as it is founded merely upon the mutual conventions of states, it possesses that authority over the contracting parties which results from the rule, that men ought to abide by their engagements. The principal considerations which present themselves upon the subject appears to be these:—

- (1) That the law of nations is binding upon those states who knowingly allow themselves to be regarded as parties to it.
- (2) That it is wholly nugatory with respect to those states which are not parties to it.
- (3) That it is of no force in opposition to the moral law.

*Maxim 6 :* The moral law should always be regarded as paramount to every other law. The will of God, the only right and safe rule of human actions, is to be ascertained principally from the Christian Scriptures. Information it is true may be drawn from other sources, and rules for human conduct laid down, but they are all subordinate, and must be subjected to the decisions of the moral law.