WITH OUR FACES IN THE LIGHT

FREDERICK PALMER

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BY FREDERICK PALMER

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A BOOK BY AN AMERICAN FOR AMERICANS
WHICH HE HOPES MAY EXPLAIN TO BRITONS
AMERICA'S SPIRIT IN THIS WAR.

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I

New visions arose and old visions were intensified when a traveller war-old, perhaps war-wise, whose message is in this little book, had the greatest thrill of the war in a quiet Virginia railway station as a newspaper bought from the car-steps told him that Congress had given the word for blows.

Now the struggle that I had seen begun with the young Belgian King's call of his country to arms; that I had seen continued in Belgium's living death under German rule, in a Paris holding its breath while it awaited word from the Marne, in the glad

pursuit of the Germans to the Aisne, in all the process of trench vigils and attacks and counter attacks on the Western front, had become our struggle. It meant Virginia and Maine and California as well as Britain and Flanders and France.

I was seeing Virginia out of the car window in the gracious spring sunlight. Virginia had known war of old as suffering France knows it today. The spirits of the men who fought in her fields came to life in blue and grey legions, and faded, and I was back on the Somme where a battalion of the New Army had halted beside the road. A chill autumn rain was falling and dripping from the steel helmets of the men, yet the air was singularly luminous, bringing distant objects near and emphasizing nearby objects by suppression of detail, while the guns kept on pounding and the transport rumbled in ceaseless undertone like the current of a great river.

Ahead was the ridge which was to be attacked, and above its crest of shell-torn earth rose the broken wall of a church and some limbless trunks of trees against the horizon. The battalion commander came over to where I was standing and made a casual remark. Then he looked away at the ridge and back to his men, whom he had trained from civilians into practical soldiers. They stood at ease, mud plastered, silent, in that wondrous glow, illumined by the spirit of the moment.

"With their faces in the light!" he exclaimed. "That is it, and all of it!"

With their faces in the light the British had crossed the Channel, and the Canadian, the New Zealander, the Australian and the South African had crossed oceans to fight beside the French.

Three years ago they had had no more thought of this sacrifice than I

had of learning one day in a Virginia railway station that the United States had declared war on Germany or that our women and children would ever be murdered by U-boats. They had not chosen their part any more than we had chosen ours. It had been chosen for all in Berlin.

"Your country will come in eventually," the officer said, after we had talked for a while.

"Why?"

"Because your faces are in the light," he answered. "Propaganda may delay you—I know little of policies or politics—but you will come in because that thing which we are now about to attack will drive you, and the thing that is sending us to the charge is calling you."

II

I KNEW out of the depths of experience what the officer meant. The lesson had come hot and unmistakable at the front. It was personified now as a British soldier passed. His salute was that of obedience to reasoned purpose, with no surrender of the inner self that makes the individual. In the British and the French armies an officer may not strike a man. The men in the allied trenches talk freely among themselves and criticize their statesmen and government policies, but turn from discussion to the reasoned obedience of orders. Their minds are their own.

Then some German prisoners went by. Their rigid salute was a surrender of self to superior rank with

a clockwork automatism. In the German army an officer may strike a man; his bodily self-respect is forfeit and his mind too. How often prisoners had told us that they never discussed their Emperor or the government's doings for fear of being punished! Their minds were not their own.

Yet the American beside the road, a neutral, recollected that the Russian officer also might strike his men. But the Russian soldier had not been long out of serfdom. He belonged in another age. In most instances he could not read and write. The German belonged in this age, literate, organized, with a trained brain yielding its trained capabilities in blind compliance.

I had seen a light in the German faces, too, in the early days—the light of conquest which endures only with success. In its place came the light of hate, baffled hate.

"You have no prejudice against the Germans?" I asked the officer.

"None. They are an obstacle to be overcome," he said. "At the start of the war I had prejudice. But how can I have prejudice now when the prisoners tell us that France invaded Germany? They believe what they are told."

"Not all of them," I replied. "Some know better, and they know that they are in the wrong. They try to stifle their consciences with self-deceit, as other nations have tried when they were in the wrong. They fight stubbornly by the very criterion of the aim of materialism that sent them into the war, as if by fighting to prove that they are in the right. The others fight in defence, as they think, and take their moral satisfaction from their faith in the lies told them from the top."

"Their light comes from without," said the officer. "The staff supplies

it and the staff is strong, the system strong. Our light comes from within, and there you have the whole of this business."

His men took up the march to the hazard of death with the wondrous light of that early afternoon in their faces as it must have been in the faces of the Crusaders, the Minute Men, and those who went to the relief of the beleaguered women and children at Lucknow—against a system.

III

War opens the national ledger, puts the stethoscope on the national heart, sounds the national character. Had we grown soft, as some people said? Were we only an agglomeration of races and not a nation? What spirit did we bring to our task? How deep and how true was our patriotism?

I had had many lessons in patriotism from association with those men whose courage was a wall in France between us and the Germans. One of indelible simplicity I had from Francis Grenfell, who saved the guns at Mons, when he was convalescing from his second wound.

"That is what we are fighting for," he said, as we were strolling above

the valley of the Thames and he swept his hand toward the carpet of hedge and field.

Later, on the same afternoon, he asked me if I should like to see the diary which he had kept through the retreat from Mons and the first battle of Ypres. We sat in the silent library of the house while I read his brief, soldierly, unaffected account. Frequently there were only a few lines of entry, but many times the last words of the day were, "For England!" written out of the heart in the confessional of a private journal. Again he wrote, "I am glad to do this for England," after the fighting had been particularly hard and his part very active.

"When I go back I suppose that I shall get it," he said, as a matter of course. "Not that one wants to die. Who does?" and he looked fondly out of the window across the sweep of lawn toward the banks of his

beloved Thames—which he was not to see again.

"Isn't that worth fighting for?" I thought, as I looked out at the Virginia fields.

Then I was back in thought to a captured German trench and a Frenchman, speaking of what France meant to him, took up a handful of soil:

"This is France!" he said. "I have France in my hand!"

His roots were in the earth. His ancestors were in France when Cæsar came with his conquering legions. He had not to reason about the causes of the war. His cause was under his feet in the inheritance of countless generations of Frenchmen, holding fast to their tongue, their literature, their France.

Where he had only a country from the Mediterranean to the North Sea and Grenfell only a country from Land's End to John o' Groat's, I had a country extending from Canada to

the Rio Grande and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Long periods of absence had taught me to envisage it as a whole. Apart from sheer legal titles to real estate, I had a claim on the whole. Where Grenfell and the Frenchman were poor in acres I was rich.

As either man spoke I was not seeing the valley of the Somme or the Thames, but the New England hills and the factory towns beside the winding streams; the valley of the Hudson, which you may enjoy for the taking of a train; the rich, black acres of the Middle West turned under the plow; the cotton fields in bloom; the Mississippi with the immensity of its eternal flow calling to the imagination as a unifying power to all the States and towns which it passed on its way to the Gulf; the irrigation farms in the midst of the desert; the Rockies in massive grandeur outdoing imagination; and

the orange groves and all the world beyond the Rockies looking out toward the Pacific—all was America, where I was at home in the great, widespread American family. I could take up the soil of any part of it in my hand and say that it was mine.

"When I think what England has done for me, this is the least that I can do for England," said Grenfell.

To him it was simply a matter of paying a debt; a debt which in this instance was paid with his life to the land that had given him life.

I recalled a dedicatory ceremony in a small town at home. A man who had gone from the small town to the city when he was young and accumulated a fortune had given to his native place a recreation park. All of the speech-making was about the honour that he had brought to the community by being born there. No one mentioned what the community

had done for him; even he overlooked the thought, which would have brought the light into his face if it had occurred to him. He was only paying his debt to the mother earth of his rootage with his gold, a debt which some have to pay with their lives. For the time comes to every nation when it must pay its debt to its parent soil.

How much America has done for us! How much we owe to this new land, fallow to our rootage, pliant to our shaping! Some parts of it have beauty of scene and richness of loam together; others, monotonous distances and hard tillage. Nothing looks better to me when I return from enforced absence abroad than a stone wall running over the knoll of a Connecticut farm. The Tiber is a commonplace river, but it was the mother of rivers to the Romans, who set the mistress city of the world on its banks. The Greeks immortalized

in sculpture the marble ridges of their sterile land, which they loved because it was theirs. There is no true patriotism without the patriotism of the soil.

IV

THERE is the patriotism of tradition, too. It is a hollow form unless you live up to it; the excuse of inertia, the proxy of courage and sacrifice for a dying people in their degeneration. Need one ask if we had it when one was in Virginia? George Washington was a Virginian.

The European thinks of us as young. We are and, let us hope, ever shall be young, and ever with our faces in the light. Yet we are old—the oldest of the great republics. Our tradition is one hundred and forty-one years young or old, as you please. It began with the winning of freedom, which Englishmen enjoyed themselves but which their government denied to Colonists. Where

other nations take their traditions from kings, we take ours from an elected President. We had a self-governing democracy founded on our English inheritance, expanded and fashioned to suit our purpose when parliamentary institutions were not yet born in France, which does not ensure that we shall retain it or prove that Americans are freer than Englishmen and Frenchmen to-day. Such a guarantee rests with the present generation, and with every present generation in all the ages to come.

Those of us who have felt the Teutonic racial pull in this war had best remember that Washington, a great Englishman, fought his race for a principle—an English principle. We have been neglecting Washington of late years, perhaps. He is of sterner stuff than some of the dispensations of an irresolute democracy favor. We shall revert to him more

and more as we come to sterner times. He made the nation. Others have had only to hold it together.

To the average American of to-day he is a kind of autocrat, this stalwart republican; a dim, shadowy figure in the garb of the age of aristocracy; but I envisage him as near, human and real as he mounted his horse to ride away to take command at Cambridge in the prime of manhood. Never did mortal set out with his face more truly in the light, or on a braver mission, or on one which meant more to the world. Never had a people a finer tradition in leadership than we have in him. At the start, he led only a protest in arms by act of the colonial legislatures; he had no thought of the separation from the mother country which eventually the stubbornness of George III. made inevitable.

Those Australians and Canadians who are fighting in France, more than

they realize owe the heritage of their freedom to the lesson that Washington's sword taught; and all kings of the Kaiser's kind of German breed, whether set on home or on foreign thrones, to-day or in 1776, owe him eternal hate. But for him and his tattered regiments there might have been no French Revolution and no such France as we know to-day.

The richest man in America may take a lesson from him who was the richest man of his time in Virginia. With all to lose, he risked all. His wealth and family position assuring aristocracy's favor if he chose it, he might naturally have inclined to be a loyalist; and if he had, George III. of Hanover would have won. He faced the odium of rebellion, of personal ruin, when precedent did not augur the success of rebellion against the intrenched monarchism of Europe. Yet with his broken, ill-fed troops in retreat, harassed by

intrigue, his resolution never faltered. No matter what the distress of his cause, he fought cleanly—and how cleanly compared to the way that Prussian monarchism has fought! Without munitions he stuck it as the British and the French stuck it at Ypres, for he was of the sticking kind.

Valley Forge, not Gettysburg or Lexington, should be the shrine of our patriotic pilgrimages. Lexington was the flash of patriotic impulse which might have been merely the abortive uprising of some farmers if the rebellion had not become a revolution. Valley Forge was the test of democracy in arms; the trying-out of the manhood of the country. In that winter camp came the decision whether or not we were worthy of winning a heritage, as again and again our worthiness to retain it must be proven.

The relics at the old headquarters at Valley Forge, which I visited after

the Somme battle, were only the symbols which helped me in these days of luxury to visualize Washington seated at the table, going over his papers with the exactitude of the thrifty planter, the considerate employer, that he was; holding his temper under great stress and letting it flash out humanly over cowardice or incompetency; or stooping in his height to pass out of the door to make the rounds of the log huts, reprimanding a malingerer, heartening a sentry in a storm with a kindly word, bringing light into the faces of his ill-clad, half-famished men when the world thought that his cause was lost.

I should be small-minded indeed not to be proud of ancestors who had shared such hardships, and smaller-minded still if I thought that the latest immigrant to arrive at Ellis Island might not be as good a citizen as I. It is well to repeat these

obvious things lest we forget them; well to remember the fortitude which made us a nation at a time when fortitude is required of us again.

Washington had no gift for speeches or infectious catch phrases which use tradition as the mask for a play of words. He made tradition. He wrought with deeds. If he had chosen he might have been dictator, even king; but this was the thing he fought against. The spirit that sent him into retirement as a citizen when his work was finished—that is the spirit which is arming a civilized world more than a century later against the usurpation of power. He had no thought of being an indispensable man; therefore he was the indispensable man. His was the patriotism of character; Valley Forge the patriotism of fortitude.

V

It was the sight of a small frame house from the car window that made me recall the remark of an English officer to one of those Americans who were the bane of Europe to self-respecting Americans until we came into the war. Some tried to conceal their nationality, others voiced their shame of country. I like to see the American abroad neither boastful of his own land nor deriding the customs of other lands because they are different from his own ; but ready to learn from others and prompt to justify his own country when it is maligned or to interpret it when it is misunderstood. This American was despising himself for belonging to a nation too proud to fight.

"I have read the history of Stonewall Jackson's campaigns," said the Englishman significantly; and this was all he said.

In that little frame house Stonewall Jackson had died after his brilliant victory at Chancellarsville. I had passed it on other occasions, but this time the sight of it touched new chords. Jackson is now a tradition with us, as is Lee. We may all share him along with Grant. The thing that matters to-day is the way that the South fought. She had the dignity that ennobles a lost cause. She had the light of conviction in her face. All she asked was to set up a house of her own. Her reading of the Constitution gave her this right. True to parliamentary form and the tradition of the Revolution and our parliamentary inheritance the legislatures of her States deliberately passed their acts of secession, served their notice.

I like to recall that anecdote of Longstreet, when he went to Richmond after resigning from the United States army, heavy of heart but having chosen between the people of his State and his nation. Jefferson Davis asked him if his accounts as quartermaster were audited before his resignation and Longstreet's answer was the silence of disdain of such a question to an officer and a gentleman. I like to dwell on the fact that every Southern naval officer in command of a United States man-of-war brought his ship as United States property back to a United States port before he joined his own people. If Grant or Sheridan had been a Mississippian he would have fought for Mississippi.

The South fought to maintain its new house against invasion; and with its face in the light, the temper of its steel was in this conviction. After the Civil War we of the North did

the South a great wrong. Having fought to keep her in the union and having succeeded, we did not treat her as a sister.

It is good to think that again we are one in the same kind of cause, this time in the name of all the world, as we were in the name of the thirteen colonies. Had Lee won he would have been acclaimed another Washington. If there had to be a civil war we should be grateful that it gave us such men as Lee. He, too, ever fought cleanly. Contrast his orders to his men in the invasion of Pennsylvania with German orders in the invasion of Belgium. I was seeing him and Grant at Appomattox and hearing Grant tell Lee that his men were to keep their horses, as they would be needed for the spring ploughing. Lincoln must have been happy when he heard that remark. It had an immortal simplicity.

In no part of the country is our

human rootage deeper in the soil than in the South. It is the sense of his debt to the soil that makes the Southerner so devoted to his State and his community. City dwellers sometimes think this devotion narrow and provincial, when in truth it breathes the very spirit that made the Frenchman take up a handful of earth. The soil was all that the South had left when those lean men and their lean horses went back to the plough. With more than the attachment of an agricultural people they realized the motherhood of earth. Theirs has never been the vagabondage of apartment houses. They have a vested interest of generations in America, this old American stock.

Is the spirit of the Jacksons and the Lees still there? Oh, quite. I had to go no farther for proof than the Southern home where I had spent the night before the declaration of war. It was in the father and the

mother and in that large family of children around the table. I suspected it of peeping out from the heirlooms of old mahogany furniture. I think that it was more pleasantly situated in its surroundings in the North Carolina hills where hospitality is inborn than in big houses where hospitality is hectic with the effort for something that it lacks—the something that this Southern home possessed.

VI

Reverence of tradition and love of the soil in Virginia: what in New York or in Chicago? You must go to the foreign quarters of our great cities to realize how the European recipe for patriotism does not apply to us. The appeal that has been most potent in calling the nations of Europe to arms through the ages we never make. Our patriotism rests on countering one of the most vital sources of theirs.

"We understand the President's difficulty," said an English statesman early in the war. "He would have a German rebellion on his hands if you declared war on Germany."

In common with all Europeans, to whom patriotism is the loyalty of race,

he could not understand how Scots, Prussians, Hungarians, Irish, English, Poles, Russians, Italians, Bulgars, Greeks, Swedes, Serbs and Dutch could be made one.

"While our foreign policy, except the Monroe Doctrine which concerns foreign nations," I reminded him, "varies with succeeding administrations, our policy in relation to foreigners in the United States is fixed. It is not the result of any prevision of the State Department or of the Foreign Relations Committees of Congress, but the very essence of the instinct of patriotism and self-preservation of democracy of which the average man is hardly conscious."

The statesman smiled. He was politely sceptical, as he might well be, for Ireland was very troublesome at the time. Indeed, I also was becoming sceptical in the midst of that racial contest in Europe as the result of letters from home, which gave the

impression that, despite all the Fourth of July speeches and the Red, White and Blue in the schools, we were only an assembly of races encamped.

The vaunted melting-pot had failed to do the melting or, rather, there had been no such thing as a common melting-pot. Our patriotic cooking was being done in the same number of pots as there were foreign languages spoken in New York and Chicago. I should find myself with a faction but without a country.

Therefore, upon my return, Ellis Island bulked large in the harbour view in relation to the Statue of Liberty. When I went ashore to see, with the eyes of eighteen months' absence, all the alien faces in the streets, I felt almost a stranger in my own land. I understood the foreign point of view.

How could one expect these newcomers to be American? They had no place for rootage except tenements

and pavements. It was only natural that they should revert to the scenes of their childhood and their ancestors' childhood, which had the same pull for them as the French countryside for the Frenchman and the English countryside for the Englishman. Had they come to America for liberty? Usually it was for material advantage. They arrived third class in the hope of departing first class. America was to them a bank account.

I was quite cynical until I passed a schoolhouse on the East Side, where the children swarming out of the door made a scene which wrought with the quickness of magic a change of mood. They were all speaking English. They had the bond of language; they would absorb the bond of institutions. The next generation would not know their mother tongues, and difference of language, Kant had said, was the cause of wars. No one offended their racial or religious susceptibilities,

thanks to that broad toleration established by our forefathers. French-Canadians after centuries of the French language in Quebec accepted English in New England. Americanization was a thing of private influence, the very opposite of Germanization or Russianization in Poland; for our Government orders no one to be American. A concerted public opinion turns the trick.

When I saw the flag flying over the schoolhouse, I was reminded that it had not flown over the one where I went to school. In a community of old Americans it was not necessary, any more than a French flag over a French schoolhouse. But the sons of the newcomers had the symbol of their adopted land before their eyes. The fathers who could not read a line of the constitution could see the flag. When I asked foreign-born or second generation whether they were pro-Ally or pro-German, they answered

sharply, "Pro-American!" That was the thing to say, at least. Any one who said anything else would have found public opinion a speedy corrective.

I realized, with the war ever in the background of my thoughts, what a wonderful business this assimilation of races was in all of its manifestations, methods and symbols. It gave me a new pride of country; a sense of sharing in a world benefaction. Unceasing instruction is proceeding; every American is a pedagogue in a land where newcomers have to be taught our English tongue and how to do their work in the midst of the adjustments of our rapid growth, where opportunity intensifies the ambition of the second generation. In older countries more is taken for granted, because more is really granted in the standardization of existence, son following in the footsteps of father. We must teach, explain, insist.

That weakness for display which foreigners say we have is only a part of the work of Americanization. After the breaking off of diplomatic relations with Germany, I was taxed for not having the Stars and Stripes in my buttonhole. I might have answered that I carried it in my head and heart. I might have said that it would hardly occur to a Frenchman from the trenches if he came to America to wear a flag to show that he was a patriotic Frenchman. But I should have been in the wrong. The flag was a symbol of educational value. Show your colours, everybody! Are you American or not?

It occurred to me that in the curriculum of absorption the face of Lincoln on the cent piece had an influence on newcomers. To people used to kings on their coins, he is the representation of our idea of kingship. His sayings, his speeches, have become the maxims of democracy; he

personifies the patriotism of idea—a man such as no other nation has ever had, giving character to ours. In the darkest hours his face was always in the light; and it was this that made him immortal.

"These old Americans talk as if they had all the patriotism," said a Pole to me in broken English. "I'm sick of their telling us newcomers at their Preparedness banquets that we foreigners, as they call us, have got to be Americans. America means just as much to us as to them. They were born here; they had to be Americans. We make ourselves Americans because we want to be, and we are just as good Americans as they are — and we'll fight for America, too."

I did not bother to ask him if he had hung out a flag. It did not matter. I rejoiced in his outburst. He had America in his heart. Our climate would see to it that his children

had it in their features; our customs that they had it in their habits of thought and manner so strongly that they would be distinctively, and I hope quietly and worthily, American anywhere in the world.

VII

Though imperceptible in its degrees to those at home, the change in America from the second to the third winter of the war marked a telling contrast to me after a summer at the front. I looked my country in the face in November of 1915, thinking what it was in August, 1914, when I left it; and again in November of 1916, thinking what it was in 1915.

We had pro-Allies more violent than the Allies; pro-Germans more rabid than the Germans; but, generally, we seemed to see the war as an inexcusable madness and waited with the self-consciousness of reason, which could in no sense justify such destruction, for the return of sanity. Our national policy of assimilation

instinctively avoided offence of the alien strains in our population. Satire at the ghastly spectacle was an expedient of neutrality that flowed from editorial pens, while we were safe out of the reach of chaos. Europe had turned to murder; we would keep out of murder's way.

Our papers were open to all arguments, all propaganda. The mass of the American people posed judicially between the furies. As well trust the facts that passed the censorship of one side as the other, asserted the cynical, who were confused as to what was lies and what was truth. As well believe the special pleading of one madman as the other. Belgian outrages? Would the members of that kind German family who lived next door kill women and children! No! And did not the German government produce documents to prove that France and England had been the first to break Belgian neutrality?

The German staff, which reasons that everything is justified for the end of power, turned its machinery toward the moulding of American public opinion. America liked interviews: everybody from Count Zeppelin to the Crown Prince submitted to the American interviewer. Americans liked sentiment: give them a picture of a German soldier holding a Belgian child on his knee. Bluster one day, fawn the next; spend money directly and indirectly. Have every propagandist repeat that the "war was forced upon us." France is popular: pity the French. Justify German militarism on land by scoring British militarism at sea which was starving German women and children. Picture the horror of this war, its wickedness, the while you whisper peace proposals and Falkenhayn strikes at Verdun.

America was thinking aloud. This is an American habit which foreigners recognize. What puzzles them is the

nature of the conclusions that are forming in the back of the head while we are thinking aloud, which is one of the results of assimilation feeling its way in keeping the national family together.

We like to hear what the other fellow has to say. Where the European will turn away from the orator who is expressing convictions different from his, the American will listen and even applaud before going to the polling booth to vote the other way. This characteristic has latterly been the evil genius of machine politicians. But nine-tenths of us were for the Allied cause, if not for England, France, Italy or Russia individually, as a secret ballot would have shown. We could not be neutral in heart between right and wrong.

The war brought prosperity and we accepted it as a treasure-trove washed up on our shores. In the second winter we were enjoying it; in the

third winter we were not. We wanted the war over, regardless of our pockets. The sense of its machinelike, continuing horror had deepened; a greater sympathy was in our hearts. The orgy of New Year in New York of 1915 was not repeated in 1916. Where in 1915 exponents of preparedness had talked of guns and ships and of preparedness itself as if it were something purchasable by the yard, in 1916 we were talking of the preparedness of manhood, of universal service.

Was this the same America of other days, which had had a certain inherent feeling of sufficiency in the conviction that every American was born a soldier? Surely war is a rapid teacher. Now you could say that the whole volunteer system was ridiculous and inefficient and un-American, without being subjected to an amused condescension which formerly had warned you of the folly of proven experience tilting at an adamant state of mind.

Pessimists were holding up the mirror and drawing faces of gloom and derision for it to reflect. We were irresolute and flabby. Wasn't I disgusted with my country ? friends asked. On the contrary, the returned traveller was highly pleased with the restlessness, the heart-searching, in the midst of peace, comfort and employment for everybody. I was prouder than ever of being an American. The light was dawning. Would a great leadership crystallize it into shafts of lightning against the Prussian system ?

Some other countries might have been content to let the bank clearings increase ; to sit under the plum tree and let the ripe fruit fall. With us the old traditions were at work. The diagnosis of our trouble was the Puritan conscience and the Cavalier honour, the Washington and Lincoln tradition, protesting in our souls.

Less often you heard a certain type of man saying, " Let people keep at

home if they do not want to be drowned by U-boats!" or, "If you get in the way of men in a scrap and are hurt it is your own fault!" And when he did say it he laboured the point in a way that showed that the thinking out loud was a kind of formality.

In New York they were muttering all kinds of things about the West: it took no interest in the war or in the defence of the nation; as for the Pacific Coast, it was hopeless. The "effete East" had become belligerent, while the supposedly red-blooded West had barred the six-shooter since it had cut up the ranges into quarter sections and paid off the mortgage. But I happened to know what the West as well as the East was thinking.

"They're quite wrought up in New York expecting the Zeppelins," as a Missourian said. "You wait till war comes and see whether we don't do our share of enlisting!"

As a peripatetic volunteer counsellor

I had considered the state of the nation with Pullman car porters, drummers, chambers of commerce, literary societies, women's suffrage clubs and mechanics' institutes. I had gone from the North West, where they say that sleighing is poor three months in the year, to the soft breezes of the Gulf; gone to sleep in sight of snow on the plains and awakened to look out at strawberry beds in bearing; watched our cities grow and taken a run around the suburbs before dinner, where I ascertained who of those present were for universal service before answering the question when I thought the war would be over. Whether or not I was informing, I cannot say. Certainly I was being informed.

The Eastern seaboard complained about provincialism in other sections, which, in turn, complained about the provincialism of the Eastern seaboard. Passing through a range of

climate under the flag greater than that from Copenhagen to Sicily, I had in mind, too, the European question if climatic and geographical lines must not eventually separate us into different nations. The delightful answer was insistence that each locality was more American than the others.

All the way from Dakota to the Rio Grande people read the same magazines and books, play the same kind of games, respond to the same sentiments, are interested in the same big league scores, look to Washington as the political centre as much as a Frenchman looks to Paris. The dome of the Capitol is a symbol as distinct to them as Westminster Abbey to an Englishman.

Dismiss the idea of distance, which is misleading, and the difference between a New Englander and a Texan is not so great as that between a Savoyard and a Breton of France. Where a Cornish miner, a Yorkshire

farmer, a Scotch shepherd and a London cockney would have difficulty in understanding one another's tongue, bring a lumberjack from the Michigan woods, a Georgia cracker, and any others of the most dissociated American types together and none will need an interpreter. No people have more complete unity of language than our second generation who have all been taught in the public schools. We have more people speaking English than all the rest of the world together. Our common intelligence is the highest in the world, electric in its connection from end to end of the country. It binds us together and makes us act together in response to the patriotism of idea born of our traditions. Yet one heard sinister whispers of German reservists secretly drilling; of bombs to blow up bridges and arsenals. What would happen in Milwaukee and Hoboken?

But my sampling of all parts of

the country did not undermine the confidence that I had when good-humouredly I told the English statesman that if our democracy ever decided for war, the Germans at home would give us less trouble than the Irish in Ireland had given him.

VIII

"YES, I do a deal of thinking about the war," said an Iowa farmer. "Maybe we country folks do more thinking than city folks. We have plenty of time for it when we are ploughing, or harrowing, or even doing the winter chores."

His acres were fifteen hundred miles from the sea, which he had never seen, and more than four thousand miles from the French front. After thinking on the slaughter in the trenches he was not eager to have his son charging through curtains of fire instead of sowing wheat. This did not mean that he was not a good American ; only that he was a normal, sensible human being. His thinking associated war only with drilling youth

and sending them into battle. Some people who criticized him for irresponsiveness seemed to think that war was a kind of game which had become fashionable the world over. To him war meant war. When he considered its horrors he applied them, as people did in the South, where they still have the memory of war's ravages and where they know the cost.

"It's hard to get facts," said the farmer. "I guess the President knows most about it. We've got to leave it to him."

We Americans are great sticklers for facts, probably because we are accustomed to discounting reportorial enterprise in separating the facts from the profusion of entertainment and thrill which we demand in our newspapers. Germany's request for a peace conference was a fact; the Allies' reply stating their terms was another; Germany's failure to state hers another; the President's peace

message another; and the German note announcing ruthless submarine warfare the clinching fact. "That settles it!" you heard men saying on all sides. We had ceased to think aloud.

"That settles it!" spoke the opinion of the nation from end to end. There was no excitement in the South, where I was at the time; none in the Middle West, where I was when the President gave Bernstorff his passports. Our newspaper headlines looked as if we were hectic; but with us the press blows off our emotion by proxy.

"I am of German descent. I hope that the Germans will beat the English!" said a German to me the day before the ruthless note; and the next day he said, "We've got to show the Kaiser that we are a nation, and we shall have to do it with war."

Thus the patriotism of idea had worked out its processes; thus the facts had done their work; thus the

toleration of freedom which binds us together had wrought the wonder which Europe cannot understand—the wonder that is the triumph of our unique nationalism, a wonder which we hardly appreciate ourselves.

Victory of one kind was ours already, the victory of unity; a victory reflected in the audience in a New England factory town where I spoke soon after our declaration of war. I was told that there were people of at least six different European races present. The Mayor's speech introducing me was a classic of Americanism. He warned his hearers that many of them had relatives fighting in the ranks of the enemy. Affection for their kindred was natural and human. Their part was hard. Consideration for their feelings was the very essence of good Americanism, of the cause that had called us to arms. Loyalty to America of those present he took for granted; or if there were any who were not

loyal—he left that, too, to the audience.

The European method would have been a threat based on the suspicion that if German or Hungarian blood flowed in any one's veins, he must perforce be an enemy, which is a sure prescription for keeping race hatred alive. Still, I knew that the Mayor did not lack force; no one could frighten him with a threat. There was plenty of fight in his square jaw if fighting were necessary.

In the front row of seats were the G.A.R. veterans, in the blue of their day, and in the second the Boy Scouts, in the khaki of ours; boys mostly of foreign parentage, linking the tradition of old New England with the tradition which Ellis Island had formed. Though of foreign parentage, the Scouts were American already to the eye, their roots in our sunlight and spirit if not yet in the soil. The old boys and the young

boys laughed over the same stories, as they always do.

If the parents sometimes looked backward in lingering, affectionate reminiscence to their home lands across the sea, when they looked forward it was to the future of their children, American by birth and environment, who were to live and bring forth their young and die in America and have the same stake in its unity for which the veterans had fought. There was something singularly appealing in that expanse of assorted faces so distinctly of many races behind the faces of the old fighters and the Scouts which were so distinctly American, brought together in our New England—my New England, with its contrast of colleges and factories.

The colleges seem almost as numerous as the factories. Founding colleges was a habit of our forefathers carried westward with their migrating

sons, as if in prevision of the future requirements of assimilation. The doors of the colleges are open to the sons and daughters of these newcomers, who may achieve a place in our aristocracy, which will be more and more one of accomplishment and education, please the good Lord! We have our leisure class, too, which they may join if they have a little money. The traveller may meet the older men and women, parental white heads on an Odyssey in a Pullman section, who have gained a competence, going southward in winter to kindly airs and returning northward in spring, enjoying well-earned rest in the evening of their days.

If some of us think well of our lineage, why, that is only proper pride unless it inclines to snobbishness, which requires a reminder that most of the forefathers themselves were not lords' sons but men who were expected to touch their forelock to

the squire in passing and who crossed the sea to clear the forests and make themselves squires. Some college clubs may ask if the several times great-grandfather came over in the *Mayflower*, but, generally speaking, faculty and fellow-students in all our schools show their favour to the boy who by his own merit, whoever his father was, has established himself in the aristocracy of self-respect and application. Germany has its officer class drawn from a class. The son of a bootblack may go through West Point if he has the physique and the brain.

Our colleges are the perfected mills of final absorption. No one can be a Rah! Rah! boy for three or four years and escape being American. Alfieri, Schmidt, Levinsky, MacPherson become of the same piece. Touch their quick and they may revert to race in the pride of parenthood which no man should disown. But why touch their quick?

"I can remember the time," said an old New England business man, "when you used to see signs of 'Boy wanted. No Irish need apply' in city windows. Now these same Irish boys are among our leading citizens."

You don't see such signs to-day. We have passed that stage. The only question is, Is he an honest, industrious boy? If we had not passed that stage European doubt about our unity might be well-grounded; that Mayor might not have been able to leave the question of loyalty to the audience; that factory manager in another part of the country might not have left it to his men, who were largely of foreign origin and supposedly pro-German.

He did not employ guards against disorder as some of the directors suggested, but hung big American flags in every part of his works. One workman and only one made a disparaging remark about the flag.

Those near by left their machines and gathered around him and quietly, without laying hands on him—though it was evident that their hands could close into very sturdy fists—told him that he had better not say that again. Public opinion having performed its function, they returned to their places. The superintendent who had watched the proceeding spoke of its dignity; a dignity that made sport of any precautions against disloyal actions and somewhat disappointed the authors of sinister whispers about possible uprisings in "foreign quarters."

I like best the story of the chief of police of a great city who had declined the offer of volunteer police to act in such an emergency, because the section where you hear a babel of strange tongues in that city was so quiet after we declared war on Germany that the chief thought it an insult to the residents to provide extra patrols. He smilingly

apologized to the eager volunteers for not having had a chance to do their bit. No bridges blown up, no bomb-throwing, no rioting, and the West recruiting faster than the East —the pessimists confounded! Yes, America had won a victory for all who have laboured in the processes of assimilation; a victory of democracy, of our institutions, of the light, which thrilled the war-wise traveller in his pride of country as much as the storming of redoubts.

There was no enthusiasm for the war. Why should there be? We went to war as a duty to our manhood, to the world, without the prejudice of race which is the cause of wars; we went in an American way for an American end. Aside from principle, France was fighting for her soil; but our soil was not in danger. Germany went for conquest; while Mexico, ripe and inviting by all the rules of the relations of the strong to

the weak, we had refused to pacify. Aside from principle, England went to war for her sea-power, her colonies, her existence; we sought no territory, no indemnity. Our purpose was to be found in the one-hundred-and-forty-one-year-old tradition. And yes, we, too, fought for our existence—at least the existence of our free manhood, no less than England.

If ever a nation had its face in the light it was ours. Was this enough? How serious were we? How strong was our resolution? What strain would our unity bear? The issue was three thousand miles away, and the British Navy and a wall of French and British soldiers were between us and our enemy. Must we Americans go through the fire that had remade England and France, the fire of hardship and sacrifice which Washington's and Grant's and Lee's legions knew, before we could be sure that we would bear the supreme test?

IX

We must keep the cause concrete and burning in our minds. Its name is Frightfulness and its lair the General Staff offices in Berlin. Consider this word as the shibboleth of a system; then consider nature and the history of war itself.

Even among beasts the male refuses to strike the female; yet the German staff wages war against women and children. Between two men in a passion fighting with nature's weapons there is a recognized foul blow which may not be struck; but the German staff is striking foul blows which all the codes of combat established by law or by custom have aimed to curb. Good leaders are those who have tried to stay the rapacity of soldiers in the intoxication

of victory or the lust for revenge; bad leaders those who gave it free rein. The German staff has not only given it free rein, but urged it on.

One day in the Boxer campaign I saw some American soldiers looting just as their general happened along.

"Don't you know that that house is not yours; that that is not your property?" he asked as he appeared at the door of the house which they were ransacking.

They dropped their plunder as they saluted. But the salute was only the symbol of obedience. I saw in their faces that they knew that they were in the wrong. Their leader had roused their consciences. Another general of another nation closed his eyes to looting. He was worse than his men; responsible for encouraging the brute in them.

By slow degrees humanity has developed its better instincts, but all that has been gained in a thousand

years may be lost in a day if war's fury is unbridled.

The Hague and the Geneva Conventions and similar international efforts have had as their object mitigation of the horrors of war as well as the preservation of peace. The Red Cross itself is not old, and it is only an expression of the ethics of not firing on a wounded man, of easing his misery and saving a maximum from the human wreckage of war. War was a fact, a human manifestation; but let it bestialize man as little as possible.

What male has not known the time when he wanted to settle his differences with another male by blows? If he were young and the other old the ethical spirit of generations of civilization forbade. Had he struck the elder man public opinion would have been outraged; the court of neutrality proscribed such an act. A group of schoolboys forming a ring

to see fair play at fisticuffs is only an expression in miniature of the Hague Convention; the exclamation, "Let us have it out, man to man!" as the two men strip off their coats, is the expression in nature's weapons of the duelling code. There is bad blood between the two which they think can be removed only by combat. Duellists were given the same kind of pistols; the seconds saw to it that the same kind of bullets and the same amount of powder were used, and that both men fired at a given word.

Murderous duelling has passed, and in nations where duelling survives it is so modified that the bad blood may be drawn by a prick. But suppose that one duellist had drawn and fired without awaiting the command. Well, public opinion would have called that murder, as the public opinion of nations condemns an attack without a declaration of war.

But savage man did not bother about rules. He struck the other man from behind and took his property, which bred hate in the dead man's sons and thus continued strife and destruction. Frightfulness was the gospel of prehistoric wars, which were wars of population and therefore prosecuted mercilessly. When one savage tribe swept down on another and wiped it out, the code of frightfulness was vindicated according to the logic of frightfulness. Public opinion did not matter. It had been killed with the war axe; or if any remained among neighbouring tribes it feared to express itself because it lacked power.

Thus, power became its own excuse, its own law and judge and the god of a modern people, set up by the German staff. War was force, and force should be used in any way possible. World public opinion could curb the system of the sword only

with the sword. As one German officer said:

"You ask how we shall like to face the *Lusitania* and other facts in history, and our answer is that we shall write the history of this war as Cæsar wrote the history of his."

It seems a little hard on Cæsar, who went against uncivilized tribes, not against the France of Pasteur.

X

This new materialism justified the foul blow against Belgium and the bombing of women and children, because war was killing and destruction and the answer to all arguments. It made a hand grenade worth more than all the books of law, a seventeen-inch howitzer greater than a cathedral. Industriously the principle was refined into processes of efficiency, supported by college professors as a theory of "Kultur"; an efficiency setting at naught the normal chivalrous instincts of Christian man no less than the codes which he had laboriously formulated.

"You do not understand our system," said a German woman to me.

"Perhaps I do," I replied. "In

the early days of the war if a German aeroplane had to descend in the Allies' lines, though the aviator might be alive, the German guns began to fire on the plane, hoping to get some of the Allied soldiers who ran up to the spot. It did not matter if the guns killed their own man, for he was a prisoner, an expended unit that could fight no more."

"Precisely!" she said. "It is the sacrifice of the individual to the whole. We do it among ourselves. We had to do it with some Belgians."

"But one day it happened that a German plane which had engine trouble could not reach its own lines, and lighted in No Man's Land just short of the German trench. The German soldiers came out of the trench and gathered around the plane. In the first months of the war the French would have held their fire and looked on in the impulse of chivalry at these Germans, for the moment not

soldiers but curious spectators. Such incidents soften the brutality of war. But now, in the spirit of reprisal which frightfulness has developed, an officer passed the word and, waiting on an opportune moment, machine guns and rifles mowed the Germans down."

"Why not? He was right," said the German woman. "War is war. Those Germans were stupid. They had a fool for an officer in that trench."

"That is the sort of fighting that breeds hate, which breeds more hate and more war," I said.

"I believe in hate," she insisted.

Yet I refused to think that she did at heart. She was kind if left to the natural instincts of Christian individualism. I disliked to think that German soldiers would fire on their own aviator except by command; for it was an act contrary to human nature. The German staff, as efficient in making public opinion as curtains

of fire, had inoculated this woman with the virus of materialism. The period was that of German hate at its most venomous, not to say ridiculous, stage, when the staff was transmitting rage to the German public to cover its failure to win prompt victory.

The Germans are not the only people in civilized times who have been the victims of a poisonous infection which takes best in war. The French had it in the form of glory under Louis Napoleon, when they went to Mexico. The need of victory is the hypodermic needle used by the German staff to inject its virus. The staff had gained victory over Denmark, over Austria, over France; and by this proof of its infallibility it asked for the acquiescence of the German public in all its methods. Victory it must have. Victory is its *raison d'être;* its panacea for all ills; its justification of all frightfulness. The people suffering for the sake of victory

worshipped at the altar of the god that had formerly given victories, as other peoples have, not realizing that it had become the god of savagery.

To us the symbol of frightfulness is the submarine, and our cause, the human and national cause, that of men and women in watery graves, murdered when they were going their lawful ways. The U-boat defies all codes, all rules against foul blows; sets aside even the instinct of the male beast that makes it refuse to strike the female. The utility of all international law in time of war, which is the result of centuries of progress in limiting war's horrors and ruin, is based on safe-guarding the life and property of non-combatants, which at sea means their passengers and freight. A belligerent may establish a blockade against contraband, but the law says that the belligerent must have the command of the roadways of transit

and protect the ships that travel thereon. The command of the sea is on the surface of the sea, for cargo and passenger ships travel on the surface.

The submarine operates under the sea ; it cannot protect a single German merchant ship on the surface. It has no headquarters. When located it cannot deliver fight even against a destroyer. No ship can report to it for examination. It is a highwayman, a guerrilla, and worse. The highwayman comes out of ambush to hold up lawful traffic for loot or to murder its guard if necessary ; while the submarine kills the guard and the passengers, and, unable to use the property, destroys it.

Carried to a logical conclusion, submarine warfare would mean that the sea would be without any ships except submarines. The deep would belong to human sharks. On land the same idea would mean a return to the

anarchy of predatory individualism, universal assassination and destruction; to houses burned over the heads of their owners in wanton madness—a land where the scorpion and the rattlesnake ruled and the only crop was nettles. It says:

"You shall not live and prosper. I will kill you and destroy your home. I will have no law except the law of death, unless it be my law. You cannot survive except on my terms, which are not only the surrender of national honour but of all the steps in human progress away from the beast, which man in labour and sacrifice has crystallized in the relations of nations and individuals."

No German, however brave—and the tiger is brave—can have any light in his face as he sends a torpedo into a neutral ship; only the fire of hell in his soul.

Such in the concrete is the cause for which we are fighting; and our

faces are in the light of all the traditions of our country, from Valley Forge to Ellis Island, and of all the ages of human progress.

XI

When we think of Washington we see the Capitol, the White House and the Monument. In peace time the Capitol has first place in our mind. In war time we turn to the man in the White House; and ever that mighty shaft seen from the President's study is a symbol of a people's aspirations.

If our forefathers had had typewriters and less inclination to sober thought they might have written a longer, but a poorer, constitution. They distrusted us a little and made amendments difficult; but they seemed to have a deep trust in the character of the Presidents whom we should choose. They made the President

both ruler and premier; the head of the nation and its executive; and also commander-in-chief of the army and navy. But he was a commander without a uniform, a fact singularly expressive of the jealousy of the doctrine of civil rights which had been so hardly won, step by step, in English history.

Where a European premier held office by the will of the monarch, or, in later times, by grace of fluctuations of popular passion and intrigue or the throwing of the votes of a legislative faction this way or that, the President was secure in his place for four years, whatever the crisis, whatever his shortcomings, unless they called for impeachment. The burden was set on his shoulders by the people; their mandate was definite and personal. If he were not equal to his task it was the fault of the people; a personified reflection on their own bad judgment or on the misleading

demagogy which painted his lath to look like steel.

Democracy, they say, is a bad war-maker, because war-making requires centralization of authority. But in making the constitution our forefathers evidently had in mind the example of Washington fettered by the Congress of his time. Consider that in England Asquith, first with his own party minority, then with a coalition, and after him Lloyd George with a new coalition, and in France several premiers, have had their turn of public favour and parliamentary support, with ever-changing cabinets; and then read the declaration of war in which Congress of our time conferred almost autocratic power on the President. It is a legal paraphrase of the words of the Iowa farmer:

"The President knows most about it. We've got to leave it to him!"

His cabinet were adjutants of his own choosing, holding office at his

will rather than at that of the legislature. On his word billions would be spent. Under his command millions of soldiers might be sent to battle. Such was democracy triumphant in its trust when trust must be placed in one man, lest authority should be crippled by many counsels.

His is a responsibility as great as any man ever had and of a kind that no other man except the President can have; greater than Lincoln had with a less generous Congress. If ever a human being must have his face in the light it is the President, and his strength should be in the light in our faces—his strength and his reward.

He is the interpreter of the people's thought in action; he must foresee what would be the desire of their intelligence and conscience if they had his knowledge and had coolly considered the facts; his wisdom can crystallize their aspiration

until it stands as clear against the background of history as Lincoln's stands; he can give voice to their inarticulateness, bring cohesion out of their confusion, restrain their eagerness until they have had time for second thought—but always he is the servant of their purpose in the light of their cause. And war is action, centralized and direct.

Though he has all sources of information at his command it is hard for him to know the truth. Selfishness comes knocking at his door in the guise of flattery. Even the people flatter him. Washington and Lincoln and —— they fill the blank space with his name to make a resplendent trinity. But a President who thinks of his place in history, who plans immortality, never achieves it. Washington was not thinking of his niche in the Pantheon when he went to Cambridge, or Lincoln when Fort Sumter was fired on. Each

with his face in the light took up the day's work which destiny had assigned him.

The President must see with shrewd eyes the real and the sham and cut through the circle of his near advisers to his best adviser—the people who gave his power, who elected him to act for them. They must ever preserve their right of free speech, of criticism, of rulership through him as a deputy. Otherwise, they will lose the very thing which they are fighting to preserve.

XII

When everybody was asking, "How can I help?" and friends were turning to me to answer the question out of my experience, I recalled the rallying "Carry on!" in the letters of Britons at the front to their wives. Carry on, you at home, as we are carrying on in the trenches! Keep step; keep on marching, with your faces in the light!

A programme of life, a code of principles, in those two words refined in the crucible of war's afflictions! The wife carried on by doing her day's work for the country as the army commander carried on by doing his. Her work supplements his. Home influences can create "the spirit that quickeneth," which General

Haig made his war cry, in training the new army for battle.

Woman sets the standards of economy. She is fashion and she is soul. She is the personification of the cause. When the Spartan mother said to her son, "Return with your shield or upon it!" this was the best recipe against malingering. But she did not do her part if her letters set him worrying, or if she did not cut down family expenses, or if she went amongst her neighbours complaining.

The woman who rushes about in her car to meetings may not be of as much service as if she merely gave up her car; and the man who gets indigestion at patriotic banquets may be of less service than if he took a snack at home and neither made nor listened to speeches. It is the simple things that count. War itself is blows and support of those who strike them. War is fighting and those who may fight and are fitted to fight should

think only of fighting, but not everybody may fight or is fit to fight, and he serves best sometimes who is content with giving support.

We have a naval and a military academy and staff and war colleges, whose business is to train experts in war while others become expert in occupations of peace. If our war experts have not learned their profession it is the fault of lax public supervision. Energize them; hold them to their stern test. Do not clutter them with advice or get in their way in your desire to do something "warlike" in person.

We have railroad, shipping and munition experts. Leave them to their tasks and go on with yours until the government calls for you. A wise and honest government will choose the man best suited for each task; otherwise, the government must be reformed. Because you have no place under the government may mean that

you are doing far more than if you had a place, with your reward that of carrying on instead of an official title which may be the mask of inefficiency. Every one has his personal bit at his desk, or his machine, or in his furrow, and his public bit in sound and fearless supervision of official acts. He can keep his head and steady others who are in danger of losing theirs.

"Go on with business" does not mean, "Business as usual," which is the fatal excuse of slacking. Nothing can be as usual in war time. Personal sacrifice, whatever your position, is war's portion, your individual contribution to victory. A majority makes it a rule in a democracy. Inability to learn the lessons of war without war's scourge is one of the justifications of war. In blood it has taught Europe that no one is so old or so frail that he may not help. Even a smile will help in its effect on others. The joke that a soldier passes before

a charge is an affectation in the face of death which breaks the strain.

One day I saw an old man playing with some children in a French village. They were sitting on his knees and on the back of his seat, tugging, shouting, asking questions. He looked hot and tired, but childishly happy.

"I used to be crabbed," he said. "I didn't care much for children, but now I have found this way of doing my bit. It gives their mothers freedom to work and that means heartening and more supplies for the men at the front."

The old man may all unconsciously have started an endless chain of kindnesses. The war had taught him not to think of himself, but of others; it had brought the light to his face. For the service of war is in making human beings objective; it is the hideous antidote for selfishness.

"One thing I do know," said one of the richest men in London to me.

"Money is going to mean less hereafter."

Money had been power to him, personal power. He had accumulated it to that end, and it now yielded its service at the call of public opinion if not at the call of his patriotism. Where its display had formerly made him courted, it now brought censure. If he smoked costly cigars it must be in private; to offer them to his guests was bad form. His wealth had become his weapon against the enemy. It was in the crucible. If England lost the war he would lose much of his fortune and something that he valued even more; something which he had in common with every other man.

When I returned to my own country from the front it suddenly occurred to me that I was wearing an old suit of clothes. In Europe this did not matter. Over there everybody was making his clothes last as long as

possible; it was the fashion. I became self-conscious until I complied with the fashion that prevailed at home. A custom set by common sentiment saves a government regulation and serves far better than one, as it is the expression of the individualism of democracy acting in concert, thus preserving and glorifying individualism and proving that solidarity may come from the people spontaneously instead of by command, which is the method of Kaiserdom.

Do not be depressed by the day's news. Gloom will not make the next day's any better or sink a submarine. Stoicism is a good thing if it is not an excuse for indifference. Carry on! Carry on!

With the guns roaring in an attack, I have watched the familiar picture of peasants working in the fields, seemingly unconcerned when of course they were most deeply concerned.

"It does not help our men at the

front to win positions if we go to the village and stand about asking questions," a woman explained. "We are fighting the weeds while the men fight the Germans. The soldiers are eager to know if the crops are in in time and how they are doing, and we can send good reports that will cheer only if we do our best with our labour to make up for the loss of theirs."

This spirit, as fine as the Spartan woman's, was the outgrowth of necessity born of wounds and death for millions of men ; but we may have it in face of war without waiting for long casualty lists if we keep our faces in the light.

XIII

Though France had love of the soil and unity of race, these did not save her from invasion; though England had traditions as mistress of the seas, they did not solve the U-boat problem; though Russia had immense resources, they did not keep the Germans out of Warsaw! though Brussels flung more bunting to the breeze than I had ever seen, it did not stay the flight of the poor little Belgian army.

Patriotism, tradition, wealth and flag-waving are not blows. No error is so easy as underrating your enemy, and every nation in Europe committed it. Germany was certain that she could take Paris; France and Russia were certain that they could

stop the German army. The anticipation of speedy victory and a brief campaign in the early days of the war was the product of a patriotic optimism which was measured by emotion rather than by reason.

If we dwell too much on our merits we shall not overcome our weaknesses. The good soldier looks to the vulnerable points of his armour; he sees the strength of his enemy without illusion. He considers his own faults. Otherwise, he may not conquer his enemy.

Germans will tell us that they believe in order and we believe in disorder. I want none of their kind of order, yet disorder cannot defeat order in war or hold its own against it in peace. Foreigners see us as an undisciplined people with a rich legacy in land and mines; the spoiled children of our isolation and of beneficent nature. So confident are we in our wealth that we are prodigal, in

the conviction that it is indestructible. Before the war with all our resources we had hard times, while Germany with her seventy millions crowded in narrow confines was prosperous. Our military budget was only little less than hers ; our extravagance in government self-evident.

Nothing is so obvious to a foreign visitor as that our best young men do not go into public life. Politics and taxation and all the official business of the well-being of the whole nation are largely left to the politicians. The American's ambition is a career of his own, a private fortune, his chosen circle of friends. Wasn't Uncle Sam, as the saying ran in the old days, rich enough to buy every one of us a farm? War has brought home the fact that each of us has a vested interest in the conduct of his country's affairs which he may not shirk.

Every American returning from

abroad feels the intoxication of the champagne in our air. We have extremes of heat and cold in the Northern States which may produce extremes in us. In a sense we are a one-idea people, riding a reform or a hobby hard for a while and then forgetting it as we mount another, which politicians who profit by the failing call our short public memory.

Foreigners say that we waste motion, lack poise, make a cult of being rushed. An old Japanese general who was visiting here when told that by getting off at Forty-second street on the subway and taking an express train he could save a minute and a half, asked naïvely: "And what shall we do with the minute and a half?" For him it meant shaking hands with still more people. We like a lot of movement for its own sake.

If Western Europe furnishes no such example of individual hustle, its

ordered methods of an older civilization offer fewer examples of exhausted people leaning against something for support, out of natural ennui or sheer weariness. We alternate bursts of energy, called forth by the climate, with periods of utter relaxation in reaction. We are strong in the hundred-yard dash. If it were not for the continual renewal of our stock with fresh European blood we might not survive, say Europeans, who think that we lack sustained power to carry through. Their idea is perhaps the result of envy of our energy when we are on high gear. The strain of war and the strain that is to come after the war will prove whether or not we can still carry through. I think that we can, as we did in the Civil War and the Revolution and our pioneering of the West. And our great asset is common sense. It is the ballast that keeps any furore of public emotion from capsizing the ship.

In Germany the State directs the people; in our country the people direct the State. There, a group of chosen men in secret council, seeing far ahead, work out their plans for millions of pawns. However objectionable the German system is, it is not weak. The official class is not given to corruption or idleness; it has a sense of the responsibility of ownership. Those officers who made the German war machine worked ten and twelve hours a day preparing for the day when Germany should be over all. Their purpose was as direct as it was ruthless.

No matter how misled the Kaiser's subjects may be, we have the fact of a monstrously clever ruler with absurd divine right pretensions, who has educated and drilled a people and galvanized them with a loyalty that means co-ordination in courage, organization, production and fortitude as the pawns of skilful chess-

play. The fanaticism of a false faith put the killing edge to the Moslem sword that mocked at Christians in prayer in irresolution and dissension, as it cut its way to the walls of Vienna.

With us, the many-headed council of the people takes the place of the Kaiser. Our system will prevail in war only if our force is greater than the enemy's. With us, in every man must be the sense of his personal divine right to rule combating the Kaiser's.

XIV

The great vision is ours. Americans of the old stock can set an example worthy of their ancestry by heartening the newcomers if they falter with the resolution of Washington heartening his men at Valley Forge. Where the three millions of colonists made a tradition for the future in the Revolution in establishing freedom, to-day the newcomers among the hundred millions may share in making a tradition for maintaining freedom. They, too, may pay the great price whose reward is the great destiny. Unless it is paid, whether in blood or in common service, we shall ever dwell in uncertainty, ever question our faith in ourselves.

On the drill grounds men of all

races have only the capital of their manhood which they offer for America; the stake of the rich man being the same as that of the poor man. Class prejudice will be worked out of human systems in the awkward squad. Discipline will put its formative, corrective hand in the name of democracy upon the village tough and the spoiled child of luxury.

No longer is the melting-pot stirred with symbols. It is over the white heat of a furnace and the scum goes into refuse. The question becomes more than whether or not government of the people, by the people and for the people, shall perish from the earth. It is whether or not this people of many races can triumph in the supreme test of nationality

Any soldier who may go to France is the custodian of that great vision on a battle line three thousand miles away. His the drudgery, his the risk of death, his the great sacrifice. He

fights for America, all America, yours and mine, and our faith.

The ridge is before us. We must take it or yield to the system. Our faces must be in the light, or we have no more right than the system has to victory.

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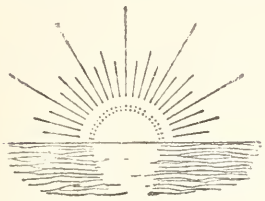

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