

THE CAUSE OF THE WAR

Before the war broke out, H. N. Brailsford wrote a book "The War of Steel and Gold." He drew aside the curtain and showed us the great forces which are ever at work and which inevitably lead to war.

The war came. We were told that it was caused by the Serajevo murders. We were told that Britain entered the war because of the invasion of Belgium. We were told that America entered the war to make the world safe for democracy. Most of us believed what we were told.

Now the war is over. Millions of lives have been sacrificed and the governments mortgaged for generations to come. The world is not yet apparently safe for democracy. Civilization is threatened. The War Lords are urging us to prepare for the next war. The peace treaty is much like other peace treaties—a division of the spoils. The League of Nations is essentially another alliance.

Idealistic appeals having accomplished their purpose are now forgotten and war is beginning to stand out in all its horror and sordidness. The soldiers are beginning to realize that they have not accomplished what they expected to accomplish. The ordinary citizens feel the high cost of living which always follows war. The profiteers alone are happy.

It was the profiteers who made the war. Let me quote a few passages from Brailford.

In 1909: "As Sir George Paish stated in a paper which he read to the Royal Statistical Society, our profits prove foreign and colonial investments amounted to 140 millions. One no longer enquires why the unaggressive, anti-militarist, anti-Imperialist Liberalism of the free-trading England, which was content to take Cobden as its guide, has given place to the expansionist, militarist, financially minded Imperialism of today. . . . Both our navy and our army overseas are an insurance provided and maintained by the nation at large, for the capital owned abroad by our business class."

* * *

"The trade in armaments has evolved along the familiar lines of capitalistic concentration. Competition has been nearly eliminated among the British firms, and what is more curious still, the relations of the chief armament