

we have as yet no power to control, may not rush upon us like a thief in the night and precipitate a crisis which public opinion has not yet been prepared to face. That was what happened in 1775. It is my firm conviction that had groups of men in the American colonies and in Britain set themselves, on the morrow of the Seven Years' War, to do what the Round Table groups are doing now, that is to say, to work out the real issues, to bring them home to their fellow-citizens, and to show what changes and what sacrifices were necessary to meet them, the immeasurable catastrophe which followed would have been avoided; there would to-day have been a mighty commonwealth centering, not in the Old World, but the New. The opportunity is, I believe, presented to us now of preventing a recurrence of that catastrophe, and feeble as our means and numbers may seem, I believe that we can prevent it, if only we have the patience and firmness of purpose to follow to their issue, the principles upon which we have set out.