

Suddenly across this prosperous, domestic, materialistic world the sounds of war rang out, and the only compulsion to take part in it was the compulsion of conscience. Indeed the urgency was not at first fully understood. It was hard to believe that war really meant war; hard to believe that lives were to be thrown away and civilizations to be wrecked in any such monstrous anachronism. It was all to be soon over. The financial stringency would throttle war. The madness of it would never allow the issue to be one purely of endurance and resources. But the war did go on. The weeks spread to months and the months to years. Each mail meant a clearer understanding of the horror that had been unloosed, and strangely enough, because of the knowledge of the horror, a clearer call to take one's place and to do one's part. "Business as usual" was a fatal cry. Nothing could be as usual, and it was only when we discovered that truth that the claim became compelling. The need was men, men, men; men to stop the gaps in the lines, men with the highest intellectual training, or men with no learning at all, but men who could stand the strain, and hold a gun, and shoot straight, and stay where they were placed till they died: men, free men, who should put themselves under the sternest discipline and undertake the severest hardships and carry a light heart into the most desperate endeavour. The call was answered magnificently. The problem was not how to get the men, but how to train them and arm them. The decision was made in full knowledge of all the facts, and men brought up in the faith that to ensure against to-morrow was a first responsibility dropped, on the moment, all that they had undertaken, and crossed the seas to fight in a war that was none of their choosing, and to meet, with little but their manhood, the enemy who had for a generation been laying the train of his assault.

Thank God, it all now lies behind us, and we pray that we, with those who come after us, shall war no more. Victory is ours, victory far more complete than we had dared to hope for. We have come through days that were dark