

privilege of addressing the flower of his country's youth within sound and range of the enemy's guns as well as in hospitals and convalescent homes beyond the seas, and has stood by the graves of those who fell in France and in Belgium; one who has looked forth upon the valley at the foot of the hills that sweep around Ypres, and has realized that more than one hundred thousand men had there found their graves within ten months—such a person must surely realize the tragedy of this war and the awful responsibility of those who forced it upon the world.

The outbreak of hostilities found us utterly unprepared with military forces adequate for the vast operations which were immediately found necessary. Never perhaps, not even in the stress which came upon this Republic more than half a century ago has the capacity of democracy been so thoroughly and searchingly tested. We were called upon to meet the assault of the greatest military power ever known to the world, a highly efficient, thoroughly organized and determined people, trained to arms, magnificently equipped, provided with every military necessity and so industrially organized that the whole force of the nation could be thrown behind the blow it struck. Armies cannot be organized and trained nor munitions provided in a day. The task has been difficult but the effort has been great. It would not have been undertaken nor could it be accomplished except for the most intense conviction of a righteous cause and the firmest determination to make it prevail.

Without pausing to speak of the mighty influence which this war must exercise upon the world's future I may be permitted to express my conception of what it will accomplish for the closer unity of our Empire. Never before have the Mother Country and the various Dominions and Dependencies been so closely united in ideal, inspiration and effort as in this conflict. In hospitals and convalescent homes beyond the seas I have many times met men from the British Islands, from Australia, New Zealand and Canada, brought together in close association and comradeship, each learning the better to realize his Empire, and all united in a common determination to do their duty in this war to the end. One can hardly exaggerate the immense advantage of such association and blending of the Empire's manhood.

All war is tragedy and this war the greatest tragedy the world has ever known. We all pray for the day when

“ The roaring of war shall cease upon the air,  
“ Falling of tears and all the voices of sorrow ”;