

4 To the Man-in-the-Street

These words are written for the Man-in-the-Street.

Not a moment is to be lost in understanding clearly what this War is about, what is happening, and why. Not only his to-morrow, but his future and his children's future are in his hands to-day and depend on his knowing. All this mad running about and abusing the German—for being a German—is as futile as all this admiration of German methods, on the one hand, and the idea of gentle persuasiveness to cure the Prussian cancer by our sentimental dreamers, on the other. It is worse—it is dangerous. The Man-in-the-Street must put aside the passing passions and panics and exultations and depressions of the street and the Press, and sit down and have a good square look at the whole thing; must try to grasp it as a whole. Much now depends upon it.

It is no more good to a man to think that he has any understanding of the battles being fought before his eyes without getting a general idea of what it is all about, than it is possible for him to understand the point of the simplest story if he miss the story. And there is nothing to be gained, but his yawns, if the story be made into a boredom.

The strategy of the war is as easy to understand as a novel.

To pore over and dig out the little petty details of the tactics of a battle will no more help him to understand the War than if he read Conic Sections. All such elaborate business is only useful for the expert. Being shelled in a dug-out for two years will not help to make a man, even with a Military Cross, understand strategy.

Nor can any man possibly understand the large issues of the War by being plunged into the Great