

Troy offered to present to the besieged Trojans a wooden horse. But the gift was fatal, because inside the horse were hidden Greek soldiers who should open the gates of the City by night. Hence the phrase. So I fear the Germans when they are, in a very faint and whispering fashion, offering the gift of Peace. What is inside the wooden horse? What underlies the proposal? In one of the great New York papers the other day there was a picture of the Kaiser as a big bandit. Under his arms he had a bit of France and nearly all of Belgium, all of Servia and Montenegro, a bit of Roumania and all of Poland. He was staggering along under the load as best he could. Hugging his booty close, he says, "Let us have peace." The bandit goes off with the booty and says to the world, "Let us have peace." His offer would seem to be directed mainly to arousing his own people, already sadly misled and misguided, to sterner efforts for their taskmasters, the Prussian war lords. No peace proposals could possibly be entertained from the murderer still at large and still claiming the right to murder. Surely until there is restitution, reparation and adequate guarantee, we may "fear the Greeks even when they are offering gifts." No man who knows anything about the conditions of actual warfare, or who has any of his loved ones at the Front or on the way, or who has talked with those who have come back from that inferno, would wish to prolong for one unnecessary hour this awful tragedy of blood and tears and destruction. And yet the blood and the sacrifice of those who have already made the supreme offering must challenge us to endure and to reinforce until our great moral and political objectives are gained and the world is made safe for peace, justice and decency. No well-intentioned suggestions from any quarter are going for a moment to interfere with the grim determination of the champions of freedom, by the blessing of God, to make freedom secure for the whole world.