

and the British Empire. An imperfect peace means, in the second place, the condemnation of the War. Such a peace must in fact, if not in name, fall short of that destruction of German despotism which alone justifies the sufferings caused by this world-wide war. It were well if the Allies should publish the declaration that they will not even look at any proposals of peace from Germany till she has at least withdrawn from Belgium.

All talk about terms of peace and all schemes for federating the world are at present out of place; they are worse than vain; they may do untold harm; they divert men from the true duty before them. England and her Allies are not called upon at this moment to form policies for creating a new or a better world, they are called upon to punish and guard against crimes which, if they meet with no penalty, will throw the hardly won civilization of Europe back into barbarism. We are here following the teaching and the example of Wordsworth. He does not dream of some moral millennium, he does not frame wild schemes for securing perpetual peace; he is no pacifist.

The nation would err grievously, if she suffered the abuse which other states have made of military power, to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was, or can be, independent, free, or secure, much less great, in any application of the word, without martial propensities, and an assiduous cultivation of military virtues.¹

In his statesmanship, as in his poetry, Wordsworth's eyes were always fixed upon fact. He preached in season and out of season, in poetry no less than in prose, that in his day the one duty of England was to deliver the world from Napoleonic despotism. He, being dead, yet

¹ Advertisement to *Thanksgiving Ode*, January 18, 1816.