

## The Philosopher

### A Turning Point in History

Never before since the beginning of recorded time has history leaped from one epoch into another so abruptly as now. Never before in this world has an old order of things passed away in such a terrible convulsion of civilization as that through which humanity has been passing since the August of 1914. Never before has a new year brought with its dawning such hopes of a new era. Indeed, there are many who do not realize in anything like full measure the significance of the great change that has already been wrought in the spirit of mankind. The first half of great world drama is ended. It has been made up of war and blood and destruction and terror and griefs and sorrows beyond all possibility of telling. At its ending a great hope shone through the darkness, and voices of many watchers upon towers announced the coming of the new era. Civilization has been for more than four years like the bewildered mariners who sailed with Columbus across the uncharted deep. It has been swept by dark tidal waves and by terrible tempests out of all its bearings. But all the time it has been headed towards a great consummation—"Time's burst of dawn." Truly this is a most wonderful time in which to be living.

### The Coming of the New Era

The new era on whose threshold we stand is one which brings solemn thought to every man and woman in the world who is capable of serious thinking and of realizing the responsibilities of life, which has been made so sacred a thing by the sacrifices of the Great War. We survivors from the terrible years of that titanic struggle for liberty and human rights can never, if we are to prove ourselves worthy to be left alive, take life lightly any more. It has been sanctified by the deaths of too many. It is a gift to us, something to be accepted gravely and reverently from dead hands. We must use it with a constant sense of the supreme duty we owe to the dead who gave up their lives for the welfare of the future of humanity. Shall nothing spiritual be born for the world out of all that sacrifice and grief? Every one of us has a share of responsibility in answering this question. Even the humblest of us can help towards the realization of the best possible in the new era by faithfulness to the least and simplest duties of our everyday life. Even the greatest and most highly placed in the world will not be living worthy lives, however well they may strive to discharge rightly the duties of their public stations, if they fail in discharging rightly also those least and simplest duties which make up the main part of the texture of every human life.

### Religion After the War

A degree of amazement and grief seized many souls because the forces of religion seemed helpless in the stress of the Great War. And yet it was undeniably and manifestly true that the great struggle in defence of liberty and human rights released spiritual energies which cannot but result in the strengthening of religion in the world, as a force making for increased realization of the human brotherhood. Profound religious convictions inspired the devotion of the men who fought for the right; the men themselves may not always give their motives that name, and in some cases may have been only indistinctly aware that it was truly religious conviction and emotion which keyed them and spurred them to heroic service, but none the less it was true. And it is a continuing truth in the world which must make itself felt for good. Heroic service in the cause of human brotherhood cannot be considered a thing apart from religion. The moral and spiritual energies which gave such proof of themselves at the front are bound to make themselves felt in the religious life of the world in the years to come.

### Demobilization Problems

The complex and formidable problems presented by demobilization will require the very best of thought and foresight and wise organizing power and management for their solution. It is satisfactory to note that there is evidence that this is being fully realized by those in authority both in the Dominion and in the Provinces. Every possible safeguard must be provided against the conditions which would result from men being released from the army in such a way that they would not be absorbed into the working life of Canada as rapidly as they are released. Nothing could be plainer than the fact that justice demands that the soldiers who were taken from their work by the public need should have their economic claims considered in connection with their discharge from the army and their return to the civilian life of the country. The responsibilities in connection with the just solution of the problems of demobilization rest upon the Canadian nation as a whole.

### Women as Lawmakers

It is now only a matter of time until in all the Provinces of this country women will have not alone the right to vote but the right also to sit in the legisla-

tures. There are already women members of the legislatures of Alberta and British Columbia. The parliament of Great Britain, which bears the proud title of "the Mother of Parliaments," has recognized this right. In the British general elections last month, women above the age of thirty had the right to vote; by curious anomaly there were several women candidates for the House of Commons who were under that age and, therefore, without votes themselves, though they could be voted for by those who had votes. At this writing, the results of the polling, delayed on account of the necessity of including the soldiers' votes, are not yet known. It is more than ten years since women were first elected to the parliament of Finland. In Norway they are also eligible for parliament. The Danish House of Commons includes four women members. In Holland women are eligible for an election but curiously they have not the franchise. In a copy of the London Times just to hand The Philosopher notes that in New South Wales an act has been introduced in the legislature entitling women to be elected to that body and to the civic council of Sydney and all the other municipalities of New South Wales, and to be admitted to practise as barristers or solicitors. The bill also provides that a woman may be elected Lady Mayoress of the city of Sydney. The bill has been introduced by the attorney-general of New South Wales, and has the support of progressive Australian women. Women should be recognized in every progressive country as citizens with full rights of citizenship.

### "The Good Old Times"

The manner in which in every land in which there is ordered government the public men of all parties are giving practical proof of their realization that the good of those who used once to be designated as "the common people" must be the supreme consideration speaks for itself in regard to the change which the Great War has made in the world. The student of history who looks back to the close of the Napoleonic wars finds vivid contrasts in the century's retrospect. The Napoleonic wars left the poor in every land in Europe with a dismal outlook. Even in England the village and town workers were, as the historian has described them, "poorer in money, poorer in happiness, poorer in sympathy and infinitely poorer in horizon and hope" than they were before. A British Prime Minister a little more than a hundred years ago, the great Pitt, actually said in the House of Commons, as an excuse for his inattention to the poverty and misery of millions, that he was "inexperienced in the condition of the poor." No public man in any country would dare to say such a thing to-day. Children worked in the mines and factories at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in conditions which could not have been worse than they were. They worked from eighteen to twenty hours a day. Pitt proposed in the House of Commons that children should be put to work at five years of age. Flogging was the punishment for falling asleep at work. And yet there are sentimentalists who prattle about "the good old times."

### The Pioneers of "Upper Canada"

In these days when there is renewed attention to the problems of land settlement in this country, it is interesting to look into a book published in England in 1832, entitled "The Canadas, as They At Present Command Themselves to Emigrants, Colonists and Capitalists," by Andrew Picken. The pages of greatest interest in that old book are those which contain letters written from Upper Canada (now the Province of Ontario) by settlers who had come out from England and taken up land. For example, W. Clements, who had been a day laborer in Corsley, in Wiltshire, wrote home from Port Talbot, Upper Canada, to his father, a letter dated October 10, 1830, in which he said:—"I had not a shilling left when I got here. But I met with good friends who took me in, and I went to work at 6s. per day and my board, on to this day. And now I am going to work on my own farm of 50 acres, which I bought at £55, and have five years to pay it in. And I have bought me a cow and five pigs. And I have sowed 4½ acres of wheat and I have 2 more to sow. I am going to build me a house this fall, and if I had staid at Corsley I never should have had nothing. I like the country very much. I am at liberty to shoot turkeys, quail, pigeon and all kinds of game which I have in my backwood. My wife and two sons are happy. I wish Father and Mother and all the family were as well provided as we be." Another settler, William Snelgrove, who had been likewise a day laborer of Corsley, wrote from Dundas, Upper Canada, on September 3, 1830, a letter in which these sentences occur:—"Health is a beautiful thing, and it depends upon God alone to give it. Was it in the hands of man, health would decline, as many things have in England, as labor and victualling, which, if the good God give us our health, is as plentiful with us as the scarcity is with you. We have plenty of good beef, mutton, pork, fish, fowl and butter; and I am happy to state that by one day's work a man can supply himself with all these neces-

saries for three days. You have a good many cold bellies to go to bed with, I know, or things is greatly altered from the state it was when I was with you. But if you were with us, if you liked, for three half-pence your belly would be so warm that you would not know the way to bed." The pioneers in Ontario had to clear the timber from their land, and they had many hardships and deprivations to encounter, but they were happy in their independence.

### The Value of Brain Training

"Education is not a knowledge of facts; it is a process of brain training." It would be difficult, indeed, to pack a greater value of meaning into so few words than is compressed into this sentence, which is the summing up of Dr. Arthur Shipley's exposition of the true meaning and right method of education. Dr. Shipley is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and holds world-wide recognition as an authority in educational matters. The sentence quoted at the outset of this was not set forth by Dr. Shipley as a new discovery of his, but as a self-evident truth, which, indeed, it is. Put into other words, it is equivalent to saying that every subject of study is, from the point of view of education, of less importance in itself than the manner in which it is studied and the method which is used in dealing with it. This is true not only of colleges and universities, but of the primary classes in schools, as well. It is true of all education. The object of all education is brain training. An educated person is not a person who knows an immense number of items of information, but a person whose mind has been made an instrument capable of useful and valuable work, and who is skilled in using it.

### What is Germany?

Throughout everything that has been said and written, and is still being said and written, about the war and the causes of the war and the terms of the peace settlement, there is one word constantly used, in regard to which there is not as much clearness in the general mind as might be desired. That word is "Germany." There is great timeliness in the discussion of the meaning of this word by Hilaire Belloc, in *Land and Water*. Does Germany, he asks, mean the German Empire, which Bismarck put together fifty years ago? Or does it mean the German race? As for the German Empire, it was not a nation but a number of states that were federated under the domination of Prussia. It did not include all the people of German race, but it included Poles and others not of the German race. Bismarck, in whose master mind were united all the Prussian qualities of brutally unscrupulous perfidy and belief that might is right and scornful disbelief in democracy and belief in militarism and repression and "the mailed fist," created the German Empire, but he entirely failed, because he never wished to create German unity. He did not include Austria. He simply used Prussian militarism to dominate the territory he needed to make the Empire he had planned. His methods have been conspicuously in use by German statesmanship and diplomacy during recent years; but among the things which the German Empire lacked during the reign of its last Emperor, was Bismarckian brains. But even if there had been a Bismarck in control at Berlin during the past decade, the German Empire would, nevertheless, failed to achieve world domination. The free peoples of the world would have fought it unyieldingly in defence of freedom and human rights, and defeated it. What the word "Germany" is to mean in the future remains to be seen.

### Wrong Fear and Right Fear

Among the many things printed in the newspapers about the influenza epidemic which The Philosopher has read since the arrival of that death-dealing visitation, was a letter by a woman, who wrote that she knew of individuals who were so possessed by fear of infection that they even avoided passing a house where a person lay sick of the influenza. "Such fear," she added, "is really a shameful lack of faith in God's promise of protection to His people." There is, of course, a great truth in the familiar old parable of the two gaunt figures that met outside the gates of an Eastern city. "I am Pestilence," said the one. "I have slain my thousands in that city." And the other made answer: "I am Fear. In that city I have slain my tens of thousands." Unquestionably pusillanimous fear is a disintegrating force, physically, mentally and morally. But sensible caution is not fear. One of the most important lessons enforced upon our men in khaki was against foolhardiness in taking unnecessary risks. The fear which means not lack of courage but simply a cool, clear-sighted recognition of danger is not denial of God's providence. It is foolish to neglect precautions against conditions which we know to be perilous. It is wise to have a right fear of dangerous and wrong conditions, whether they are physical, mental or moral, and to resist them and work intelligently to overcome them.