

swept plains of Northern Europe and Asia, amidst those hard conditions which give physical and mental and moral fibre.

The civilisation of the world, the garnered wisdom of ages, seems to be swept into a hopeless abyss; it is only that it may have a new and nobler birth. On the fierce Northern energy has now been engrafted the moral strength of Christianity; the capacity to win back and make use of the culture of Greece, the governing power of Rome. Then comes the Renaissance of national life on small, concentrated spheres of action—Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, Germany, Belgium, Britain. But while the geographical area of each European nation is circumscribed, the horizon of activity and effort expands. New worlds are discovered; new routes are found; instead of the inland sea, the mightiest oceans become the field of man's highest activities. Who is to take the lead in this new process of new World Growth? Who is to realise the idea of an Ocean Empire united in spite of distance? Long the decision hung in the balance; now it seems clear (and let us say it with all humility and sense of responsibility) that the Briton with his Teutonic basis of strength must take the leading place in this great sphere of world-activity. Two of the new continents, America and Australia, have fallen almost exclusively to our race. A third, Africa, seems, in its most habitable parts, well within our grasp by the compulsion of circumstances and almost without our conscious effort. Once more, again, as representing the civilisation of the West, we go back to the East: to Egypt, to India, to China. We go armed not merely with the intellectual gains of the Greek, the fighting and governing energy of the Roman, but with the moral energy of the Christian. We go again as masters; surely it is not again to become slaves.

Not if we know the greatness of our destiny and accept it. Not if we recognise that under this strange diversity and complexity of our national life there is the material for a wonderful unity of effort and organisation; that we have a marvellous opportunity to make our moral and political impact upon the world greater even than in the past, and greater for the highest and noblest aims.