

be admitted that, the more abundant our mechanical resources the less terrible the price we must pay in human blood for victory. But mechanism alone could never have saved Verdun, and to suppose that the whole business of this war is a matter of mechanics is to borrow the grossly heathen philosophy of the Boche—the very creed which will bring about the collapse of his ambitions and the downfall of his dominion.

I went through a field ambulance behind the Verdun lines to see some of the heroes of the last triumphant French advance by which they regained the ground the Boche had paid such a monstrous price to wrest from them long months ago. They reconquered by the kilometre; the Boche had acquired it by the yard, paying a fearful price for every foot he gained. The men I went to see were those whose injuries had been too serious to admit of their being moved farther back, with safety, for a little while. I wish that all the apostles of pure mechanics and the mailed fist could (without disturbing for an instant one of those wounded heroes) have an opportunity of learning the sort of lessons which that field ambulance had to offer. One could devote many pages to the attempt to describe and pay tribute to the spirit of Verdun; and one would need to be far more skilful than the present writer