

the gloom that it has cast upon the souls of men. For the multitudes who have to bear its trials in bereavement and helpless grief, the complex questions as to its origin and justifications are of minor import : for them the one great fact that war exists is overwhelming in its horror. The heart of humanity is stricken, and its anguish is the first and the strongest protest against this conflict ; it is the voice of nature pleading for its right to live, and appealing from the arbitration of force to the higher law which restrains nations as well as individuals from doing injustice.

Nor can it be said that this is but the cry of terror or the lament of popular emotion. Even to the calmest intelligence, the first shock of war was violent ; and now that reflective thought has regained its sway, the wisest are sorely perplexed to discover the innermost meaning of the struggle and to forecast its ultimate issues. In the judgment of many, it would almost seem that the long centuries of progress had counted for naught and that the fruits of civilisation for which mankind has suffered and toiled were about to be swept away. Others again have been led to doubt whether it were longer possible to speak of a moral sense as man's distinctive endowment or to set any store by the solemn pledges given by nation to nation. It has even been asserted that religion has failed of its purpose and that the message of peace which Christianity proclaims has been turned to a mockery by the tumult of war—as though the evil-doing of man had made void the justice of God.