

CHARIOTS OF FIRE

settlement will defy the ingenuity of man. To do them credit, our statesmen for the most part are sparing of brave words about the future that is to be. They know how many are the rocks ahead.

One thing, however, it is now possible to say with confidence ; the genuineness and finality of the settlement must depend on the domination of the moral factor. The very utmost that we must hope from this war is that we may successfully resist aggression, and perhaps demonstrate even to the Germans that militarism does not pay. Force cannot create a temper inclined to peace, and the problem is how to create it. It is true that we may hope a good deal from the failure of the military machine to give to the German multitudes the security promised by its originators and advocates. Kicking against the pricks has before now disposed a soul to conversion, and God often uses failure to bring a man or a people to repentance and common sense. But even for this there must be other conditions besides force.

One of these is clear enough, though it is negative. Force must not be pressed to the point where it is felt to be a cruelty and humiliation. Both these terms, and especially humiliation, require a certain amount of definition ; for a nation which has set out to grasp the leadership of Europe and to crush the peoples into the mould of its own arbitrary ideal must accept a certain sort of humbling as the price of failure. If Germany has set her heart upon a Germanic domination of Europe, and is humiliated as long as she, like others, is the servant of the common weal, then sooner or later humiliation must be her portion. It is unthinkable that she should retain Belgium, and justice will cry out upon us unless in Belgium and Northern France she is compelled to repair the ruin she has caused with so wilful a calculation. There may be other items in the sentence passed upon her ; to say nothing of the casualty lists, the loss of foreign trade, and the despoil done to every German reputation by outrages on land and by the murder of non-combatants at sea ; but when we say that Germany should not be