

PATRIOTISM

sciences of the people, upon statesmen and orators, journalists and authors, teachers and preachers—and still more upon the common spirit of all those quiet folk who care about the things that are unseen, upon their prayer, their talk, and the abounding influence of their lives.

Our loyalty to our nation will indeed depend upon our fealty to God. It is the very spirit of loyalty that we lack, for we have lost it in religion; our earthly patriotism has been so poor because our patriotism in our heavenly Kingdom has been so dim and shamefaced a thing; we have been disloyal to our native cities, and have allowed other folk to be enslaved in theirs, because we have not claimed our citizenship in the Jerusalem that is above, that is free and the mother of us all—the very matrix of our Christian civilization. The sense even and the savour of loyalty in the highest things has been half lost: no one becomes an American because he disapproves of the censorship, or German because he disagrees with the second article of the National Anthem, or Chinese because he wishes some ancient statutes amended. Yet for lesser things men and women will forsake a church, or transfer their allegiance to an alien creed, running giddily after strange gods. In Britain as in France, in all Europe and America, many find to-day their religion in patriotism, because religion has become so unpatriotic. Folk pick and choose, and fastidiously do poise their souls in nothingness, because we have forgotten that religion, too, is an allegiance, because we have not understood that churches like nations must perish, if their citizens are not ready to love them in spite of their faults and their mistakes, and to pour out their devotion in complete fidelity to the spirit of the fellowship which formulas and hierarchies can never but imperfectly express.

We have thought so long that the Church was founded on opinions, and that is why our loyalty has faded, and