

CHARIOTS OF FIRE

enough to question accepted ideas. It is good that the Head Master of Eton should force us to consider whether we shall be wise to continue to challenge all other nations by holding the keys of every sea. We have taken refuge too often behind the benevolence of our intentions ; we shall only meet the inevitable criticism of neutrals, and even of Allies, when we show that we too are prepared to take risks and make sacrifices for the equal commonwealth of nations. Dr. Lyttelton's words have done their work, despite the outcry against them. Wherever pulpit and press have been faithful and broadminded, this too will be an asset when we come to the reconstruction of European relations.

In the fourth place we may say with little fear of contradiction that on the average the young are far more sensitive to the scandal of war than are their elders. It is partly that they are not so inured to the general folly and wickedness of human society, as we have organized it, and partly that they have not lost the power to dream ; their thinking, too, is clarified by the fact that they may have to back their opinions with their lives, just because a system for which they are not responsible has lacked the moral conviction needful to find a less clumsy method of settling disputes. But whatever the cause, it is impossible to avoid the impression that, for all its wonderful readiness to fight, the younger generation is not satisfied with the conditions predisposing to war, or willing to accept as its mouthpiece the spluttering patriotisms of clubs and drawing-rooms. Please God, when the time for settlement comes, the young will not be silent.

Fifth, we have much to hope from those who have seen the actual devastation which war involves. All those who have harboured Belgian refugees, must have felt it to be intolerable that a nation should be overrun without provocation, and harried without the possibility of appeal. Those who have watched the work of relief in Holland, and still more in Belgium itself, have imbibed a horror for all war which they will keep till their dying day.