

Taking nations as a whole, there is one point on which they all differ, at least in some degree, and that is the national ideal ; and, for whatever other causes they may go to war, the fortunes of their respective ideals will at the same time be involved. From what beginnings, or by what stages, ideals develop, we need not stop to inquire. It is enough for us to recognize that all nations have an ideal, even if it be only destructive, and that in this respect small nations are of at least equal value as great. Indeed, all the great ideals which now govern civilization have been derived from petty States. The Jews gave us our beliefs on the relations between man and God ; to Athens and to Florence we owe our art ; to Athens also we owe the beginnings of our philosophy. Early Rome was the cradle of law. Since the birth of Islam the ideals which divided mankind have usually been religious. It is possible that even now we may not have seen the last of the great wars between the Cross and the Crescent. The wars between Catholic and Protestant have been less protracted, but hardly less bitter or less devastating. It will aid the reader to comprehend the tenor of what follows if we state that the conflict now in progress is, in our opinion, between religious and irreligious ideals. The dispute, of course, is not on the field of dogmatic beliefs but between the morality of the Gospel and the total rejection of morality by such writers as Machiavelli and Nietzsche.

The peculiar mission of each nation is the maintenance, development, and propagation of its own ideals. Freedom is the condition under which the ideal can be realized ; and tyranny the condition under which it is held down and stifled by a competing ideal ; and if men value freedom more than even their own lives, it is because nothing else in this life is so dear to them as