

## PATRIOTISM

goes up to heaven, while we expensively amuse ourselves. And we think we are patriots! Why, even in the toll of human life, the slaughter of war is small compared with the perennial casualties from preventable diseases, preventable infant mortality, unnecessarily dangerous trades—from ignorance, poverty, drunkenness and vice. It needed this war to make Russia sober; but the gain to Russia in human life alone will be made up in a few years, the gain in character and happiness is already beyond calculation. Alas, that not even this war can make Britain patriotic in the same way!

And yet even we, so accustomed to put private gain before the common weal, are strangely stirred. The careless are awake, the stupid have won that grace of imagination without which no man can be saved, the selfish think of others, the mean are almost generous. We are all patriotic. Virtue has come to us. England is strong. The Empire is united. 'Your King and Country need you.' Great God! Have they not needed us all through our lives?

The war will soon be finished—very soon, as history reckons. Shall we continue to be patriotic when it is over? Our forefathers did not, after the Hundred Years' War, or after the Civil War, or after the wars of the eighteenth century, or after Waterloo. We have not indeed yet shaken off all the degradation into which Britain sank after Napoleon was done with.

Shall we over-ride the coming reaction, and love our country when the war is over? Or shall we justify the philosophy of those who say that war is necessary because nothing else can purge us from the greater horrors of our unchastened wickedness in peace, because nothing else can make us loyal?

This will depend largely upon the spirit of those whose work it is to inform the minds and enlighten the con-