

the chasm in its foundation must now be filled with the flower of its youth. Yet for all this failure it remains the hope of freedom, the essential system through which men can acquire and practise the art of governing themselves ; and therefore it is that thousands have risen from every part of it to oppose with their own bodies the blows which are battering its walls. Never in the history of free states have men offered themselves so freely for the public cause. For many of them danger was easier to face than the discipline of military life, but they have made themselves subject to its rule that others might continue to govern themselves. There was little to draw them in the hope of personal distinction, which is hard to come by where the company of valour is so vast and every day calls for deeds daring as any for which men have been noted in lesser times. From the uttermost parts of the Commonwealth they have come to honour their uncovenanted bond, obedient to one uncalculating purpose ; and the fields of their final achievement, where they lie in a fellowship too close and a peace too deep to be broken, are the image and epitome of the cause for which they fell. They have not feared to enter the darkness, because they walk by a light that is in themselves, which burns and shall burn unquenched wherever their ashes lie mingled by land or sea. From that fervent dust the breath of one man might kindle a flame whereby these nations might find and follow the print of their feet. So might a new birth of freedom be raised from their seed. So might these severed threads be caught up and woven into the stuff of other men's lives.