

as long a life as is conveniently possible. But men must die sometime, and, if we dare really to confess the truth, the thing that most of us in our hearts long for, the thing which either means ultimate happiness or else is greater and dearer to men than happiness, is the power to do our duty and, when we die, to have done it. The behaviour of our soldiers and sailors proves it. '*The last I saw of him was on the after bridge, doing well.*' The words come in the official report made by the captain of one of our lost cruisers. But that is the kind of epitaph nearly all men crave for themselves, and the wisest men, I think, even for their nation.

And if we accept this there will follow further consequences. War is not all evil. It is a true tragedy, which must have nobleness and triumph in it as well as disaster. . . . This is dangerous ground. The subject lends itself to foolish bombast, especially when accompanied by a lack of true imagination. We must not begin to praise war without stopping to reflect on the hundreds of thousands of human beings involved in such horrors of pain and indignity that, if here in our ordinary hours we saw one man so treated, the memory would sicken us to the end of our lives; we must remember the horses, remember the gentle natures brutalized by hardship and filth, and the once decent persons transformed by rage and fear into devils of cruelty. But, when we have realized that, we may venture to see in this wilderness of evil some oases of extraordinary good.

These men who are engaged in what seems like a vast public crime ought, one would think, to fall to something below their average selves, below the ordinary standard of common folk. But do they? Day after