

that of the major part of her audience that the bomb which had precipitated the war had been made in Germany. She was proceeding complacently, despite the hisses of several members with German forbears, and the President had just exchanged a glance of amusement with a moderate neutral, who believed that Russia's desire to thaw out her icy feet in warm water was at the bottom of the mischief, when — spurred perhaps by a biting allusion to the atrocities engaging the press at the moment — the idea of murder took definite form in that clear unvisionary brain so justly admired by the ladies of Elsinore.

Mrs. Balfame's pure profile, the purer for the still smooth contours and white skin of the face itself, the stately setting of the head, was turned toward the audience below the platform, and one admiring young member, who attended an art class in New York, was sketching it as a study in St. Cecelias, when those six letters of fire rose smoking from the battle fields of Europe and took Mrs. Balfame's consciousness by assault: six dark and murky letters, but with no vagueness of outline.

The first faint shock of surprise over, as well as the few moments of retrospect, she asked herself calmly: "Why not?" Over there men were being torn and shot to pieces by wholesale, joking across the trenches in their intervals of rest, to kill again when the signal was given with as little compunction as she herself had often aimed at a target, or wrung the neck of a chicken that had fed from her hand. And these were men, the makers of law, the self-elected rulers of the world.

Mrs. Balfame had respected men mightily in her youth. Even now, although she both despised and