

PATRIOTISM

large is to be great. We owe what we are to the ' Little England '—

This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silve sea ;

to the little England wherein were lived the spacious days of great Elizabeth, and to little states like Florence, like Greece—and to a wayside inn in a little town in the smallest country of them all. We need not despise the small state, or be impatient of its stubborn patriotism. From it have come the great treasures, in it has dwelt the mighty heart of freedom, and to it is largely due that teeming life of unity in variety which we call modern civilization.

We have, finally, to be far more patriotic, so that we shall no longer need the goad of war to make us loyal, but shall love our country even in times of peace. For, indeed, patriotism has nothing to do with war—except for the hardness of our hearts—any more than religion has, though men have often fought for both, and forgotten both in peace. The Budget has just been presented to an applauding country as I write. Why do we remember only in war time that tax-paying is a glorious opportunity of national service, and that in this also God loveth a cheerful giver ? Why do we welcome the waste of war, and rage against the beneficent expenditure of peace, unless it be that in times of peace we do not really love our country ? Indeed we do not : in the agonizing years of sullen class warfare which we call the piping times of peace we live base lives, selfish, mean, and cruel ; and year by year the towns spread hideously their streets and their slums over this fair England of ours, for which we are able to die but are not ready to live ; and year by year the poor are oppressed, the lowly degraded, and the weak violated ; and the cry of our submerged millions