

**CIHM
Microfiche
Series
(Monographs)**

**ICMH
Collection de
microfiches
(monographies)**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1999

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

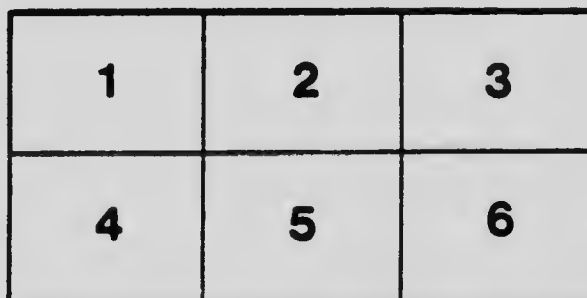
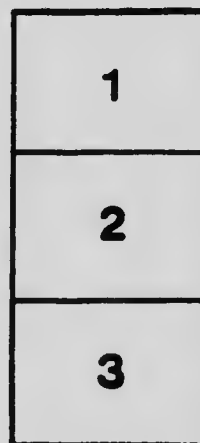
Toronto Reference Library

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

Toronto Reference Library

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., pouvant être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



5.0

5.6

6.3

7.1

8.0

9.0

10

11.2

12.5

14

16

18

20

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

71

80

90

100

112

125

140

160

180

200

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

Second Series

PAPERS FOR WAR TIME. No. 23

THE PRICE OF BLOOD



BY

KENNETH MACLENNAN

**HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON EDINBURGH GLASGOW NEW YORK
TORONTO MELBOURNE BOMBAY**

1915

BASIS OF PUBLICATION

This series of Papers is based on the following convictions :

1. That Great Britain was in August morally bound to declare war and is no less bound to carry the war to a decisive issue ;
2. That the war is none the less an outcome and a revelation of the un-Christian principles which have dominated the life of Western Christendom and of which both the Church and the nations have need to repent ;
3. That followers of Christ, as members of the Church, are linked to one another in a fellowship which transcends all divisions of nationality or race ;
4. That the Christian duties of love and forgiveness are as binding in time of war as in time of peace ;
5. That Christians are bound to recognize the insufficiency of mere compulsion for overcoming evil and to place supreme reliance upon spiritual forces and in particular upon the power and method of the Cross ;
6. That only in proportion as Christian principles dictate the terms of settlement will a real and lasting peace be secured ;
7. That it is the duty of the Church to make an altogether new effort to realize and apply to all the relations of life its own positive ideal of brotherhood and fellowship ;
8. That with God all things are possible.



THE PRICE OF BLOOD

' Shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy ? '—KING DAVID.

' It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion ; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain.'—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

British Empire is pouring out without stint its most precious treasure. Its best, strongest, and most promising young life is being freely sacrificed. No question is of greater concern to the nation than what fruit it is going to reap from this prodigal expenditure. What is the real worth of that expenditure ? What gains may it bring to us ? What results are we going to aim at so that there may come out of it all some worthy equivalent for the blood shed ?

The nations at war are paying a tremendous price. Possibly in no equally brief period have any nations in any time passed through so great a stirring of spirit to high sacrifice as has come to Europe during these last months. The two great parallel examples of modern history are the French Revolution and the American Civil

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

War. In the dread days of the French Revolution the Place de la Concorde witnessed moving scenes, the spilling of much blood, and the sowing of seed-ideas which have resulted in many bloody, and some bloodless, revolutions. The American Civil War exhibited the strange spectacle of men of one race and tongue engaged in a fratricidal struggle in which the whole young manhood of the nation was involved. But these events were slow-moving and on a small scale in comparison with the present happenings in Europe. Every day of this struggle is full of dramatic intensity. Its magnitude leaves the imagination numb and the mind stunned. The British Empire, France, Belgium, Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Serbia are sacrificing their best young life on a scale of prodigality for which we have no parallel.

How shall we think of our share of the sacrifice? We are bound up with the men who are fighting for England in mystical bonds from which we cannot free ourselves if we would. They are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. Every British grave in Flanders means blood and tears in the homeland. The fight they wage is ours. The lives they lay down are for the land we love. The things we are going to take out of the war are purchased at the price of their blood. We are heirs to the fruits of their victory and trustees of their sacrifice, responsible for seeing that the price they have paid shall not be in vain.

The blood which is being spilt in Flanders and the tears

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

which fall at home are shed on an altar. The men who have gone so readily to the front have, generally speaking, gone under the moving impulse of a simple ideal. They have felt that a blow has been struck at liberty, that the maintenance of high ideals concerning international right and honour has been threatened, and that a great wrong has been done in the world. The youth of our land are mostly simple, honest, strong-hearted men, accustomed, in spite of all surface defects, to manly action, and without hesitation they quietly put their bodies between mankind and these things. Uneonsciously they erected an altar, and as unconsciously provided the sacrifice, never questioning the end, but facing death and wounds with a sublimely simple faith in the rightness of things, and a calm trust in their own countrymen to see the matter through. They did not wait even to consider how precious was the price they were paying nor how great things it might purchase. In unconscious trust they left that to us.

Such an altar and such an offering call for a priesthood of no common order. The task of interpreting and mediating to the world such a sacrifice is not to be lightly undertaken by any people. The nation must touch that tender responsibility with clean hands and pure hearts. If Britons are worthily to fulfil the trust thus committed to them, they must have a true appreciation of the great price that is being paid and of the things it can purchase.

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

They must be keenly sensitive to the way in which the trust may be defiled and to the grave danger that there may be failure in fulfilment through slackness or neglect. They must realize that the trust is not a passing and tribal one, but is for the future and for all mankind, and that those who have imposed it come back transfigured and expectant.

The sacrifice is redeeming to us all that we love best : our honour, our homes, our liberty, are being saved by the blood of our sons. It will help to free Belgium and France from the invader. These are the primary things, but there is promise of a greater gain, for the issues and potentialities are larger still. Mankind may be saved from the possibility of such another cataclysm, if the right forces are generated by victory. But that will be a much bigger and infinitely more difficult task than the naval and military operations, and one that will require more patience, for it will mean not only a proper adjustment of naval and military strength, but an ordering of influences, ideals, and tendencies. Every wrong left unrighted in Europe, every sore left festering, will make for a recurrence of war, and it will tax all the wisdom of our wisest statesmen so to adjust a settlement that nationality and human right shall be respected in the days to come, that predisposing causes to international strife are removed, and that all roots of bitterness are destroyed. It is not a day too soon to be thinking hard upon these things

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

and seeking to form purposes which shall not be unworthy of the redemptive power of the blood spilt. If moral forces are to wield any influence at the close of the war they must be mobilized now. We have to ask ourselves now in what sort of way we will enter into our heritage of redemptive sacrifice. How are we going to use it? What kind of gain is going to be worth the sacrifice?

The spirit of the action of our young men has already given us two great gains. First, in striking contrast with the indifference of other times, the mind of the nation is keenly sensitive to the needs of our soldiers at the front and of their dependants at home, and to the wants of all those who, in our land and beyond it, have become the victims of distress on account of the war. In the second place, life has become a very real and strenuous thing for nearly all our people. Senseless indulgence in pleasure and offensive luxury have almost disappeared. Social barriers have to a large extent been thrown down in face of a common task and a common danger. All things have been tacitly, swiftly, and drastically revalued. The things that matter to most people in Britain to-day are life, death, and duty, faith, hope, and God. There is a new community of interest, helpfulness, obligation, and sacrifice. Notwithstanding some unlovely private profiteering, we have come nearer the ideal of having all things in common. And the most casual observer can see the source of these gains. We have bethought ourselves of

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

our dead and of all the young life in daily peril ; we have experienced the redemptive power of that sacrifice and been stirred thereby to worthier purpose and nobler action than before. If the social revolution which has so silently taken place with such unanimous consent be a real gain (and who shall deny that it is ?), shall the nation be untrue, after the war, to the dead from whom its impulse came and drift back into the old indifference to social wrong and sin, and the old class and party antagonisms ? Or shall each of us resolve that :

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall the Sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land ?

But if there are already distinct gains in these directions there is equally distinct danger in another quarter. In all ages there have been men willing to accept a debased price for blood. The history of Israel contains some notorious examples, culminating in the thirty pieces of silver. But the Jews are not worse sinners than others. It is due to the omission of the historian rather than to any special grace, that the history of other nations does not recount more numerous instances of equally sordid deeds. And the spirit is by no means dead that would greedily drink of ' the water of the well of Bethlehem that is at the gate . . . the blood of these men which have put their lives in jeopardy '.

There are things that men dare not accept as the price

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

of blood. If we are offered gold or territory or trade or vainglory, shall we accept these as a worthy equivalent for the sacrifice made? It was not the trumpet-blast of these things to which our youth responded, and if others lay stress on such gains, shall we not protest against the defilement of the sacrifice? Which of our sons went to Flanders that we might get gold or land? Who of us would sell the lives of our strongest and bravest for such a base price? Is the sacrifice to be so lightly esteemed that it may be bartered for these things?

The British people felt some disappointment that the first protest on the subject of the war from our friends in America related to interference with commerce. We felt that the precedence of protest did not do justice to the fine American character as we know it. We wanted their primary concern to be Liège, Malines, and Louvain. And yet we are characteristically unconscious that in Great Britain to-day there is a feverishness about enrichment at the expense of the enemy compared with which the dignified protest by our American cousins about the injury to their trade is highly virtuous. We have not gone to war to enable our merchants to join in an unseemly scramble for the trade of the enemy for the sake of the ensuing gain. We cannot afford that it should be said of us that 'Where the carcass is there shall the eagles be gathered together'.

The needs of the hour demand from our manufacturers

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

and merchants the most strenuous service they can render on behalf of the people. They demand also that those who render such service should not grow rich thereby. The nation is sparing no sacrifice. The rich and the poor are brought into tribute. Every new privation, every new hardship, every lessened resource is part of a sacrifice in order that the Empire may live. We are all going to emerge from this war much poorer. Is it right that any shall emerge richer ; that some shall yield all service and become impoverished for the commonweal and that a few others shall grow rich because of their contribution to the service of the State in the hour of its need ? That would be a strange sharing of the national burden—it would be drinking of ‘the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy’. Men may be placed in such a position that they cannot help making money, but there ought to be an honourable way of escape from the odium of growing rich out of the needs of the present situation. All extraordinary profits at this time are morally forfeit to the nation ; and the Church should proclaim this before the Chancellor of the Exchequer does so.

Lust for gain brings many evils in its train which inevitably affect the whole community. The wise man says, ‘He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house’. The nation has inevitably to share the pernicious consequences of individual greed. It breeds the temper that makes for class war. Its unlovely fruit is sufficiently

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

evident in many aspects of the present social order. The redemption price is too costly to be thus prostituted.

Some readjustment of territory will be one necessary outcome of a victory for the Allies, even to secure bare justice to the principle of nationality. Grave questions regarding colonies and spheres of influence will emerge for settlement. The call comes to us now to cultivate a spirit that shall enable our statesmen to approach the settlement of these questions without being urged forward by a public opinion that is actuated by the spirit of gain, but rather with the support and influence of a public opinion that wishes the foundations of a new world laid.

Many strong men would scorn to soil the sacrifice by accepting gold or territory as compensation, but they feel that the situation demands vengeance of some kind. They call for justice to France, restitution to Belgium, and vengeance on the nation that has wronged these lands. Full restitution to Belgium and justice to France are worthy of the expenditure of our best blood and treasure. It is a great thing to be allowed to heal the hurt of any people. We honour our trust to the dead by seeing that their sacrifice to that end shall not be in vain. It is, however, dangerous to talk about vengeance. It comes very near to the soiling of the sacrifice. Talk of vengeance does not ennoble man, and all sacrifice is intended to do so. Vengeance usually means the letting loose of undisciplined and angry passion. The redemptive

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

power of the blood shed in Flanders should stem such things. And it is well to recognize that in its naked ugliness any revengeful action by a nation means untold vicarious suffering, much misery and many tears for the innocent. Nearly always in addition it means roots of bitterness which foster a continually growing desire for retaliation. The graves of our beloved dead must never be so desecrated.

The sacrifice made has the latent power to uplift and ennoble our own land, and through us all the lands of earth. The situation contains the possibilities of a new world. This alone would give us something worth the price, and the price would be well worth it. In loyalty to the dead we dare not aim at less without betraying the trust reposed in us. In duty to the living and to the lives that are to be, we dare not miss the full fruit of this time of suffering. For what shall it profit the nation if it gain the whole world of gold, trade, territory, and vainglory, and deliver France and Belgium, and preserve our own Empire and liberties, if we fail in the name of our dead to deliver a mortal blow at those forces which are arrayed against the unity of the nations and the brotherhood of mankind? Precious shall their blood be in our sight, and we were craven to let the utmost it can win for the world go by default. Slackness or neglect would be treason to the trust we hold from the dead for posterity.

Such a conception of the possibilities of the situation would enable the nation to lift the heavy end of the load

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

confronting Europe in the days that are to come after the war. Thousands of millions of pounds are being wasted; but when other nations shall have spent their uttermost farthing, we shall still have spending power, and if the war is waged to the bitter economic end, we shall come out unbeaten, though with sadly wasted resources. Is our first act to be a demand for a big share of any money restitution that can be given? The biggest possible indemnity will be a mere trifle when set against the total wastage, and the claims of Belgium and France cry out for priority. Let us not lessen by any claim of ours the fullest restitution for their grievous wrongs that can be extracted from an exhausted enemy. That would be an ill fulfilment of the task of deliverance which we voluntarily accepted. Indeed do we not owe more to Belgium than mere deliverance? Nobly and at terrible cost did she stay the blow dealt at Europe, and should we too not help to repair her loss?

Shall we go further? If we are really fighting for the brotherhood of mankind we must not forget that if one member suffer, the whole body suffers with it. The exhaustion of the enemy's economic resources, the paralysis of his trade, the poverty of his citizens will react on his neighbours. An indemnity intended to crush would merely have the effect of artificially stimulating exports from the oppressed country without conferring any corresponding capacity for import trade. This would be

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

disastrous both to that country and to labour classes in other lands. It would be bad economies, but it would be a worse sin against our own ideals, to crush the enemy utterly. It would mean the sowing of seeds of lasting hatred between us and those who are now our foes, and that would prevent the realization of our aim that out of the war should come a new order of things in the world under which Christian nations at least shall dwell together as brothers. Is it possible that the time has come in history when a nation shall say to its fellows - We laid our all on the altar for the sake of mankind, and mankind being delivered and brotherhood proclaimed, we prefer that we and our dead should alone bear the sacrifice it has cost us? We should witness to a wondering world that we had waged war not for gold or territory or trade or vengeance, but to redeem men from an intolerable ill. We should be purified by the choice, and the proud dead looking on with their white shields would be satisfied because our shields were white also.

If from the supreme Sacrifice there came life more abundantly, may we not dare to hope that from the altar on which our young life is laid down there may also come redeeming influences that shall live on, ever bringing forth fruits worthy of the sacrifice? If love and goodwill and brotherhood and unity and forgiveness came to men through the sacrifice of the Son of God, in order that all human wrong might be righted and all

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

human sin cured, can we not reverently hope for, pray for, work for these same fruits from our sacrifice? Unless these fruits come there can be little hope of a permanent peace. Force will never remove international menace. Constructive moral forces with an adequate motive and a sufficient dynamic can alone do so. This is going to be the hardest task of all, but for the sake of the fallen it must be undertaken. History has already thrown up in Abraham Lincoln a great man who earned the unique distinction that while he fought for one side he was thinking of and working for the good of both. We see the result in a unified America, where the North and the South respect each other. We are fighting strenuously for a side, but we can even now think and work for the ultimate good of all. If we do, men and women in the agony of bereavement may possess their souls in quietness and confidence, cherishing the certain hope that from their loss there will blossom new life for stricken Europe. Then the pain of loss will be healed and the worth of the sacrifice understood.

The discipline of any road of redemption is severe, and if the British people set out deliberately to seek a worthy price for the blood we are now pouring forth, there are many fierce tussles of spirit ahead, many acts of bitter penitence, and much purifying of hand and heart. Are we to aim at rebuilding the broken bridge after the war is fought and won? Are we to aim at a reconstructed brotherhood of mankind in which love and unity and

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

goodwill and forgiveness shall be the dominating notes? There will indeed be an Armageddon in the soul of the nation before such questions are settled, but dare we salute the sacred dead and answer these mighty questions in the negative? We hold the matter in trust for them. We are stewards for those who walk in dyed garments. If blood cries out, does it cry for vengeance, hate, or the perpetuation of animosity? does it forbid forgiveness? When all the cruel wrong of the war flits before the mind, it is hard to think of an afterwards in which we and our foes shall dwell together in unity. The suffering has been very grievous, but there are worse things than suffering. The throwing away of a redemptive power given to us in trust would be a debasing thing.

The opportunity for the exercise of redemptive power is for perhaps the first time given to a nation. The cost of this war in blood and treasure is appalling. The blood may mean a new birth for the world. It may win for mankind a new consciousness of their unity. It can produce new thoughts, ideals, and purposes in the human heart and set a-going new springs of action in the human will. It may ring out death to the law of the jungle. It may purchase goodwill and confidence between the nations. It will do all these things if British men and women mean that it shall do no less. And choosing the highest pathway for ourselves, we choose too for those who have made the sacrifice, for in the full fruit of it they will live on in the power of an endless life.

