

jects, such as "The Fuller Life", "Education an Asset", and so on; but with increasing dissatisfaction. My thought was: I don't want to give those young people the same old high-sounding but empty generalities that come in one ear and go out the other. Meanwhile, in company with all other men who read and think, my mind was inevitably occupied with thoughts of the great war, until there came to me, like an inspiration, the suggestion: Why not make that the subject of your address? Here is a theme in which we all have a common interest. Here is an event that for its very magnitude, for its tremendous significance, overshadows anything that has happened since the first page of history was recorded. Here is something that is going to exercise a momentous influence upon the lives of these young people; that is going to reform—just how much no man dare say—the institutions, the standards, the ideals of society. You are approaching maturity at a time when the world is on the threshold of one of those great transitions, a renaissance, a transvaluation, in which old things pass away, and life finds for itself new channels, new directions, new standards, new ideals.

Young people—you are to be congratulated upon entering the theatre of active life at a time which I believe I am justified in terming the greatest in all the history of the world. This I believe—I must believe it—we all must believe it—that out of this war—the greatest evil that has ever been let loose upon the earth—there must come a good not only as great, but even greater in its proportions. If history can teach us anything, if knowledge has any proposition that is inewantly true, it is this: That action and reaction are equal, that the pendulum must swing forward even as it has swung back, that the law of compensation must assert itself. It is thus that the inexorable cycles of change evolve themselves. It is thus that God has chosen to accomplish his unknowable purposes. The bright morning days of ancient Greece came after ages of stagnant ignorance. The black abysses of the Dark Ages gave way to the glorious splendor of the Renaissance. Is it not true in your life and mine? Is there a pleasure that hasn't its proportionate pain, an evil that may not yield its good? How may we progress except by toil and suffering? Victory ever springs from disaster. From Death, Life ever renews itself.

And so I can look upon this welter of blood and horror and outrage, only as the price that is being paid for the great gain that humanity is about to make. I am an optimist and proud of it. For those who wail that the foundations of our civilization are destroyed and that the world is about to reel back into the beast, I have nothing but pity. I dare to believe that this great sickness that is now clutching the very vitals of half the world will but purge it of its vice, will but show it its own