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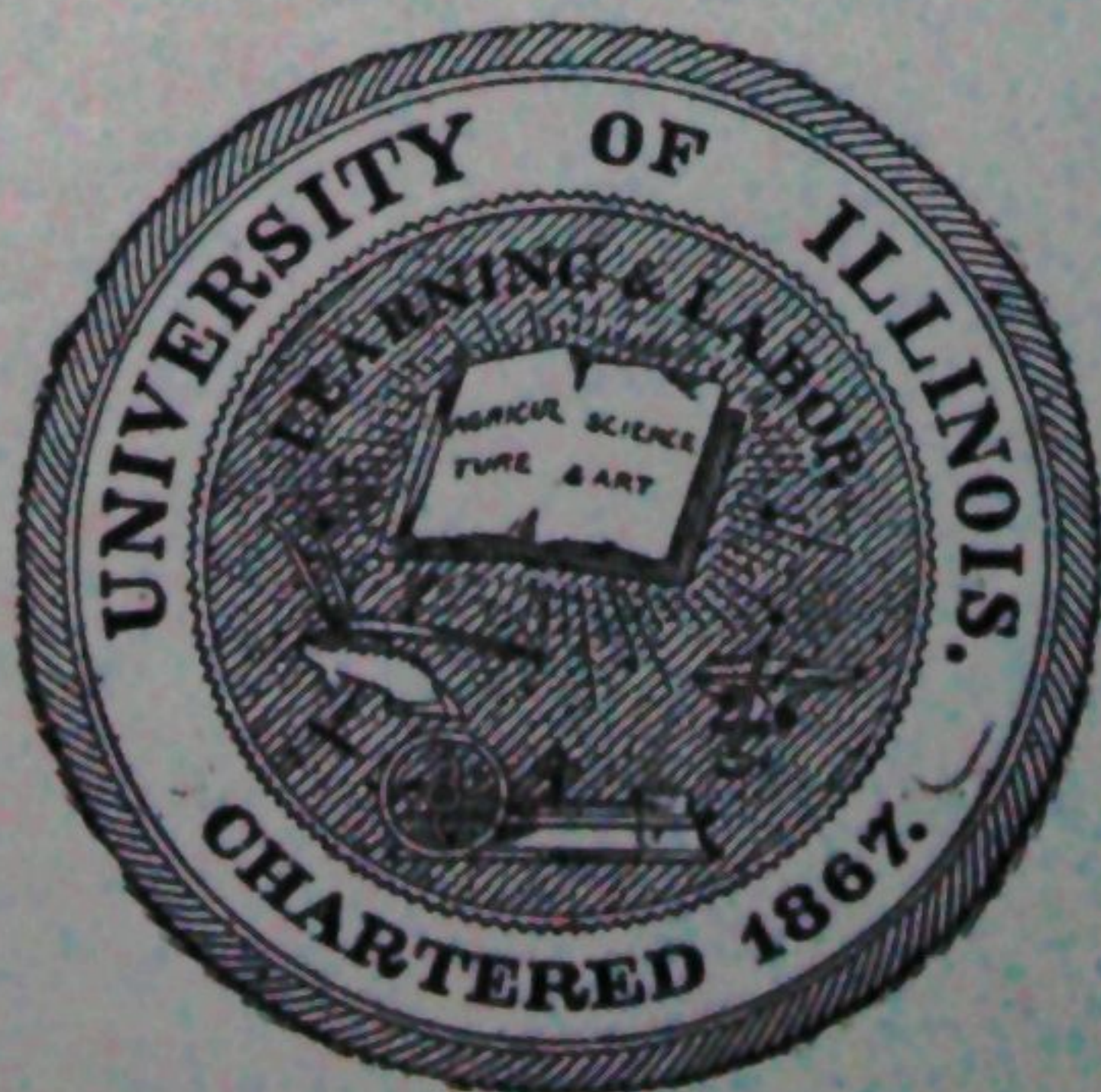
The College Man and the War

[Commencement Address, June 14, 1918]

BY

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The College Man and the War

By EDMUND JANES JAMES
President of the University

MEMBERS of the Class of 1918:

MI take keen pleasure in welcoming you into the great fellowship of college men and women. It is a fraternity which you may well be proud to join. It is broadly extended not only through our land, but through *all* lands. The bond holding us together is a very subtle—not easily explainable—but nevertheless a very real and compelling bond. In all the years to come, no matter where you may be, under whatever circumstances you may live, if you run across a fellow alumnus of your Alma Mater on sea or land, in valley or on mountain, in desert or jungle, though you may never have known or even seen him or been in college with him, though you may be half as old or twice as old, yet when you know that you and he were at the University of Illinois,—I will not say together, for his class may have been 1870 and yours 1918, his subject may have been Greek and yours Mathematics,—yet in spite of it all, you will both experience a strange warming of the heart as you grasp each other's hands, and the fountains of emotion will flow again—no matter how old you are—as you talk and think of old Illinois.

This feeling of college fraternity is not limited to the students of one institution. Next to our own, perhaps, we are stirred to emotion by meeting fellow students from other colleges with whom we have contended in oration or debate or on the football field or the river. But it is not even limited to this. When an Illinois man meets a Michigan man or a Harvard man or a California man, be it in the trenches on the blood-stained fields of northern France or in the hilly stretches of Macedonia or the desert wastes of Mesopotamia, think you not that his pulse will beat more quickly and his heart be strangely stirred because he has run across a fellow fraternity man? It doesn't even stop here. When you shall meet, in the

years to come, men who have studied at Oxford or Cambridge or Paris or Padua or Rome or Tokio, you will feel this same strange companionship in the freemasonry of college men and women. It is one of the things best worth while as a result of four years of college life and work.

What is the secret of this bond? It is difficult to ascertain and analyze. But I take it we shall find the chief reason in the essential oneness of all college work and effort. We were of much the same age when in college. We were all trying to find ourselves in this universe of mystery. We walked along the same high paths, and peered out into the mysterious depths in front, behind, on either side, to see what it all meant. We were trying to prepare ourselves to run a worthy race, to do our share in the work of the world, to become a real part in that infinite process of life in which we find ourselves. We were raising the same questions, finding the same answers, leaving unsettled the same mysteries. We were reading and studying together the records of the thoughts and feelings of the great ones of earth, of our own country and of other countries, of our own age and other ages. And so we became fellow citizens, intellectual and moral and spiritual, in the same great republic of letters and thought and aspiration—a citizenship which we far more often felt than talked about in our personal intercourse.

This fellowship, my young friends, you will feel more and more to be one of the most valuable results of college life and college graduation. And if some fool asks you sneeringly of what use your college education has been to you—you need not think of anything else; you need not stop to estimate how much higher or lower your salary or greater or less your wealth or reputation because of the opportunities which college and university have brought you. In this beautiful and sat-

isfying companionship of the college men and women of all countries and all times you have a full "value received" for everything which you have put into this enterprise of getting a college education—no matter how much money or how much brains or how much effort you have invested in it.

But there are other and even greater things than this.

I congratulate you that you live in this time and that you are going out into a world vastly full of wonderful opportunities, such as did not greet us of a previous generation.

In the first place you come into this life greatly welcomed, greeted with a glad hand by men and forces which in times past have been accustomed to ignore or slight the personality and qualities of the college man as such.

This is the time of year in which the wise penny-a-liner has been in the habit of indulging in cheap wit and covert and open sneers at the college graduate and his unfitness for the practical duties of real life; in which the cartoonist has loved to represent the combing down of the college graduate by practical men as he crawls disconsolately from office to office seeking a chance to earn his daily bread.

A most remarkable change has come over the spirit of modern industry and everybody from Uncle Sam to the boss rag-picker or junkman is crying out to the college—I will not say graduate—but even undergraduate—"Come over into Macedonia and help us."

I do not think I am exaggerating in the slightest degree when I say that during the last year I could have placed in remunerative positions ten times over every college student in the University of Illinois from freshman to senior, whom I could recommend as being reliable and industrious. And the same thing is true of every college president in the country. I have received letters from many great corporations of many different kinds, from many

great railway administrations, from every branch of the Navy and Army, urging me to recommend to them members of our student body.

There has been an equally imperative demand for the services of our faculty members for positions with which college men have rarely been mentioned in previous years.

Why this sudden and extraordinary demand for college men as such—irrespective oftentimes of special training or technical preparation for specific tasks?

First of all, of course, because of the economic demand for physical labor everywhere—even for the physical labor of the college men—growing out of the extraordinary world conditions now prevailing; but still more from the sudden revelation of the important things lying at the basis of a great and complex civilization which the flames of war have made visible.

War, however justified, however inevitable, is awful; carried on by anybody, anywhere, for any purpose, it is terrible; and no war in history has brought this fact closer to the consciousness of mankind than the present Great War to the successful conclusion of which we have all dedicated our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

But war, aside from the great and immediate issues involved, has also its compensations. And it brings, sometimes, certain good things to pass with such rapidity and completeness as to surpass the achievements of peace.

Scholars and patriots and far seeing prophets have been urging for generations that our governments should spend more money on the support of scientific investigation in all its different lines. This ever-increasing demand has been met by the average man, the average politician, with smiles and smirks and talk about "academic beggars and looters of the public treasury" and by small dribblets of private gifts and public appropriations.

And then the Great War broke out and

our leaders and administrators suddenly became aware of our infinite ignorance in matters of great importance and in their necessary haste have thrown away within a year sums of money as merely incidental to military preparation, which, if spent according to an orderly plan over two generations would have made us scientifically the best prepared of all the nations now fighting.

Scientific men have urged upon the American people the necessity of increasing and improving our chemical and physical laboratories; of building and endowing our biological institutes; of establishing and equipping our departments of public health; of increasing our food supply by increasing and applying our knowledge of scientific agriculture.

Their cries have largely fallen upon deaf ears—their voices have been of those crying in the wilderness—made sick by hope deferred, owing to the shortsightedness and lack of public spirit of our wealthy men or to the ignorance or sloth of our statesmen.

And then the war comes. This is a cry we can all understand. We need materials, which, if we had searched for them, we should have found at home. We need scientific apparatus which we might ourselves have produced instead of drawing it from territory now enemy; we need optical glass for example which in its best form is still only obtainable in enemy laboratories; we need guns and we are still disputing over the kind and quality; we need flying machines and we are nowhere equipped with knowledge or skill to furnish them in sufficient numbers.

Nothing but a great, universal and pressing war could have brought home to the American people what a service science, properly developed, could render the nation in times of peace.

We must first see its awful power in the creation of means of destruction before we are ready to contemplate the possibility of its great service in the interest of humanity and civilization.

The nation has called for chemists by the thousand and the ten thousand. Where were they to come from? Only the universities could furnish them. It needed physicists. Where were they to be found? Only in the Universities. It called for psychologists. Whence were they to come? Only from university laboratories,—the establishment of which Government officials had only a short time before declared was no proper charge on federal funds, granted for the purposes of higher education!

And so university men are thus in a certain sense coming into their own, because the glare of bursting shells reveals everywhere the scientific foundation of the successful waging of a great war.

I can not but believe that this lesson, taught so plainly that a wayfaring man though a fool can not mistake it, will sink deep into the hearts and minds of the American people and that when this war is over and our victorious boys come marching home again with the Kaiser's scalp dangling at the army's belt, our wealthy citizens and our legislators and statesmen will vie with each other in establishing and endowing by public and private money the greatest scientific foundations the world has ever seen; and you and the like of you will be the men and the women to make these foundations effective—for after all no amount of brick and mortar, no number of books, no amount of apparatus can accomplish anything unless we can produce in this institution and the like of it the brains and character and training necessary to push forward the bounds of our knowledge and control over nature.

We all understand with ease why the Government has called upon the Universities and technical schools for men with special training like chemists, engineers, architects, etc. for special work. But why has it called for college men, simply as college men, without reference to special training for specific work — accepting youngsters who have studied Latin, Greek, Entomology, or Archaeology and set them to work upon tasks which have no re-

lation to the lines of study followed in college. This, it seems to me, is the most significant for our future civilization of all the acts of the Government.

Here we have a recognition on the part of the Federal Government that men who have done three or four years successful work in college have acquired an alertness, adaptability, an outlook, a fitness for unfamiliar tasks, a courage in the face of unexpected difficulties which distinguish them in a marked degree as a class from the men who have not had this training and makes it distinctly worth while, therefore, to gamble upon putting them in charge of new enterprises rather than their brothers who have not had this training.

Of course, you can't make hickory out of buckeye or a silk purse out of a sow's ear—and no amount of college training will supply brains or character and both are needed to make the successful man anywhere. You will remember that Cicero in that interesting oration on the Poet Archias says that "men have always disputed whether the training of the schools or natural ability were the more important element in the highest success of men, but they are all agreed that when to great natural abilities are added the qualities which training can produce, something rare and marvelous is likely to appear."

So here, the Government, and large and small industry in its wake, acknowledges the immense advantage of school training over the haphazard training of practical business, and so called practical work on the farm, in the bank, in the shops, in such a way that it will impress the imagination of even the eighth grade boy or girl in our public schools.

After the war, in my opinion, the American people will recognize as never before the advantages of systematic school training long continued as an element in preparation for life. This will make a new world—the world in which you will have to live—which will make it easier for you to live—and, above all, will make it possible for you to do greater things than we

have done. And so I congratulate you on this outlook and these prospects.

You are going to face enormous burdens in your work—far heavier than any we have had to carry in our generation. You will answer the call I am sure.

I congratulate you again my young friends in your coming into your majority, in your beginning your active, independent life in a world which will be vastly different and in my opinion vastly better than that in which we have been living.

You come in during the greatest war in the history of the human race. It may be you come in at the real beginning of the war in order of time or about the middle of it or as, I believe, toward the close—and toward a victorious close for us. Be that as it may, you are still young and will see the benefits it will work out and you will profit by them.

Other wars have been waged in the name of freedom and humanity. They have often resulted in a freedom for one nation which enabled it to lord it over other nations or enabled its privileged classes to reign more absolutely over the lower classes of the same nation. Other wars have united many nations in pursuit of the same end, viz: the overthrow of a power seeking to establish universal dominion; and the overthrow of such a power has been followed by a kind of national freedom which was entirely consistent with the growth and maintenance of autocratic forms of government.

The history of the French Revolution furnishes a striking illustration of this form of development.

The republican armies of France went forth, more than a century ago, to the conquest of the world with the sentiments of liberty, equality and fraternity upon their standards. They were greeted with enthusiastic cooperation in some places, and with only half-hearted resistance in others. And victory perched upon their banners along the entire boundaries of the republic.

But the times were not ripe for the full realization of this magnificent dream. And

Napoleonism succeeded republicanism and the idea of universal dominion overcame the notion of equal rights among nations and men.

The uprising of the nations against Napoleon was in the name of freedom and liberty. The battle of Waterloo brought national freedom from Napoleonic dictation but did not bring political, religious or industrial liberty to the masses of the people in Germany, Russia or Austria.

On the contrary, the dynasties on the thrones of these nations succeeded at the Congress of Vienna and in the years immediately following in organizing a combination of autocratic and despotic power to crush out every possible semblance of political liberty for the masses of the people in those and other nations. And the Holy Alliance, born of most unholy parentage and guilty of the most unholy acts, was to turn back the wheels of progress and bring to naught as far as possible the designs and purposes of the Great Revolution.

And in large part, it succeeded for nearly half a century—this we should not forget at this juncture—in repressing all movements of progress toward the realization of these great ideals.

Now we can not conceal the fact that there is a certain fear on the part of many that some such result may come out of this conflict.

I do not share this fear. The world conditions today are vastly different from those of a century ago. Then the majority of nations had in form and fact governments autocratic or aristocratic; today they are democratic or rapidly becoming so. Then the world fear was of democracy. Today, it is of autocracy. Then the real superiority in arms and men was on the side of the autocratic nations—today it is on the side of democratic nations.

The representatives of the nations at Vienna were men of the stripe of Tallyrand and Metternich and the like of them. Today at such a conference they will be

Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George and Clemenceau and the like of them.

But the guaranties of a different outcome are after all vastly greater and more certain than the personality of individual men even though they be as great as these three.

Slowly and irresistibly the issues have framed themselves in this fierce conflict so that the nations one after another have lined up and pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to the maintenance of free government and fair treatment among all nations and all men. Nothing like it has ever happened before in human history.

The vast majority of nations are now marching together shoulder to shoulder committed to the defense and full realization of the principles of our Declaration of Independence: that all men are born equal and are entitled to certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, carrying high aloft on their banners the slogan of liberty, equality and fraternity to all men!

And victory sooner or later is sure to these legions with this legend.

The Germans may possibly take Paris; they may possibly take the Channel ports; they may possibly invent a gun which will lay London in ashes—nothing of this sort seems to them impossible. But it will all be in vain! The stars in their courses are fighting for us even though now they be dimmed by clouds and mist.

The greater the German victories, the surer, the more complete, the more irretrievable their ultimate defeat.

The farther into France they march, the longer for them the way home—though they may cover it in the return far more rapidly than in the onset.

The victory of our program over that of the Central Powers is as sure and certain as that there is a sun in the sky or a God in heaven.

Now what is this program whose realization will make for us, that is, for you and your children and your children's

children, a new heaven and a new earth here on this globe and during your lives?

First of all we, that is the Allies, are committed to the creation of a real international law, not a mere collection of precedents, illuminated or darkened by the comments of professors of international law in German or Russian or French or American or English Universities—but a real code of enforceable precepts based upon ethical principles.

A code in which the "might of right instead of the right of might" shall be so integrally incorporated that no doubt shall exist as to the principle on which it is based. We are all now committed to the support of putting the idea of law—as meaning something more than a disputed custom into international relations; to vindicate for righteous law the claim to be the only real foundation stone of all national and international action; to substitute the reign of law dominated by ethical considerations for the reign of might and force based on national selfishness—to put in the place of the idea of the supreme self-determining, uncontrolled, unmoral, unethical, or if you please, supermoral and superethical nation, the notion of a moral being, subject to the reign of moral law, regardful of the rights of other nations and of individual human beings, sensitive to the ever-purifying and ever-rising standards of justice and mercy and fairness in the conduct of international affairs.

As a nation, subject like other weak human organizations to occasional lapses, we Americans have stood for these things—we have held high these standards in our courts, in our administrative departments, in our legislatures, and now, thank God, the whole strength of the Republic, the entire fortunes of its citizens, its sacred honor and mighty traditions are lining up on the bloodstained fields of France in furtherance of these ideas.

Nay more! The President of the United States has voiced these sentiments in lofty and inspiring language. He has read the deepest thought of the American

people and formulated it in a way to lead each of them to say "that is exactly what I think," and with that, the nation has become unified and strengthened and exalted.

With this formulation of our views and sentiments we entered this great conflict and immediately our Allies accepted our statement of this issue and thus it has become the rallying cry of the oppressed nations throughout the world and all these great powers, England, France, Italy, Japan, China, and the numerous smaller nations, have solemnly undertaken to observe these principles.

It will be a new world when they shall have been formally adopted and put into practice as they will be at the end of the Great War.

In the second place, this war in its outcome will, in my opinion, give an immense impetus to the movement for democratic government among the sons of men. It will raise it and exalt it as the only possible form of the highest type of human political organization. It will hold it high advanced as the ideal toward which we should strive with all our might and strength and soul. All monarchical or aristocratic remnants of previous stages of evolution are destined, in my opinion, to disappear—nay must disappear, and this war will go a long way to clean them up. If monarchy must be restored to save Russian society or China from dissolution, it will frankly be recognized as only a temporary measure to be gotten rid of as soon as Russia and China have reached such a development as will enable them to dispense with these crutches.

Now I believe that this immense impetus to free government is going to produce wonderful results of many different kinds here, in our own society which will make it infinitely easier for the man dependent on his own exertion to get on in the world than it now is.

We have been conceiving the liberty spoken of in the Declaration of Independence in terms of political liberty, in terms

of freedom from legal interference. We are coming to see that that is only a small part of liberty. Liberty is something positive, and not negative. Economic liberty, intellectual liberty, spiritual liberty are as real necessities of a life spent in pursuit of happiness as political liberty itself.

A society in which every man is free to race ahead as rapidly as he can without reference to his neighbors, except to get ahead of them, is necessarily a society in which the vigorous, able, keen, alert, strong may ultimately reduce their brethren less favorably endowed with brains, nerves, and muscles to the position of a thoroughly exploited class—and such a society can not be called a democratic society in any true sense even though political liberty be fully established and protected.

Now, this war, in my opinion, is going to change the face of human society in many important respects, through the agencies it will create or energize to protect and foster the rights of the great mass of the people. And as you will be the people or a part of them you will profit by all such development.

As a concrete illustration of what this may mean, take the attitude of the English Labor Party toward this war. "We are willing," their leaders declared, "to mobilize labor to the limit in prosecution of this just undertaking. But you should not ask us to sacrifice more, relatively speaking, than other classes. And you must therefore guarantee to us that we shall be left at the end of the war in the same position of relative advantage in fixing wages, hours, and the terms of employment as we occupy now."

No such demand was ever made before in any war. The Government made this promise. The fact that it can never really carry out this promise fully and explicitly is not of nearly as much significance as the fact that it really made the promise in good faith; nor as the fact that giving such a promise indicates a new attitude on the part of the British Government toward the demands of organized and un-

organized labor. The action of our own Federal Government in all such matters from the passage of the Adamson Law to the present is equally striking and significant.

It will be a new world in which you will live and move and have your being. Your burdens will be heavy, your tasks enormous, but your opportunities wonderful.

And it is on these *opportunities* I would congratulate you. You are privileged to live and work in one of the greatest eras of human history and to become a part of this country's life and of this era's movement.

I know not how other men think about it, but as for myself I thank God I was born in the United States of America. None yield more honor than I to those small nations like Athens and Switzerland and Holland and Belgium which have written their names high in the list of those which have deserved well of mankind. But I rejoice in our boundless prairies, in our mighty rivers, our lofty mountains, our endless stretch of sea coast. I draw a fuller breath in contemplation of this mighty realm of which I am a part. I am exalted in spirit as I move over these never-ending railway lines and see these infinite harvests—and dream of what this people will be and do when it finally awakes to its opportunities and to its obligations to mankind.

My heart thrills with pride as I reflect that I am a citizen of the country which produced Washington and Lincoln and which, having produced them, knew how to honor and magnify their names. I glory in the recollection that it was my country which produced a Grant and a Sherman, a Lee and a Stonewall Jackson. I rejoice in that long list of victories, military, moral, and spiritual, by which my ancestors helped to settle and conquer and civilize the wilderness.

No victories at golf or billiards or lawn tennis, or even football or baseball—no pleasure in fine horses or automobiles or

of any or all the ordinary pleasures of life—ever satisfied me as these impalpable, imponderable delights of American citizenship have done.

They are going to be enormously increased for you and yours as a result of this Great War and its consequences. The names of many heroes will come forth from the mighty womb of time to multiply and strengthen our manifold causes for joy and pride in our country and its work. All this will be uplifting and helpful to you—a source of infinite strength and power in the mighty tasks you have to help solve.

I congratulate you once again and finally upon the chance you have to get into and become an integral part of this Great War and thus to share personally and immediately in its glorious results; be entitled to feel that you have been a living, working, contributing cell in this life process of the ages. It will exalt you, lift you out of yourselves and into higher regions of life and light.

No one will suspect me of underestimating the value of science and scientific investigation to our society; nor of setting a low value on the University of Illinois and its services to the State and country. But all this, to my mind, is of secondary importance—nay of far lower importance than that compared with the winning of this war. If we have been breeding and feeding and training a generation of men and women who will permit the Central Powers of Europe to dictate such a peace as they have hoped to win—vain, vain has been our work—and empty the achievement of building an American nation—for such a nation would be unworthy of Washington and Lincoln, would be unworthy of the men who died that this country might be created, or the men of that far greater army, who died that it might be saved. Ah! young men and women, if you fail to put forth your best efforts to help win this war, you will regret it as long as you live. You will be ashamed to tell your children and your

grandchildren that you stood aside and let this great movement of progress sweep on, and looked upon this drive for human freedom with apathy, indifference, or actual hostility.

Perhaps you do not realize fully what it all means.

Just remember two or three things and let them sink into your souls. I shall not undertake to describe the remote causes of the war; I can not even undertake to give a brief history of its rise and progress. Like other great wars the history can not be written for a century to come. But a few things are now clear and can be known of all men:

1. Germany began this war, and that in two senses. It refused to prevent it as it might have done; and it actually first invaded a foreign country.

2. It invaded a small, defenseless, peaceable country whose neutrality it had guaranteed to protect.

When this country resisted, it attempted to break its resistance by a policy of terrorism. War is horrible enough at best, but directed not at armed forces but at helpless civilians in order to frighten them into inaction or to serve as an example to other peoples—it is unspeakable.

Germany not only conquered Belgium but it has laid heavy tribute upon it for attempting to defend itself, compelling it, moreover, by forced contributions of labor and money and material to impoverish itself in order to help Germany defeat France and England.

3. Germany has done the same thing in all countries she has overrun.

4. She proposes to make the peoples she conquers pay the cost of their being conquered. Stop to think what that means.

5. She proposes to conquer France and England and then she will take the United States. Are you willing that this should be done? If not, then into the conflict with body and soul!

6. Germany has proposed to take the coal and iron mines of Belgium and north-

ern France and annex them to the German Empire. Not content with this, she has proposed to drive out the entire Belgian and French population from these territories and let what is left of Belgium and France pay these poor devils for the land and houses Germany has taken. Has there ever been a more cruel or cold-blooded proposition than this in the history of Christian nations?

7. The doctrine has been enunciated by her philosophers that Germany has a moral right to take any territory which in Germany's opinion is necessary for her welfare or convenience. Can you make any answer to such monstrous propositions except "Back to your own boundaries."

If we had failed to help France and England in their extremity against this menace to all they hold dear, it would be a righteous judgment of God upon us, that Germany should finally do to us what she is trying to do to France and England.

I know nothing personally about the atrocities attributed to the Germans in Belgium and France and Roumania—eye witnesses have however reported dreadful things—but I know something of atrocities which occur in this country at times in spite of our laws and our police, and I can imagine what may happen in other countries when because of war, laws and police are set aside; and the soldiers are ordered to make an example of a man, a woman, a child, a town, a province or a whole nation. God forgive us if we permit any nation with this military and moral code to overrun the civilized world—or rather may he not forgive us, but punish us as we deserve!

One other thing, young friends, not only is the winning of this war necessary to protect civilization in Europe, and to protect our own homes, our altars, and our fires from devastation and destruction; but the definite winning of this war at this time will put forward civilization a great way. This is a critical time in hu-

man history. If the Central Powers win, the ball of human civilization will roll down the hill of time, and we must again take up the Sisyphean task of pushing it up again toward the top.

If we win, we shall secure the blessings of civilization thus far attained and add enormously to the certainty of steady and rapid upward progress.

Surely, it is worth all you have in time and strength and nerve to help win this great war. If you are of the proper age and strength and freedom, seek the trench unless the Government wishes you elsewhere, and calls you for other work. If you can't do this, do something else, but everywhere and all the time, work at this one supreme problem of winning the war.

I never wished to be older for but the one reason that I might have carried a musket in our Great Civil War; and I have never wished to be younger for but one reason, that I might now be serving, a machine gun in the blood-stained fields of France. My elder son has gone into the navy; my younger son is about to enter the army service; my son-in-law is already in, and with him, the entire physical strength of my family is in the service, and I am doing what I can to recruit it.

Oh, my young brothers, I envy you your chance to get personally into this great world conflict on the side of right and justice and mercy. If I had been a little older, I might have fought at Vicksburg or Gettysburg; or a little younger at Vimy Ridge or the Marne. And if I had fallen in the Civil War, I should have joined that great and glorious throng who have made it such a privilege for us to be American citizens; and if I had fallen at the Marne or Vimy Ridge, I should have entered that noble army who died that their brothers across the sea might live.

I wish you all the greatest good luck! the highest earthly good fortune and prosperity, consistent with the highest moral and spiritual development of yourselves. I can wish you no greater good

than that somewhere in this great struggle you find a place to serve this university, this Commonwealth, this nation, the whole world by your lofty patriotism and devotion to all that is true and beautiful and good.

Some of you will go to Flanders. I pray God you may return with the laurel wreath for faithful and distinguished service long to bless your family and your country. Some of you will doubtless fall there, and lie among the poppies of the Flanders fields. You will have taken up the torch dropped by your predecessors and helped carry it on to victory. Our love, our admiration, our honor, our gratitude and that of all posterity will follow you as you make this great sacrifice!

John McRae has called to you in these beautiful lines from those who lie in Flanders fields where he now lies himself:

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky,

The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the dead; short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe!
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high!
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Not like those Roman Gladiators who
they entered the arena turned and came
to the Emperor:

Morituri te salutamus!

We who are about to die salute thee
but with the glad cry,

"We who are about to live salute thee!
you rush forward into this conflict, and
if to lie in Flanders fields among the poppies—then still to have life and to have it more abundantly.