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EDITORIAL.

THE RECOVERY OF PATRIOTISM.

The first Sunday in the New Year was set apart to be observed by all the churches as a day of special intercession "on behalf of the nation and Empire in this time of war."

In the Cathedrals and Churches of the Anglican and Roman Communion, and in the Free Churches, on Sunday, and in the Synagogues of the Jewish community throughout the country on Saturday last—the Jewish Sabbath—the day was universally observed.

At St. Paul's Cathedral, preaching at the morning service the Bishop of London taking for his text "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away," said that there were two divisions possible of the spirit in which we should enter upon the New Year. In the first the year opened with nothing but cloud and thick darkness, not only was the night of war still upon us but there was not even a streak of dawn. There had been no such crime for 1,000 years as the deliberate extermination of the Armenian race, and the misery of the Serbian refugees was beyond description.

We ourselves had made mistakes in policy and strategy which had lost us the confidence of the world. We would not believe the war was coming, and when it did come, so little were we prepared that we were turning out one shell to one hundred turned out by the enemy.

Few things were less helpful to-day than unthinking optimism. Not a single fact recounted by the pessimist need be denied.

But, worshipping under the Dome of St. Paul's, we had no right to take short views. The only question worth thinking about on the first Sunday in the New Year was what did God think of the war? God had no favourites. He was not the special God of the British Empire any more than of Germany. He was the God of the earth. The

positive comfort at this distressful time, was that God had never allowed devilry, lust and tyranny finally to triumph in the world. The one condition was that the nations which were to be the instruments of his judgment were worthy to be weapons in his hands. Were we, as a nation such a weapon? What about the National Drink Bill? What about the moral state of the streets in darkened London—worse now than it had been for twenty years? But it required no foolish ignoring of plain facts to enter the New Year in a hopeful spirit? It required only faith in God. In such faith let the nation arise from its knees of penitence and prayer with head erect to face its task.

Archdeacon Wilberforce also spoke soberly at Westminster Abbey when he said that the voluntary system, of which we were justifiably proud, would have broken down if it were found that the murder of Nurse Cavell, and other acts of German brutality, did not shame all eligible men and cause them to join the forces.

Bishop Diggle preaching in Carlisle Cathedral on "Patriotism true and false" pointed out that even the curse of war might bring blessings in its train. The men who eventually returned home from the trenches, and the women who returned from the hospitals, would bring with them new thoughts and larger aspirations.

The war was a grand opportunity for the cultivation of self-discipline, and the recovery of the patriotism, in the larger and more generous development of national consciousness.

The Master of the Temple emphasised the fact that we had always been contemptuous of imagination and education. We admired the foresight and skill which brought fame and fortune to individuals, and with singular inconsequence almost worshipped our national capacity for muddling through.

Let us hope we have now learnt our lesson.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)