

lights that are granted to us, not to fail these people or to be wholly unworthy of their faithful and generous regard.

To Conquer or to Die.

The British nation is stirred and moved as it never has been at any time in its long, eventful and famous history, and it is no hackneyed figure of speech to say that they mean to conquer or to die. What a triumph the life of these battered cities is over the worst that fire and bomb can do! What a vindication of the civilised and decent way of living we have been trying to work for and work towards in our island! What a proof of the virtues of free institutions, what a test of the quality of our local authorities, and of customs and societies so sturdily built!

This ordeal by fire has in a certain sense even exhilarated the manhood and the womanhood of Britain. The sublime but also terrible experiences and emotions of the battlefield, which for centuries have been reserved for the soldiers and sailors, are now shared for good or ill by the entire population. All are proud to be under the fire of the enemy.

Old men, little children, the crippled, the veterans of former wars, aged women, the ordinary hard-pressed citizen, or subject of the King, as he likes to call himself, the sturdy workman with his hammer in the shipyard or who loads the ships, and the skilful craftsman, the members of every kind of A.R.P. service, are proud to feel that they stand in the line together with our fighting men when one of the greatest causes is being fought out, as fought out it will be, to the end. This, indeed, is a grand, heroic period of our history, and the light of glory shines upon all.

You may imagine how deeply I feel my own responsibility towards all these people, my responsibility to bear my part in bringing them safely out of this long, stern, scowling valley through which we are marching, and not to demand of them that their sacrifices and exertions shall be in vain.

I have thought in this dark period, when so much fighting and so many critical and complicated manoeuvres are going on, that it is above all things imperative that our policy and conduct should be upon the highest level and that honour should be our guide.

Freedom Shall Not be Trampled Down.

No prudent and far-seeing man can doubt that the eventual and total defeat of Hitler and Mussolini is certain in view of the respective declared resolves of the British and American democracies. There are less than 70,000,000 malignant Huns, some of whom are curable and some killable, and most of whom are already engaged in holding down Austrians, Czechs, Poles, and many other ancient races they now bully and pillage.

The people of the British Empire and the United States number nearly 200,000,000 in their homelands and in the British Dominions alone. They possess the unchallengeable command of the ocean, and will soon obtain decisive superiority in the air. They have more wealth, more technical resources, and they make more steel than the whole of the rest of the world put together. They are determined that the cause of freedom shall not

be trampled down nor the tide of world progress be turned back by the criminal dictators.

While, therefore, we naturally view with sorrow and anxiety much that is happening in Europe and in Africa and may happen in Asia, we must not lose our sense of proportion, and thus become discouraged and alarmed.

When we face with a steady eye the difficulties which lie before us, we may derive new confidence by remembering those we have already overcome. Nothing that is happening now is comparable in gravity with the dangers through which we passed last year. Nothing which can happen in the East is comparable with what is happening in the West.

Last time I spoke to you I quoted the lines of Longfellow, which President Roosevelt had written out to me in his own hand. I have some other lines which are less well known, and which seem apt and precious to our thoughts to-night, and I believe they will be so judged wherever the English language is spoken and the flag of freedom flies:—

“For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in the main.

“And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
But westward, look, the land is bright!”

* * Mr. Churchill's closing quotation is from the poem “Say not the struggle naught availeth,” by Arthur Hugh Clough.

HONOURS FOR NURSES.

His Majesty The King has given orders for the following awards for brave conduct in Civil Defence.

O.B.E.

Miss Annie Caroline Robins, S.R.N., Matron of the General Hospital at Bristol.

When Bristol General Hospital was severely damaged by high explosive and incendiary bombs Miss Robins showed the utmost devotion to duty and set an outstanding example of fortitude and courage to her staff.

GEORGE MEDAL.

Mary Fleming, Staff Nurse; and Aileen Turner, Senior Assistant Nurse; both of Grove Park Hospital, London.

When a high explosive bomb struck Grove Park Hospital, Nurse Fleming and Nurse Turner climbed through a first floor window, crawled across the floor of a ward which was in a highly dangerous condition and rescued several patients who had been trapped.

The quickness, coolness and courage of these two nurses resulted in all the patients being rescued a few minutes after the floor had collapsed.

Further evidence of bravery of members of the Nursing Profession, during air raids, was emphasised by the Minister of Health at the Florence Nightingale Memorial Service held at St. Martin-in-the-Fields on May 15th.

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