EDITORIAL

THE war that was to end war has been followed, says the cynic, by a peace that has ended peace. We talk loosely of " declaring peace " ; but it seems that the ordered tranquillity and harmony of human wills we call peace, is not attainable by committees or conferences, however formidable. The discords of men cannot be adjusted by the mere signing of documents. There is a sense in which the pen is *not* mightier than the sword. Though all crave for peace, the world is far from it : men have said, " Peace," but there is no peace.

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It is interesting to note the general attitude of people with regard to another war and to remember the popular attitude in 1914. Invaded Poland now does not call forth the same sentiments as did outraged Belgium then. The public seems content to remain in woeful ignorance of the facts of the situation. Few care to pause and consider the rights and wrongs of the case. There is no indignant clamour against the violated rights of a small nation. There is hardly any appeal to principles at all. Yet all are agreed on one point, that as far as this country is concerned, there shall be no war : 1914 saw a certain enthusiasm, a certain glow of chivalry, that rushed into the fray heedless of consequences. There is no rushing now : if there is any fever at all, it is an anti-war fever. There is only the dogged, unanimous determination to keep out of war and to " down tools " and apply direct action at the first serious mention of the word.

This resolve is the bitter fruit of four and a half years' war experience and of the sad months that have followed.

It has been said that the war has been easily forgotten. A history professor recently spoke of it flippantly as " ancient history," remarking that, as for himself, he knew so little about it because it was not " his period." For those who never experienced its grim and sordid realities, it may perhaps be a dead memory—a thing read of in a book, but not lived. But for those whose boys and brothers went, not to return, it will not be a matter of history, ancient or modern, but a present experience. To the men who suffered, were maimed, saw their comrades die and endured the unspeakable horror of it all, it will always be unforgettable—something they would gladly forget if they could. Their very reluctance to speak of it testifies not to the dimness of a fading impression, but to the intensity of inexpressible things burnt into the soul. When they sometimes speak of it amusingly, their frivolity is either an unconscious camouflage or an attempt to relieve the tenseness of a supreme tragedy with a strain of comedy.

Would that all might know the realities of modern war with its foulness, its savagery, its degrading brutality—all this accompanied with a holocaust of splendid youth whose consummate heroism alone ennobled it! That knowledge would do much to prevent the possibility of a repetition of the tragic years we have lived to see.

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If the war is stamped indelibly on individual souls,

t will necessarily make an ineffaceable mark on those records of human activity we call history. The future historian will always regard it as a clear-cut division, separating one era from another. It will be an even more conspicuous landmark than the Fall of Constantinople or the French Revolution. For it has brought about not only a rearrangement of the map, but a reshuffling of ideas—not exactly the birth of new ideas, but the attempt to give other ideas a trial. The ferment and unrest are occasioned by the clash of the old with the new. It is the anguish of a new birth. Only a genius could stand forth as the champion of both orders, putting off the old with reason and dignity and adopting the new.

We still look for the arrival of this genius who must be both prophet and saint.

THE EDITOR