

**THE HEALING OF NATIONS
AND THE HIDDEN
SOURCES OF THEIR STRIFE**

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The Healing of Nations and the Hidden Sources of Their Strife by Edward Carpenter

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EDWARD CARPENTER

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NATIONS AND THE
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*"The Tree of Life . . . whose leaves
are for the Healing of the Nations"*

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

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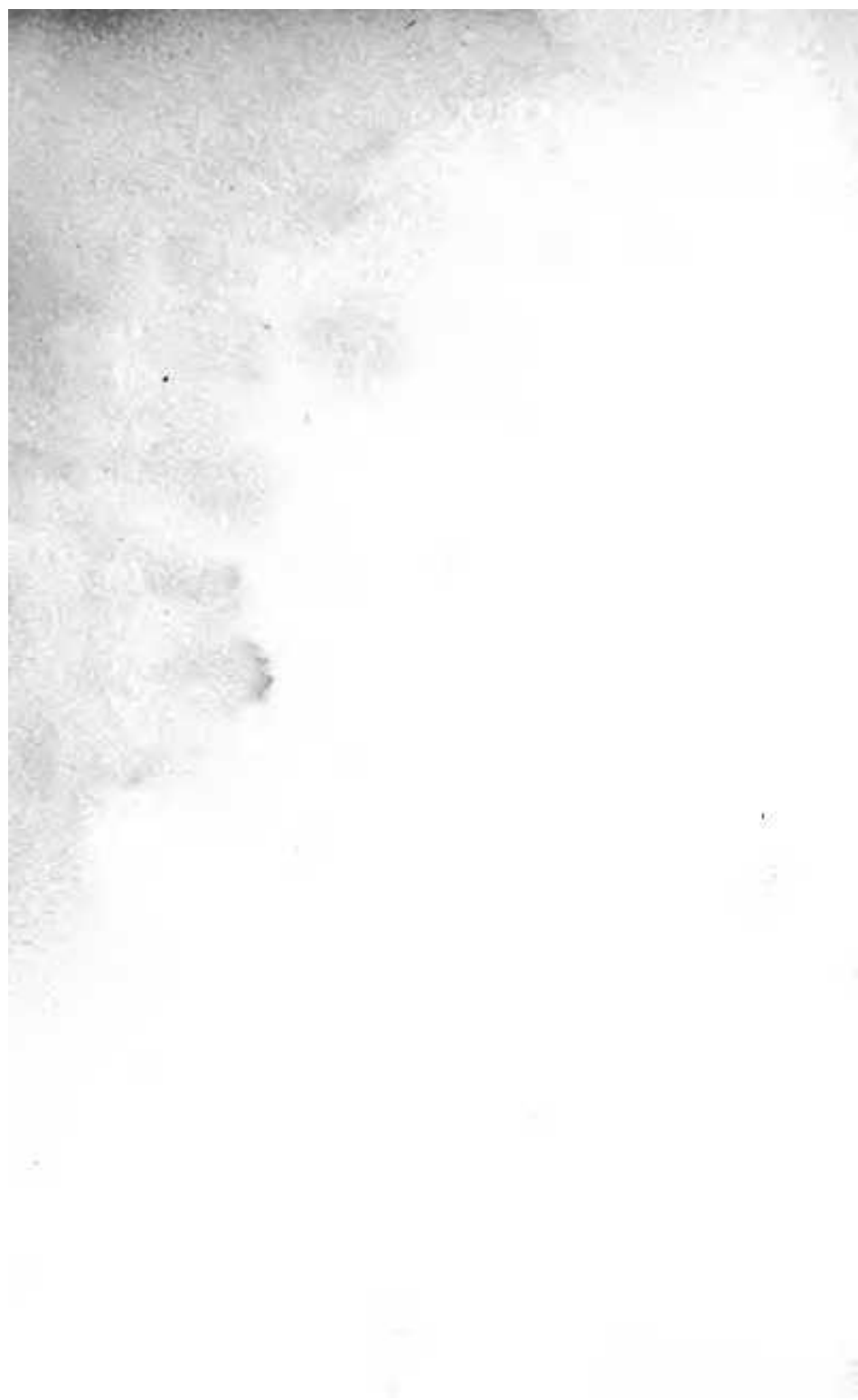
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I

INTRODUCTORY

THE following Studies and Notes, made during the earlier period of the present war and now collected together for publication, do not—as will be evident to the reader—pretend to any sort of completeness in their embrace of the subject, or finality in its presentation. Rather they are scattered thoughts suggested by the large and tangled drama which we are witnessing; and I am sufficiently conscious that their expression involves contradictions as well as repetitions.

The truth is that affairs of this kind—like all the *great* issues of human life, Love, Politics, Religion, and so forth, do not, at their best, admit of final dispatch in definite views and phrases. They are too vast and complex for that. It is, indeed, quite probable

that such things cannot be adequately represented or put before the human mind *without* logical inconsistencies and contradictions. But (perhaps for that very reason) they are the subjects of the most violent and dogmatic differences of opinion. Nothing people quarrel about more bitterly than Politics—unless it be Religion: both being subjects of which all that one can really say for certain is—that nobody understands them.

When, as in the present war, a dozen or more nations enter into conflict and hurl at each other accusations of the angriest sort (often quite genuinely made and yet absolutely irreconcilable one with another), and when on the top of that scores and hundreds of writers profess to explain the resulting situation in a few brief phrases (but unfortunately their explanations are all different), and calmly affix the blame on "Russia" or "Germany" or "France" or "England"—just as if these names represented certain responsible individuals, supposed for the purposes of the argument to be of very wily and far-scheming disposition—whereas it is perfectly well known that they really represent most complex whirlpools of political