

**NOVISSIMA VERBA:
LAST WORDS, 1920**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649205462

Novissima verba: last words, 1920 by Frederic Harrison

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FREDERIC HARRISON

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BY

FREDERIC HARRISON

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NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

PR
4759
H4
N6

First published in 1921

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TO
THE EARL OF ROSEBERY
K.G. &c. &c.
1889—1921

PREFATORY

These Notes on events and books of the day were published in the "Fortnightly Review" month by month during the year 1920. It was not found necessary to make any addition, excision, or qualification to comments which, by the courtesy of the "Review," are now issued as they appeared at the time. After very careful consideration, I offer these essays as my deliberate judgment on urgent problems of State, still far from solution or settlement.

F. H.

Bath, October, 1921.

JANUARY

- 1920 -

I

I TAKE up again my pen to record the occasional Thoughts which strike a very old observer of current events in the world of change and storm in which we live. When I noted them in the last year of the great war (*Obiter Scripta*, Chapman and Hall, 1919) the dominant fact was that "a war of Classes was about to supersede the war of Nations." The Russian Revolution had sent a thrill of expectation through the democracy of the human race. There was coming on, I said, "a new Social Order as deep and as wide as any in the history of civilisation." Two years have passed. And all these things seem to have increased tenfold. Russian revolution has been followed by that of Germany and of Austria. Kingdoms, Constitutions, Churches, peoples are in chaos. Above all, the relations of the great and the small nations, of Capital and of Labour, of trade and taxation, of the State and the citizen, seem about to convulse civilisation.

* * * * *

I never joined the early enthusiasm for a League of Nations. It seemed to me to be premature—impos-