

NATIONALIZING AMERICA

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Nationalizing America by Edward A. Steiner

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By

EDWARD A. STEINER

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
TO TWO NOBLE AMERICAN WOMEN
Antoinette and Isaphine[†] Granger
THOUGH DEATH HAS SEPARATED THEM
THEY ARE ALWAYS TOGETHER
IN THE HEARTS OF
THEIR FRIENDS

PREFACE

THE battle-axe of the Great War has gashed the tree of life of all the nations, and although time may heal the wound, the scar will never be obliterated; for the hurt has penetrated to the very pith of our own national life.

We have been shaken out of our smug complacency, and our superficialities, begotten in times of peaceful ease. Without having had a direct share in the nations' quarrel, or paid the cost of it, we have passed through an epoch almost as significant as if we had used the munitions we have made, and our sons and brothers had been the slayers or the slain.

While these awful years belong to history and can never be forgotten, they are not as yet history. Even if their chapters were clear enough for the reading, we cannot be certain what we should learn, or if learning, we would heed.

The straight upward line which marked

humanity's progress has sagged and reached so low a level that we have lost faith in humanity's ability to learn from the past. Whether or not we are free moral agents, and rational, has also been doubted.

We have thought much, but we have felt more; we have been swayed hither and thither by the fortunes of war, by sympathies and antipathies; but to arrive at any definite, abiding conclusions has been all but impossible.

The emotional strain upon those who, like myself, were born in one of the countries involved in the war is indescribable, and our confused questioning or questionable attitude is not easily understood. In spite of my daily anxiety for close kindred in the trenches, and of my deep sympathy going out to those who have offered up their sons to the Fatherland, my life is so centered here in the United States that my hopes and fears are only for her. I have spoken about it often, but I had neither the poise nor the courage to write.

This summer, at the request of the management of the Chautauqua Institution, I de-