

TIMELY TOPICS

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Timely topics by Theodore Whitefield Hunt

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PREFACE

In these brief papers it is proposed to present a series of vital discussions on vital topics—topics in part growing out of the World War, but mainly those of a fundamental and permanent interest, in the rapidly developing life of the modern world. To a limited extent educational, they are mainly topics of civic interest—national and international—the object being to assume a desirable and tenable position between radical extremes, and in a sane and sensible manner to investigate and interpret those pressing and practical problems which confront the country and the civilized world at large.

T. W. HUNT.

Princeton, June 1, 1921.

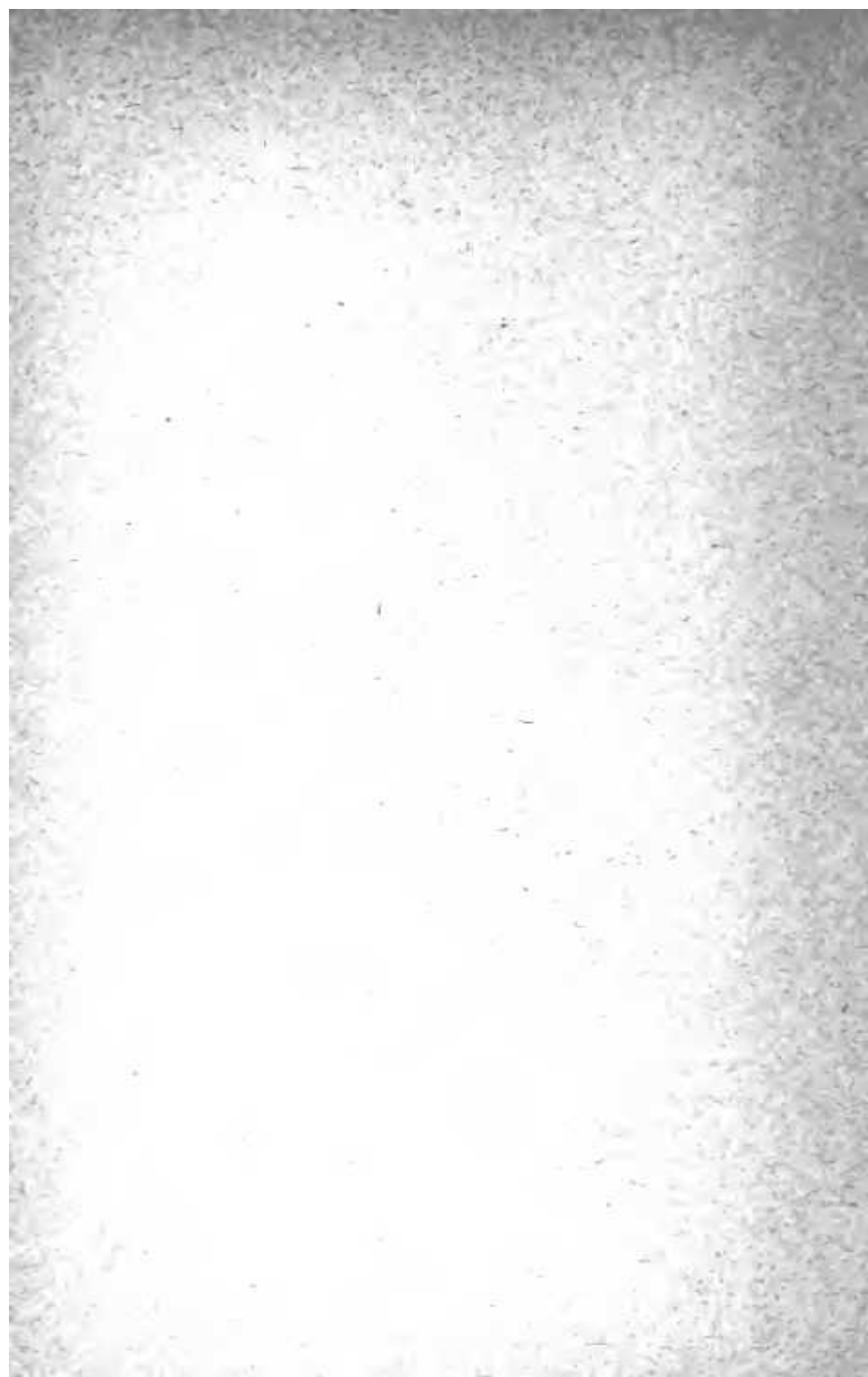


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I

DEMOCRACY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

Thirty years ago, Professor Fiske published a volume under the title—"The Critical Period in American History." If, at that date, the conditions were critical what shall be said of the America of to-day, at the close of the World War! It is the world as a whole that has arrived at the most critical era in its history. So momentous have been the evolutions and revolutions of the last decade that they are nothing less than dramatic and that on the side of tragedy. History has become histrionic.

To examine these pending and confusing issues in a judicial and dispassionate temper demands the wisdom of the wisest. The world is at its crisis and the crisis must be met. Two or three fundamental considerations may be cited:

I

THE DEMOCRATIC INSTINCT

The word, democratic, is here used in its etymological and generally accepted sense, of the rule of the people. Among the "inalienable rights" with which men as men are endowed, liberty is an indispensable one and never can be