

**OUR COMMON
CONSCIENCE: ADDRESSES
DELIVERED IN AMERICA
DURING THE GREAT WAR**

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Our Common Conscience: Addresses Delivered in America During the Great War by Sir
George Adam Smith

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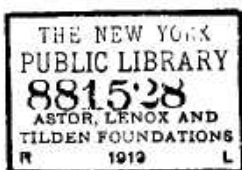
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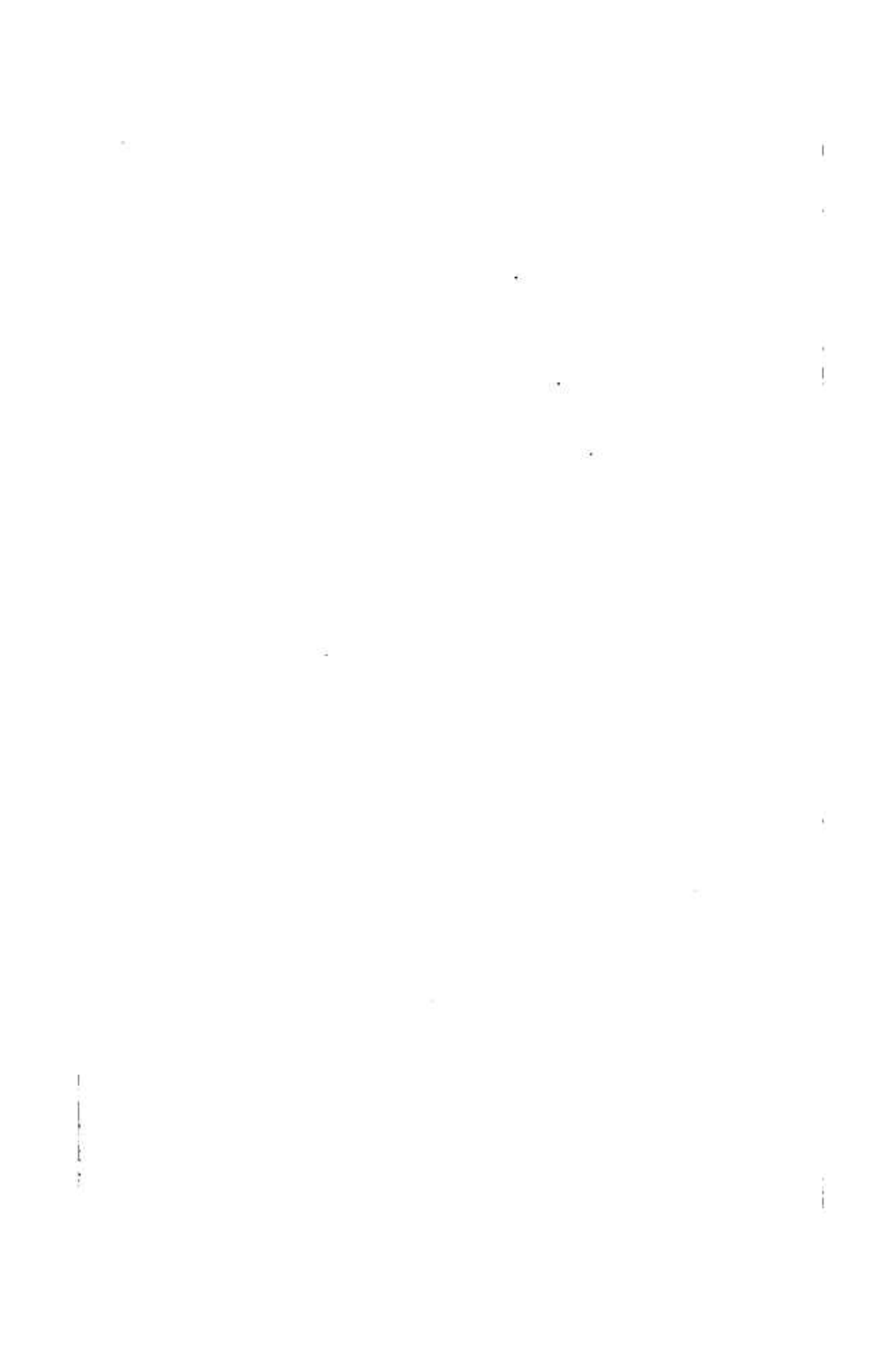
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NEW YORK
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1919

TO
OUR DEAR SONS
WHO FELL FIGHTING FOR THE CAUSE
GEORGE BUCHANAN SMITH
SECOND LIEUTENANT GORDON HIGHLANDERS
IN THE BATTLE OF LOOS
25 SEPTEMBER 1915
AND
ROBERT DUNLOP SMITH
CAPTAIN 13RD PUNJABIS INDIAN ARMY
AT BEAUMONT'S POST NGAURA RIVER EAST AFRICA
12 JUNE 1917

—
These they were, and they have kept Thy word

Returned 11 March 1917



INTRODUCTION

IN the first of the following addresses I have explained the origins of the mission on which they were delivered. That mission was begun in New York on the 2nd of April, 1918, and with two brief intervals was continued daily till the middle of July, after which I had a few further engagements before my return from America in the end of August. The programme of the necessary tours was drawn up by the executive of the National Committee (of the United States) on the Churches and Moral Aims of the War—of which Mr. Holt is chairman, and ex-President Taft, the Hon. Alton B. Parker, and other representative Americans are members, and by their secretary, Mr. Henry A. Atkinson, to whom, with his assistant, Mr. L. Gordon, and Dr. Frederick Lynch of the "League to Enforce Peace" by winning the war, I have many reasons to be very grateful. Their admirable plans were carried out in co-operation with local committees, chambers of

commerce, mercantile clubs, universities, and federations of ministers of religion, in the thirty-nine or so large cities and other places visited. Sometimes I spoke alone, but usually along with another speaker, an American. We addressed in all 127 meetings, for the most part of two kinds—either “Conferences” with business men or ministers or with both, varying in size from 80 or 100 to 600 or 700, at which after the speeches questions were put and answered; or, in the evening, “Mass Meetings,” from 1000 up to 3500 and 4000, to hear addresses interspersed with patriotic music. To reach all these, scattered over the States as they were from New York to San Francisco and San Diego and from Detroit to New Orleans, I had to cover over 22,000 miles by rail. The excellence of the arrangements made is proved by the fact that no engagement was missed and only one had to be postponed.

Before delivery I had written out only three of the ten addresses given in this volume. The other seven, starting from a few notes, grew as we went along. They have been reproduced from these notes and from shorthand reports of some of them, with the help of my daughter who accompanied me as my secretary. Some further re-

marks seem necessary. In speaking in America I used in part the materials of addresses given in my own country since the war broke out. Again, the subjects of the addresses being closely related, they contain not a few repetitions of the same thoughts expressed sometimes in the same terms. In this volume I have left these repetitions standing just as they were spoken. Again, it must be kept in mind that my mission began with the close of America's first year at war, at a time when in result of the last German offensive in France the fortunes of the Allies—in spite of British successes in Asia and Africa—appeared at as low an ebb as they had reached at any point, and when—though the American Navy and Army Medical Corps had been at work with the British for several months—only the first considerable detachments of American troops had arrived in Europe. On those dark days there followed nearly three months during which our anxiety was but gradually relieved, first by the fortunate union of the Allied Armies under a single supreme command, then by the check to the German advance in Picardy and Flanders, and—most potentially—by the increased speed of the despatch of American soldiers to France in far greater numbers than either our