

**ENGLAND'S EFFORT:
LETTERS TO AN
AMERICAN FRIEND**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649573820

England's Effort: Letters to an American Friend by Mrs. Humphry Ward & Joseph H. Choate

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Cover @ 2017

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MRS. HUMPHRY WARD & JOSEPH H. CHOATE

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Letters to an American Friend

1876-3-176 p- 2nd ed
1916-3-183 p

Thos Choate
10/4/32
L.W.

England's Effort

Letters to an American Friend

By
Mrs. Humphry Ward

With a Preface by
Joseph H. Choate

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Fifth Edition

L. C.

New York
Charles Scribner's Sons

1916
CS

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

Preface

HAS ENGLAND DONE ALL SHE COULD?

THAT is the question which Mrs. Ward, replying to some doubts and queries of an American friend, has undertaken to answer in this series of letters, and every one who reads them will admit that her answer is as complete and triumphant as it is thrilling. Nobody but a woman, an Englishwoman of warm heart, strong brain, and vivid power of observation, could possibly have written these letters which reflect the very soul of England since this wicked and cruel war began. She has unfolded and interpreted to us, as no one else, I think, has even attempted to do, the development and absolute transformation of English men and women, which has enabled them, living and dying, to secure for their proud nation under God that "new birth of freedom" which Lincoln at Gettysburg prophesied for his own countrymen. Really the cause is the same, to secure the selfsame thing, "that government of the people, by the people, and for the people may not perish from

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the earth";—and if any American wishes to know how this has been accomplished, he must read these letters, which were written expressly for our enlightenment.

Mrs. Ward had marvellous qualifications for this patriotic task. The granddaughter of Doctor Arnold and the niece of Matthew Arnold, from childhood up she has been as deeply interested in politics and in public affairs as she has been in literature, by which she has attained such world-wide fame, and next to English politics, in American politics and American opinion. She has been a staunch believer in the greatness of America's future, and has maintained close friendship with leaders of public thought on both sides of the water. Her only son is a member of Parliament, and is fighting in the war, just as all the able-bodied men she knows are doing.

She has received from the English government special opportunities of seeing what England has been doing in the war, and has been allowed to go with her daughter where few English men and no other women have been allowed to go, to see the very heart of England's preparedness. She has visited, since the war began, the British fleet, the very key of the whole situation, without whose unmatched power and ever-increasing strength the Allies at the outset must have succumbed. She

has watched, always under the protection and guidance of that wonderful new Minister of Munitions, Lloyd George, the vast activity of that ministry throughout the country, and finally in a motor tour of five hundred miles, through the zone of the English armies in France, she has seen with her own eyes, that marvellous organization of everything that goes to make and support a great army, which England has built up in the course of eighteen months behind her fighting-line. She has witnessed within three-quarters of a mile of the fighting line, with a gas helmet at hand, ready to put on, a German counter attack after a successful English advance, something which no other woman, except herself and her daughter, who accompanied her, has ever had the opportunity to see.

Mrs. Ward admits that at the beginning England was unprepared, which itself demonstrated that as a Nation she never wished for war with Germany, and never expected it. Her countrymen had no faith in Lord Roberts's ten-year-long agitation for universal national service, based on the portentous growth of the German army and navy. She never knew of any hatred of Germany in the country. On the contrary, she realized what England and all the rest of the world owed to Germany in so many ways.

England was not absolutely unprepared in the sense that the United States is unprepared, even for self-defense from external attack, but except for the fleet and her little expeditionary force, England had neither men nor equipment equal to the fighting of a great Continental war.

The wholly unexpected news of the invasion of Belgium aroused the whole country to realize that war on a scale never known before had come, and, as the firing upon Fort Sumter awakened America, convinced England that she must fight to the death for her liberties, unready as she was;—but Mr. Balfour, the First Lord of the Admiralty, says that, since the war began, she has added one million to the tonnage of her navy, and has doubled its personnel, and is adding more every day.

In the matter of munitions the story that Mrs. Ward tells is wonderful, almost beyond belief. Much had been done in the first eight months of the war, in the building of munition shops, and the ordering of vast quantities from abroad, before the second battle of Ypres, in April, 1915, which led to the formation of the new Coalition Ministry, including a wholly new department, the Ministry of Munitions, with Mr. Lloyd George at its head.

From that time to this the work has been colossal,

and almost incredible, and without serious collision with the working classes. Vast new buildings have been erected all over England, and a huge staff, running into thousands, set in action. The new Minister has set out with determination to get the thing done at whatever cost, and to remove all obstacles that he found in his way. The Government has absolutely taken control of the whole work of the creation of munitions and the regulation of workmen, employed in it by whatever employers, and everything and everybody has had to submit to his imperious will, and the greatest change of all has been the employment of women on a vast scale to do the work that only men had ever done before. France had set about it immediately after the battle of the Marne, and allowed no Frenchman to remain idle who could do such work.

Mrs. Ward does not fail to do full justice to the working men of Great Britain, and shows that besides the hundreds of thousands that they have sent to the fighting line, a million and a half remained at work in the shops, creating munitions with the aid of skilled experts and the astonishing help of the women, who never before had expected to have anything to do with guns and shells, with bombs, rifles, and machine-guns. The old ways were laid aside, old distinctions of class and sex