

**ARROWS OF DESIRE,
ESSAYS ON OUR
NATIONAL CHARACTER
AND OUTLOOK**

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Arrows of desire, essays on our national character and outlook by J. S. Mackenzie

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J. S. MACKENZIE

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ARROWS OF DESIRE

ESSAYS ON OUR NATIONAL
CHARACTER AND OUTLOOK

BY

J. S. MACKENZIE,

LITT.D. (CAMBRIDGE), HON. LL.D. (GLASGOW); EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF LOGIC
AND PHILOSOPHY IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, CARDIFF; FORMERLY
FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



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'Bring me my bow of burning gold;
Bring me my arrows of desire;
Bring me my spear: O clouds, unfold;
Bring me my chariot of fire.
I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.'

BLAKE.

PREFACE

THIS is a series of somewhat disconnected essays ; and, like many other recent publications, it owes its origin to the war. It has not been easy for anyone, in these last few years, to give his mind to purely speculative inquiries. Absorbing as the problems of the cosmos must be to all who have ever felt their fascination, devotion to them presupposes some degree of stability in the affairs of the little planet that we inhabit. When the whole order of our civilization was threatened, even those who were most completely destitute of any power to set against the forces that made for dissolution were at least bound to feel a certain call to contribute something to the great work of re-establishing a better and more enduring order. Those who could do little or nothing of a directly practical kind towards the furtherance of this end were naturally led to attempt at least to help in the interpretation of the conditions in which we are placed and in the consideration of possible means for their improvement. It is out of such an endeavour that these essays have grown. They are specially concerned with our own national life and character, the subject that seemed most readily accessible, and not perhaps the least important. Some aspects of it, no doubt, are not specially within the writer's province. To treat them satisfactorily there would have been needed a more intimate knowledge of history and literature, of anthropology and social conditions, than I have found myself able to acquire. But, after all, there are few who are competent to deal thoroughly with the manifold aspects