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BIOLOGY AND PREPAREDNESS¹

THE association of ideas suggested by the words "biology" and "preparedness" probably marks the beginning of a new epoch in history. The careful consideration of the sequence of events that have led to the formal act of linking together these two words should supply material for an interesting chapter in history, and should furnish an impulse strong enough to reawaken in the minds of those who have already left hope behind them rational expectations for a slow but steady progress of civilization.

Science, as one of the chief witnesses to this fortunate union, is relieved of any necessity for explaining that while certain by-products may liberate destructive forces, her aims and methods tend beyond peradventure to conserve both life and energy. In view of the critical times in which we are living, this fact by itself is not even half-way satisfying. The human animal needs the stimulus of positive hope and the knowledge of actual accomplishment; and these will be added to our most treasured possessions when once we shall begin, after centuries of indifference, to make preparations for rational living.

During the last two years we have not only changed our general attitude towards life, but have been made most bitterly aware of the disappointments sure to follow dreams of incredible Utopias, or visions of universal peace. We have paid a high price for our failure to emphasize the greater importance of preparing to live ef-

¹ Read in symposium on "Biology and National Existence," meeting of the American Naturalists, New York, December 28, 1916.

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