

## SOAR Curricular Material #8

### *Tomorrow (After the War)*(February 1916—Original Version)

These are days of conflict and questioning, the equal of which have never before occurred in the history of mankind. Doubt and uncertainty are abroad. But though there were never times such as these when the future was so uncertain, when it was so impossible to **presage** what even the next day would bring forth, yet prophets and their prophecies multiply daily though they repel each other in their differences. And these so-called prophecies are given on fields of human activity, and in many cases their authors would even direct nature and dictate to God. Unfailing laws and abiding principles are ruthlessly cast aside. In every country can be found in abundance, those who **bewail** the downfall of true religion who *ring the knell of Christianity*. Do they sense the trend of the age? They forget the justice of God. There is still punishment for sin and blessing for obedience. The fire which destroys the **dross** also refines the gold. The laws of God are unchangeable. Out of the ashes of the present conflict will arise the true faith, elemental and pure, cleansed of all the clay which the passing of the centuries has mixed with it. There is a law that life shall ever spring out of death. The present destruction, though terrible in its present and future effects, has in it the *germ of new life. And the new shall be better than the old.*

~~M.W.R.

#### WORD BANK

**Presage**—(v.) to know intuitively that something is going to happen; to predict or foretell something

**Bewail**—(v.) to complain about something; grieve

**Knell**—(n.) a bell that is rung slowly; it is usually rung as a sign of mourning or to announce a death or disaster

**Dross**—(n.) the scum formed on molten metal, which is usually caused by oxidation

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### Analysis Questions

- 1) Rewrite this passage in 4-6 sentences using your own words.
- 2) Compare your rewrite to the original passage in order to conclude what the author's main argument is.
- 3) What perspective or standpoint is the author taking in this piece? Why do think this is so?
- 4) "In every country can be found in abundance, those who bewail the downfall of true religion who ring *the knell of Christianity*."
  - a. What is the significance, or meaning, of this statement?
  - b. How does this statement reflect the main idea and fit in with rest of this piece?
  - c. What does the knell of Christianity symbolize?
  - d. Who do you believe the author is referring to as "those who bewail the downfall of true religion?"
- 5) When the author says the present and future effects of the current destruction [war] are terrible, he also says that the same destruction has in it the *germ of new life*.
  - a. What do you think he is referring to here? What is the "germ of new life?"
  - b. The author then concludes his piece with, "And the new shall be better than the old." What do you believe he is trying to say with this statement? How does this reflect the overarching theme of his piece?