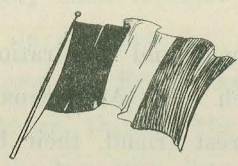


ST 291

APR 28 1917

Hail, France!



Issued by Connecticut State Council of Defense

Conn Doc
St 291p
ha
c.2

Hail, France!

American Thoughts on French National Holiday, Bastille Day, July 14, 1918

IT is with reverence and admiration that dim the eyes and halt speech that Americans turn to greet their oldest and dearest friend, their best and bravest ally, on this her day.

The story of France is the finest and rarest in the world. It is the story of romance come true, of the small torch of faith and hope and beauty burning on through long years of doubt and depression and despair, to blaze up into a flame of consuming glory and passion when the winds of heaven called.

It was an impossible task that faced France in August, 1914. Only now that we have come to perceive the true intentions of Germany, her long years of planning, her manifold manoeuvres of preparation, her training of a whole people to hate and to kill, can we realize the monster it was that crossed the fields of Belgium and flung forward at the



throat of France. With the Kaiser were numbers, were machines, were all the powers of an evil imagination and brain.

Against Germany was a nation of peace, a nation of liberty. Let us always be thankful and let us always remember that the manhood of democratic France had been trained to fight, however loath they were to draw the sword. Let us never forget, too, that gallant handful of superb soldiers, her utmost, that England threw to the aid of her beset ally. But it was the spirit of France, her naked, shining soul, that won the Battle of the Marne. Never in the history of the world was there a clearer prevailing of will over matter, of courage and faith over darkness and wrong. Some of the grandeur of the victory came straight to us in the broken news of those black days. Each day and month and year has added to the glory. If France had done nothing else her fame would be secure through the centuries.

How much else she has done, driven thereto largely by our own ignorance and delay, Verdun and the weary months make answer. The sword flashed in the sun on the Marne has never faltered since, whatever the night, whatever the suspense. Her deeds have been the rallying cry for all the world. "Press where ye see the white plume of Henry of Navarre!" echoes again, with all the forces of truth and right to answer.

It is not a debt that we pay. What the world owes France is beyond the price of generations. It is the soul of the world, in peril, that we worship, and to whose defence we would devote our lives. France, the banner of righteousness and honor; France, the ally that knows no

compromise; France, of clearest vision and glistening mind; France, the bravest fighter of all battles and all time—her we would aid. We cannot picture our civilization without her. We could not believe in justice or truth or right if she should fall. To France, complete and restored, with all her children at her knees, Alsace and Lorraine among the rest, we pledge our faith, our honor and the last drop of our blood!

Thank God, we are coming! Thank God, we did not fail in the test of nations! May our sword never waver until victory is secure!

But, above all else, thank God for France!

Reproduced by
Connecticut State Council of Defense
From Editorial in "New York Tribune"