

unshakable optimism, her absolute certainty in the final triumph. One cannot appreciate the energy, the activity, the thrift, the wonderful industry of the French people until one can see them at work. The whole nation has no other thought, no other preoccupation than the war. All the men capable of bearing arms are in the trenches or making munitions of war; their work in the cities and in the rural parts is being performed by the women, the old men and the children. The old men, the women and the children, millions of them, are working night and day to supply the soldiers with arms and munitions.

I have seen the women doing the men's work in the factories, the stores, the streets; performing all the farm labor up to within half a mile of the German trenches, with shrapnel and shells hissing over their heads or exploding in close proximity.

To prove this wonderful, this incredible earnestness and efficiency, let me tell you that in 1916 only 5 p.c. of the arable lands of France were not under cultivation and that this year's crop is quite up to the average. The crops which we saw right near the very battlefields of Flanders last July were the finest that I ever saw in any part of the world, and the result wholly of the labor of the women, the very old men and the children of France. No wonder Germany's cupidity had been aroused and one cannot help remembering Blücher's typically Prussian exclamation the first time he visited London, after Waterloo—"What a City to sack!" What a prize France would be! The very thought that the Germans came very near snatching it makes my blood run cold.

Another proof of France's industry and thrift is that the vintage of 1916 will produce 25,500,000 hectolitres or 990,000,000 Imperial gallons, which is 44,000,000 Imperial gallons more than for the year 1913. The returns from the shipping, railway and industries of France speak also most eloquently of her wonderful activity and efficiency.

The war is costing the Republic \$18,000,000 daily, and though the best part of industrial France, with her coal and iron mines and factories, is in the possession of the Germans, who are exploiting them and bleeding them and robbing them, she has put up, equipped and operated the many thousands of munition factories from which are poured out daily the most powerful and perfect guns in the world and huge quantities of arms, shrapnel and shells; she has perfected her railway system and greatly added to it, she has organized and put into operation a magnificent and most complete transportation scheme. France has raised, equipped and trained an army of 6,000,000 men, she has brought 1,000,000 troops from her colonies. She has perfected the most useful and efficient flying machines, which she has made in incredible numbers for herself and her allies. Just as Britain is Mistress of the Seas, France has now become Mistress of the Air over the battlefields of France. The optimism and irreducible tenacity and heroism of her people are maintained to the highest degree. From the first day of the invasion of Belgium, France put forth her best efforts, energy and efficiency, all of which were so magnificently displayed, as well as the incomparable genius of her military leaders, at the battle of the Marne, when her fate and that of the United Kingdom and all the British Dominions as well, and the fate also of democracy, was clearly at stake. Modern democracy was saved by France on the banks of the Marne.