

the slightest "fuss." The pose of the nation is an inspiration and speaks of solidarity and resolve.

Many of our preconceived notions of them were shattered. The men and women in all classes of the French people are kind, industrious, very moral and deeply religious. They are not at all like the hysterical neurotic creatures of the yellow French novels.

France is the most democratic country in the world. Far more so than the United States or Canada where in most cases every family tries to establish a peculiar cast, a special creed and a select circle of society all its own.

France has a national system of military service and every young man when he comes of military age has to learn the trade of soldiering, starting in the ranks. He does not begin his soldiering by being an honorary general. He reaches the commission rank by study and attention to his duties, not by having friends at Court.

Some people foolishly confound National Service with conscription. They are not the same at all. Where a country has conscription a portion of the population is liable to be drafted compulsorily into the army. When men are needed each parish or community is called upon to provide so many men, whether they know anything of military duties or not. The mayor or head of the community puts all the names of the eligibles into a hat. The required number are drawn by ballot and are supposed to go to war,—but seldom do. One of the beauties of conscription is that if you have the money you can buy a substitute. Conscription is the product of a very old form of civilization, for if in China, for instance, you are conscripted to be hung or be beheaded, you are at liberty to hire a substitute. Conscription thus bears very heavily on the poor, while the idle rich can always escape service.

With national service, rich and poor, prince, priest and pauper have to serve alike without exemption. When the nation is at war, every man, woman and child in it is at war.