

FOR FRANCE



Ye sons of France, awake to glory!
Hark! hark! what myriads bid you rise!
Your children, wives, and grandsires hoary,
Behold their tears and hear their cries!

La Marseillaise

GARDEN CITY NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
M C M X V I I

FOREWORD

I AM both proud and humble at having been chosen to write the introduction for this volume. The idea of the book itself originated with Mrs. William Astor Chanler. It is she to whom primarily the credit is due, and all those who know her will appreciate what I mean when I say that it is typical of her idealism and fine disinterestedness of character. She had noble assistance from Miss Elsa Maxwell and from Mr. Harrison Rhodes.

A glance through the table of contents will show that Mrs. Chanler has been able to draw on the services of the great majority of the most notable authors, artists, publicists, actors, sculptors, architects, and churchmen of our country. The volume contains fiction of a high order, and I believe that many of the articles and many of the poems have in them the quality of permanence. Indeed, it seems to me that certain of the poets have, in what they have written, reached their finest expression. There are also five bits of manuscript music from eminent composers.

It is particularly fitting that the three opening contributions of the book should be from Richard Harding Davis, Alan Seeger, and Victor Chapman. Seeger and Chapman

FOREWORD

died in the service of France, giving their joyous young lives for a lofty ideal in a spirit worthy of the nation for which they died, as that nation has shown herself during the last three years, and worthy of their own nation in the days of that nation's loftiest idealism; in the days when Washington and Lincoln were proud to fight for great causes, and when, having drawn the sword for righteousness, they scorned to sheath it until they had achieved the peace of victory.

As for Richard Harding Davis, although in his life he did much good work, he never did better work than in his last two years, when he served France and thereby served America with all the intensity of his virile Americanism. During the past three years, every man who has been a pacifist, or pro-German, and every man who has failed from the outset to strive with all his strength for preparedness, has been false to America, and false to humanity, and has deserved ill of this country, and ill of mankind. Long before this war began, Richard Harding Davis was striving for preparedness, and from the beginning of the war he realized that Germany had made herself the champion of all that was basest and most evil, and should be opposed by every lover of liberty, and believer in right, and that France, to a peculiar degree, symbolized in this contest the great cause, or group of causes to which, in the past, all of the Americans to whom our country owes most had dedicated their lives.

A special feature of this volume is that it was begun long before the entrance of America into the great war. When it was begun, our Government, which had partly misled the people and partly lagged far behind the people, was still pledged to the ignoble policy of neutrality between

FOREWORD

right and wrong. Since then, thank heaven, we have entered into the war. Every consideration of abstract justice and right, every consideration which caused us to enter into the war for the sake of humanity, and liberty, and world justice, and democracy, applied with exactly as much force in the fall of 1914 when we announced ourselves neutral, as in the spring of 1917 when we declared our belated conversion to the belief that it was our duty to take sides. Every consideration of our own national interest and honour, that got us into the war, applied even more strongly after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, than they applied two years later when we actually went to war. Nevertheless, the majority of the men in political control of our country, whether influenced by the folly of the pacifists, or by the even more sinister menace of the pro-Germans, not merely kept us out of the war, but kept us from making any preparations to bear ourselves well in the war, if it should be forced upon us.

There was, however, a growing body of American sentiment which, although without leadership from the men in political control at Washington, was eager to bear testimony against the foul wrong that Germany had committed, and on behalf of the heroism of France. It was the popular feeling, excited against the wish of the Government, which finally forced the Government to action. The group of writers, whose contributions are contained in this volume, and the great majority of whose contributions were written before we went to war, represent that body of public opinion which finally forced the Government to put the United States on the side of international justice.

Most of these contributions are written by native-born

FOREWORD

Americans, but two to three of them are by those who were born elsewhere, and who are exactly as good Americans as if they were born here.

Mrs. Chanler is now in France arranging for the purchase of the Château Lafayette, where it is intended finally to preserve the original manuscripts of the pieces in this volume. The men and women who have written these pieces are speaking in the name of America to the France we all love. I am glad, indeed, to be numbered among them.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

New York, May, 1917.