

The French are warned their world
is ended if Paris falls to Hitler

Preface to a Lost Battle

By EVE-CURIE

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(Editor's Note: Less than three weeks before the surrender of Paris, this prophetic and moving exhortation was written by Mlle. Curie, whose name is well-known to the American public.)

IN THESE terrible hours there is no room for subtlety. A decisive battle is under way. French soldiers have a simple duty: to fight as valiantly as they can, to be victorious. The duty of the women, of all civilians, is no less simple: to labor, to help, to wait, to be calm and silent. The issue of the war is clear: if we resist the German assault, if by tenacity we can correct our faults and regain lost ground, life for every one of us, life for France, will again become possible.

If we weaken, it is the end.

There are in France perhaps a few cowardly men and a few cowardly women—very few, happily—who believe that the cardinal objective is to hold to life, to love life, and who, in

their joy of living, have estranged themselves from the ideals that underlie the liberty and the dignity of their country. These cowards—how courageous they are! They believe themselves capable of supporting a future that might be allotted to us by a triumphant Hitler, of supporting serfdom, persecution, torture, shame; of permitting land to be wrested from us, French, or the pillage of our peasants' farms, the homes of our workers, the merchants' shops; the stripping of our factories, the despoliation of our universities, our churches, our libraries and our museums. They believe themselves able to suffer the sight of men, women and the children of France driven to some desolate corner of Europe to vegetate there in despair; and to see their new masters, the Nazis, confiscate their homes and seize their fields.

In a way, these cowards are heroes.

In the face of the possibility of a German victory, of a German peace, the sacrifices asked of us in this grave

hour are insignificant, and even death itself would seem a recompense. To be brave is not only our duty. It may also be the simplest fate left to us, the one road to salvation.

We French fight, above all, to save our land, our liberty, our lives. But France is responsible not only for the life of France alone. Elsewhere in the world there are nations which, aroused by the horrors of the Nazi régime, dread the German army, its implacable instrument of conquest. These nations scarcely dare contemplate their future, should Hitlerism triumph. The collective conscience of these nations has prejudged the oppressor. But it is to France, and her ally, to whom are intrusted the outcome of this great struggle. It is upon France that victory depends.

WE must not grow bitter over our position. The grandeur of our nation has always been its readiness to shoulder responsibilities beyond its strength, and to prove itself worthy of that task. France is smaller than Texas. But it is France, and her soldiers, who will determine the destiny of the world.

And precisely because we carry the burden of this fearful responsibility, we should not permit ourselves a moment of discouragement, or of rest from our labors. In view of what may arrive, let us steel ourselves to be calm.

The men of France have known for months that a formidable offensive was drawing near; so have the women of France. Instinctively, all of us have conditioned our nerves for a terrible moment in time.

In the faces of the people in the streets of Paris there is no agitation,

there are no tears; and there are no futile gestures.

A few laconic words are exchanged with friends before one reaches work. . . . A few laconic headlines are scanned. . . . A few laconic letters are read from the front. Only yesterday I saw a military postcard sent by a lad in the tanks corps to his mother. The postcard read, simply, "*Bonne résistance. Tendresses.*"

Frenchmen give little expression to the torment that rages in all of us. One only hears, on every side, that "this war must be won, won by us French."

"*Bonne résistance!*" Nothing may be added to that eloquence. There is infinite confidence, anxiety, effort and hope in those two words, scrawled in the midst of a vast battle by a young soldier of France.

To the commands given to us at home we will submit with discipline, labor as efficiently as we can at the posts assigned to us, however humble they may be. But we need no commands to bolster our will to win this war. Each one of us defends a way of life dear to us. And all these individual resolves fuse into one determination that makes for French unanimity. This war is the ultimate conflict, the final collision, of two conceptions of life: on one side, liberty, individualism, Christian civilization; on the other, oppression, aggression, torture and the law of the jungle.

The battle is perplexing, agonizing. The enemy is unpredictable, undaunted. His wiles are innumerable. But in essence this Battle of Paris is the most elementary ever waged. For all peoples there was never a simpler alternative: suffer the heel of the Nazis or live in freedom.

They may be next victims in the
bloodless penetration of the Nazis

Under the Surface in the Balkans

By CHARLES M. MEISTER

AS AUGUST approached, the Balkans, saved as by a miracle from active involvement in the first months of the European war, expected no such miracle to make it possible for Turkey to block Russia's age-old ambition for control of the Dardanelles. Following Rumania's partial dismemberment by Soviet power, despite King Carol's desperate efforts to win the dread protection of Adolf Hitler, every country in Southeastern Europe that still retained a measure of apparent freedom, felt intimations of mortality.

With the eastern tier of these countries—Rumania, Bulgaria and Turkey—struggling only feebly against the Soviet domination which Germany seemed willing to permit, until scores are settled with Great Britain, Hungary and Yugoslavia, the first situated dangerously between Germany and the Rumanian oil fields, the second bordering on both Germany and Italy, trembled at the thought that they most probably would be Hitler's next victims.

Fifth columns, which were old devices in the Balkans before the modern-day term was coined, probably will be all that is needed in either Hungary or Yugoslavia to bring those countries under the complete domination of the Axis Powers. In the case of Hungary, this will be facilitated by the fact that the Magyars lost far more than the Germans at the end of the war of 1914-18, and have therefore been as bitter as any Nazi at the results of that conflict.

But the Hungarians, as individualistic and as devoted to their own traditions as any people in the world, do not look forward with delight to the sort of regimentation which Hitler has now imposed on France, with Marshal Henri Pétain as Führer. Even less does such totalitarian domination appeal to the Yugoslavs, united at last despite their diversity of religion and background.

South Slavs and Hungarians are wryly amused by the irony of the Soviet threat to Turkey, which in the past so long dominated large parts of