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THE DISPATCH OFFICE

Britain Doing Her Part In the Great Struggle

Continued from page 1

cruisers and destroyers, at the same time including every improvement suggested by the war.

All these ships required guns while the new army was begging for guns. But however hungry the army for either artillery or shells, no Cabinet Minister, no officer at the British front, would suggest that the army should do other, than wait until Jellicoe's orders had been satisfied.

What if Jellicoe should fail for the want of anything that might have been supplied? Though the British army in France were swept into the sea, still Britain and her empire might survive if she kept command of the sea. Should Jellicoe ask that Westminister Abbey be sent to him in his mysterious harbor, the British public would doubtless tell Mr. Asquith to set some new army battalions at work to take it down and start it on its way.

Why doesn't the British navy dig out the German navy? It was Winston Churchill, when First Lord of the Admiralty early in the war, who made the "rats in a hole" speech, not Sir John Jellicoe or Lord Fisher. I have never talked with any naval expert who thought that an attempt by the British to reach the German fleet in the harbor of Kiel was sound naval policy. American and other experts agree that professionally both navies have followed the best policy in the interest of their nations. The German fleet is secreted far out of the range of any British ship, protected by heavy fortress guns, by submarines, and by many nets impassable to any submarine.

In vain the Germans have hoped that the British—who are too wise—would become impatient and undertake some sort of an offensive which would mean the loss of some of their ships, thus evering up the ratio of strength of the two fleets; and in vain the British have hoped that the Germans—who are too wise—would come out an odd battle. If the Germans thought that they had any chance, they certainly would; for if they should win, they would not only win the war, but the mastery of the seas and of the world.

Some doubters have asked if the British fleet is not also shut up in its harbor in fear of submarines and mine fields. It goes out into the North Sea whenever it pleases—I have seen it go—and it will be there when the German fleet appears. The fact that the Germans do not come out is tribute enough to the character of the British navy. For the Germans are not fools. The British navy goes on building new ships, new dry docks, and extending its naval bases. It has a forever unsatisfied appetite for material, and it has done its part. Britain has kept faith with her partners in the alliance. She commands the seas.

When she saw the fortunes of war were going against her partners she prepared to fight by land; to put in millions of soldiers as well as her naval strength. It never occurred to any Englishman or Scot or Irishman that the British would ever have an army half the size of that fighting there today on the Continent. As ingrained in the British is the idea of sea defence as that of great distances and isolation in the Americas before this war. He thought of an army only as a means of policing the Empire. His green pastures and hedged and lines were safe, thanks to the salt water.

The Regulars had done his fighting for him as they had for us. There came to him a call like the one that came to us in the our Civil War when North and South set untrained troops against untrained troops. A people proud as we were of the fact that they had escaped universal military service, when they found that Russia and France had not soldiers enough, were ready to give their flesh and blood against not untrained troops, but the best trained and best equipped of troops.

In two months the British had lost more killed and wounded than their original force; in six months, more than the total of their standing army. They had lacked machine guns and guns of heavy calibre; so had the French. The English had not only to train men who had never shouldered a rifle, but to equip them. Russia and France, too, lacked sufficient uniforms at the outset of the war for all the soldiers they had, from the Belgian and the Serbian and the Russian army came the call to manufacturing England for arms and uniforms. England was the mint, the foundry, the workshop which must be a bottomless source of supply—which

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every demand of Jellicoe's had to be met. She plodded on sturdily, if not brilliantly, criticising no one but herself.

Though the British had supposed that their part was to command the sea, three millions volunteered to cross the Channel or go farther overseas and fight. That is a different thing from volunteering to fight in your own country against an invader. Mind, these three millions did not have to be ordered to fight. They went of their own free will—carpenters, farmers, costermongers, doctors, lawyers, millionaires and laborers, with every able bodied man of Oxford and Cambridge and other universities and great public schools offering himself. History has afforded nothing finer than this outpouring, and never was there an effort more depreciated by those who made it. For lack of guns the British in France had to fight with flesh and blood against superior artillery—flesh and blood against machine killing. France needed help; England gave all she had to give—the lives of her men. From India she brought her Indian troops—anything to help win the war.

The old rule of war is that with the loss of 10 per cent. of your total force you prepare for retreat; with the loss of 15 per cent. you had better get under way; and no battalion, regiment, brigade, division corps or army is expected to hold after a loss of 25 or 30 per cent. This was about the percentage at Waterloo and Gettysburg.

British regiments in the first battle of Ypres used to cheer when the German infantry charged, for this meant the end of the torrent of shell and fire, and they could go out to meet the enemy with the bayonet. In the icy water they stood in a number of instances after losses of fifty and sixty and seventy and eighty per cent. At the worst this was not "falling down." It was being "shot down." For it takes a long time to make a gun or a rifle. On December 1 last, a year after the war began, the United States, with all its adaptability and manufacturing resources, was shipping to the Allies only three thousand rifles a week, or enough for a hundred and fifty thousand men in a year which is not arming a very large army as armies go on the Continent of Europe.

Every time that there has been a rifle ready for him, the British have had a man ready for the rifle, which requires expert and experienced workmen in manufacturing, as any rifle maker will tell you. One reason they had to hold a short line was that for many months they had to do it with flesh and blood, without adequate guns or adequate shells for the guns, though they have the shells now and are getting the guns. Another reason was that they held the famous Ypres salient, one of the bloodiest parts of the line. If you don't think so, ask any German who has fought there. Again, don't make the mistake of depreciating the British soldier to a German soldier. The highest praise you can hear for the British army is from Germans.

"But they ought to have foreseen and have been prepared?" One carpentering military critic said to me. They were on the sea. Again: "They may be brave, but they blundered. Look at Gallipoli!" For political reasons and against sound military advice, both British and French, they went to Gallipoli to open the Dardanelles for Russia to send out her wheat and bring in munitions. It was a blunder, the result of haste; but at least they tried to help with what they had. Four hundred thousand men fighting in France and sixty thousand in Gallipoli eight months after the war began—twice the

number of their original standing army. It took McClellan eight months to get one hundred thousand men ready for his peninsular campaign in the Civil War.

"And their staff work is near," cries the critic. Did the British army ever boast that it was perfect? With heavy losses in their regular officers, the survivors who had not been trained for big continental warfare had to undertake the management of vast new armies. Of course they made mistakes. It is amazing how few, to my mind. They talk of muddling," but it seems to me that they do very much less muddling than they advertise. The error so highly criticized at Loos was made by the German Staff only a few days later. In fact, the Germans have been guilty of it several times, but they say nothing and go on. Berlin is silent while tongues wag in London.

My last day at the British front was a revelation of what they had accomplished, while they grumbled at themselves in making a new army. I saw hundreds of guns—most of them made since the war began and manned by gunners three out of four of whom had never worn a uniform when the war began. I saw them place their fire with an accuracy on a German trench front about to be attacked which would have pleased the most fastidious of French artillery experts. All an English artillery officer said was: "I think our artillery work was better today. We are improving." They were—amazingly, but not boasting or advertising.

More than a million men overseas, three millions more ready to go in; the sea secure. Remember, too, that the British Isles have only a little over

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Bubonic Plague in Bristol, Eng.

New York, Aug. 18.—A cable to the World from Bristol, Eng., dated yesterday, says:

Three cases of the dread bubonic plague have been discovered in Bristol, on the southwest coast of England, long one of the greatest British ports in foreign trade.

Said Dr. Davies, health officer of Bristol port, to the correspondent today: "The three cases have been traced to rats, which it is supposed were inoculated purposely with bubonic plague."

"There is no evidence that the disease was brought here on a ship, nor that the infection came from America. The method by which the disease was introduced is obscure, but is being investigated carefully."

Legal Mountains in Labor

[From the London Express]

This story of one of the apt reports of "Tim" Healy, who has been figuring rather largely in the parliamentary discussion on the Irish rebellion, was told the other day. During the hearing of a recent case in which he appeared a rasping voice coming from an adjoining room disturbed the court.

"Do you know what that noise is, Mr. Healy?" asked the Judge.

"I think," retorted Mr. Healy, "it must be one of my learned friends filing an affidavit."

Two well known northern characters have joined the 238th Forestry Battalion in Saskatchewan, in the persons of Albert Campbell, of The Pas, Man., who the 150-mile husky dog race last winter, and Charles Stayback, chief dog musher for Revillon Freres, the big fur traders.