

## ASQUITH REFUTES TWO CALUMNIES

Text of Important and Interesting Speech on Moving Recess For Parliament

Mr. Asquith, in moving in the British House of Commons on July 28, that

On Thursday, Mr. Speaker, as soon as he has reported the royal assent to the bills which have been agreed on by both Houses, do adjourn the House without question put until Tuesday, September 14.

said that during rather more than nine months the House has had fifteen weeks in all of what he supposed he must call vacation. He thought that since the commencement of the session last November there had been a very substantial legislative output. In the first place, he said, we have passed the War Loan Bill, a measure absolutely without precedent in the history of this or any other country, and as is well known, the passing of that bill into an Act of Parliament has aroused a most gratifying response among all classes of the people of this country, and has done perhaps as much as anything to convince the world, and in particular our own Allies, that so far as we in this country are concerned we are determined to devote the whole of our resources to the successful prosecution of the war. (Cheers.)

### Peers and Pensions Bill

They had also passed the Munitions Act, the National Registration Bill and a very large number of extremely useful, though less ambitious, emergency bills. As for the Naval and Military Pensions Bill, the fruit of probably the most representative and authoritative committee which the House had ever had, he regretted that it could not for the moment be added to those which would receive the royal assent. It went to another place and it would not be seemly to pass criticism on what took place in a sphere to which they were strangers, and of which they knew nothing except by common report. (Laughter.) If the bill had been read a second time amendments might have been made in committee which would have been received by the House of Commons in a sympathetic and respectful spirit.

Notwithstanding the postponement of the final enactment of the bill, which he trusted would take place by consent at no distant date, the status quo in regard to pensions and separation allowances continued, and on the whole he could not bring himself to think that serious injury would result from the delay of a few weeks.

So far as the Government were concerned, they had for the moment no further legislation to propose to the House. There would be large and difficult questions connected with taxation, in respect of which the Government would feel it their duty after due deliberation to make proposals, and they would be more satisfactory if they were able to take more time for their consideration. In these circumstances it would seem to follow that the House might suspend its activities for a few weeks.

### Tribute to the Press

I agree, he said, that the House has other functions besides that of legislation. (Hear, hear.) We have in this country two recognized—I might, perhaps, say accredited—organs of criticism of the executive of the day. One is the press—a very delicate topic.

(Laughter.) In regard to the press, I will, for the moment, at any rate, content myself by saying this: that I think since the outbreak of the war under peculiarly trying conditions, under the supervision of the novel and unfamiliar restraints of Censorship, the press of the United Kingdom, with one or two melancholy and notorious exceptions—(loud and prolonged cheering)—has discharged its duty with a patriotism, self-strain and public spirit, and in a manner worthy of the best traditions of that great institution. (Cheers.)

The press we have always with us. (Laughter.) The other organ of criticism to which I refer, as an old Parliamentarian—now I am sorry to say one of the oldest in this House—attach more importance, and for which I feel greater deference and respect, is the House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) It would be not only impertinent but self-complacent for one who holds, as I have for many years past, the position of leader of the House, to enlarge upon the admirable and patriotic manner in which the House has always discharged, and I am sure will continue to discharge that most necessary duty. (Some laughter.) I don't know why that observation should excite any hilarity in any quarter of the House. I thought I was enunciating a platitude.

Mr. McVeagh: With melancholy and notorious exceptions. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Asquith: I am going to make no exception. (Hear, hear.) But when the House is sitting from legislative point of view "in vacuo," as would be the case if we prolonged our sittings under the conditions I have just described, the function of criticism, most necessary and most useful, could only be discharged by the familiar process of interrogation and answer.

Sir A. Markham: Not answer.

### The Plague of Questions

Mr. Asquith, proceeding, pointed out that since the commencement of the session 1,532 questions had been addressed to the Under Secretary for War, and 468 to himself personally. These had been replied to orally. His right hon. friend had given 249 written answers, and he had given 51. He was so hardened that he did not mind whether the questions numbered 400 or 4,000. (Laughter.)

What did matter was the strain upon the departments, especially on the War Office and Admiralty, involved in dealing with those questions. It was absolutely essential in the public interest that the officials should have some respite. It was not a question of holiday-making. (Cheers.) These men had no holiday since the beginning of the war, and they were no, likely to have any. The House ought to have some regard for them, and not continue to put an intolerable burden on them.

### M.P.'s National Services

What about the House of Commons itself?

Sir A. Markham: It is moribund.

Mr. Asquith—I had a question addressed to me the other day on the subject of the payment of members, and I am not sure it was not by the hon. member who has just described us as moribund. In the course of

## AT THE NICKEL

that question he suggested that there were not more than a hundred and fifty members in regular attendance at the House. What does that mean? Does that mean that the remainder are holiday-making, that they are indifferent to the discharge of their duty? A large number of them are at the front actually fighting. (Cheers.)—I suppose, even a larger number are here in various ranks and classes in the fighting services which are preparing soldiers and sailors to go to the front. A number more are engaged in the not less important duty of organizing in their various localities the different services—Industrial, philanthropic, healing—which are equally necessary if we are to do our duty to our soldiers and sailors and those who are fighting for us. (Cheers.)

Of the one hundred and fifty who remain, it is to be suggested that it is this motion is carried and we adjourn for six or seven weeks, they are all going holiday-making? Nothing of the kind. (Cheers.) On the contrary, many of them are going to do duties more important, more urgent, and more needed in the interests of the country than sitting on these benches, walking about the corridors, or listening to or making speeches. I repudiate altogether as a calumny on the House of Commons the suggestion that because we are not sitting here after our legislative tasks have concluded we are not serving our country just as well or even better.

### Russia's Great Example World

It has been suggested that I ought to take advantage of this opportunity to make something in the nature of a general statement before we adjourn as to the present position and the future conduct of the war. I doubt very much—am I, and all my colleagues are, to give every kind of information at our disposal that is consistent with the public service to the House—whether it would be expedient for me to respond, certainly at any length or in any detail, to that demand.

I said on the last occasion when I had the privilege of addressing the House on the general situation that in my opinion this war had become, and was likely to continue for some time to come, a contest of endurance. We should be ungrateful and indeed, insensitive if we did not recognize, at this moment in particular, the gallant, the indescribably gallant, efforts which are being made by our Russian Allies—(loud and prolonged cheers)—to stem the tide of invasion and to maintain the inviolable integrity of their position. I do not think in the whole of military history there has been a more magnificent example afforded of discipline, patient endurance, and of both individual and collective initiative than by the Russian army during the last eleven months. (Cheers.)

In regard to our new ally, Italy—(cheers)—we recognize that they are steadily gaining ground and making their way towards an objective which we believe will within a very short army during the last eleven months. (Hear.)

### Our French Comrades

We ourselves are fighting side by side in France with our French comrades for such they have been now for the best part of a year—(cheers)—and I do not believe that from the beginning of the war up to the present there has ever been a time when the two armies were inspired with a fraternity and comradeship, or when they were more confident that victory—I will not predict times or seasons, I should be foolish if I did—must ultimately be theirs. (Cheers.)

In regard to operations which, in conjunction with them, we are undertaking further east in the Gallipoli Peninsula, I will only repeat what I said to the House when I addressed them last on the subject—namely, that our confidence is undiminished in the result at which we are aiming. (Cheers.)

It is just a year next week since the declaration of war. Has anyone in the history of the world ever seen a more complete and, might I not almost say, a more miraculous transformation in the country—not in its spirit, not in its soul and heart, but in the outward manifestations of its life, than has taken place here during these twelve months? (Cheers.)

### The Silent Fleet

I need say nothing about our fleet—Great Britain has always been the greatest of naval powers—except that,

strong as it was at the beginning of the war, it is far stronger now. (Cheers.) To its quiet, unobserved, but ubiquitous and all-powerful activity it is due that the seas are clear, or substantially clear, and that this submarine menace, serious as it appeared to at the moment, is not going to inflict fatal or substantial injury on British trade. (Loud cheers.)

The seas are clear, we have our supplies of food and raw materials, upon which we as a country depend, flowing in upon us in the same abundance and with the same freedom, and I might without much exaggeration say, judging by rates of insurance or by any other test, with the same immunity from serious hazard and risk as ever in time of peace. (Loud cheers.)

The navy so far have been denied the grim and glorious delights of pitched battle, but they have the consciousness—and we ought to let them know that we recognize the debt of gratitude we owe to them—(loud cheers)—that it is through their unremitting vigilance, through the supreme skill with which they have been handled that this country to-day can laugh at the scare of invasion and that we are to an extent unknown by any other of the belligerent powers immune from the actual ravages and dangers of war. (Cheers.)

### Army Recruiting Good

We have always been a great naval Power, but look at the position of the Army! Here we are. Even in this House I see hon. friends—a sight unknown, I suppose, for a hundred years—clad in military garb but there is not a family represented here in this House—and in that respect the House is typical of the whole country—which has not given its hostages in the shape of sons or brothers—(loud cheers)—to the Army, and I am glad to be able to say that the process of recruiting the Army from the ranks of the people, which has now gone on for twelve months with undiminished activity—(cheers)—is in a highly satisfactory condition—(cheers)—and the latest returns are among the best we have had for a long time past. (Loud cheers.)

What of our industries? My right hon. friend the Minister for Munitions with the aid of his skilled advisers, has already organized the production of all those things which are necessary for the active conduct of the war, or at least has arranged for its organization upon a basis never dreamt of in our history, and which I am satisfied will prove thoroughly adequate to our requirements.

### War Finance

In this war the duty has been cast upon us, not only of maintaining the freedom of the seas, not only of supplying large contingents of well-equipped men for the battlefield and the trenches, but we have also the duty of financing—a not less important duty—(hear, hear)—to a large extent the whole conduct of the war. We cannot do that unless we organize all our industry. (Hear, hear.) We cannot do that if we continue to import, and so to increase our indebtedness to other countries, to import from abroad things that in normal conditions might be regarded as among the natural comforts or even simpler luxuries of life. We cannot do that unless we maintain in our great manufacturing industries the men who will keep up and, indeed, increase the supply of those goods which we alone in the world produce, and which we produce better than other people, and by which we have in the long run to pay for the things we import. (Hear, hear.)

There was one point, he continued not sufficiently borne in mind, namely, that it was all important for us to keep up and to increase our reserve of gold. He would urge upon householders and employers and everyone that one of the best services they could render to the country was to see that all their money—the smaller change of our social and industrial life—was paid not in gold, but in notes. In that way the country would be able to accumulate such a large reserve of gold as would enable them to face without doubt or hesitation whatever drafts might be made on it.

### Spirit Entering Second Year

Upon a review of the position to-day said the Premier in conclusion, as compared with our position of exactly a year ago, can there be a greater calmness on our own people, both here and overseas, than to say that they have not risen to the height of a great

occasion. (Cheers.) I said, Can there be a greater still, and that is to suggest—it is a calumny, this one, not on ourselves, but on our gallant Allies, one and all—to suggest that they do not realize and appreciate to the full the contribution which we are making to the ultimate triumph of our common cause. (Cheers.)

It is in that spirit, I believe, that the House and the country at large are entering upon the second year of the war. Do not let us give any encouragement to the faint-hearted—if such there be—and still less to the backbiters—(cheers)—who do what they can—I make no inquiry as to their motives or intentions—who do what they can to dishearten our Allies, and to encourage our enemies. Let us, here in this House and in the country at large, in the same spirit of unity and of determination which for twelve months has inspired our combined efforts, persist and persevere to the inevitable triumphant issue. (Cheers.)

### Von Buelow on Strategy Of Yesterday and Today

Budapest, July 20.—A Budapest news paper publishes an interview with General von Buelow, obtained at the front, in which the general discusses the difference between the present German campaign in Russia and that of Napoleon in 1812.

"It has been remarked," said the general "that the present strategy of the Russians is the same as that which proved effective against Napoleon. Such strategy was effective then, but not now, when means of communication have been so much improved. The bread which our soldiers eat to-day in Windau was baked in Breslau yesterday."

### Old Days Nonsensical

"In times when a railway is being built a mile behind the advancing forces, when thousands of motor lorries are close behind us, when asphalt roads grow, as it were, out of the earth, no such strategy is effective. We drink German mineral water and eat fresh meat direct from Berlin and can build a road, if necessary, fifty miles long in two days. It is therefore nonsense to speak of the days and strategy of Napoleon."

### LOCAL ITEMS

While playing football at the Wesley picnic yesterday, Gordon Hynes of Z. Cox's grocery, fell and gave his ankle a bad sprain. He had to be driven home for attention.

The S.S. Ada arrived here this morning from Talbot, Wales, after a run of 12 days for orders. She will go to Bonavista Bay to load pit props for Wales.

The S.S. Durango, Capt. Rendell, arrived here at 1 a.m. to-day from Halifax. The ship has been off this coast since Tuesday evening in a dense fog and that day experienced, as we did here, a heavy thunder storm. She brought 400 tons cargo, but no passengers and sails to-morrow morning for Liverpool with 1000 tons cargo, fish, oil &c.

### The "Stephano" in Port

The S.S. Stephano, Capt. Smith, arrived in port to-day at 10.30 a.m. The ship which brought a full cargo left New York Saturday morning last, reached Halifax at noon Monday and left again at 5.30 p.m. Tuesday she had splendid weather down except for some fog this morning at Cape Race, and brought 147 passengers, all told, including 80 round trippers. On arrival the ship swung at anchor in the stream so that the authorities could supervise the passengers.

### Prominent American Comes Here

Mr. Flagler, a prominent citizen of the United States, and especially of the State of Florida, arrived here by the Stephano to-day. He, and his connections own large hotels all through the state and built the railroad through the Florida Keys. They are also interested in other Corporations and Mr. Flagler will spend some time here, and will go country on a fishing excursion.

## A Great Big Holiday Programme!

"THE MILLION DOLLAR MYSTERY"

Episode 13. THE SECRET AGENT FROM RUSSIA.

Patriotic Baritone Solo, "HAIL KING GEORGE," Forbes Law Duguid,

"THE MENACING PAST"

A strong melo-drama.

"THE NEWS PICTORIAL"

Interesting events.

"OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS"

A Keystone comedy.

NOTE—The first performance will commence at 7 p.m. sharp Wednesday evening.

## ROSSLEY'S EAST END THEATRE.

St. John's Leading Vaudeville, Dramatic and Picture Theatre.

## THE AUSTRALIAN MERRY MAKERS

IN GRAND CHANGE OF PROGRAMME.

## Great Roaring Sketch, "A TIP ON THE CUP"

Written for the Russels, by G. M. Cohen.

Hear Jack Russell "I'm on my way to Dublin Bay." A real Irish Song and the finest singer ever heard here. Also pathetic character song, entitled "The Tramps."

## AND GOOD PICTURES

NOTE—The Royal Punch and Judy show for the Children's Matinee Saturday. They will be seen in a new act, also Don the Wonderful Dog.

## 5c. CRESCENT Picture Palace 5c.

## "HIS DOMINANT PASSION"

A Vitagraph Drama with William Humphrey and Leah Baird.

## "THE GIRL AT HIS SIDE"

A Society Drama produced by the Selig Company.

## "THE SLAVERY OF FOXICUS"

A Kalem Farce Comedy with Ruth Roland.

## "BEYOND YOUTH'S PARADISE"

A story adapted from the Munsey Magazines.

## "SOPHIE PULLS A BIG ONE"

A Western Drama by the Essanay Company.

Harry Collins—Irish Tenor—Singing Classy Songs and Ballads  
Good Music—A Cool and well ventilated Theatre.

## COAKER ENGINES

are THE BEST Motor Engines for Fishermen

W. F. Coaker, Esq., M.H.A.,  
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Trading Company Limited.

Dear Sir,—

Last Spring I purchased a 6 h.p. COAKER Engine which has given me every satisfaction.

I certainly consider it the best Motor Engine for fishermen to-day on the local market.

With my trap boat I am able to make seven knots an hour. Last Summer I had my trap set four miles away and I made two trips daily with three dories in tow, and never had the slightest mishap.

I would advise any fisherman who requires an Engine that can be operated easily and give good results to buy a 6 h.p. COAKER Engine.

Yours truly,

WALTER HILLIER.

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April 1915.

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