

through; now and then submarines have carried on their barbarous warfare, not only against ships of the Allied nations, but against ships of neutral nations as well. But when we take everything into consideration the highest possible tribute must be paid to Sir John Jellicoe, Sir David Beatty, and the admirals, officers and men of the British navy for all the splendid work that they have accomplished under almost insuperable difficulties ever since this war broke out. The mere guarding of the North Sea itself, the awful vigil in winter as in summer, under all weather conditions, in mist and ice and snow, with hidden danger at hand all the time—the hidden danger of the submarine—that task of itself was one that might daunt all but the bravest hearts. In addition to that, they have had the task of keeping the whole ocean free, so that to all intents and purposes the pathways of the ocean have been almost as safe to us as in time of peace—a wonderful tribute to the power of the British navy, and to the valor, heroism and endurance of the officers and men who man it.

The same may be said, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the work which Britain has done in organizing her army. You know what the condition was at first: ability to send overseas 80,000 or 120,000 or 160,000 men to fight the battles of the Empire upon the continent of Europe if occasion should arise. I desire to pause here to pay just tribute to the memory of that man who organized the army which will yet win victory for Britain and for the allied nations: I mean Lord Kitchener. We deplore his death, which was a great loss not only to his mother country but to all the Allied nations and to the world. He did a great work. To his standing as a great soldier, as the virtual head of the British army at the time; to his military ability, to his indomitable will, which had been tested on so many occasions, the people of the united Kingdom and of the whole Empire looked in the day of trial, and they did not look in vain. To enlist, to train, to discipline, to arm, to equip that vast army was a task which none of us here could adequately comprehend. He had done a great work when his untimely death occurred, and he would, I believe, have done a still greater work if he had been spared to the Empire.

The work which the British army has accomplished in this war has been referred to by the hon. member for Jacques Cartier. While it is well for us to remember the valour and heroism of our own men, and

the resourcefulness which they have shown at every time of testing or of trial, let us not forget what those splendid men from the United Kingdom have done on the soil of France and Belgium; and let us not forget the tremendous losses which the population of the United Kingdom has suffered in this war during the past three years, and suffered without repining, suffered without for one moment relaxing the indomitable will and the firm resolve with which they entered the war, and which I am sure will be maintained until the end.

My right honourable friend has spoken of some matters to which I will allude in a moment; but the first to which naturally I should direct my attention is the progress of the war during the past year. I am not quite prepared to view the progress of the war during the past twelve months so unfavourably as my right honourable friend would suggest. If we compare the end of 1916 with the end of 1915, I think we shall find that very considerable progress has been made by the allied nations, and that the successes of Germany have, perhaps, been more spectacular than real. I remember that at the end of 1915 we had abandoned Gallipoli, and Serbia had been crushed; the outlook was not very good at that time. There has been since a spectacular German success in Rumania, and they are entitled to whatever consolation they may find in that; I think there is good reason for believing that it may be found more spectacular than real. My right hon. friend has referred to the German defeat at Verdun. It can be classed as nothing else—a continuous, persistent effort for five months, with an enormous sacrifice of men, ending in absolute defeat after the magnificent armies of France had won back in three or four days all that the Germans had gained during five months, and won it back at a cost of probably one-twentieth of what the Germans had expended in winning it in the first instance. That was followed by the magnificent Russian success, which involved the capture of no less than 500,000 prisoners from the enemy, and probably a total loss of one and a half million men. Since then we know that the British and French have demonstrated in the battle of the Somme their ability to break the German line when it becomes worth while to do so. From what we have learned from the press—I speak from no official information on the subject—there can be no doubt that if two more weeks of fine weather had