

THE WAR: WHAT ENGLAND IS DOING.

An Answer to the Question, Why Doesn't England Do Something?

By John Henry Culley in the Navy (U. S.) Magazine for May, 1916.

Firstly, Britain's control of the sea is epic. No episode in the long history of the world approaches it in grandeur, vastness, completeness. A whole gigantic phase of the enemy's life has been suddenly blotted out; has evaporated; has apparently ceased to exist. The "silent victories"—as an eloquent Belgian calls them—of the British fleet find no headlines in the newspapers, yet they represent, so far, the one overwhelmingly decisive factor of the war. The British are accused of being backward, inefficient; yet Frederick Palmer says of their navy: "The British navy wanted nothing in the way of modern preparation. It led in all mechanical processes. Not a single bit of equipment or a single tool for war was lacking. The British navy was an up-to-date organization." It has done all that was expected of it; it has met with an amazing energy and ingenuity new obstacles such as the submarine danger. Under its protection the vast merchant service of Britain proceeds as usual; her ships, and those of her allies and the neutral countries sail the sea practically unmolested; every week four thousand trading vessels touch and leave British ports, load and unload, with quiet regularity—only the length of the state of New Mexico from a hostile fleet, the second greatest the world has ever known; innumerable convoys of troops pass unhindered and without mishap from every quarter of the globe; the fishery of the Scotch and English coasts ply their trade as usual. Meanwhile the patrol of the dark waters of the North Sea continues ceaselessly, countless coaling craft plying to and fro to feed the warships; a close blockade is maintained over a thousand miles of coast; ships are watched with sleepless vigilance; the oceans are alive with submarine chasers, newly contrived and built for the purpose; British submarines sink ships in the Baltic and dodge about the Sea of Marmora. Why doesn't Britain do something?

Well, at the beginning of the war Britain could only muster all told 200,000 soldiers. The allies asked her 120,000, they now want 4,000,000. Her artillery was not even on a par with the number of men; only a few guns; those of the wrong kind. She had no officers to train soldiers; no place to put men in, not even a shed; no ammunition, no establishments for making ammunition of any kind; no considerable factories for making guns; no organization of any kind; no general staff; nothing. (It is not my purpose here to discuss the question why Britain found herself in this position, though I know something about it, having a brother-in-law who, or several years, has been stumping Britain from end to end in a valiant endeavor to wake the people up to a realization of the German

peril.) The allies, as I said, asked her at first for 120,000 men; they ask her now for 4,000,000. So she started to work, started with nothing. To-day Great Britain is an armed camp. From end to end of the country there is hardly a man, woman, or child that isn't working—drilling, or making ammunition, or guarding the coasts, or doing police duty, or watching for Zeppelins, or making uniforms, or moving provisions of all kinds for what will soon be an army of four and one-half million men, with the British navy thrown in. Out of nothing she has now in full blast 2,000 munition factories employing a million men. Factory after factory turns out big guns. "Our largest guns at the beginning of the war," says Lloyd George, "are our smallest now." (In fact, the men at the front say they are practically useless.) She has reduced the cost of shell 40 per cent.; she has increased the output of machine guns five-fold since June; trench mortars are produced every fortnight in the whole first year of the war.

"A neutral," writing in the London Times, says: "I have just crossed Britain from one end to the other. Britain at last is mobilized for war. Her achievement to-day far surpasses the wildest German idea of 'Kottosol.' No more striking example of national energy, directed, consolidated, and centralized under direct government can be found. The master mind behind this gigantic enterprise has created a compulsory industrial system, stronger and more powerful than any hitherto devised, even in Germany." It is all practically, the work of six months; and is of course only a beginning.

Meanwhile the shipyards travel ceaselessly. In spite of submarine losses, Great Britain's merchant fleet is larger than at the opening of the war; while General Wood asserts that she has built more ships, dreadnaughts and submarines, since the war began than the United States navy possesses. Then she has enrolled and drilled an army of 3,000,000 men; equipping and arming them; all out of nothing—a city larger in the aggregate than Chicago has had to be improvised in a few months to hold them. Some of these men are not yet available for service, because there are not even now enough guns to send on with them. But even as it is, Great Britain has a million men on the western front, perfectly organized, and it is thought, better fed than any other troops in the war, with what is believed to be, perhaps, the most perfect medical organization that has ever been put in the field; she has an army at Salonika; she is fighting fiercely in the hundred miles from a regular base, in Mesopotamia; and has a large force in Egypt; she holds German Southwest Africa, and has got pos-

session of the Cameroons; while amid all the miscalculations and misadventures surrounding her, she calmly despatches one of her most successful generals with a large force of men, to German East Africa, the last of Germany's colonies (though of course, she has been fighting there all through the war—an exhibition of sangfroid that could only emanate from Britain). Meanwhile forces have had to be sent to various points on the Indian frontier to suppress outbreaks of border tribes; while troops are maintained, of course, in all the non-self-governing colonies and dependencies under the British flag. The above expeditions and undertakings do not work automatically; they have to be furnished with arms, big guns, ammunition, men, clothing, food, aeroplanes, horses (Britain is using probably a million horses), carried over vast distances of sea and land, amid great dangers. Now, why doesn't Great Britain do something?

But that's nothing. On Britain has fallen the task, aided chiefly by America, of supplying with a large part of the manufactured necessities of life and war, including ammunition, France, Belgium, Russia; for Belgium has lost all and France the best of their manufacturing districts. So that Britain, although her industries have been disastrously crippled, is still, in addition to supplying her own needs, exporting goods at the rate of two billion dollars a year; and these exports are steadily increasing. The second largest merchant fleet of the world—that of Germany—being out of business, Britain is conducting a larger than ever proportion of the carrying trade of the world. If her government were to requisition all her merchant ships trading between foreign ports, to-day, the outside commerce of the world would practically cease. A vast enterprise in itself, employing armies of men; a vast business in peace time, but staggering amid the pressure of war. She is caring for boards of Belgian refugees; a friend writes me, "Britain is full of Belgians"—thousands of helpless women and children are being housed, fed and clothed. Charitable organizations by the score add to the press of business. Red Cross outfits at every front, to be supplied with funds, equipment; to be despatched to the different scenes of action. Relief organizations for every ally; for France (I noticed a large shipment of field seeds and sheep from British farmers to ruined French farmers, the other day); for Belgium; for Serbia; for Poland. One wonders how they get their relief stuff through to the front, but they do it. Blue Cross outfits for the horses of France and Italy; (the Blue Cross hospital is purely a British organization); funds for tobacco and extra comforts for the soldiers and sailors; overseas aircraft funds—the mind grows baffled—all requiring means, administration, transport. I give it

up; for over and above all this, the financial affairs and accounts of the nation, covering an expenditure of \$7,000,000,000 per annum for the war alone, are being quietly attended to; while the everyday needs and concerns of the four or five hundred million inhabitants of the British empire have to be provided for. Why the devil doesn't Great Britain wake up and do something?

"I give it up," I said a moment ago, but I had forgotten the British women—those militant suffragists, etc. Well, over and above hospital relief, ammunition, recruiting work and so forth, girls are taking the place of blacksmiths, making shoes for army horses. Cultivated, aristocratic women—members of golf and hockey, and hunt clubs—are working on farms, hauling the teams, pitching the hay, driving the cattle to market; are taking charge of army remount depots, where they feed, and doctor and groom the horses; are acting as chauffeurs.

—Mr. Lloyd George has a woman chaffeur—as constables, street car conductors, "dummers," "lady commercials" open up their sample cases and display their goods—doing any kind of work, in fact, that turns up, and clamoring for more. At the various fronts hundreds of British women are living, through all kinds of weather, in tents just behind the firing lines, acting as stretcher bearers, and the only women of any country doing this work—driving the motor ambulances.

It may interest my readers to have a little first hand evidence on the spirit of the average Britisher in the present crisis. A brother, who has a physical defect and cannot serve, wrote, in October last: "Here no one can think of anything but the war. We have raised three million men voluntarily, which must be a world's record, and people in all walks of life, unit for the field, are making ammunition. G—a (step-brother) was shot about three weeks ago, but is recovering; the bullet just missed his heart. Alas! a good many of our

A Thoughtful To-day! A Thankful To-morrow!

WHEN prices are soaring high on many necessities of life persons of limited means require to stop and think how these prices are going to affect their income. If not increasing in proportion to the cost of living a few thoughtful moments will suggest the need for economy. Then the problems arises HOW? A solution lies in exercising care where they buy and what they pay for their requirements. Our advice is buy at the old prices, where and when you can. This is made practicable on many useful and necessary articles of wear obtainable at our store. Purchase here. To-morrow you will be thankful.

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friends are killed, mostly boys. I makes one savage to think that one can't be in it. Poor J. R. who had retired, went out in command of the new N. D. levies and was killed at the head of his men the first day they were in action, at Ypres. It is a good way to die, but alas! denied to a lot of us.

A brother-in-law, second in command of the new K. R. R. battalions, wrote somewhat earlier: "I am drilling a battalion of recruits. We have just got to the bayonet stage. The men are as keen as pepper, and wild to get to the front. They are now in the trenches in France."

If I make no reference to France, incomparable France; and Italy; and Canada, who proposes to give the empire one-eighth of her male population; and gallant Australia and New Zealand, it is purely because their case falls outside the purpose of this paper.

I hesitate to turn my attention, for a moment, to the case of Germany. I do not wish to make this pamphlet contentious. My idea is simply to state some facts, and try to bring a little more imagination to bear upon them than the average man has time or inclination for. Not that I claim to be without sympathies in the matter; I had sooner be a leper, as white as snow, than the thing they call a "neutral" in such a struggle as this. But there has been exhibited with regard to Germany the same shallowness and cheapness of judgment as has been applied, I think, I have shown, to Britain; and I am a fervent foe of shallowness and cheapness. Let us take a look at the German case.

At the opening of the war, Germany's and Austria's superiority in numbers of effectives was overwhelming. It has remained practically ever since, for the British army is not yet nearly all available, and as for Italy—well, Italy is fighting not the Austrians and the Alps. Everyone agrees that wars are now won by guns and ammunition. We do not know how many guns Germany has had, but she has been able to lend guns to her allies, while as late as last May she was manufacturing one hundred times as many high explosives as Britain. I need not dwell on her general preparedness, which had been developing steadily since the congress of Vienna; in a few days the whole German empire was on a war footing.

But, most important point of all, Germany has sat in the center of the scene of action, her appliances of war all around her, and a network of strategic railroads reaching out in all directions. She has been able with an incalculable saving, as compared with her opponents, of time, labor, risk, and expense, to concentrate troops at this point, withdraw them from that; forward artillery, ammunition, supplies, as conditions demanded.

Let me repeat: My object in this paper is to state some facts, and try to draw logical deductions therefrom; not to make out a case for or against either party in the war. No one but a fool would wish to deny to Germany, in all practical lines of work, an energy, industry, efficiency, such as no other entire nation in history has shown. No one would think of denying to her soldiers, and people at large, infinite courage, fortitude, patriotism. All of us have marvelled at her driving power, at the vigor and efficiency with which her officers seem to imbue the troops of her allies as soon as they take them in hand. And yet, as I regard, as far as possible, in the "dry light" of philosophy, the conditions under which Germany has been fighting up to now; her preparedness in all lines, her complete organization, her superiority in number of effective men, her overwhelming advantage in artillery and ammunition, her strategic railroads; when I think of the Russians, in their great retreat, opposing her with their fists only, and the British, at the opening of the war, with little better—as one thinks over all these things he finds himself wondering again and again, wondering, why it is that Ger-

many has not succeeded in accomplishing more.

I wish I had time to deal with the case of Russia; for Russia has played a most spectacular part in the war, so far. Russia, without railroads, without adequate guns or ammunition, isolated, holding a line—single-handed—against three great powers—reaching from the Baltic to Persia! But I must finish up these remarks with one final reference to Great Britain.

The British themselves have been the most clamorous in their condemnation of everything and everybody. That's a characteristic of the British people; you may class it as a good or bad one, as you choose (as a matter of fact it's both). Everybody constitutes himself a committee of one to "kick" about something. If God Almighty with a cabinet of selected angels, were to establish himself at the head of things, there, some one would be found to complain that the harps were constituting a disturbance of the peace. It is not my object here to say that Britain has made a success or failure. It is my object to disabuse some people of the idea that Britain is driving along, doing very little, to make the point that any intelligent person considering the facts, as he may see them, if he chooses to look for them, and as I have inadequately tried to present them, will find it hard to avoid the conclusion that the difficulties Great Britain has had to face in this war are incomparably the greatest that ever confronted any nation; and that the work she is carrying on in the world, at the present juncture, for better or worse, constitutes the most stupendous, the most staggering exercise of human energy of which history has any record.

No Imagination.

Mrs. Hoyle—I don't like a person without any imagination.
Mrs. Doyle—Neither do I. Every time my husband comes home late at night he has some stereotyped excuse to offer.