

PERSONALITY OF EARL KITCHENER

Britain's War Lord Gives Evidence of Reserve Force

CANADIAN ENGINEER ONLY MAN WHO EVER "TALKED BACK" AND GOT AWAY WITH IT

New Secretary for War Had Training in Desert and Like Nelson He Secured Honors by Delaying Orders—His Way in Dealing With Men Different From Lord Roberts

(By T. H. Manners Howe, in Fall Mall Magazine.)

Though it is seldom that the true proportions of a man's greatness are appreciable by his own countrymen and contemporaries, it is often possible to anticipate the verdict of history by that of more detached foreign observers. In the case of Earl Kitchener the opinion of western and Oriental alike has very definitely pointed to him as the greatest Englishman of his era.

A MAN NOT OPEN TO IMPRESSION

When Kitchener visited Manchuria and Japan upon the expiration of his command in India, the Japanese had themselves out to impress him with various exhibitions of their military power, of which they were very reasonably proud. But the most imposing pageant in the world, its pomp and vanities, are as nothing in Kitchener's eyes. His host viewed his silence, his expressionless immobility, if with disappointment, at least with profound respect. It was, in fact, like their own ideal of impenetrable reserve, and as a Far Eastern friend who was in Kitchener's entourage informed me, Kitchener is regarded by the Japanese today as the greatest European they have ever seen.

Incidentally, my object here is to suggest a new and more accurate estimate of Lord Kitchener's personality. None could be more interesting, if only for the fact that there has been no other modern military or statesman whose preparation for the work awaiting him has provided such an example of reverence to the ancient methods of Providence in the fashioning of his heroism from the days of Moses onwards—amidst the wastes and solitudes of nature.

THE EVIDENCE OF "SILLY SUFFOLK"

There is a common factor in the character of great men which an old writer has described as "reserve force acting directly by presence without means." "It is a sort of familiar genius," he says, "by whose impulses, and whose commands they are not imparted. Such men are often solitary, or, if they chance to be social, do not need society but can entertain themselves very well alone. What others effect by talent or by eloquence such men accomplish by some magnetism."

When the history of Lord Kitchener comes to be written, surely no more fitting words could be found to describe him. It was said of Lord Chatham that there was something finer in the man than anything he said. So with Lord Kitchener there is a strange innate power which always found expression, not in words, but in achievement and in the production of achievement in others.

FROM "SILLY SUFFOLK"

Irishmen like to claim Lord Kitchener as a countryman of theirs on the ground that he was born at Gushinstown Villa, County Kerry, on June 24, 1850. But although his father, Colonel Henry Horatio Kitchener, had migrated to Ireland from Leicestershire two years before the birth of his son Herbert, the family in East Anglia, and in the little Suffolk village of Lakenheath there are records of the Kitcheners going back to 200 years ago, when Thomas Kitchener and his wife Abigail came thither from Hampshire in the reign of the third William.

His mother's family, the Chevalliers of Aspall, in the same old eastern county, had possessed Aspall Hall for over two centuries, and it was in recognition of his mother's family that Kitchener associated in his title the name of the little East Anglian village with that of Khartoum.

Ireland has given many great soldiers to the empire—notably Lord Roberts—but "silly" Suffolk produced the stock from which sprang Earl Kitchener of Khartoum and Aspall.

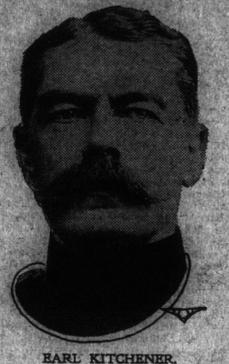
"A SHY SELF-CONTAINED BOY"

As a boy he seems to have impressed observers in different ways. An old friend of the family describes him as a "manly, active and spirited little fellow who could not keep quiet, and consequently, like all boys of his kind, used to get into scrapes, but had great luck in getting out of them." Another says, "he was a smart, intelligent, growing-up lad, promising to be a smart young fellow" while a third remembers him as "quiet and taciturn, good at books, but taking a bad place in outdoor games and gymnastics." To fourth he was "a shy, self-contained boy, who early showed a talent for figures."

HIS FIRST SCENT OF POWDER

They soon bore fruit in an eagerness for any useful experience which crossed his path. Thus even before he entered the army in 1871 he had had a taste of actual war. While still a Woolwich cadet he was staying during a vacation with his father in Brittany, for the Irish estates had been sold. France's last desperate struggle against the Germans was being fought out by brave but ill-organized armies of hastily-raised levies. Young Kitchener offered his services to the French, was accepted, and fought under General Chazay in the

HERE'S BRITISH FLAG WITH BATTLE HISTORY 140 YEARS OLD



EARL KITCHENER.

operations around Le Mans. It was to be remembered afterwards when he and Captain Marchand gallantly drank to one another on the Nile at Fashoda.

A SON OF THE WILDERNESS

But we need not go out of our way to seek for early germs of K's after greatness. He would be the first to deny that there was any lines quality in his nature than is to be found in the generality of young Anglo-Saxon soldiers.

THE TALE OF A TELEGRAM

It was characteristic of an unconventional nature that his first step to fortune and greatness was a piece of indisciplined severity. Living the Alexandrian of the eve of the famous bombardment, and knowing that a telegram recalling him to Cyprus was imminent, he arranged with a friendly press-man to delay its reaching his hands until the weekly boat to Cyprus had gone. Lieutenant Kitchener with the natives and their language, was, of course, a welcome find for any commander like Lord Wolseley, committed to operations in a comparatively unknown country. Accordingly his services were retained, and from that moment his future was assured.

He Wanders Garbed as an Arab

There followed twelve months' unremitting labor, broken only by a journey to Sinai, and then, as an Intelligence Officer, he disappeared into the desert to the south. His nature had become fully responsive and attuned to the voice of the wilderness, and it was a call he could not resist. For two years he wandered about in the desert with Bibber, the Arab, and the Red Sea.

The Arab whose language he spoke and whose garb he wore met him sometimes in the villages, in crowded bazaars, or in desert oases. Living the life of the native, he talked trade and commerce with cross-legged Arab merchants between puffs of his chibouk, and "Soudanese" politics with the Sheikh by palm-shaded wells in the Libyan deserts. And all the time he was absorbing that vast store of information and knowledge which in due season, after fifteen long years, was to materialize in the regeneration of the Soudan.

Kitchener's Way

Genial, affable, kindly, and fond of a joke at ordinary times, when hard work or fighting is afoot he freezes into an uncompromising severity. Hence the constant triumph of his subordinates over apparently insuperable difficulties. Once, in a blazing Soudan summer, a young officer on a desert post, to whom an order had been sent, was down with a touch of sunstroke. It was a direct contravention of K's regulations, for every-one of his officers had to be fit and ready to march in K's invariable half-an-hour in any direction. One of K's staff thoughtfully pleaded the young officer's physical incapacity. "Sunstroke," replied K. "What the devil does he mean by having sunstroke? Send him down to Cairo at once!"

As this was K's invariable sentence of death, the staff-officer hurriedly wired to his friend a warning that he was under a delusion and was quite well. The order was somewhat cancelled and nothing more was heard of the matter.

The Only Man Who Ever "Talked Back"

Only one man is ever known to have given back-talk to Kitchener in the matter of an order. When at the most critical stage of the long advance towards Khartoum, the all-important desert railway was being pushed into the gleaming wastes of rock and sand by young Wady Halfa, K. one day made a sudden descent upon the officer in charge of the work and strongly objected to some method of construction. "It might well have silenced some men. But the young man, at that time unknown soldier of French-Canadian extraction, Percy Girouard, looked calmly into the eyes of the dreaded chief and replied deliberately, "Look here, sir, am I working this job or are you?" Kitchener laughed. "Go on," he said. "Do it your own way." He knew his man and the qualities which gave him such faith in himself.

K's "Must"

The following story affords an interesting comparison between K's way and that of other commanders. It occurred in South Africa. Lord Roberts, requiring some important work to be carried out, sent for a senior officer and gave him his instructions. "How soon do you think you can put it through?" inquired the kindly old squire. "I know you'll do the best you can," "I'll try to do it in a fortnight, sir," was the reply. "Well, I know you'll do your best," smiled Lord Roberts, as he bade the other goodbye. The visitor had no sooner got outside than he ran up against Lord Kitchener.

ALLIED PROGRESS SLOW BUT SURE

London, Oct. 2.—9.30 p. m.—The battle of the Aisne, as it is still called, although the armies contending in it have spread far beyond that river, has been in progress just three weeks now, and no decision has yet been reached. The reports coming from Paris earlier in the week that the results of the Allies' operations were about to be attained were premature, and from all appearances there must be more hard fighting before either side gives way.

The heaviest blows are being given and taken in the western area, where, according to today's French official communication, an extremely violent battle continues, especially in the Roye district, where the Germans have concentrated considerable forces. The communication added that the action was extending more and more northward, and that the fighting front now extends to the district south of Arras.

This, apparently, was a modest account of the northward advance of the French, for private telegrams received in London tonight announced that the French actually had reached Arras. Stubborn resistance is being offered by the Germans in the vicinity of Roye, where earlier in the week they succeeded in occupying the heights which, however, they later were compelled to give up.

Along the front, from the Oise to the Meuse rivers, according to the French report, only partial operations have been attempted by either side. Frontal attacks by the allies have, as a matter of fact, been discontinued, while the flanks are fighting for ascendancy.

On the Allies' right the Germans have made another attempt to cross the Meuse at St. Mihiel, where they got across last week. The German attempt to regain this ground, which they had abandoned when threatened on their flank by troops from Toul, was made yesterday when they tried to throw a bridge across the river. The bridge, however, according to the French report, was destroyed during the night.

GERMAN ATTACK ON ANTWERP

The Germans, who are supposed to have had the assistance of heavy Austrian guns, apparently have failed in their first attempt to break the outer line of forts at Antwerp. Official reports and statements by correspondents say that none of the Belgian forts have been severely damaged, and that the German infantry attacks were repulsed with heavy losses to the attackers.

The opinion prevails here that the Germans do not intend at present, to make a serious attempt to besiege Antwerp, and that the attack they have made is with the purpose of keeping the Belgians within the fortress and stopping sorties, which were disconcerting to the Germans occupying the rest of the country and occasionally dislocated their plans.

Again reports are in circulation that the Germans are making preparations to evacuate Belgium or, at any rate, that portion as far east as Brussels. It is said that their force in Brussels is packing up. Still another rumor has it that the German staff headquarters has been removed from Luxembourg to Mayence.

The battle which promises to be the greatest and most important of the eastern campaign has commenced near Craacow, Galicia, where an Austro-German army, estimated to number 800,000 men, is endeavoring to check the Russian advance.

This combined Austro-German army has occupied a line just inside the Russian Poland frontier, from Craacow through Zenskoocowa to Kalisz, and has had lots of time to prepare strong defensive positions. Both sides are bringing up reinforcements. The Germans are getting their reinforcements from Breslau and Bavaria. All the Bohemian and Moravian railways are congested with German troops and war material.

RUSSIANS DRIVING GERMANS BACK

The German plan of an invasion of Russia from East Prussia has failed, according to Russian official reports. These reports say the Germans got as far as the western bank of the Niemen river, but found strong Russian forces in the hills on the eastern bank. Being in low and marshy ground, the Germans, according to the Russian viewpoint, were unable to advance.

A fight is now in progress at Mirampol, near the northeastern Russian frontier, while further south, in the Suwalki district, the Russians claim to have turned the Germans' retreat into disorderly flight.

More heavy fighting is taking place at Angustowo, 140 miles northeast of Warsaw, in the province of Suwalki, where the Germans have received reinforcements and been able to take the offensive. At Grajewo, twenty-five miles southwest of Angustowo, the Russians have again entered German territory, and at Mlawka the Russians claim a victory over the Germans.

FRENCH IN VICINITY OF AREAS

Paris, Oct. 2, 11.03 p. m.—The following official communication was issued tonight: "First—On our left wing one of our detachments which came out of Arras (a fortified town and capital of the department of Pas-de-Calais) has fallen back a little toward the east and north of that city.

"North of the Somme we have made progress in front of Albert. Between Roye and Lassigny the enemy has directed violent attacks, which have been broken against our resistance.

"Second—Quiet prevails along the rest of the front. It is reported that in the neighborhood of St. Mihiel (department of Meuse, twenty miles southeast of Verdun), there remains no enemy on the left bank of the Meuse."

ALLIES' PROGRESS SLOW BUT SURE

On the battlefield, via Paris, Oct. 2, 9.31 p. m.—A thrill was in the air all along the extended allied lines today. The French and British troops, who have been over a fortnight in the closest contact with the Germans, felt that they had accomplished their hard task of preventing the Germans breaking through the human barrier created between them and their main objective, Paris, and that this meant eventually victory for the Allies.

The lines of the trenches make the battlefield appear like deeply scarred fields. The Allies, who quickly learned the lesson in burrowing, at some places face the Germans within a quarter of a mile. Their field entrenchments offer admirable shelter from the effects of the German artillery, which consequently reduces their casualties, and permits the Allies to await in comparative safety the German attacks, which must be made across the open, and often at terrible cost.

The fury of the German onslaughts was unabated today, especially on the western wing, but their efforts were met with vigor by the Allies, who seemed to vie with each other in throwing all their strength and courage against the attacks.

The scene of the most violent attacks changes day by day. The Germans, finding it impossible to penetrate the allied lines in the vicinity of Rheims and Soissons, quickly transported many of their divisions farther northwest, and today hurled them against Roye. As they failed, although tonight they had not ceased their efforts to batter down the resistance.

The Allies' great turning movement continued today, and their western wing extended toward Arras. Reports from the other end of the line of the front show the progress of the Allies to be slow, but sure. Hundreds of German prisoners fell into the hands of the Allies at every point, and it was remarked that among them the majority were Bavarians, who seem to have been prominent in the front of the German attack.

OLD FLAG WITH BATTLE HISTORY PRESENTED TO NATIONAL MUSEUM

Montreal, Oct. 1.—A British flag 140 years old has been presented under most inspiring circumstances to the Canadian Patriotic Fund. The donor, A. McD. Young, although a resident of Milwaukee, is a true-hearted Britisher as the accompanying letter to Sir Thomas Sloughness testifies.

"Dear Sir Thomas,—I have been—as you are aware—a resident here for fifty years, and yet, while gladly bearing witness that those among whom I have so long sojourned are as fine a people as in my possession ever since (fifty years). It has struck me to send you this flag, the idea I have in doing so being that I am still a British subject. This being so, you will realize how intensely interested I am in the war now going on. I am anxious to do something for the fund Canada is raising. There was held in Milwaukee in 1864, a large fair for the benefit of the then soldiers of this country, and at that fair was exhibited a British flag said to have been captured at Detroit in 1774 (the donor showing data to that effect). It was determined to own that flag, and to that end bought practically the tickets in the lottery covering it. I did win it and it has been in my possession ever since (fifty years). 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