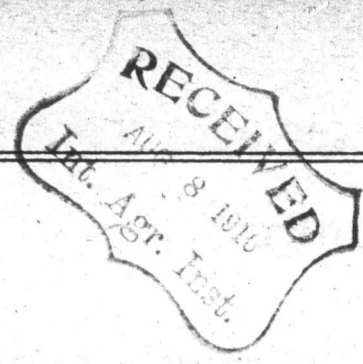


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Special Articles

Enemy Competition After the War.

By W. E. Dowding.

What Spain Thinks on the World War.

By W. W. Swanson.

American Finance and Banking.

By H. V. Cann.

Conditions in the West.

By E. Cora Hind.

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In the Third Year

WHEN the late Lord Kitchener, at the beginning of the war, in reply to a question, said the conflict would probably last three years, many people thought that he could hardly be in earnest, and that the war would certainly come to a much earlier end. Time is vindicating Lord Kitchener's remark and showing that what he said at the beginning was not a mere guess, but a reasoned judgment, based upon material facts of the case, which the ordinary observer either did not know or was not well qualified to understand. We are now entering the third year of the war. Why there have been so few distinct advances by the British forces is made clear enough by a very interesting statement of the situation just given to the press by Sir Douglas Haig, the Commander-in-Chief of the British army on the Continent. From the beginning the Germans were much better prepared for war than their opponents, especially their British opponents. For forty years the Germans had been preparing for the conflict, while Britain had been devoting herself to winning victories of peace through the improvement of the social and industrial condition of her people. There are militarists who readily enough condemn this lack of preparation and insist that Britain should have adopted German methods many years before the war. It is not well to hastily accept this view. What might have been the condition of Britain if, during the past forty years, she had given herself up to the militarism of the continental nations is by no means clear. There is room for the view of those who hold that it was better for her, even at the cost of unpreparedness for war, to devote herself to the services of peace and progress. But whatever view of this may be held, the fact must be admitted that when the war cloud burst in 1914 Britain had neither sufficient army nor sufficient equipment in war material to meet the demands of a great conflict. To have flung her forces—the "contemptible little army" as the Kaiser described it—against the trained horde of Germans and challenged them to decisive battles would have been military madness. The situation which faced the British military authorities is thus set forth by General Haig:

"Our unpreparedness at the start of the war, due to its unexpectedness, is no secret. While France, which had a great national army and universal service, was giving all her strength, we had to begin building from the bottom. The majority of our best regular officers had been killed or wounded in the early fighting. With the remainder as a nucleus to drill and organize the volunteers, who were raw but had the spirit that quickeneth, we undertook to create an army of millions,

which must be officered largely by men of no military experience, to fight the German army, with its forty years of preparation. We had to make uniforms before the men who had enlisted could be taken out of civilian garb, to build plants for the manufacture of rifles before we could arm our recruits, and to build gun and munition plants before we had artillery.

"Meanwhile we had to keep on stone-walling in France with such troops as we had ready against that prepared foe, whose blows were the sturdier in his efforts for a decision owing to his realization that time was against him. Now the new army has had its first practical experience in attack on a large scale."

In short, Britain's unprepared condition obliged her to play a waiting game for two long years. During this period there were many sharp battles in which British heroism was well exhibited, and many gallant men gave their lives for the good cause. But all the time Britain stood on the defensive, not desiring to risk decisive conflict with a foe far exceeding our forces in number and in equipment. Now the waiting period seems to be over. With millions of British men trained to their duty, with abundant resources in arms, ammunition and equipment, with the French and Russians bringing increased power into the conflict on both Western and Eastern fronts, with the Italians keeping the Austrians busily engaged in defending their own territory, the Allies are in a position to assume the offensive all along the line. Already the effect of these new conditions is being seen. The offensive so gallantly and successfully undertaken lately will be continued, not in a manner to produce an immediate decision, but with a firm determination to drive back the invaders from the soil of France and Belgium. The process may still be slow, but it will be sure. And the German people, too long kept in the dark as to the real state of the contending forces, must soon awaken to the fact, which their military leaders must long since have realized, that the war can end only when a complete victory for the Allies has been won.

Mr. Asquith

MUCH interest has been aroused by a remark made several days ago by Mr. Asquith in the British House of Commons. Replying to a question as to the character of the business of the next session of Parliament, Mr. Asquith said he was unable to say who would be responsible for the conduct of business at the next session. In some quarters his words have been taken to mean that he contemplates an early retirement from the position of Prime Minister. Perhaps he meant no more than to