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# THE MAIL AND ADVOCATE.

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## Balfour Gets After Churchill In Plain Strightforward Talk

Says Churchill's Speech Was Unfortunate and Was Calculated to Arouse Doubts About the Fleet—Scores the Colonel on His Apology to Fisher—Says Navy Today is More Powerful Than When Churchill Left Office—Balfour Told Churchill His Suggestion to Recall Fisher was a Paradox of the Wildest and Most Extravagant Kind

LONDON, Mar. 8.—Speaking in the Commons today on the Navy estimates, Mr. Balfour said that the speech made yesterday by Col. Churchill, his predecessor in office, was unfortunate in form and substance; it was calculated, he said, to arouse doubts and misgivings about the Fleet, and the energy of the present Admiralty Board in dealing with national necessities. Balfour denied that there had been any breach of continuity between the present board and its predecessor. Regarding shortage of labor, he said, the Government was doing all possible to alleviate it, if not to completely remedy it.

Referring to Churchill's explanation, his mind had become clearer since he had been in the trenches, Balfour said. The Colonel must have inherited the qualities of the great Duke of Marlborough, who was never cooler or more collected than when in action. He said he considered Churchill's apology to Lord Fisher as little short of an insult to Sir Henry Jackson, Lord Fisher's successor as First Sea Lord.

In bitter tones, Balfour complained that it was under the Churchill regime that skilled shipwrights were permitted to join the Army. He asserted that delay in completing dreadnoughts was due to the fact that Churchill used guns and gun mountings, designed for capital ships, to complete the equipment of monitors. He said he was not pessimistic about the strength of the Fleet. It was more powerful than when Churchill left office, and was being increased in strength constantly.

When Balfour said the guns for the monitors had been designed for the capital ships, Sir Arthur Basil Markham (Liberal) interjected: "Those monitor guns came from America." "There was more than one lot of guns," retorted Balfour.

Continuing, the First Lord said, monitors had proved of the greatest value, but that all the monitors of the world would add little to the strength of the Grand Fleet; they could not work with the Grand Fleet; they were not intended to work with

it. He did not assert that it was wrong to build these vessels which had done very good service in the Dardanelles and on the coast of Belgium. They might do good service again, but it was not right for those who had deliberately, perhaps rightly weakened the Grand Fleet to create those monitors, should turn around and say you are neglecting the Grand Fleet.

A contest between two persons who have occupied the same place in the cabinet, in Balfour's opinion, was neither decorous nor profitable, and to suggest alarms and fears was an act contrary to the public interest. Some monitors had been constructed so hastily, he continued, that even now it has been found impossible to use them, it being necessary to remodel them. Balfour urged his hearers to dismiss empty fears. He said, every kind of ship, regarded as of value in modern war, had been increased largely since the war began.

Churchill's suggestion to recall Lord Fisher to office, he continued, had been listened to with profound stupefaction. He characterized Churchill's suggestion as a paradox of the wildest and most extravagant kind, and proceeded to pay a warm tribute to Sir Henry Jackson. He said he should regard himself as contemptible, beyond the power of expression, if he yielded to the demand to the supersession of Sir Henry by Lord Fisher, made in such a manner by Churchill. Immediately Mr. Balfour concluded his speech, Churchill arose. He said his disquietude was due to doubts as to whether the destroyer and battleship programme was being executed, according to revised plans, and that on this point Balfour had given no assurance.

### WILL LET HIM GO

LONDON, Mar. 8.—Unless the German ships seized by Portugal are released, Portugal's Minister to Germany will receive his passports on Saturday at noon, says a despatch, which gives a report from Frankfurt as a basis for the statement.

The "Munich Nachrichten" despatch adds, says that no ultimatum has yet been presented to Portugal.

### STOCK DIVIDENDS

MONTREAL, Mar. 8.—The Herald announces this afternoon that the Nova Scotia Steel and Iron Co. will pay all common stock dividends deferred, six in number, since dividend payments were suspended in June, 1914.

## Were Driven Out To Be Massacred By Kurd Bands

Russians Find Few Armenians Left When They Entered the City—The Turks Sent Them to Certain Death

LONDON, March 9.—The Russians found only 16 Armenians alive in Erzerum out of usual Armenian population of 40,000, according to information received at Petrograd and forwarded by a Reuter's correspondent to the Russian capital.

The Turkish inhabitants of Erzerum, the correspondent adds, stated that a few days before the capture of the fortress by the Russians all Armenians in the town were driven out by the police in a westerly direction, where the Kurds, who had been forewarned, massacred all of them.

## Not Liable For Military Service

Irish Mechanics Who Cross Channel to Work in Munition Factories in England and Scotland Will Be Exempt From Military Service

LONDON, March 9.—That many Irish mechanics are afraid that if they cross the Channel they will place themselves within the scope of the Military Service Act, is the reason given by the Trade Union officials for the failure of their efforts to obtain skilled labor from Ireland for factories in England and Scotland, where it is urgently needed.

In order to overcome this objection one of the Trades Unions obtained legal opinion that Irishmen employed temporarily on jobs in England would not be liable for military service.

## Getting After King Alcohol

Bradford, Eng., March 9.—National Free Churches Council today passed a resolution calling upon the Government to adopt a thorough going policy on temperance questions and to take more effective measures to prevent the squandering of the nation's resources in drink.

### RUSSIANS STILL PRESS TURKS CLOSELY

Petrograd, March 9.—On the Caucasian front in the coastal district our troops continue to press the Turks closely. We captured the town of Riza on the seventh. On the Persian front, we occupied the town of Senneh, fifty verst northward of Kermanshab.

### TRENCHES RECAPTURED BY THE FRENCH

PARIS, Mar. 8.—In Champagne the French have recaptured portions of the trenches lost on March 6th, according to a semi-official announcement made here today. The situation north of Verdun is unchanged. No infantry attacks were made last night, but artillery fighting continues.

### QUITE RIGHT

SYDNEY, N.S.W., Mar. 8.—The Cabinet has decided to disenfranchise all German-born electors for the duration of the war, following the arrest and internment of several hundred aliens, who are considered to be of hostile disposition.

## CHURCHILL ASSAILED BY PRESS

London Morning Papers Have Some Sharp Raps at Winston—All Agree Present no Time For Opening up Old Wounds

LONDON, Mar. 8.—Churchill's speech in the Commons yesterday, is the subject of many columns of comment in the London morning papers. His speech aroused many divergent views, and opens up old wounds. The attitude of most of the editors is that of outspoken disapproval.

The Times says: "The episode will be remembered more for Colonel Churchill's warning on the score of naval material, than for his recommendation for the return of Lord Fisher. We regret that Lord Fisher's name should have been raised in a manner which is bound to provoke personal controversy. This is no time for allowing personal likes and dislikes to sway in the choice of men."

The Daily News says: "We are not sure that Lord Fisher has not reason to wish to be saved from his friends. We do not like to see his claims associated with a shadowy criticism of the Admiralty and an attack on the Government."

The Standard says: "It is doubtful whether the interests of the navy are best served by the advocacy of an appointment in so public and dramatic

## Violent Fighting Is In Progress from North East Of Verdun to the Meuse

Berlin Claims Some German Gains Around Verdun—Few Villages Have Fallen into the Hands of the Germans—Spirited Artillery Duels on Remainder of Front—French Continue to Shell German Positions on Forest of Argonne

LONDON, March 9.—Fighting of great violence between the French and German infantry has been in progress from Bethancourt, north-west of Verdun to the Meuse, and east of the Meuse from the southern slopes of Cote de Talou, in the Douaumont region, the battle fronts aggregating about ten miles in length. Spirited artillery duels continue along the remainder of the front. About Verdun a continuation of the German drive north-west of Verdun is declared by Berlin to have netted the Germans some French positions over a front of nearly four miles and virtually two miles in depth, which enabled them to capture 58 officers and 3,277 men. The Villages of Forges, Regneville Heiglts, Raben and Cumieres Woods fell into the hands of the Germans. The French did not give up these positions without a strong resistance and suffered heavy losses, especially along the southern fringe of Cumieres Wood, which was occupied recently by the Germans. The French launched a heavy counter attack and drove the Germans out from the greater part of their positions east of the Meuse. The Germans have recaptured Hardaumont Redoubt, over which there has been such heavy fighting and in their line straightening manoeuvre have made progress over a front of about five miles along the southern slope of Cote de Talou, Cote du Poivre, and in the Douaumont region, in the Woivre district, south-east of Verdun, the Germans have forced the French to loosen their hold on the outlying positions they held near the village of Fresnes. Here the Germans assert they captured 700 prisoners. In the Meuse hills the French artillery is counter-shelling the German trenches captured by the French in Upper Alsace. Destructive bombardments of German positions at several points north of the Aisne, and shelling in the forest of Argonne are told in a French official communication. Sixteen French aeroplanes have dropped a large number of shells on Metz Sablon station.

## No Misuse Now Of American Passports

Regulations Put in Force by the United States Have Been so Effective as to Stop all Fraudulent Use of Passports

LONDON, March 9.—The stringent regulations put into effect by the American Government to prevent the issue of fraudulent passports has been so effective that the use of American passports by spies in England has practically ceased. At the present moment not a single person is held in England for espionage possesses any American passport.

Not only has it become extremely difficult for an American with legitimate business to secure a passport, but such close tract is kept of those already issued that spies are unlikely to take the risk of attempting to enter England with forged American passports.

The Morning Post says: "It will need more than vindictive insinuations of Churchill to disturb the nation's faith in the Navy. Col. Churchill, who is mainly responsible for the disastrous Dardanelles expedition, has amazing effrontery to return to the House of Commons, and offer gratuitous advice to the Admiralty."

## French Fire Forces German Troops to Give In and Retire

GOING AT FULL SPEED

LONDON, Mar. 8.—The German fleet consisting of at least fifty big warships, followed by a large grey-painted armed trawler fleet, two big Zeppelins and numerous submarines, was sighted on Monday afternoon in the North Sea, off Terschelling Island, north of Holland, according to a report of a steam trawler which arrived at Ymuiden, says Reuter's correspondent. The fleet was proceeding westward, the correspondent adds.

On Monday morning five large cruisers of unknown nationality passed Ymuiden at full speed.

The German fleet returned to its base this morning, says Reuter's Ymuiden correspondent, telegraphing on Wednesday. A Dutch trawler which was searched by one of the warships, the correspondent adds, reports that many vessels had a peculiar appearance. These carrying several funnels had a sternmast, funnels were painted yellow or covered with yellow cloth, while other funnels were grey.

### FISHER ATTENDS MILITARY WAR COUNCIL

LONDON, Mar. 8.—For the first time since he left the Admiralty, Lord Fisher to-day attended a full meeting of the War Council, presided over by Premier Asquith. It is understood that Lord Fisher was invited to join the war council temporarily, to give his advice on important matters in regard to which his experience would be useful. It is not believed to be likely that he will return to the Admiralty as a permanent member.

## Russian Ships Active in the Black Sea

Turkish Coast Defenses Are Crumbling up Before Russian Bombardment—Rumors of Turks Anxious For Peace Are Again Current

Petrograd, March 9.—The activity of Russian torpedo boats in the Black Sea against the coast towns East of Trebizond is continuing with success.

According to recent despatches from Sebastopol, the Turkish coast defenses are crumbling up before the intensity of the Russian bombardment. There is apparently a growing disposition on the part of the Turks along the Anatolian shore to surrender without fighting. In many cases, according to reports received here, the Turkish population have sent out emissaries in boats to the Russian fleet offering submission to the Russians.

The Russian cruisers continue to bombard Trebizond.

Rumors of Turkey's willingness to enter into peace negotiations with Russia are increasingly current here, but there is no official confirmation that Turkey had up to the present made any actual overtures to the Russian Government.

### P. AND O. LINER AFIRE; BEACHED AND PASSENGERS SAFE

LONDON, March 8.—A Lloyd's despatch from Malta says that the Peninsular and Oriental steamship "Nellors" with fire aboard, was beached, and that the fire has been extinguished, and that the passengers and mails have been removed.

Wave After Wave of Densely Packed Masses Dashed Forward But Could Not Stand The Terrific Fire of the French—The Result of Yesterday's Operations Have Caused Firm Confidence in Paris—French Succeeded in Extending Their Line—Win Back Corbeaux Wood Which They Lost Day Previous

PARIS, March 8.—As a result of yesterday's operations the French line west of the Meuse, in the Verdun battle, now runs from Bethancourt by Corbeaux Wood and the northern part of Cumiers to the upper end of Cote de Loie, and is thus in advance of the first line of resistance constituted by positions running from Mort Homme Hill to the south of Cumiers. This is considered as of considerable importance in the French position in that section. The faith of the public in the solidity of the line west of the Meuse is regarded as justified by the results of the first day's serious attacks. The whole front yesterday was copiously shelled by the German heavy artillery, but the German infantry attacks on positions at Bethancourt on the left of the more westerly of the two plateaux between which the French line runs, completely failed. Wave after wave of densely packed masses dashed forward, but the Frenchmen, having emerged from shelter as soon as the preliminary bombardment had ceased, directed such an effective fire from carefully placed machine guns, accompanied by fire from rifles and 75-millimetre guns, that after struggling boldly again and again, the assailants finally gave up and retired. Encouraged by their successful resistance, the Frenchmen won back Corbeaux Wood, which they had lost the day before. It was considered that the honors of the day rested with the French. But the situation remained undecided.

### FIVE INJURED ARE NOW DEAD

LONDON, March 9.—The War Office announces that five persons who were previously reported as having been injured in recent air raid have died. The total number of casualties in all areas attacked by aeroplanes are: Killed, 9 men, 4 women and 5 children; injured, 22 men, 22 women and 8 children.

### TURKS ABOLISH IMPORT DUTY ON NECESSARY ARTICLES

AMSTERDAM, March 7 (via London).—Constantinople advices state that the Chamber of Deputies has adopted a Bill abolishing for the duration of the war import duties on petroleum, sugar, coffee, rice, linens, watches, drugs and other such articles as the Government may later regard as necessary.


The Turkish Chamber has also adopted a bill extending to fifty years the age limit for military service.

### CLOSED TO ALL SHIPPING EXCEPT THOSE OF ALLIES

WASHINGTON, Mar. 8.—British Admiralty orders announced in State Department despatches from Consul General Skinner in London, exclude all vessels except those calling for examination, or belonging to the Allied Powers, from entering any port or harbour, or anchoring off any part of the Shetland Islands, until further notice.

### ORDER OF MERIT FOR MOEWES' COMMANDER

LONDON, Mar. 8.—Emperor Wilhelm has received the Commander of the German commerce raider Moeve, and personally presented with the Order of Merit, according to a Reuter despatch from Amsterdam.



## A Coat

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