

British Navy v. German Army 195

structural damage. On the 29th the opposition from the shore had practically ceased, and the preponderance of naval gunnery seemed to be established.

The casualties were very slight throughout, but one shell exploded on the destroyer "Falcon," killed one officer and eight men, and wounded one officer and fifteen men. The "Brilliant," an old cruiser, also had a few casualties, as did the "Rinaldo," an obsolete gunboat. These losses, however, bore no reasonable proportion whatever to those which all accounts agree were inflicted on the enemy by the naval bombardment. A conservative estimate put the German casualties during the first four days of the sea bombardment at 1,600 in killed alone.

At the same time the action of the Fleet had the direct result of holding up the German advance along the coast. Without the co-operation of the naval guns the Allies would have been hard pressed in this quarter. As it was, the arrival of the ships brought to bear an overwhelming artillery fire at the very point where it was most needed, and there is every reason to believe that the German plan of seizing Dunkirk and Calais has now been finally frustrated.

Baulked for the time being of its legitimate prey—for the German High Seas Fleet still refused to come out and fight—the British Navy welcomed the opportunity of throwing a portion of its weight into the balance of the land campaign, with such promising results.