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Yours truly,

WALTER HILLIER.

Point-aux-Gaul, Lamaline,
April 1915.

Mr. Winston Churchill On the Dardanelles Great Work of the Navy Rebuke to Grumblers--Organization of the Nation and a Tribute to Lord Haldane

Mr. Winston Churchill, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, addressed a non-party gathering of his constituents in Dundee recently. It was his first appearance at a public meeting since the events which brought about the formation of a Coalition Ministry and his first at Dundee since the outbreak of the war.

The speech will rank among the finest declarations of national policy. Mr. Churchill said nothing of a personal nature beyond a brief remark that the archives of the Admiralty would show the part he had played in all the great transactions that had taken place. To them and to the general naval situation he looked for his defence. As for certain criticism that had been made, he did not think newspapers should attack the responsible leaders of the nation, whether in the field or at home, or to write in a manner to spread doubt or want of confidence. If there must be criticism it should be only the loyal criticism of earnest intention.

He had a word of warning for croakers: "We had much to be proud of and much to be thankful for."

THE SPEECH.

Mr. Churchill, who was received with loud cheers, said:—
I thought it right to take an opportunity of coming to my constituency, in view of all the events which have recently taken place, and also of the fact that considerably more than a year has passed since I have had the opportunity of speaking in Dundee. I have not come here to trouble you with personal matters or embark on explanations, or to indulge in reproaches or recriminations.

In war time a man must do his duty as he sees it, and take his luck as it comes or goes. I will not say a word here or in Parliament which I cannot truly feel will have a useful bearing upon the only thing that matters, the only thing I care about, the only thing I want you to think about—namely, the waging of victorious war upon the enemy.

I was sent to the Admiralty in 1911 after the Agadir crisis had nearly brought us into war, and I was sent with the express duty laid upon me by the Prime Minister to put the Fleet in a state of instant and constant readiness for war in case we were attacked by Germany. Since then for nearly four years I have borne the heavy burden of being, according to the time-honoured language of my patent, "responsible to Crown and Parliament for all the business of the Admiralty," and, when I say responsible, I have been responsible in this real sense—that I have had the blame for everything that has gone wrong. (Laughter and cheers.)

A Great Accomplishment.

Those years have comprised the most important period in our naval history—a period of preparation for war, a period of vigilance and mobilization, and a period of actual war under conditions of which no man had any experience.

I have done my best, and the archives of the Admiralty will show in the utmost detail the part I have played in all the great transactions that have taken place, and it is to them I look for my defence.

I look also to the general naval situation. The terrible dangers of the beginning of the war are over—the seas have been swept clear, the submarine menace has been fixed within definite limits, the personal ascendancy of our men, the superior quality of our ships on the high seas, have been established beyond doubt or question: our strength has greatly increased actually and relatively from what it was in the beginning of the war, and it grows continually every day by leaps and bounds in all the classes of vessels needed for the special purposes of this war.

Between now and the end of the year the British Navy will receive reinforcements which would be incredible if they were not actual facts. Everything is in perfect order.

Nearly everything has been foreseen, all our supplies, stores, ammunition, appliances of every kind, and drafts of officers and men, all are there. Nowhere will you be hindered. You have taken the measure of your foe; you have only to go forward with confidence.

On the whole surface of the seas of the world no hostile flag is flown.

(Loud cheers.) In that achievement I shall always be proud to have taken a share.

Mr. Balfour's Great Qualities.

My charge now passes to another hand, and it is my duty to do everything in my power to give my successor loyal support, in act, in word and in thought. (Cheers.) I am very glad indeed that Mr. Balfour—(cheers)—has been able to undertake this great task.

The operations which are now proceeding at the Dardanelles will give him the opportunity of using that quality of cool, calm courage and inflexibility which fifteen years ago prevented Ladysmith from being left to its fate and surrendered to the enemy.

I have two things to say to you about the Dardanelles. You must expect losses both by land and sea, but the fleet you are employing there is your surplus fleet after all other needs have been provided for. Had it not been used in this great enterprise it would have been lying idle in your southern ports. A large number of the old vessels of which it is composed have to be laid up in any case before the end of the year, because their crews are wanted for the enormous reinforcements of new ships which the industry of your workshops is hurrying into the water.

Losses of ships, therefore, as long as the precious lives of the officers and men are saved—which in nearly every case they have been—losses of that kind, I say, may easily be exaggerated in the minds both of friend and foe.

Victory Near.

My second point is this: In looking at your losses squarely and soberly you must not forget at the same time the prize for which you are contending. The army of Sir Ian Hamilton, the fleet of Admiral de Robeck, are separated only by a few miles from a victory such as this war has not yet seen.

When I speak of victory, I am not referring to those victories which crowd the daily placards of newspapers. I am speaking of victory in the sense of the brilliant and formidable fact shaping the destinies of nations and shortening the duration of the war. Beyond those few miles of ridge and scrub on which our soldiers, our French comrades, our gallant Australians and our New Zealand fellows subjects are now fighting the downfall of a hostile empire, the destruction of an enemy's fleet and army, the fall of a world-famous capital, and probably the accession of powerful allies.

The struggle will be heavy, the risks enormous, the losses cruel, but victory when it comes will make amends for all. There never was a great subsidiary operation of war in which a more complete harmony of strategic, political and economic advantages were combined, or which stood in truer relation to the main decision, which is in the central theatre. Through the Narrows of the Dardanelles and across the ridges of the Gallipoli Peninsula lie some of the shortest paths of triumph and peace.

That is all I say upon that subject this afternoon, but later on, perhaps, when the concluding chapters in this famous story have been written I may be allowed to return again to the subject.

Critics and Criticism.

Now, gentlemen, I am not with the croakers. (Cheers.) I see some of our newspaper friends are reproaching themselves and reproaching others for having been too optimistic. Let them lay their consciences to rest. It is the general duty of the Press, for the most part faithfully discharge, to sustain the public confidence and spirit in time of war. All the great commanders of the past, the rulers of States in times of crisis, have always laboured to discourage pessimism by every means in their power. Our Allies, the French, have a recent saying that pessimism in the civilian is the

counterpart of cowardice in the soldier.

This does not mean that you must not face facts. You should face facts, but surely from the facts of our situation you will find the means of enjoying much encouragement. Why, when we look back and remember that we entered this conflict of military nations, of great States prepared mainly for war, that we entered this conflict ten months ago, a peaceful, civilized nation, that no part of our national life, excepting always the Navy—the British Navy was as ready the German Army, and has proved itself more equal to its task—(cheers)—when we remember that no part of our national life, except the Navy, was adapted to war on a great scale, have we not in all that has happened since much to be proud and much to be thankful for? (Cheers.)

Isn't it wonderful, for instance, that after so many years of peace we should have found ready to hand a Kitchener to recruit and organize our Army, a dauntless leader like Sir John French to command them, skillful Generals like Sir Douglas Haig and Sir Ian Hamilton, a naval Commander-in-Chief like Sir John Jellicoe, Admirals like Beatty and Sturdee and De Robeck, and the gallant Commodore who flies a broad pennant in the saucy *Arcturion*?

Depend upon it, gentlemen, behind them there are many more only waiting for the golden gleam of opportunity to perform surpassing deeds of merit in our cause.

Confidence in the Leaders.

It is the duty of all in times like these to give loyalty and confidence to their leaders, be they the soldiers in the active sphere or the statesmen who sit in anxious council here at home. Give them loyalty and confidence, not only when all goes smoothly, for that is easy, but to make them feel that they will not be blamed for necessary losses incurred in valiant enterprise, or reproached at the first check or twist of fortune. Then you will get your leaders, be they military or civilian, and you will get from them the courage, the energy, the audacity and readiness to run all risks and shoulder the responsibilities without which no great result in war can ever be achieved. (Cheers.)

Now I would like to say something which will get me into trouble. (Laughter.) I don't think that the newspapers ought to be allowed to attack the responsible leader of the nation—(loud cheers again and again renewed)—whether in the field or at home, or to write in a manner which is calculated to spread doubts and want of confidence in them or in particular operations, or to write anything which is calculated to make bad blood between them. I apply this not only to the Admirals and Generals, but to the principal Ministers at home, and especially the heads of the great fighting departments.

Parliament With Closed Doors.

No other nation now at war would allow the newspapers such a license in the present time. If there is to be criticism, if there must be criticism, first it should be only the loyal criticism of earnest intention; but let it be in Parliament. If the speeches are such that we cannot allow the enemy to be a party to our discussions, then let Parliament, as is its right, sit for the time being with closed doors.

But it seems imperative in the interests of the country for the future, and for the safety and success of our arms, that irresponsible or malicious (Cheers.) or old ordid old oil carping should not continue. (Cheers.) We in this country are the firm supporters of a free Press. A free Press is a natural and healthy feature in national life, so long as you have also a free Parliament and a free platform but when owing to war conditions Parliament observes a voluntary, but severe restraint, and when many of the speeches cannot be freely discussed without giving information to the enemy, then the balance of society is no longer true, and grave injury results from the unrestrained action of the newspapers.

I have very much regretted that the Liberal Government, which is now no more, had no opportunity of stating its case in Parliament. I would, I think, have been found that Lord Kitchener had a very strong case to unfold on behalf of the War Office, and (continued on page 3.)

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