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Shells—Nothing But Shells.

The British Political-Military Controversy of French vs. Kitchener.
(By BRIAN PHILLIPS.)

London, July 1.—French vs. Kitchener (Asquith intervening) would be the legal way, one supposes, of expressing the present politico-military controversy, and it looks as if it were capable of stretching out like Jarnyce vs. Jarnyce in Dickens' novel. The newspapers—not being so long-winded as the law makes a victim afford for it to be—condemne the whole dispute into the headline "Shells," and "Shells" it is likely to remain. Certainly the Times and the Daily Mail desire no better label to express their new point of the case, and although they cannot con-

ceal the fact that there are many aspects to the quarrel now, including Lord French's breach of etiquette in attacking men who are either dead or muzzled, they stick to the shortage charge, and thrive on it. The Times says that rather than face a Black Monday in the Commons on the question, Mr. Asquith formed a coalition. The Mail paraphrases this by saying that to give way at all was an admission of guilt, which is a doctrine that could be used in a variety of ways. The public remembers, however, that the first quarter where Lord French was discredited was in the Times and its Sunday paper, the Weekly Dispatch, for on the first Sunday of the Flanders retreat they printed a starting and unjustified message of the alarmist kind saying that Lord French's army had been annihilated, or words to that effect. It was from Lord Kitchener's action

on this violation of all decency, according to the opinion of men with inside knowledge, that the long feud that brought these furies upon himself, and though their attack did good in the long run, it would have ruined the great soldier if he had had less tenacity of character. It is unfortunate that personalities should have been brought into the dispute at all, but justice requires it to be said that it was not Mr. Asquith who began it, and even now he treats the whole against him started, which the Mail and the Times maintained till the day of his death. Fleet Street clings to the opinion that it was Mr. Asquith's defence of Lord Kitchener matter with dignity, responsibility and gravity. One of these days some Liberal cartoonist will draw Mr. Asquith as Achilles fighting for the dead body of Patroclus and the corpse will have the bushy moustache of the late Lord Kitchener.

Where is the Proof?

Lord French's claim that he had advocated the supply of high explosives long before the war began has brought a reply in the nature of doubt from many well-informed masters. It is pointed out that Lord French was a cavalry enthusiast pure and simple, and little likely to set up artillery programmes; moreover, the lesson of the South African War which he cites was not for high explosive, but all for shrapnel, as he admits, he was getting "more than enough." Mr. Asquith simply says that if Lord French sent recommendations to the Committee of Imperial Defence, there must be some record of the same, and none yields to search. One reply to this is that records of equal value have been admittedly lost by the War Office staff only lately, and the fact that records are non-productive is not final by any means. Mr. Asquith can still retort, however, that the onus lies on Lord French to prove his advocacy in the matter went so far back as 1914 at least, and this may be difficult without the production of administrative files and minutes which are covered by the rule of official secrecy. On the actual quantity Mr. Asquith shows that the Government had multiplied the production of munitions by nineteen, but this does not prove by any means that the guns were getting up to a level chance of what they could do, and there Mr. Asquith was at fault. His chief points, judging from the applause of his own followers, drawn together at a meal in his honor a day or two ago, came when he read a Kitchener letter dated April 14, 1915 (a few days before he went to Newcastle), reporting a talk with Lord French, who had assured him there was enough ammunition as the next forward movement required. This was hardly overpowering—certainly not enough to warrant charges of wastage by the troops, and still less a requisition to detach from the paltry stock in Flanders twenty per cent for the Gallipoli expedition; but the Liberal audience cheered no end, and one half suspects, to explain this enthusiasm, that they had counted on little or no reply at all.

Buntiness Which is Double-Edged.
Finally, Mr. Asquith read a letter from Lord French thanking him personally for all his kindness and consideration from the first, and saying "no general in the field in the whole history of war" had been more supported by a Premier's sympathy and encouragement. This was dated three days after the Coalition Government had come into being, with Mr. Lloyd George in charge of munitions, and though it may have been excused on the grounds of personal relations, this letter seemed hardly to cohere with the spirit of a man determined to rescue the army charge of the nation from an obdurate and hopeless Government. Moreover, its terms were hardly those of the "plain, blunt soldier" that the Times exalts in its leader for this very "determination;" and altogether we seem to feel that Lord French is a victim to that common weakness, self-persuasion, after the event. That is why the public and the press now adopt Lord French's example and phraseology, and "venture at this critical juncture to convey to him our inmost thoughts." He says in a note of explanation as to this same letter that as he had been directed to apply to Lord Kitchener in all matters of shells, etc., he considers that Lord Kitchener must bear the blame for keeping these communications to himself. This, however, was not his attitude a week ago. He then made out that the Premier was responsible for his Secretary of War and their war policy; and if the Premier could be thanked in such gushing terms, it looked as if Lord French was repenting his "determination." It remains for him now to reply to Mr. Asquith's statement that if Lord French had had his way we should have been stained by the French with an "indelible reproach," and that it was necessary to send Kitchener out to prevent further retirement, as he did.

The last word, as one surveys a most unfortunate but most instructive quarrel, is this: where is Mr. Lloyd George in the matter? All he has done is to accept the gushing dedication of Lord French's book, and to deny that it was he who instigated his withdrawal from the command of our expeditionary army. Beyond that, silence. We know that up to a point

he stood up and supported Mr. Asquith in 1914 and 1915, even on this vexed question of the supply of ammunition; but when it came to deposing his chief, he was very much upon the spot. Now, when there is this acrimonious fight for prestige between the ex-premier and Lord French, we learn from Mr. Bonar Law that there is to be no State inquiry, and we are to await what there is to be said on Kitchener's behalf by his old and faithful secretary, General Sir George Arthur. But all this while, Mr. Lloyd George stands aside, and there you see the master strategist!

Wise Men Say—

That they that govern most make least noise.
That working will get you farther than whining.
That misery is rust on a mind that has stopped working.
That the smaller the mind, the longer it takes to make up.
That he who lives without folly is not as wise as he imagines.
That the man who never does anything he doesn't like rarely likes anything he does.
That wit should be used as a shield for defence rather than as a sword to wound others.
That it's difficult for a man to keep straight when he's trying to make both ends meet.
That most people would not have so many troubles if they spent less time talking about them.
That the great thing in the world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving.
Every Saturday evening after 7 o'clock, Choice Ends of Beef, Mutton, Lamb, Pork will be sold at cost, ELLIS & CO., LTD., 283 Water Street—Nov 29.

The King and the Sailor.

It was in the Palace of Versailles that Jean Bart, the noted privateer captain, was presented to the French King whom he had served so valiantly. He was the roughest of sea-dogs, and as ready to defy etiquette as to brave the Atlantic gales. Jean got tired of waiting for the King, and to the horror of the courtiers, pulled out his pipe and lighted up. Then the King came in, and, not knowing what else to do, told the gallant skipper that he might go on smoking. Then—"Jean Bart," said His Majesty, "I have just promoted you to the rank of Commodore."
"Sire," replied Jean Bart, "you have done the proper thing."
Mrs. Bridge Hutton, of London, G. B., was fined \$250 for overcharging for whiskey, and not having the strength of the whiskey marked on the bottle in which it was sold.

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A Few of the Reasons, Why?

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These Notes are issued for three years, yield full 7 p.c., and both the principal and interest are payable in New York, as well as in Montreal or Halifax. This provision is of substantial advantage in view of the high rate of premium ruling on New York funds and the early maturity of the Notes.

This issue of Coupon Gold Notes has been authorized, sanctioned and approved by the Board of Commissioners of the Province of Nova Scotia. They are a direct obligation of the Company and rank ahead of the preferred and common shares.

In view of the fact that the Company operates a service indispensable to the public, an unusually stable base is afforded to these securities. During the industrial reconstruction period following the war and while conditions are becoming normal and the trend of trade and industry is being established, an investment in the 3 year Coupon Gold Notes of this public utility, at the attractive yield of 7 p.c., is strongly recommended. These Notes will probably cover the uncertain period of world-wide readjustment and reconstruction, and yet their comparatively early maturity, June 1st, 1922, should stabilize their market price and course, and make them readily saleable at any time desired. Our suggestion is therefore to invest meanwhile in sound, conservative securities which should not be affected by commercial conditions, and it is for this and other good reasons that we regard Coupon Gold Notes as a highly attractive offering, particularly at this time.

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