

HOW EUROPE IS PREPARING FOR WAR

RIGHT HON. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER, M.P. is contributing a series of articles to the London Standard on "Our Military Policy and Needs." The first is as follows:

This summer, following a practice which I have pursued almost without intermission for 30 years, I have devoted a portion of any holiday to seeing something of the work of one of the great armies of the Continent. What I have learned this year is but a continuation and a confirmation of the lessons which many previous years had taught me.

The lessons to be learned are numerous and varied. I shall not attempt to recapitulate them here. But the sum of all my observations leads me to one great conclusion, which is so definite and alarming that I desire to submit it to the earnest consideration of my countrymen. My conclusion is this:

Every country in Europe, save our own, to the best of its ability, and according to its lights, is preparing for the kind of war in which it has reason to fear that it may some day be engaged. How complete, how scientific, how tremendous these preparations are, many Englishmen knew very well; but the majority of the people of this country are not so well informed. Happily for ourselves, we in England know nothing whatever of war as it really is; and, as a natural consequence, we are unable to understand the frame of mind in which those who possess this sinister experience approach the problem of national defence. The result of our ignorance is curious; at least, so it seems to one who has enjoyed somewhat special opportunities of studying both Continental methods and our own. It appears to me to be a fact beyond contradiction that while foreign nations, without exception, are preparing for the wars in which they are likely to be engaged, we alone are doing nothing of the kind. Not only are we making no preparation for the kind of war in which all our experience tells us we are likely to be involved, but, with great diligence and an immense amount of talk, we are making what we are pleased to call preparations for a war in which in all human probability we shall never be engaged.

Truth and Its Enemies

The result is very serious; so serious, that, at the risk of incurring great disfavor on the part of those who hate to look unpleasant facts in the face, I shall do my best to tell the truth, and the whole truth, about the military policy to which this country is being committed.

The task is not easy. It is difficult at the present time for any person to examine, still more to criticise our military arrangements. For four years past an organized campaign has been in progress, the apparent object of which has been to befog and confuse the public, and to divert men's minds from the problem of defence, as a whole, to the contemplation of one subsidiary and not very important part of it. The praises of that excellent institution, the Territorial Army, have been sung in every key, the subject of the Regular Army has been systematically and effectively buried in parliament and out of it. But this is by no means all. The mot d'ordre seems to have been given that every one who refuses to find merit in the official policy shall be denounced and attacked as a public enemy. Solemn wiggings have been administered by important personages to all and sundry who shall dare to criticise or even to question. Exalted names have been dragged into the service of the promoters, and it has been stated, almost in so many words, that for a civilian to doubt the virtue of the new scheme is to be guilty of lese majeste, and is a sign of malevolence and want of patriotism. A similar offence on the part of an officer is to be punished with expulsion from the army. Our soldiers have been definitely told that praise and approval will be welcomed and rewarded. Those whose conscience or whose military experience forbids them to offer this tribute have been bluntly told to hold their tongues or to take the consequences. And the outcome of this process is described as "military opinion."

But extravagances of this kind must in the long run defeat their own object. No self-respecting civilian is likely to be affected by menaces, and the army suffers too much from the continuance of a sham to allow of its voice being permanently silenced. Officers who may expect to find themselves confronted with a real army composed of men, and of trained men, will be the first to suffer from a system which will send them into action at the head of a tiny contingent largely composed of untrained boys. That much harm has been done by system of menace and cajolery which has been pursued cannot be denied; but its success will not be permanent. In the long run it will be found impossible to stifle free discussion and to prevent the plain statement of plain truths. And one of the plainest of these plain truths, which cannot be stated too clearly or too often, is this. We in this country are not preparing for any war in which there is a reasonable probability of our being engaged. On the contrary, we are preparing for an emergency which in all human probability will never occur, and one which, if it does occur, will not be met by the preparations we are making.

Foreign Methods

It may be said that these are abstract and general statements, and that in order to make them intelligible and effective they must be supported by and illustrated by concrete examples, which every one can understand and appreciate. Let me then be perfectly explicit. I have said that foreign nations are preparing for wars in

which they think that they may some day be engaged; and that they are taking the most effective steps of which they are capable to ensure success in such wars should they, unhappily, take place. The French War Office has to contemplate the possibility of another German invasion; and the French frontier from Verdun to Belfort is elaborately defended and organized with the object of making such an invasion impossible. The preparation may prove to be inadequate; but it is in accordance with a consistent theory, it is scientific, it is appropriate. For its purpose it is the very best thing that French intelligence and French wealth combined can produce.

In the same way the German army and navy are perfectly organized for a great aggressive war. Very likely no such war is in contemplation, but aggressive wars have always formed part of the Prussian system; and when undertaken they have always, hitherto, been successful, because the means were deliberately calculated to produce the ends desired.

British Methods, Naval and Military

But when we come to our own country, what do we find? We find, at least so far as one great branch of our defensive service is concerned, nothing even remotely resembling the German or the French method. The navy, happily, is still organized with reasonable regard to the work it may have to do. The Admiralty, to my certain knowledge, have a theory, and a perfectly definite one, as to the functions

which the fleet ought to perform in time of war. Their whole efforts are devoted to the task of enabling the fleet to perform that function successfully. I am aware that in the opinion of some critics the Admiralty are not doing enough to enable them to carry out their purpose. If the critics are right, the Admiralty are open to censure, and it is their plain duty to increase the fleet until its power to achieve that purpose is beyond dispute. But no one even pretends that the navy has not a definite role and a definite object. The stronger the navy becomes, the more easily and the more certainly will it do what the country expects from it.

Now let us turn to the army. How different is the situation. Unless all the teaching of history be wrong and of no account, unless all military experience is to be discarded as meaningless, we are not preparing for war at all. This allegation may seem at first sight to be an exaggeration. But a brief examination of our military position will suffice to show that it is a reasonable and moderate statement of an incontrovertible fact. Indeed, were it not that the British public is rarely willing to pay attention to two subjects at the same time, such an obvious truth would never have escaped attention. Unluckily, the skilful manoeuvres which have been resorted to with the object of diverting public attention from the Regular Army and concentrating it upon the Territorial force have been successful. Parliament and press have been full of the Territorial Force. All the world

has been writing about it, and making speeches about it. The sporting element, so dear to Englishmen, has entered into the discussion of the question. Sides have been formed. Half the press and half the critics have declared that the required numbers will never be raised, and that the scheme will, therefore, be a failure. The other half have asserted with equal conviction that the numbers will be raised, and that when and because they have been raised, the success of the scheme will become, thereby, self-evident. Nobody has ever paused to ask whether, if the whole force were to be completed tomorrow, down to the last drummer boy, it would be of any use whatever for the sole purpose for which it exists, namely, to win a victory for this country in any war in which the nation is to be engaged. There are hundreds of thousands of persons in this country who, if the Territorial Force reaches its establishment, will pronounce it a success, and who, if it falls short of that establishment, will, with equal confidence, pronounce it a failure. And yet, as I shall endeavor to demonstrate, the force may be complete in every detail and yet be an absolute and dangerous failure, from the point of view of the national needs.

The Territorial Force and Its Flatterers

And here it is desirable to pause for a moment to say a word which ought not to be necessary, but which is necessary in view of the prejudice which the promoters of the Territorial Army scheme have endeavored to create

against all those who do not fall down and worship. I write as a well-wisher of the Territorial Army. That force, which, of course, is only the Volunteers under another name, has many admirable qualities, and fulfils some useful purposes. There has been, and there always will be, an immense amount of exaggeration with regard to it; and the force has, undoubtedly, suffered a good deal from the indiscriminate eulogy which some of its friends have thought fit to bestow upon it. We read glowing accounts of the performances of the troops at manoeuvres; we are invited to admire and wonder at the intelligence, discipline, and physique of officers and men. A great many of the things that are said are true, true not of the force as a whole, but of certain portions of it; and it is unfortunate that many commentators and eulogists fail to discriminate. Moreover, it is well to remember that what we are reading in 1908 is merely a reproduction of what we might have read, and what many of us did read, in every succeeding year since 1860. The address of the inspecting officer, informing the officers and men of a Volunteer battalion that their corps is the best he has ever seen, is a formula which has marked, and, be it said, disgraced, Volunteer inspections ever since the creation of the force. The flaming newspaper articles which have been inspired by each succeeding Volunteer review or Easter excursion for fifty years past are almost word for word the same as the accounts of the Territorial Force which we have all been reading during the past few months. There have, of course, been some very valuable and discriminating criticisms in which full justice has been done to the many good qualities of the force, but from which the ridiculous exaggeration which the public is supposed to like, has been absent.

But enough of the inflated and ill-considered language to which reference has been made has found its way into the speeches of persons in authority, and into the columns of the newspapers, to mislead many persons, and to induce the belief that some great and beneficial change has come over the Volunteer Force, which has entirely changed its character. There has been a change, and a change for the better. The creation of a brigade and divisional organization, the addition of subsidiary services, such as the transport and ammunition columns; and, perhaps, more important than all, the abolition of the capitulation grant, are all real reforms for which the Secretary of State and the Army Council are entitled to great credit. But no miracles have been performed, and there is no valid ground for supposing that the statement made by the Norfolk Commission with regard to the Volunteers to the effect that, "taking the force as a whole, neither the military nor the tactical training of the rank and file would enable it to face, with a prospect of success, the troops of a Continental army," and that, "in view of the unequal military education of the officers, the limited training of the men, and the defects of equipment and organization, the Volunteer Force is not qualified to take the field against a regular army," is susceptible of any serious modification at the present time. It is well, therefore, to keep cool when reading the glowing descriptions of today. They may be true and deserved, but they differ neither in form nor in degree from many other descriptions which have preceded them, and which, beyond all doubt, were not true and were not deserved. Nothing but harm is done by these exaggerations. When the public is told, as it was told not long ago, that the field batteries of the Territorial Force, after a period of drill averaging less than ten days for each man, had attained a condition of efficiency equal to that attained by batteries of Regular Artillery at the end of a year's continuous instruction, the result is purely mischievous. The actual statement was to the effect that, "in the opinion of a thoroughly competent observer, the London field batteries at the end of the fortnight reached about the same standard as the Regular batteries, formed at home during our last war, obtained after a year's work." To nine people out of ten such a statement could only have the meaning assigned to it above. It is possible, however, that the writer of the passage referred to may have intended to convey another meaning and to prove that hastily raised units cannot be made efficient. It is probably quite true to say that the new batteries raised in a hurry in 1900-1 were far below the mark at the end of a year, though it is probably a great exaggeration to say that they were no better than the Territorial batteries after ten days' instruction. But if the contention be true, what is the moral? The moral is that, even with all the appliances available in a Regular battery, with skilled professional officers and continuous work, a battery cannot be made efficient in a year. If that is the conclusion which it is sought to establish, it need only be said that it coincides exactly with the conclusion which has long since been arrived at by artillery officers in every other army in the world, but as an argument in favor of creating 180 batteries, with a minimum training of fifteen days every second year, its relevance is not obvious.

If it be true that the work of one year's continuous training can be accomplished in a week, it is obvious that we are wasting enormous sums upon the Regular Army which ought instantly to be devoted to some other purpose. Soldiers do not take statements of the kind to which we have referred seriously; but civilians, who are entirely dependent upon the judgment of others, do believe what they are told, and are quite justified in doing so.

British Columbia Today and Its Prospects

THE problems, present conditions, and future prospects of British Columbia were the subjects of an interview which a representative of Canada (London) had with Captain the Hon. R. G. Tatlow, Minister of Finance and Agriculture in the British Columbia Government, before his departure from London for Ireland.

In reply to the suggestion that, although British Columbia was, less than ten years ago, of all Canadian provinces the best known and most popular in the Mother-country among the best class of settlers—having, in fact, a weekly paper in London devoted entirely to its interests—today Ontario and the prairie provinces are much more in the public eye, Captain Tatlow said:

"Mr. Turner, the Agent-General for the province in London, does not bear out your suggestion that British Columbia was better known ten years ago than at present. The province may have been more in the eye of the mining world, but Mr. Turner found on his arrival in England seven years ago a lamentable ignorance on the part of the general public regarding the many attractions of British Columbia. At that time, owing to adverse conditions in the British Columbia mining industry and the bitter feelings which were aroused in consequence, it was almost impossible for anyone to discuss in England the merits of the province without incurring suspicion. In 1902 arrangements were made whereby exhibits of the products of British Columbia were displayed in various parts of the United Kingdom with the idea of educating the British public as to the great possibilities of the province. In 1903 British Columbia secured the gold medal for its display of fruit, and as a result the Agent-General's office was inundated with inquiries from all parts. Since then British Columbia has become increasingly well known, and is, I understand, more talked about than any other Canadian province, excepting perhaps Ontario."

"It is recognized over here, Captain Tatlow, that, both with regard to climate, scenery, and sport, British Columbia has at least as much to offer to the well-to-do settler as any part of Canada, but the fact remains that your immigration is much more largely from the United States and from the prairie districts of the Dominion than from Great Britain. Why is this?"

"There is no doubt," replied Captain Tatlow, "that the climate and scenery of British Columbia are very attractive, more so, perhaps than those of any other part of Canada. Of course, the greater cost of traveling from the old country has to be borne in mind, but it is a fact that up till quite recently the Dominion Government made no efforts to attract emigration to our province. Attention was principally confined to securing settlers for the North-West, and the shipping companies and various agents adopted a similar policy. I am glad that Mr. J. Obed Smith, the recently appointed Dominion Assistant Superintendent of Emigration in London, is largely rectifying this state of affairs, and British Columbia is now beginning to receive its due amount of attention from Dominion emigration authorities."

"The chief attraction in the province seems to be that of fruit farming," remarked our representative, "but in certain quarters it is urged that, both as regards the market and price of land and labor, the Englishman of moderate means who intends taking up that industry can do better in the Annapolis Valley or in Ontario. What are your views on this matter?"

"Statistics show," Captain Tatlow replied, "that profits from fruit farming in British Columbia are greater than those made in the eastern provinces. This may be accounted for by

the large market in the Northwest for our fruit. Arrangements have been made also for the shipping of certain grades of apples from the Okanagan district to England. A great impetus has been given to the industry by the action of the Dominion Government which prevents dumping from the United States. Previously British Columbia fruit growers had to contend against the dumping of fruit on the market from California, Washington, and Oregon, but that is now a thing of the past, and fruit farmers have benefited accordingly. I might mention that we have a show of British Columbia fruit at the Agricultural Hall, London, on November 26 and 27, and those interested can have an opportunity of judging the quality."

Discussing the exportation of salmon, halibut, and other fish in cold storage for the market of this country, Captain Tatlow stated that the New England Fish company annually place on the Boston market halibut to the value of many million dollars. Salmon has been sent over to the English market in cold storage and the experiment proved successful. Arrangements have now been made by one of the companies operating in that direction to bring over to England an increased quantity, and undoubtedly the exportation to the United Kingdom would continue to grow. Whale fishing on the coast, which was taken up two or three years ago, is proving very successful.

"Regarding the labor question, is it true," asked our representative, "that the labor unions are stronger in British Columbia than in any other part of Canada, and that they are dominated by the American 'bosses' across the border?"

"Not more so than in any other part of Canada. Unfortunately, the Canadian unions are more or less parts of the American unions and under their control, and have to organize strikes accordingly. This is one of the questions we should like to see settled, and hope the day will soon come when public opinion will demand an alteration in present conditions."

"Is it the intention of the Government to take steps to mitigate the trouble arising in British Columbia from lack of domestic servants, so that men with means, either retired officers or officials from India or from the Mother-country, younger sons and others, can enjoy the ordinary amenities of life with suitable domestic service?"

"Last year," said Capt. Tatlow, "domestic servants and men for farm labor were sent out from the Old Country to British Columbia under the auspices of the Salvation Army, acting under an arrangement with the Provincial Government. The sum of £2,000 was lent to the Salvation Army to be used as advances to assist in overcoming the difficulty of a larger fare than that to the North-West. A sum of money was also paid to the Army on the understanding that the emigrants would be carefully selected and taken care of on arrival in British Columbia. This arrangement proved very satisfactory, enabling us to bring out a fair amount of help, and (at least, as far as domestic servants are concerned), the policy is to be continued. It should be remembered also that the majority of retired army officers and Anglo-Indian officials who settle in the province bring out their own servants. I am informed by the Agent-General that a retired officer who recently visited British Columbia to inquire into the suitability of the province as a place in which to settle, expressed himself as very well satisfied with the social conditions, and as a result a party, of which he is a member, has decided to locate there."

Our representative next referred to the recent articles on "Asiatic Immigration," by Dr. Crozier, the well-known Canadian political economist, and asked in what direction the

Government is hoping to overcome this grave disability.

"I have not read the articles," Captain Tatlow said; "but the matter is now out of British Columbia politics. The Federal Government has legislated in connection with the entry of Chinese immigrants, and the Privy Council the other day stated that legislation on the lines of the Natal Act affecting Japanese and other Oriental races is outside the jurisdiction of the Provincial Government, so that the question has become one for the Federal Government to deal with."

"Is the policy mooted by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company of opening up land on Vancouver Island on a big scale to be followed up?"

"The Canadian Pacific Railway Company are carrying on at the present time an experiment whereby a block of land is being cleared on the island for the purpose of selling it to settlers on reasonable terms. If the experiment is successful, and there is certainly every reason to believe it will be, the clearing of land on a more extensive scale will be carried out."

"Has the scheme for the erection of a representative Canadian building on the Kingsway site in London, in which several of the provinces in the Dominion were to have their London offices situated, and in which your Government was said to be interested, fallen through?"

"Practically, it has. The British Columbia Government were willing to take a share of the building, and are still willing to do so, but the scheme seems to have fallen through. Undoubtedly it would be a good move on the part of the Dominion and the various provinces to locate their offices in a central building in which the High Commissioner and the respective Agents-General would be located, and our Government for one would welcome the carrying-out of the scheme."

Questioned as to his personal opinions in regard to Tariff Reform and Imperial Federation and the views of the majority in British Columbia on this topic, Captain Tatlow replied: "I think you might safely say that we in British Columbia are all Imperial Federators to the core, and most certainly Tariff Reformers. I might even suggest that, in return for any preference we might receive from the Mother-country, our efforts in the way of immigration would be made to attract more and more our own people from the United Kingdom. The matter has formerly been left so much in the hands of shipping agents, etc., that probably greater efforts have been made on the continent of Europe than in the United Kingdom, and this is a question that might be taken up."

"Have you personally visited the northern portion of the province which will be opened up by the Grand Trunk Pacific railway," asked our representative, "and what advantages does that portion open to settlers?"

"My last visit to that district was made previous to the creation of Prince Rupert," replied Captain Tatlow; "but the operations of the surveying parties have revealed considerably more good agricultural land than was at first anticipated. As a consequence, the work of prospecting is being carried on with increased vigor, and until that work is concluded I do not wish to make a definite statement on the matter, except that the early anticipations have been very much more than realized."

In conclusion, Captain Tatlow said he was pleased to note that Canada devoted attention to making investors in Great Britain interested in the opportunity which Canada affords for remunerative investments. As for British Columbia, Captain Tatlow said that the province offered today as good facilities as ever for the loaning of money on mortgage at a rate of 6 to 7 per cent on city property, and at an even higher rate on farm land.