

many ships, how much ammunition England had; but they did not know — never could know — the spirit of the English people!

They saw a country which seethed with discontent — Hyde Park agitators who railed at everything British, women who set fire to empty buildings, and destroyed mail-boxes as a protest against unfair social conditions — and they made the *mistake of thinking* that these discontented citizens were traitors who would be glad of the chance to stab their country to the heart. They knew that the average English found golf and cricket much more interesting than foreign affairs, so they were not quite prepared for that rush of men to the recruiting offices at the first call for volunteers! Englishmen may abuse their own country, but it is a different matter when the enemy is at the door. So they came, — the farmer, the clerk, the bank boy, the teacher, the student, the professional man, the writer, the crossing-sweeper, the cab-man, — high and low, rich and poor, old and young, they flocked to the offices, like the land-seekers in the West who form queues in front of the Homestead offices, to enter their land.

I thought of these first recruits — the “contemptible little army” — who went over in those first terrible days, and, insufficiently equipped as they were, went up against the overwhelming hosts of Germany with their superior numbers and equipment that had been in preparation for forty years. . . . and how they held back the invaders — though they had but one shell to