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## ASQUITH'S VISIT TO THE FRONT

British Premier Spent Four Full Days at the Army Headquarters

SAW JOFFRE AND FRENCH

Was Also Driven to Many Interesting Sections of the Line

London, Saturday, June 5.—A despatch to the Daily News from British headquarters in the field, under Thursday's date, says:

"Premier Asquith to-day finished a busy visit of four full days to the British front. He arrived at headquarters as the guest of Sir John French Sunday afternoon, and left this afternoon for London. During his visit Premier Asquith not only saw many of the most interesting sections of our line, but yesterday had a conference of half an hour in the Commander-in-Chief's house here with Gen. Joffre, Gen. Foch and A. Millerand, French War Minister, and subsequently obtained an excellent impression of our allies' lines to the north by a drive he took to Dunkirk. The visit, I am told, is to be regarded as having been of a semi-official character, and the programme which was carried out certainly bears this out.

The Prime Minister was intensely interested in all that he saw, and frequently expressed delight at the arrangements that had been made for his entertainment.

"Monday's tour began with a visit to a certain high eminence, whence a splendid view is obtainable of a large stretch of the British front. Mr. Asquith drove, as far as the bottom of the hill by motor car and then walked up a winding path leading to the summit. A wonderful panorama was unfolded before him. The day was very clear, and various points marking the British line were clearly distinguishable.

Gazed on Ypres Ruins

"In places a winding line of opposing trenches marked by a line of thrown-up earth could be seen, while a few miles in front of where the Prime Minister was standing the shattered ruins of Ypres gleamed in the sunshine. A heavy pall of smoke hung over the place, amid which an occasional shell burst with a flash and a dull boom. Here and there a cloud of dark smoke marked the spot where a howitzer shell had burst. The scene was one of absorbing interest, and Premier Asquith, who was looking very fit, spent considerable time closely examining the various points through his glasses, while the positions were explained to him on a map. After spending about an hour on the hill the Prime Minister proceeded to a certain town, where he lunched with General Pulteney.

Addressed the Troops

"On leaving their headquarters where the luncheon was held the party proceeded to a large field outside the town, where one of the brigades in General Pulteney's command was drawn up. Mr. Asquith went down the ranks and was introduced to several of the officers. The troops then formed a hollow square and the Prime Minister, standing in the middle, spoke a few words to them. Mr. Asquith said he was glad to have the opportunity of addressing the brigade, which contained men from all parts of the British Isles, south, north, east and west. He wanted to assure them that all they were doing at the front was being anxiously watched and deeply appreciated by those at home, and he warmly congratulated the men on their splendid performances in the war. In conclusion he wished them the best of luck in whatever sphere of activity they might be engaged in during the future. The speech was received with the greatest enthusiasm, the men giving three hearty cheers and waving their caps and rifles in the air.

Talked With Wounded

"On leaving the field amid renewed cheering Premier Asquith proceeded to the casualty clearing station, where the wounded are brought straight from the front. Here their wounds are dressed, and all those who are fit to stand the journey are moved as soon as possible to the base hospital. Mr. Asquith made a tour of the buildings, inspecting all departments and walking round the wards, saying a few sympathetic words to every patient. Mr. Asquith expressed great satisfaction at the arrangements made for the comfort and well-being of the patients and then left for general headquarters.

"On his way back the Prime Minister

stopped at the bathing station, where the men on a few days' rest from the trenches can enjoy a hot bath and change their clothing. Formerly a brewery, the building has now been converted for the use of the men, and the enormous vats previously used for brewing beer have been turned into giant tubs, each accommodating twelve men. When Mr. Asquith arrived a long row of men dressed only in their underclothing, were waiting their turn for a bath. The sight was an amusing one, and Mr. Asquith smiled as the long line of Tommies filed along the courtyard and entered the bathing house. Here they tore off their clothes, which were plunged into hot water for cleaning and disinfecting, and, shouting, like school boys, plunged into the steaming tubs, where except for the tops of their heads, they were entirely lost to view.

Cheered to the Echo.

"Such was the scene that Mr. Asquith's eyes met as he entered the hall. Tub after tub stretched away into far corners of the immense room.

and the whole place was thick with steam. On Mr. Asquith's entry many of the men jumped out of the baths, and, crowding around him, raised cheer after cheer. Intense enthusiasm prevailed, and the visitor was greatly touched, though such was the humor of the scene, he couldn't help breaking into hearty laughter, in which all present joined.

"The whole visit was remarkable for lack of ceremony, while it was quite evident that Premier Asquith heartily enjoyed the unusual spectacle. After a thorough inspection the party left the building and motored back to general headquarters.

## HOSTILE FLAG ON THE SEAS

Morning Post Challenges Some Statements Made By Winston Churchill

London, June 7.—The Morning Post's naval correspondent referring to Winston Spencer Churchill's declaration at Dundee, "that on the whole surface of the seas of the world, no hostile flag is flown," cites the admiralty announcement of British mercantile losses from submarines during June, and mentions that a squadron of the German fleet is cruising in the Baltic, and an Austrian fleet in the Adriatic. He continues:

The Flags Afloat

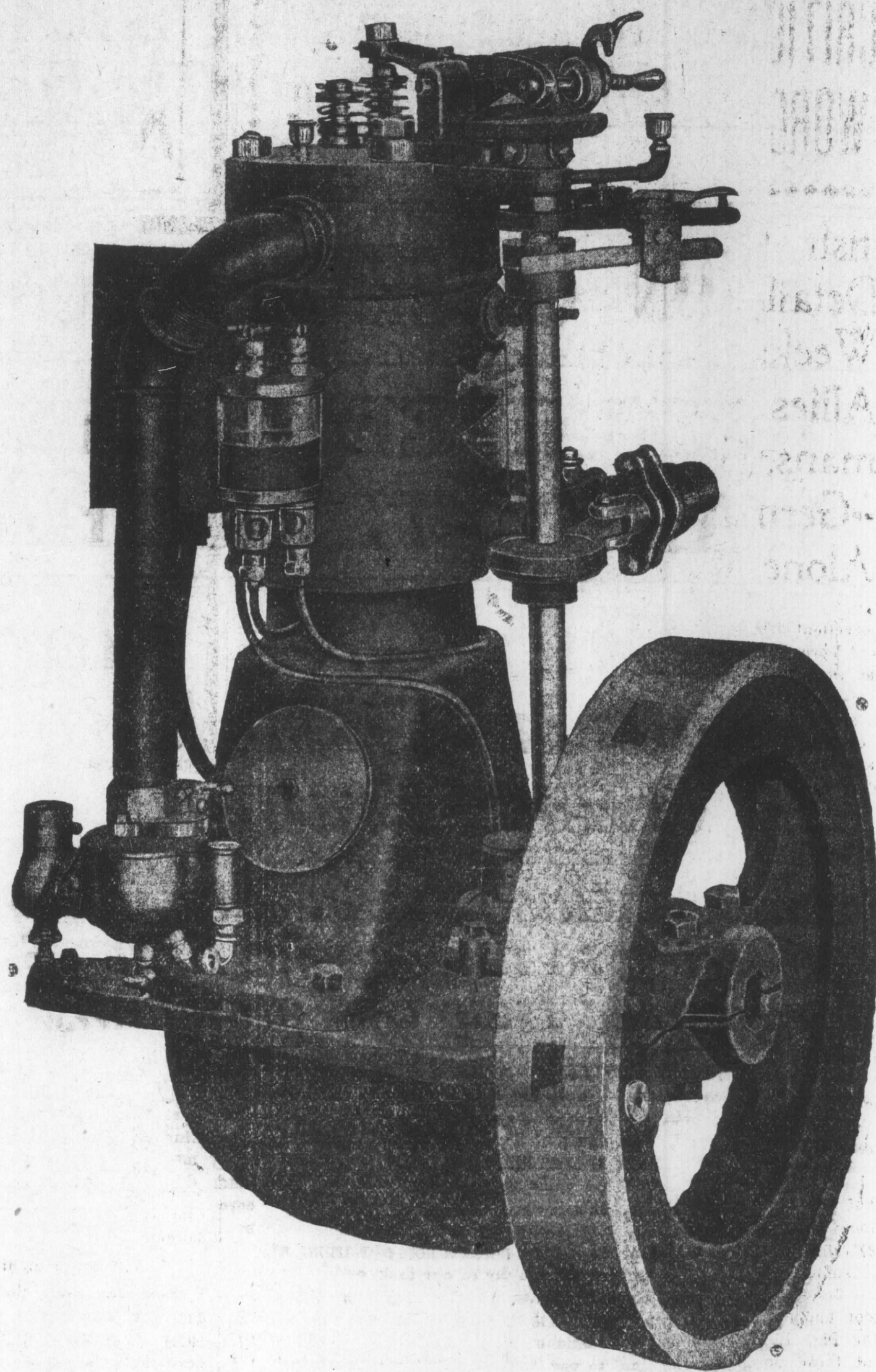
"When Mr. Churchill stated that the terrible stages of the beginning of the war were over, and that the seas had been swept clean, he did not, of course, intend to imply that the German fleet, which is a real danger, had been defeated because, of course, as every one knows, it remains undefeated. It is more difficult to understand that Mr. Churchill meant by saying that the submarine menace had been fixed within definite limits.

The Surplus Fleet

"He naturally possesses information, which is not accessible to anyone outside the admiralty, and by such the definite limit cannot be conceived. It is even more difficult to understand what Mr. Churchill meant by saying that the fleet employed in the Dardanelles was a surplus fleet, which, if it were not attacking the Dardanelles, would be lying idle in our southern ports.

Sarcastic Comment

"No writer on naval affairs would have dared publish such a statement, even if he knew it to be true, nor could he have ventured to say that these vessels would have been laid up in any case before the end of the year because their crews are wanted for an enormous reinforcement of new ships. Mr. Churchill, however, doubtless knows what he is talking about and what the admiralty will do before the end of the year. And the public when they next hear of the loss of a battleship, instead of feeling shaken or depressed, will express a hearty sense of relief.



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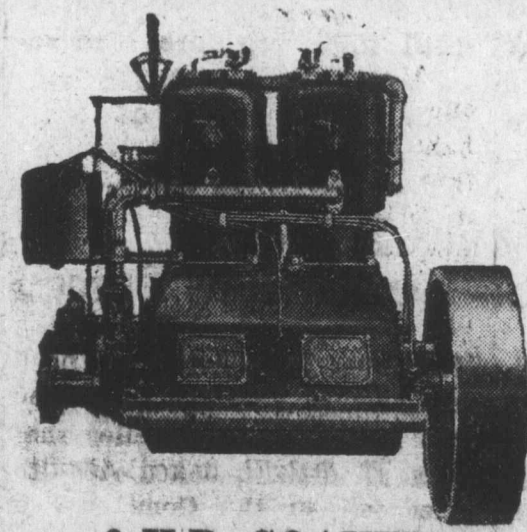
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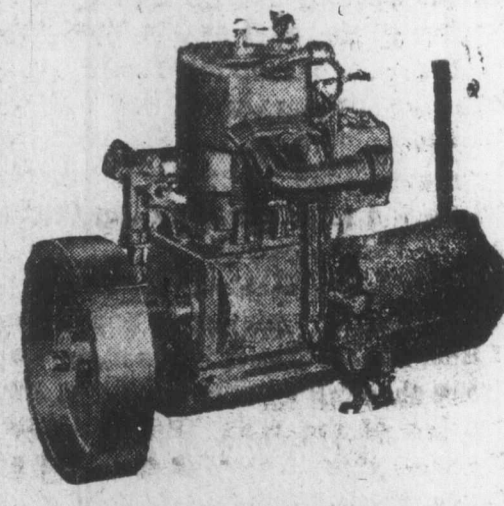
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