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Britain's Preparation for War. By news despatches and the cabled letters of London newspaper correspondents the public on this side of the Atlantic has learned daily of strenuous preparation for war, going forward incessantly both in the British Islands and in other parts of the Empire. In England such preparations have proceeded on a great scale and with urgent haste. The presence of the Channel squadron at Gibraltar, ready for action, is regarded as an ominous sign. An emergency squadron of twelve battleships was already to put to sea on November 5, while a cruisers' squadron of 16 ships, besides a large number of torpedo boats and torpedo boat destroyers, was almost ready. The dockyards were being worked at highest pressure, and preparations were being made for coast defence and the mobilization of troops. The preparations for war are on an altogether extraordinary scale, involving a very large expenditure, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been pouring out millions like water to meet the demand for the equipment of the nation's army and navy for immediate service. What does it all mean? Why is England arming in such hot haste when it has been known for a fortnight that the French Government would evacuate Fashoda unconditionally? Such are the questions over which the people of Great Britain, as well as the rest of the world, have been puzzling their heads. "I have never known public opinion to be so perplexed," writes Mr. Henry Norman to the New York Times. "Everybody has been completely in the dark. Not a single newspaper has received official inspiration. Even Lord Rosebery, who broke a two years' political silence to support Lord Salisbury, has been vouchsafed no information whatever, though it is his policy upon which the country is now united." According to Mr. Norman's view, all this preparation for war means that Great Britain is determined to resist to the utmost any claim which France may make to the possession of the Bahr-el-Ghazel country, an African territory which has been lately traversed by Major Marchand, a French officer, who it is said has established within its borders seven posts, with armed garrisons under the French flag. The extent, fertility and healthfulness of the Bahr-el-Ghazel country and its situation in respect to the Nile and Egypt render it of great importance, and the extent and character of its population add to its value. A traveller there has declared that Africa could be conquered by an army raised in Bahr-el-Ghazel. This country France has looked upon with desire, and if she could obtain it she would thereby be placed in a position to interfere very seriously with British dominion in Africa. But Bahr-el-Ghazel is said to be well within the territory administered by Egypt before the Mahdist rebellion, and therefore a part of the Anglo-Egyptian sphere about which Lord Salisbury absolutely refuses to negotiate. The possession of this country would secure to France the vital position of the original Egyptian territory, enabling her to interfere with the proposed British "Cape to Cairo" route, to send gun boats to the head waters of the Nile and join forces with the Abyssinians, if these were ever hostile to Great Britain or Egypt. Now, it is just this position that France is ambitious to occupy, and, in spite of the warnings of British statesmen that it could not be tolerated, she has persisted in attempts to realize her purpose. This, then, as Mr. Henry Norman regards matters, is the point of danger. The patience of the British people has become pretty well worn out with French manoeuvring in Africa and elsewhere, and the men at the head of the military affairs of the Empire seem to be of the opinion that, since it is improbable that the difficulties with France can ever be settled without an appeal to arms, the war, if it must come,

had better come now when conditions for Great Britain are much more favorable than may be the case in the course of a few years. Whatever truth there may be in Mr. Norman's view, it is to be remembered that Lord Salisbury has intimated that the recent action of France in regard to African affairs is satisfactory to Britain, and that the preparations for war have continued because the machinery, having been set in motion, could not be stopped at a moment's notice.

Lord Salisbury's Speech. The speech of the Prime Minister at the annual banquet of the Lord Mayor of London is an event always looked forward to with interest, inasmuch as on such occasions the Premier is accustomed to deal with subjects of special importance in the field of national and international politics. This year, in view of the controversy with France over the Fashoda incident, the strained relations existing between the two Governments and the strenuous preparations for war which England has been making of late, Lord Salisbury's speech was anticipated with much more than ordinary interest. Judging from the cabled reports, however, it does not appear that the Prime Minister's deliverance was of a very informing and satisfying character. He intimated indeed that any immediate danger of the nation becoming involved in war with France was past, owing to "the great judgment and common sense" displayed by that nation under circumstances of unusual difficulty, but how far France has gone in the way of admitting the Anglo-Egyptian claims and whether or not she has definitely consented to abandon the Bahr-el-Ghazel territory, his lordship does not appear to have explained. The statement had been made in certain quarters that the Government had decided to declare a protectorate over Egypt and that Lord Salisbury would take advantage of the occasion to announce that fact. But if any such expectations had been aroused they were set at rest by the assurance that such action was not contemplated, the Government being well satisfied with the present condition of things in that respect. However his lordship admitted that the conquest of Omdurman had modified to some extent Great Britain's position in Egypt, and what he said on this point, and what was left unsaid, might fairly, perhaps, be taken as an intimation that under present circumstances the nation was not prepared to make any conditions in respect to her withdrawal from Egypt, and that a protectorate was not impossible if the action of other powers should make it necessary. The intervention of the United States in the world's affairs by its war with Spain was alluded to as "a grave and serious event which may not conduce to the interests of peace, though in any event I think it is likely to conduce to the interests of Great Britain." This somewhat enigmatical statement has called forth unfavorable criticism, but probably his lordship meant simply to say that since the interests of both countries in Eastern Asia were largely identical the interests of Great Britain in China would be strengthened by the presence of the United States in the Philippines, though it is possible that America's possession of those islands may strongly rouse the jealousy of other powers. Lord Salisbury alluded to the proposals of the Czar looking to disarmament of the nations, and expressed hearty approval of his motives and sympathy with his aspirations, but intimated that under present conditions it was nevertheless necessary for Britain to make adequate provision for the security of her empire. It cannot be said that the speech was optimistic in respect to the establishment of universal peace upon secure conditions. There were the decaying empires no longer able to hold together and to withstand external enemies and

there were rival powers ready to contest the right of heirship to the falling nations and out of such conditions war was likely to be engendered. These remarks seem to have particular reference to Spain's inability to retain her Colonial possessions and to the dismemberment of the Chinese Empire, and they indicate grave doubt as to whether the problems which have arisen in that connection are capable of solution by diplomatic methods.

The Sirdar. General Lord Kitchener, the hero of Omdurman, was born in 1850. He is of an Irish family. Crotta House, the ancestral home, is near Tralee, on the road to Listowel, in County Kerry. There the Sirdar's childhood was spent. His father also was a soldier, Colonel Horatio Kitchener. General Kitchener was educated at the Royal Military College, Woolwich. He is a tall man, several inches over six feet in height, it is said, and "with steady, passionless eyes he looks imperiously over men's heads. His face is as impassive as the Sphinx, but it reveals the brain behind, a brain made inhumanly unerring by a fine sense of discrimination and an imperious will." His personality is not what is called magnetic. He is emphatically a man for the camp and the field, not for the court. He became popular only when he became famous. Had not the Egyptian campaigns offered him the opportunity required to develop and reveal his great powers of generalship, some one has said, he might not now perhaps be known as other than a painstaking, hard-working, unsocial, subaltern officer. But doubtless it was not a matter of mere chance that the man and the opportunity met in the campaign which has brought fame to General Kitchener. He put his best into the ordinary duties of a soldier's life, and thus proved his fitness to assume the larger responsibilities of leadership.

French Jealousy of England. In national as well as in social life jealousy plays its evil part in human affairs. It is not every man who can rejoice when his neighbor succeeds in some important undertaking in which he himself had met with failure, and for this reason many a man incurs the ill-will of his neighbor. National jealousy arises from a like cause. It is certainly not to Great Britain's discredit that she has been able to succeed above all other modern nations as a colonizer and as a ruler of foreign populations. Her rule has not always been free from error or injustice, but on the whole the extension of her colonial system has been in the interests of the highest and best civilization and her rule in all parts of the world wise and beneficent. In this all the world should rejoice. Nevertheless the prosperity of Britain has drawn envious eyes upon her, and the extension of her colonial power has especially aroused the jealousy of her neighbor France. As a colonizing nation France has been much more ambitious than successful, and jealousy at the success of Great Britain's schemes for the extension of her colonial empire has doubtless had much to do in promoting friction which of late has become so acute that an appeal to arms has seemed imminent. Alluding to the relations of the two nations, the New York Times says: "The old theory of the hereditary enmity of Englishmen and Frenchmen lapsed in the middle of the century when they fought Russia together. It has since remained lapsed in England, but it has revived in France. That a given course of policy would annoy France has never been able to make it popular in England. But that it would annoy England has sufficed to make it popular in France. . . . Ever since 1881, when France declined the joint protectorate of Egypt and left England to undertake that work alone, England has had nothing but nagging from France. Even now, when it is abundantly demonstrated that the British occupation of Egypt is the best thing that ever happened to Egypt, the nagging continues." Continual exasperating attempts—growing out of French jealousy—to thwart British lines of policy, the Times considers, has at length engendered such a feeling among Englishmen that the nation is well pleased with the opportunity which the Fashoda incident has afforded of calling France to summary account and ascertaining whether or not she has the courage of her pretensions.