A. J. P. TAYLOR

ENGLISH HISTORY
1914-1945

PENGUIN BOOKS

Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England
Penguin Books, 625 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10022, U.S.A.
Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Ringwood, Victoria, Australia
Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 2801 John Street, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3R 1B4
Penguin Books (N.Z.) Ltd, 182–190 Wairau Road, Auckland 10, New Zealand

First published by Oxford University Press 1965
Published in Pelican Books 1970
Reprinted 1973
Reprinted with a revised bibliography 1975
Reprinted 1976, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1982

Set, printed and bound in Great Britain by
Cox & Wyman Ltd, Reading
Set in Linotype Georgian

CONTENTS

V. NORMAL TIMES: 1922

VI. THREE-PARTY POLITICS, 1922–5

VII. THE YEARS OF GOLD, 1925–9

VIII. UNEXPECTED CRISIS, 1929–31

IX. HALF-TIME

X. THE NATION SAVED: ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, 1931–3

XI. THE NATION NOT SAVED: FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 1931–6

XII. APPEASEMENT, 1936–9

XIII. RELUCTANTLY TO WAR, 1939–40

XIV. FINEST HOUR, 1940–41

XV. THE GRAND ALLIANCE, 1942–4

XVI. ENDING, 1944–5

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PREFACE

WHEN the Oxford History of England was launched a generation ago, 'England' was still an all-embracing word. It meant indiscriminately England and Wales; Great Britain; the United Kingdom; and even the British Empire. Foreigners used it as the name of a Great Power and indeed continue to do so. Bonar Law, a Scotch Canadian, was not ashamed to describe himself as 'Prime Minister of England', as Disraeli, a Jew by birth, had done before him. One volume in this history treats Scotch universities under the head of English education; others treat the internal affairs of the colonies as part of English history. Now terms have become more rigorous. The use of 'England' except for a geographic area brings protests, especially from the Scotch.[1] They seek to impose 'Britain' – the name of a Roman province which perished in the fifth century and which included none of Scotland nor, indeed, all of England. I never use this incorrect term, though it is sometimes slipped past me by sub-editors. 'Great Britain' is correct and has been since 1707. It is not, however, synonymous with the United Kingdom, as the Scotch, forgetting the Irish (or, since 1922, the Northern Irish), seem to think. Again, the United Kingdom does not cover the Commonwealth, the colonial empire, or India. Whatever word we use lands us in a tangle.

I have tried to stick to my assignment, which is English history. Where the Welsh, the Scotch, the Irish, or the British overseas have the same history as the English, my book includes them also; where they have a different history, it does not. For instance, Wales is an integral part of the

1. Some inhabitants of Scotland now call themselves 'Scots' and their affairs 'Scottish'. They are entitled to do so. The English word for both is 'Scotch', just as we call les français the French, and Deutschland Germany. Being English, I use it.

English administrative and legal system, but it has (since 1919) no established church. Scotland has a different established church, a different legal and administrative system, and a largely autonomous administration. Northern Ireland since 1922 is more autonomous still. None of these things is my concern. On the other hand, it would be impossible to discover a specifically English foreign policy, and foolish, though not impossible, to discover the specifically English contribution to British budgets or to British overseas trade. It is, however, reasonable, I think, to talk about English feelings or English patterns of life. At any rate, this book is about thirty years in the history of the English people, and others come in only if they made a stir in English politics or aroused English interest in other ways. Thus, I discuss the impact of events in India on English politics and do not attempt to narrate India's political history. Similarly, I have passed over developments in Africa which were significant for Africa, but not, at the time, for England.

My book begins precisely on the day, 4 August 1914, almost at the hour, 11 p.m., when the volume by Sir Robert Ensor in this history ends. Its own ending is more ragged. There was much unfinished business: the reordering of Europe, the American loan, the establishment of the welfare state and of Indian independence. The new patterns were much clearer in 1951 than in 1945. However, I had to stop somewhere. I have written in the form of a continuous narrative, though with occasional pauses for refreshment. Most themes chose themselves. For ten of the thirty-one years which this volume covers the English people were involved in great wars; for nineteen they lived in the shadow of mass unemployment. When I had dealt with these subjects, and with the politics which sprang from them, there was not much room left. Some omissions are excused only by ignorance. There were, for instance, advances in science of the greatest importance: beneficent as with vitamins, potentially catastrophic as with nuclear explosions. I do not understand the internal-combustion engine, let alone the atomic bomb, and any discussion of scientific topics was be-

yond me. Nor could I have made much sense of modern philosophy. At any rate, I chose the subjects which seemed most urgent, most interesting, and with which I was most competent to deal.

I have followed Sir Robert Ensor's example and have treated all those mentioned in this book, living or dead, as historical figures – I hope without offence. The biographical notes are designed only for the period covered by the book, though they occasionally stray beyond it. I have received information and ideas from many people and taken them from many books. The bibliography especially could not have been compiled without assistance from individual historians and the authorities of various institutions. I am deeply grateful for all this help, so generously given, and hope that those who gave it will feel free to criticize the results.

My colleague, Kenneth Tite, Fellow of Magdalen College, read my entire manuscript twice. He saved me from many mistakes, questioned many of my judgements, and tempered the dogmatism of my style. He must take part of the blame if the word 'probably' occurs too often. Sir George Clark, the general editor, honoured me by his invitation to write this book and sustained me when I was slighted in my profession. He has read my manuscript with critical care and reinforced it at many points. One other historian gave me inspiration and guidance. I had hoped to place this book in his hands. Now I set down in bereavement the name of Max Aitken, Lord Beaverbrook, my beloved friend.

A.J.P.T.

PREFACE TO THE PELICAN EDITION

For this edition I have corrected a number of mistakes, some of which were pointed out to me by vigilant readers and some of which I found myself. I have also incorporated a little new information but essentially the book is unchanged.

NOTE TO THE 1975 EDITION

For this reprint I have substituted a revised bibliography, including works published up to July 1974.

I

THE GREAT WAR: OLD STYLE

1914–15

Until August 1914 a sensible, law-abiding Englishman could pass through life and hardly notice the existence of the state, beyond the post office and the policeman. He could live where he liked and as he liked. He had no official number or identity card. He could travel abroad or leave his country for ever without a passport or any sort of official permission. He could exchange his money for any other currency without restriction or limit. He could buy goods from any country in the world on the same terms as he bought goods at home. For that matter, a foreigner could spend his life in this country without permit and without informing the police. Unlike the countries of the European continent, the state did not require its citizens to perform military service. An Englishman could enlist, if he chose, in the regular army, the navy, or the territorials. He could also ignore, if he chose, the demands of national defence. Substantial householders were occasionally called on for jury service. Otherwise, only those helped the state who wished to do so. The Englishman paid taxes on a modest scale: nearly £200 million in 1913–14, or rather less than 8 per cent of the national income. The state intervened to prevent the citizens from eating adulterated foods or contracting certain infectious diseases. It imposed safety rules in factories and prevented women, and adult males in some industries, from working excessive hours. The state saw to it that children received education up to the age of 13. Since 1 January 1909, it provided a meagre pension for the needy over the age of 70. Since 1913, it helped to insure certain classes of workers against sickness and unemployment. This tendency towards more state action was

increasing. Expenditure on the social services had roughly doubled since the Liberals took office in 1905. Still, broadly speaking, the state acted only to help those who could not help themselves. It left the adult citizen alone.

All this was changed by the impact of the Great War.[1] The mass of the people became, for the first time, active citizens. Their lives were shaped by orders from above; they were required to serve the state instead of pursuing exclusively their own affairs. Five million men entered the armed forces, many of them (though a minority) under compulsion. The Englishman's food was limited, and its quality changed, by government order. His freedom of movement was restricted; his conditions of work prescribed. Some industries were reduced or closed, others artificially fostered. The publication of news was fettered. Street lights were dimmed. The sacred freedom of drinking was tampered with: licensed hours were cut down, and the beer watered by order. The very time on the clocks was changed. From 1916 onwards, every Englishman got up an hour earlier in summer than he would otherwise have done, thanks to an act of parliament. The state established a hold over its citizens which, though relaxed in peacetime, was never to be removed and which the second World war was again to increase. The history of the English state and of the English people merged for the first time.

Formally speaking, the war came as though King George V[2] still possessed undiminished the prerogatives of Henry VIII. At 10.30 p.m. on 4 August 1914 the king held a privy council at Buckingham Palace, which was attended only by

1. In contemporary parlance, the war of 1914–18 was always, not surprisingly, the Great War. It did not need the war of 1939–45 to change it into the first World war. Repington devised the phrase at the time of the armistice, 'to prevent the millenian folk from forgetting that the history of the world is the history of war'. Repington, *The First World War*, ii. 291.

2. George V (1865–1936), second son of Edward VII: married Princess Mary of Teck, 1893; king, 1910–36; changed name of royal family from Saxe-Coburg to Windsor, 1917; his trousers were creased at the sides, not front and back.

one minister[1] and two court officials. This council sanctioned the proclamation of a state of war with Germany from 11 p.m.[2] That was all.[3] The cabinet played no part once it had resolved to defend the neutrality of Belgium. It did not consider the ultimatum to Germany, which Sir Edward Grey, the foreign secretary,[4] sent after consulting only the prime minister, Asquith,[5] and perhaps not even him. Nor did the cabinet authorize the declaration of war. The parliament of the United Kingdom, though informed of events, did not give formal approval to the government's acts until it voted a credit of £100 million, without a division,[6] on 6 August.

The governments and parliaments of the Dominions were not consulted. The Canadian parliament alone subsequently expressed its approval. Apart from this each governor general issued the royal proclamation on his own

1. Lord Beauchamp, first commissioner of works, who succeeded Morley as lord president of the council on the following day.

2. Why 11 p.m.? It is impossible to say. The ultimatum to Germany demanded an answer *here* (i.e. London) by midnight. After its dispatch someone unknown recollected that German time was an hour in advance of Greenwich mean time, and it was decided that the ultimatum should expire according to the time in Berlin. Why? Perhaps for fear that the German government might give a favourable, or equivocal, answer; perhaps to get things settled and to be able to go to bed; probably for no reason at all.

3. War was declared against Austria-Hungary on 10 August.

4. Edward Grey (1862–1933): educated Winchester and Oxford; foreign secretary, 1905–16; created Viscount, 1916; special mission to United States, 1919; chancellor of Oxford University, 1928–33; a devoted bird-watcher until he lost his sight; the first foreign secretary to publish a full account of his work in office.

5. Herbert Henry Asquith (1852–1928): educated City of London school and Oxford; prime minister of Liberal government, 1908–15; of Coalition government, 1915–16; secretary for war, March–August 1914; defeated at East Fife, 1918; returned for Paisley, 1920; defeated (by Labour), 1924; created Earl of Oxford and Asquith, 1925; rejected as chancellor of Oxford University in favour of Cave, a man otherwise unknown, 1925; resigned leadership of Liberal party, 1926; generally regarded as 'the greatest parliamentarian'. In cabinet, Asquith wrote letters to Venetia Stanley (later Mrs Edwin Montagu).

6. Ramsay MacDonald and some Radicals spoke against the declaration of war.

authority, as did the viceroy of India. The white populations of the Empire rallied eagerly to the mother country. Some 50 million Africans and 250 million Indians were involved, without consultation, in a war of which they understood nothing, against an enemy who was also unknown to them. Use of the prerogative went further. The administrative measures, consequent on the outbreak of war, had long been laid down in the War Book, which Maurice Hankey, secretary of the committee of imperial defence,[1] elaborated. These measures were now brought into force by proclamation. Military areas were closed to aliens; trade with the enemy was forbidden; merchant ships were requisitioned (some 250 at once, and later over a thousand) for the transport of the armed forces.

This reliance on the prerogative was in part a quaint, and convenient, survival; a reminder that Great Britain had advanced towards democracy, and the Empire towards Commonwealth, without any open break in the traditional constitution. It also reflected the general view that war was an act of state, if not of prerogative, with which ordinary citizens had little to do. Even the ministers most responsible assumed that Great Britain would wage war with the armed forces which she possessed at the outset. The British navy would fight a great engagement with the German high seas fleet in the North Sea, while the armies of the continental Allies defeated Germany on land. All would be over in a few months, if not in a few weeks. The ordinary citizen would be little affected. As Grey said in the house of commons on 3 August: 'if we are engaged in war, we shall suffer but little more than we shall suffer if we stand aside.' No preparations had been made for changing civilian life – no register of manpower or survey of industrial resources, no

1. Maurice Hankey (1877–1963) an officer of marines; secretary to the committee of imperial defence, 1912–38; of war cabinet, 1916–19; of cabinet, 1919–38; clerk to the privy council, 1923–38; created Baron, 1938; minister without portfolio and member of war cabinet, 1939–40; chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, 1940–41; paymaster-general, 1941–2. Balfour said: 'Without Hankey we should have lost the [first World] war.'

accumulation of raw materials nor even consideration of what raw materials would be needed. The duty of the civilian was to carry on normally; in Churchill's[1] phrase, 'Business as usual',[2] the notice which a shopkeeper stuck up after a fire.

There were some breaches of this rule. Financial panic was widely expected to follow the outbreak of war. The government proclaimed a standstill, or moratorium, and took over responsibility for bills on neutral and enemy countries. The alarm seems to have been overdone and panic rather the other way – foreigners striving desperately to meet their obligations. Pounds grew scarce on the international market. The American exchange reached $7 to the pound (as against the normal rate of $4.86). The government also took over the insurance of war risks on shipping – an arrangement which showed a profit at the end of the war. It was feared, too, that people might take to hoarding gold sovereigns, then the general currency, and the treasury was empowered to issue paper notes for £1 and 10s.[3] Here, too,

1. Winston Spencer Churchill (1874–1965), grandson of duke of Marlborough and of American tycoon, Jerome: educated Harrow and Sandhurst; first lord of the admiralty, 1911–15; chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, 1915; commanded a battalion in France, 1915–16; minister of munitions, 1917–19; secretary for war (and air), 1919–21; for colonies, 1921–2; supported Lloyd George on break up of Coalition and defeated at Dundee, 1922; Conservative M.P. for Woodford, 1924–64; chancellor of the exchequer, 1924–9; left Conservative shadow cabinet and opposed concessions to India, 1931; supported Edward VIII at time of abdication, 1936; first lord of the admiralty and member of war cabinet, 1939–40; prime minister of National government and minister of defence, 1940–5; leader of Conservative party, 1940–55; Conservative prime minister, 1945, 1951–5; K.G., 1953; the saviour of his country.

2. And pleasure as usual also. County cricket matches continued to be played until the end of August.

3. This was not an abandonment of the gold standard. The notes could be changed into gold at the old fixed rate. Nor did paper money contribute much to inflation. Though the note circulation went up from £34 million prewar to £299 million by 1918, much of this was covered by the return of gold coins to the Bank of England. Legal tender money (i.e. gold plus notes) increased only from £200 million in June 1914 to £383 million in July 1918.

the alarm seems to have been unnecessary. These improvisations were the first wartime act of Lloyd George, chancellor of the exchequer.[1] He had opposed entry into the war until the last moment, and now handled the financial problems without, as yet, committing himself further.[2]

The president of the board of trade was also busy. The railways were taken over by the government, and guaranteed their 1913 dividends – another arrangement which finally showed a profit.[3] In practice, the take-over made little difference. A committee of railway managers ran the railways for the board of trade. The companies were not co-ordinated; and, as late as Easter 1916, leave trains from France were stopped for five days so as not to interfere with holiday traffic. There was one foreshadowing of future developments. War cut off British supplies of sugar, two-thirds of which had come from Germany and Austria-Hungary. On 20 August a royal commission was set up to buy and sell sugar, and to regulate its distribution – a first exercise in state trading which remained autonomous throughout the war. All these arrangements were made primarily for the benefit of the traders concerned – bankers and billbrokers, railway managers and sugar refiners. Otherwise the state stood aside. Parliament dispersed on 10 August. Men waited, aloof, for the great shock of arms.

1. David Lloyd George (1863–1945): educated Church school; Liberal M.P., 1890–1945; chancellor of the exchequer, 1908–15; minister of munitions, 1915–16; secretary for war, 1916; prime minister, 1916–22; leader of the Liberal party, 1926–31; created Earl Lloyd-George, 1945. A master of improvised speech and of improvised policies. Though he was dangerous to most women, he gave his heart to few. After leaving office, he farmed ambitiously, though unprofitably, and propagated the 'Lloyd George' raspberry. He disliked his correct surname, 'George', and imposed 'Lloyd George' on contemporaries and on posterity.

2. In a shortlived anticipation of coalition, Austen Chamberlain, former Unionist chancellor of the exchequer, presided at the treasury board during the emergency, when Lloyd George had to be absent on other business.

3. The government paid £95 million to the railways during the war. Their traffic would have cost £100 million at prewar rates.

Naval plans had long been settled by the admiralty. The Grand Fleet was already fully mobilized on the outbreak of war,[1] and at its battle stations in the North Sea, twenty British battleships facing thirteen German, tense for the Armageddon which Fisher had prophesied for September 1914.[2] On 3 August the cabinet authorized the mobilization of the regular army – an expeditionary force of six infantry divisions and a cavalry division. Mobilization began on the afternoon of 4 August.[3] No decision on the use of the army had been taken before the war. The plans which Sir Henry Wilson, director of military operations,[4] had elaborated with French staff officers carried no commitment. On the afternoon of 5 August, Asquith, as secretary for war, held a council of war – really an enlarged meeting of the Army Council.[5] Sixteen men, 'mostly entirely ignorant of their subject',[6] speculated in the void. They agreed that the four-

1. In March 1914 it was decided, for reasons of economy, to hold a trial mobilization in July instead of the usual summer manoeuvres. On 26 July the fleet was instructed not to disperse; on 28 July it was ordered to war-stations. Churchill, first lord of the admiralty, decreed full mobilization on the night of 1–2 August. This was approved by the cabinet on the following day.

2. John Arbuthnot Fisher (1841–1920): first sea lord, 1904–10, 1914–15; created Baron, 1909; devised Dreadnought type of battleship.

3. Not on 3 August, as subsequently stated by Haldane, and, following him, in vol. xiv of this History.

4. Henry Hughes Wilson (1864–1922): director of military operations, 1910–14; served in France, 1914–16; Eastern command, 1917; chief of imperial general staff, 1918–22; created baronet and voted £10,000 by parliament, 1919; Conservative M.P., 1922; assassinated by members of Irish Republican Army, 1922.

5. Strictly the meeting was summoned by Haldane, who was deputizing for Asquith at the war office. There attended Asquith, Churchill, Grey, and Haldane; the first sea lord (Prince Louis of Battenberg); the four military members of the Army Council; Sir John French who was to command the B.E.F.; Archibald Murray, his chief-of-staff; Haig and Grierson, his two corps commanders; Sir Ian Hamilton; and the two senior soldiers of the Empire, Roberts, who was over 80, and Kitchener, who had been out of England for forty years. Haldane's list of those to be summoned, with Hankey's ticks for attendance, is in the Imperial War Museum.

6. Wilson's phrase. Callwell, *Wilson's Life and Diaries*, i, 159.

teen Territorial divisions could protect the country from invasion. The B.E.F. was free to go abroad. Where to? Antwerp? Amiens? Merely to Le Havre and then ramble across the country? Or stay at home and train a mass army? Wilson cut in. He explained that railway time-tables, unlike horses, could not be changed. There could be no question of helping the Belgians, though this was why Great Britain had gone to war. The B.E.F. had no choice: it must go to Maubeuge on the French left, as he had long planned. The great men found no answer. They agreed: all seven divisions to Maubeuge.

On the following day the cabinet insisted that two divisions must stay at home. Meanwhile, Lord Kitchener[1] had reluctantly agreed to become secretary for war. His prestige propped up the Liberal government. He became at once the symbol of patriotic enthusiasm. In India and Egypt he had run military affairs like an oriental despot; now he did not change his ways. He had no expert advice – the imperial general staff were all off to France with the expeditionary force. Nor did he consult the civilian ministers, whom he distrusted and despised. He ran strategy by occasional flashes of genius. Kitchener foresaw the great German advance through Belgium. Maubeuge seemed to him too dangerous and exposed. On his prompting, the cabinet changed the destination of the B.E.F. to Amiens.

Kitchener soon wavered. On 12 August French staff officers, coached by Sir Henry Wilson, tackled him. They argued that the British forces would be useless if they tried to act independently of the French army. The real French motive was political, not military. They attached little value to the British army and wished only to ensure that Great Britain should be firmly embedded as an ally, instead of remaining – on the later American model – an Associated Power. Kitchener was ashamed of the smallness of the

1. Horatio Herbert Kitchener (1850–1916): conquered Sudan, 1898; commander-in-chief in South Africa, 1900–2; in India, 1902–9; British representative in Egypt, 1911–14; created Baron, 1898, Viscount, 1902, Earl, 1914; secretary for war, 1914–16; drowned on way to Russia, 1916; promised posthumous glory after the war; received none.

British contribution. 'Did they consider when they went headlong into a war like this, that they were without an army, and without any preparation to equip one?'[1] He acquiesced in the French prompting, on condition Asquith agreed, as, of course, he did. Sir John French[2] was instructed to go to Maubeuge. On 19 August Kitchener sent the fifth division to France; on 1 September, when French lost his nerve, Kitchener promised to send the sixth also. These random, and no doubt inescapable, decisions had lasting consequences. The entire regular army, as it existed on the outbreak of war, was sent to France, and it seemed obvious from this moment that further forces should go to France as they accumulated. Moreover, by going to Maubeuge, the B.E.F. ceased to be an independent force; it became an auxiliary to the French army, though as time went on an increasingly powerful one. In previous wars, Great Britain had followed an independent strategy, based on sea power. In the first World war she lost this independence by accident, almost before fighting had started.

The British Expeditionary Force was, in the words of the official history,[3] 'incomparably the best trained, best organized and best equipped British army which ever went forth to war'. It was, however, according to the same authority, 'wholly deficient' in materials for siege or trench warfare – hand grenades, howitzers, entrenching tools; an unfortunate deficiency, since siege or trench warfare was soon to be its lot. The B.E.F. was well adapted for war on the veldt: khaki uniforms, unique skill with the rifle. The Royal Flying Corps, with a strength of sixty-three machines, added a new dimension to observation.[4] Otherwise, modern ingenuity

1. Arthur, *Kitchener*, iii. 265.

2. John Denton Pinkstone French (1852–1925); commander-in-chief, B.E.F., 1914–15; cr. Viscount, 1916; commander-in-chief, home forces, 1916–18; lord-lieutenant of Ireland, 1918–21; cr. Earl of Ypres, 1922.

3. *Military Operations: France and Belgium, 1914*, i. 10.

4. On 23 August the R.F.C. observed the German move to outflank the B.E.F. at Mons. On 3 September a British aeroplane reported Kluck's swerve south east towards the Marne, which exposed the German flank to attack from Paris.

passed the army by. Each division had only twenty-four machine guns, or two per battalion. On the outbreak of war the British army had a total stock of eighty motor vehicles. Guns and supplies were drawn by horses: each infantry division had 5,600 horses to its 18,000 men. Messages were carried from one unit to another, or to and from headquarters, by officers on horseback. There were at first no field telephones or wireless equipment – unlike the navy, where the commander-in-chief was bedevilled by a stream of wireless messages from the admiralty. Such was the force which carried British arms to the continent, and carried also to immortality a music-hall song, *It's a Long Way to Tipperary*.

Sir John French, the commander-in-chief, was a cavalry officer, like many British generals of the first World war: red-faced, 62 years old, exuberant at one moment, easily depressed the next. His instructions, drafted by Kitchener, were 'to support and cooperate with the French army'. But 'your command is an entirely independent one, and you will in no case come in any sense under the orders of any Allied General ... greatest care must be exercised towards a minimum of losses and wastage'.[1] On 20 August the B.E.F. completed its concentration before Maubeuge. French plunged cheerfully into the unknown. Two days later the first shots were fired near Mons. As the British pushed northwards from Maubeuge, they ran, without prevision, into the German 1st army under Kluck, which was swinging south-west through Belgium in order to pass by and then to encircle the French. On 23 August two British divisions faced six German at Mons and, by rapid rifle-fire (which the Germans mistook for machine guns), beat them off. Mons was a small engagement by later standards: the 1,600 casualties were often exceeded in the Boer war. It achieved legendary importance, if only because it was the one occasion when Heavenly Powers intervened in the war. The Angels of Mons, varying in number from two to a platoon, fought on the British side.[2] French, encouraged perhaps by this assis-

1. *Military Operations: France and Belgium, 1914*, i, appendix vii.
2. A more prosaic version has it that Arthur Machen, writer of

tance, meant to stand on the same line the next day. During the night, he learnt that the French 5th army on his right had ordered a general retreat and that large German forces were advancing on his empty left. He, too, ordered the retreat. Three days later, the IInd Corps could march no further. It stood against the Germans at Le Cateau on 26 August, anniversary of the battle of Crecy.[1] The German pursuit was halted, though mainly because the Germans were more eager to resume their march south-west than to destroy the British army. After Le Cateau the B.E.F. could continue its retreat undisturbed.

The retreat from Mons was an impressive physical performance. The B.E.F. marched 200 miles in 13 days, often with only four hours' sleep a night. Strategically, it had grave results. Once French had, as it were, stretched out his hand to the French 5th army on his right, he could not relinquish his grasp. He found himself being pulled due south instead of south west, the direction from which he had come. In one way this was fortunate: it pulled him out of the path of the advancing Germans. But it also pulled him away from his lines of supply and from Saint Nazaire on the Atlantic coast, his ultimate point of retreat. Anxious to preserve his army and staggered by what seemed to him crippling losses, he determined to withdraw from the line altogether and 'refit'.[2] The news of this decision raised alarm when it reached the government in London. Kitchener held a midnight conference with Asquith and such other ministers as could be hastily assembled. He then crossed to Paris and met French at the British embassy on

short stories, invented the Angels of Mons in 1915 during the campaign for raising war loan.

1. The numbers engaged on the British side, and the casualties, were almost exactly the same as at Waterloo: 30,000 and 8,000.
2. Poor French has been universally condemned for this loss of nerve which, if persisted in, might have forfeited victory on the Marne. On 30 August French could only see that the defeated French armies were heading straight for encirclement, and he wished to break out in time. Gort saved the British army in 1940 by taking much the decision which French has been blamed for wanting to take in 1914.

1 September. There was a stormy scene, Kitchener assuming the airs of a supreme commander. French was overawed, though resentful. He agreed to keep his place in the line, 'conforming to the movements of the French army'. Kitchener wrote: 'please consider it as an instruction.'[1] Thus Joffre, the French commander-in-chief, came to command the British army in practice, though not in theory.

On 5 September Joffre decided to strike back at the pursuing Germans. French duly conformed. With tears in his eyes, he said to the interpreter: 'tell him we will do all that men can do'. In fact, the B.E.F. did little. The new order went out too late to stop further retreat beyond the Marne on 5 September. The next day, the B.E.F. started two marches behind the French. As it moved forward it found no Germans, but an empty hole. Kluck, commanding the German 1st army, having first swung south east to encircle the Allies, had again swung west to hold off attack from Paris. Bülow, commanding the German 2nd army, was pinned by the French offensive further east. Thirty miles separated the two armies. The B.E.F. advanced slowly into this gap – the men tired, the officers made cautious by their previous engagements with the Germans. Even so, the British cavalry were sometimes forty miles behind the German lines. On 9 September the Germans began a general retreat, before the B.E.F. had made effective contact with the enemy. There were virtually no British casualties on the Marne. It was a manoeuvre, not a battle, so far as the British were concerned. Leisurely pursuit followed until 14 September. British staff officers speculated whether they would be on the Rhine in three weeks or six. Then the weary Germans, unable to march further, stopped on the Aisne. Unwittingly, they stumbled on the discovery which shaped the first World war: men in trenches, with machine guns, could beat off all but the most formidable attacks. The Allied advance ground to a halt. On 16 September French issued his first instructions for trench warfare.[2]

1. *Military Operations: France and Belgium, 1914*, i. 264.
2. See Note A, p. 62.

Both combatant lines hung in the air. Some 200 miles of open country separated the German and French armies from the sea. Each side tried to repeat the original German strategy of turning the enemy line. This was not so much a 'race to the sea', its usual name, as a race to outflank the other side before the sea was reached. Both sides failed. The Allies seemed to have a splendid opportunity. The Channel ports – Calais, Dunkirk, Ostend, and Zeebrugge – were available to the British. The Belgian army was still intact, far away in the German rear at Antwerp. Nothing was made of this. Joffre wrote the Belgians off. Kitchener refused to send any of the eleven Territorial divisions which were now mobilized. He hesitated over the one remaining regular division, and sent it too late.

Churchill, first lord of the admiralty, plunged into land warfare, regardless of protocol. He sent an ill-equipped naval brigade to Antwerp; then on 3 October arrived himself to inspire the Belgians. In the excitement of the firing line, he proposed to relinquish the admiralty and take 'formal military charge' of the British forces in Antwerp – a proposal which the cabinet received with 'ill-concealed merriment'. This token of British assistance was too slight to stiffen the failing Belgian resolve. Antwerp fell on 10 October. The Belgian army withdrew down the coast, where it managed to hold a fragment of national territory throughout the war. The British marines were sacrificed, most of them being interned in Holland. The affair brought Churchill much discredit. He had operated a bold strategy with inadequate means and thus laid a first stone in the reputation for impulsive irresponsibility which was to dog him for many years. Yet maybe the delay before Antwerp, due rather to the Belgian defence than to Churchill and his marines, prevented the Germans from winning the 'race to the sea'.

The B.E.F. was by now no longer on the Aisne. It had been awkwardly wedged there between two French armies. Joffre agreed that it should move further north. It arrived in Flanders with the intention of outflanking the Germans, just when more powerful German forces, released by the

fall of Antwerp, arrived in Flanders with the intention of outflanking the Allies.[1] The head-on collision from 12 October to 11 November, though known as the first battle of Ypres, was no battle in the old style, where movement in the open field produced decision within a single day. It was the first spluttering attempt at trench warfare, new forces fed in each day on a narrow front until mutual exhaustion followed. At first French thought he was winning in the old way. On 22 October he wrote: 'the enemy are vigorously playing their last card'.[2] Two days later he had to report that the B.E.F. had run through their supplies and would soon be fighting without artillery.[3] He even proposed the construction of an entrenched camp at Boulogne 'to take the whole Expeditionary Force'. On 31 October the Germans broke through the British line; then, as happened so often later, could make nothing of their opportunity – French troops sealed the breach before German reserves could start moving. Ypres was saved from the Germans. The British were saddled with a sharply exposed salient and, what was worse, with the constant temptation of a Flanders offensive, a temptation to which they bloodily succumbed in 1917. The first battle of Ypres marked the end of the old British army. The B.E.F. fought the Germans to a standstill, and itself out of existence. More than half of those who crossed to France in August were now casualties; one in ten had been killed (three quarters of them at Ypres). The high command and the staff officers survived. The old army was gone past recall.

By November 1914 the almost universal expectation of a short war had proved false. Instead of decision, there was deadlock. In France a continuous line of trenches ran from the Swiss frontier to the sea – a thin line by later standards but solid enough to prevent a war of movement. On the eastern front, too, there had been victories, but no decisions.

1. The Germans had twenty divisions at Ypres, against fourteen Allied.

2. *Military Operations: France and Belgium, 1914*, ii. 520.

3. In reply, he was 'requested to see that economy was exercised'. ibid. 203.

The Russians rolled into east Prussia, only to be routed at Tannenberg (26–29 August). They defeated the Austrians in Galicia and were again halted by German intervention. The front was less solid in the east than in the west: movement was still possible on a great scale, but, until 1917, no final victory. The greatest disappointment for the British public was that there was no great battle at sea. The German high seas fleet remained obstinately in harbour. The directors of British naval strategy had made stupendous preparations for the wrong sort of war: everything for an immediate engagement, little or nothing for a prolonged period of waiting. They had not foreseen the danger either from submarines or from mines.

Three British armoured cruisers[1] were sunk by a single U-boat on 22 September; the battleship *Audacious* was sunk by a mine on 27 October. The admiralty were so perturbed by the latter loss that they kept it secret until the end of the war.[2] Scapa Flow, the base of the Grand Fleet, was not secured from submarines. At the (false) alarm of an enemy periscope, Sir John Jellicoe[3] led his fleet in precipitate flight, first west of Scotland, then to the west coast of Ireland. The British fleet did not return to Scapa Flow until well on in 1915 and then remained mostly in harbour. The North Sea became a no-man's sea, occasionally raided by each side. The Germans never ventured to attack British communications with France, still less to attempt an invasion of the British Isles. Perhaps they, too, were deterred by mines and submarines, perhaps by Nelson's long shadow. Their utmost enterprise was to bombard the British coast twice. They killed a number of people at Bridlington and West Hartlepool; broke the windows of boarding houses at Scarbor-

1. *Aboukir, Hogue,* and *Cressy*.

2. The loss was generally known long before. Liners passed the wreck on their way to America, and an illustrated paper published a photograph of it, entitled 'an Audacious Picture'.

3. John Rushworth Jellicoe (1859–1935); commander-in-chief Grand Fleet, 1914–16; first sea lord, 1916–17; governor of New Zealand, 1920–25; created Viscount, 1918, Earl, 1925; received grant of £50,000 from parliament, 1919.

tion of December 1910, the two main parties – Liberal and Unionist – almost balanced.[1] Asquith had a stable and substantial majority with the eighty Irish and forty Labour men. He assumed that their tame acquiescence would continue, apart, of course, from the half-dozen Labour men who actually opposed the war. It did not occur to him that their support would now have to be earned. Bonar Law, the Unionist leader,[2] had no wish to detach them; it was inconceivable that he could head a Unionist government,[3] sustained by Irish Nationalist votes. Though 'meekly ambitious', in Asquith's phrase, Law always bided his time, and this made him the most formidable giant-killer of the century. Balfour, Asquith, and Lloyd George all fell beneath his reluctant axe. At the moment, Law wanted to keep the Liberals tied to the war. He believed, perhaps correctly, that the Unionists could conquer power and even win a general election if they forced the patriotic note. The price would be too high; the Liberals might then turn against the war which they had so tardily supported. National unity would be shattered.

Even so, this unity was not easy to maintain. It was threatened almost immediately when parliament resumed (from 25 to 31 August and again from 9 to 17 September), in order to complete business left unfinished on the outbreak of war.

1. At the general election they exactly balanced: 272 members each. Since then the Conservatives had gain 15 seats from the Liberals and 2 from Labour. The Liberals had gained 1 from the Conservatives and 2 from Labour. Thus, in August 1914 the totals were 260 Liberals and 288 Conservatives.

2. Andrew Bonar Law (1858–1923): educated Canada and Glasgow; b. in New Brunswick; an iron-merchant in Glasgow; leader of Unionist party, 1911–21, 1922–3; colonial secretary, 1915–16; chancellor of the exchequer and member of war cabinet, 1916–19; lord privy seal, 1919–21; Conservative prime minister, 1922–3. His ashes were interred in Westminster Abbey. Asquith said: 'It is fitting that we should have buried the Unknown Prime Minister by the side of the Unknown Soldier.'

3. The Conservatives had adopted the name Unionist, in order to embrace the Liberal Unionists who broke with Gladstone over Home Rule. The name ceased to have much relevance after the creation of the Irish Free State, and the older name came back into common use.

Welsh Disestablishment and Irish Home Rule, having passed three times through the house of commons, were ripe to become law under the provisions of the Parliament Act. Both were placed on the statute book, together with acts suspending their operation until six months after the end of the war. Welsh Disestablishment created little stir, except among Welsh members and Lord Robert Cecil[1] – the Welsh holding that they should have disestablishment at once, Cecil that they should not have it at all.[2]

Home Rule was a different matter. The parties had been locked in dispute over the exclusion of Ulster; no agreement had been reached. The Unionists wanted exclusion of Ulster tacked on to the original bill. Asquith at first acquiesced; then, faced with a revolt of the Irish Nationalists, insisted that Home Rule must go on the statute book undiluted. The Unionists were indignant at what they regarded as a breach of faith. On 15 September they protested by leaving the house of commons in a body, led by Law. Asquith described them as 'a lot of prosaic and for the most part middle-aged gentlemen, trying to look like early French revolutionists in the Tennis Court'.[3] The controversy was mighty irrelevant in present circumstances. Home Rule, suspended for the duration, brought no change in Ireland: the viceroy, the chief secretary, and Dublin Castle still ruled. The Irish question was deeply changed all the same. When it came to be discussed again, Home Rule would be the starting point, not the goal: the Union of 1801 had been given notice to quit. There was another change, less noticed at the time. During the final wrangle, Asquith gave an assurance which he had never given before: 'employment of force, any kind of force' for the co-

1. Robert Cecil (1864–1958): educated Eton and Oxford; third son of third marquis of Salisbury; minister of blockade, 1916–18; lord privy seal, 1923; created Viscount, 1923; chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, 1924–7; High Churchman and Free Trader; after the war, became an enthusiast for the League of Nations.

2. Welsh Disestablishment duly came into force after the war, much to the benefit of the disestablished Church.

3. Asquith, *Memories and Reflections*, ii. 33.

ercion of Ulster was 'unthinkable', 'a thing we could never countenance or consent to'. Thus, the unity of Ireland, too, was implicitly ended.

The row left deep marks. Unionists refused to appear with Liberal speakers on patriotic platforms. There was much more dividing them under the surface. The Unionists, by and large, regarded Germany as a dangerous rival and rejoiced at the chance to destroy her. They meant to fight a hard-headed war by ruthless methods; they condemned Liberal 'softness' before the war and now. The Liberals insisted on remaining high-minded. Many of them had come to support the war only when the Germans invaded Belgium; even the less Radical among them were relieved to escape from a 'realist' position. Entering the war for idealistic motives, the Liberals wished to fight it by noble means and found it harder to abandon their principles than to endure defeat in the field. In particular, the Liberals were determined to maintain the system of Free Trade which they had successfully defended before the war. Many Unionists hoped that the war would kill Free Trade along with other Liberal illusions. There would have been raging conflict between the parties if these differences had been brought into the open. Asquith and Law combined to keep them under cover. Throughout the remaining life of the Liberal government, that is, until May 1915, the house of commons did not once discuss the war.

There were other reasons for this silence. Surprise was supposed to be a vital ingredient of war, and the Great War produced an excessive enthusiasm for secrecy, or 'security' as it came to be called. Military grounds perhaps justified this at first. The B.E.F. took the Germans unawares at Mons, and apprehension that the British might land at the Channel ports in their rear, though this never happened, embarrassed them still more. Soon, security operated more against the British public than against the enemy. The authorities, military and civil, had no idea how to win the war and therefore maintained silence until, by some miracle as yet unforeseen, the war should be won. No war correspondents followed the army to France.[1] In May 1915 six correspondents were invited to headquarters 'for a limited period'; they remained in this temporary, and somewhat privileged, position throughout the war. A press bureau distributed statements from G.H.Q. and from government departments; it advised, on request, about the publication of other news. The war office, relying on the Defence of the Realm Act,[2] censored all cables and foreign correspondence – a censorship which was avowed only in April 1916. Any newspaper publishing unauthorized news, or still worse speculating about future strategy, ran the risk of a prosecution under D.O.R.A., and most newspapers walked warily. Reports of parliamentary proceedings were not censored. In practice, indiscreet questions were rejected by the Speaker, on the private instruction of some government department, and members were struck dumb by their own freedom. Curiously, the Lords were more outspoken than the Commons. In November 1915 Lord Milner[3] brazenly referred to the coming evacuation from Gallipoli – a defiance which the bewildered Germans wrote off as deception. The one leakage in the house of commons was trivial. On 27 January 1916 a junior minister revealed that museums were being used to house government departments and were thus a legitimate object for attacks from the air.[4] Enemy information about conditions in England hardly existed. The public were still more in the dark.

The English people could not be ignored so easily. War

1. The prospective correspondents were instructed to provide themselves with horses. These were taken over by the war office six weeks later.

2. First enacted August 1914, and repeatedly strengthened thereafter. 'Dora', an elderly lady, became the symbol of restriction.

3. Alfred Milner (1854–1925): educated Germany, London, and Oxford; created Viscount, 1902; member of war cabinet, 1916–18; secretary for war, 1918; for colonies, 1919–21; admired by 'the Milner kindergarten' of young men who had worked under him in South Africa after the Boer war.

4. An attempt to take over the British Museum was defeated by Sir Frederic Kenyon, the Director. He suggested instead the Bethlehem Hospital, 'commonly known as Bedlam'.

produced a great surge of patriotic enthusiasm; all lesser passions were laid aside. H. G. Wells expressed this in his Mr Britling, who discarded his mistress in order to make plans for a better world. Mr Britling was typical, too, in his restless bicycling to the nearest village in quest of news. He found little. Instead rumour flourished. The Angels of Mons were one such rumour, universally believed. Even more famous were the Russian troops – 'little short of a million', according to a *Times* reporter[1] – who landed at Aberdeen early in September 1914 and passed through England on their way to the western front. Nearly everyone knew someone who had seen them, though the snow on their boots, which gave the last touch of authenticity, was probably a later, light-hearted gloss.

With rumour came hysteria. Harmless old men, who had forgotten to take out naturalization papers during their forty years in England, found their sons in the army and themselves interned in the Isle of Man. Shops of bakers with German-sounding names were sacked. Hard tennis courts[2] were suspect as gun emplacements, prepared for the invading German army. Flickering lights, particularly near the coast, were denounced as signals to the enemy. The arrival of some hundred thousand Belgian refugees increased the hysteria. They brought stories of German atrocities – some true, most of them inflated by the heat of war: the violated nuns and the babies with their hands cut off were never found.[3] The Belgians were given at first an emotional welcome. Lord Curzon[4] entertained the king and queen at his

1. Macdonagh, *In London during the World War*, 21. The story was denied by the Press Bureau on 15 September.

2. Tennis courts were replacing the billiards room at the homes of richer people – a victory somehow for morality and perhaps for equality of the sexes. (Few women played billiards; many played tennis.)

3. In the first World war nearly everyone believed the stories of German atrocities, though relatively few were true. In the second World war nearly everyone refused to believe the stories, though they were true, and German crimes the most atrocious ever committed by a civilized nation.

4. George Nathaniel Curzon (1859–1925): educated Eton and Oxford; viceroy of India, 1898–1905; created Earl 1911, Marquis 1921; lord privy seal, 1915–16; lord president of the council and member of war cabinet, 1916–19; foreign secretary, 1919–24; lord president, 1924–5. At time of armistice, hoped that there would be 'no be-ano'. Seeing soldiers bathing, was surprised that the lower classes had such white skins. Many of the best stories against Curzon were made up by Curzon himself.

country house; Lord Lonsdale provided for their horses as 'a further contribution to the national cause'. This sympathy did not last. Most of the refugees were ordinary working-class people, aggrieved at having been driven from their homes and resentful that Great Britain had not defended the neutrality of Belgium more adequately. Their competition was feared on the labour market.[1] Before the war ended, the Belgians were far from popular.

The war was in fact coming home to people's lives despite the silence in high places. Kitchener, the least public-minded of ministers, was responsible for this. He startled his colleagues at the first cabinet meeting which he attended by announcing that the war would last three years, not three months, and that Great Britain would have to put an army of millions into the field.[2] Regarding the Territorial army (which he mistook for the French 'territoriaux' of 1870) with undeserved contempt, he proposed to raise a New Army of seventy divisions[3] and, when Asquith ruled

1. The Local Government Board handled, in all, 119,000 Belgian refugees. As well, 'better-class refugees' were dealt with by a committee which Lady Lugard had originally organized to receive women and children fleeing from the expected civil war in Ulster. Later, a munitions area was created at Birtley, Durham, where Belgian policemen, Belgian law, and even Belgian beer created the illusion of a Belgian town.

2. Kitchener expected the French army to be defeated in the field. He did not foresee trench warfare and, when it came, said: 'I don't know what is to be done; this isn't war.'

3. This was a rule-of-thumb figure. On the German analogy, the British, allowing for the difference in population, should have raised 105 divisions. Kitchener arbitrarily knocked off a third for the needs of the navy, the merchant service, and industry. The answer was 70. Thus, Great Britain's military effort was determined by a crude calculation of available manpower, not by considering strategical requirements.

out compulsion as politically impossible, agreed to do so by voluntary recruiting. Soon Kitchener's finger pointed balefully from every hoarding: 'Your Country needs YOU.' Rupert Brooke gave the almost unanimous answer: 'Now God be thanked who has matched us with His hour.' Kitchener asked for an initial one hundred thousand – 175,000 men volunteered in the single week ending 5 September; 750,000 had enlisted by the end of September. Thereafter the average ran at 125,000 men a month until June 1915 when it slackened off. In all over two and a half million men enlisted[1] before voluntary recruitment came to an end in March 1916.

The achievement was staggering; the method clumsy. After the first flood of volunteers, enthusiasm had to be kept constantly astir. Supposedly eligible young men were presented with white feathers. Recruiting meetings built up an exaggerated hatred of the Germans and equally exaggerated hopes of the better world which would follow victory. On these platforms staid politicians, with their old-time style were eclipsed by demagogues. Horatio Bottomley, in particular, rose to new fame: an undischarged bankrupt at the beginning of the war, acknowledged tribune of the people at the end.[2] Sane thinking about how to run the war, or why it was being fought, was difficult in these conditions. Moreover, enthusiasm brought in more recruits than the existing military machine could handle. There were not enough barracks, often not even rifles for them. Recruits spent the winter months in tents and trained with sticks.

1. One and three quarter million in the regular army; three quarters of a million in the Territorials. As well 329,000 volunteered for the navy and, later, about 60,000 for the air force. N. B. Dearle, *Labour Cost of the Great War*, 8.

2. Horatio Bottomley (1860–1933): editor of *John Bull*; independent M.P., 1918–22; convicted of fraudulent conversion, 1922; died a pauper. At recruiting meetings, the strength of his peroration was determined by the size of the 'take', and he took, in all, £78,000. He used to recite a poem with the line: 'This is more than a war, mate – it's a call to the human race.' Bottomley murmured the words with a more personal meaning as he slapped the £5 notes into his pocket at the end of the meeting.

There were few qualified men to train them. Kitchener formed the remaining regular troops into divisions and sent them to France, instead of using them to shape the New Army.[1] The young enthusiasts were handled by elderly officers and sergeant-majors, who had completed their service before the death of Queen Victoria. It was the beginning of disenchantment.

Kitchener's authority had another unfortunate result. At the beginning of the war there were two private armies in Ireland: the Ulster Volunteers, who had been formed to resist Home Rule, and the Irish Volunteers, who had been formed to defend it. Both were now anxious to be embodied in the British army. Kitchener, who had been born and partly brought up in Ireland though not an Irishman, shared the outlook of the Protestant garrison. He accepted the Ulster organization; he rejected the Home Rulers. The Red Hand of Ulster was acknowledged; the Irish Harp was not. Recruits from Ulster had their own officers; those from the south of Ireland were placed under Protestants. Redmond, the Irish leader, had believed that Ireland would win her freedom by fighting for the freedom of Belgium and other small nations. Thanks to Kitchener, the surge of Irish loyalty was dissipated. A minority of the Irish Volunteers, under John MacNeill, swung round to an anti-British attitude; many of the rest slipped into sullen indifference.

Nevertheless, the New Army was Kitchener's triumph: the greatest volunteer force ever raised in any country. His prestige brought in recruits, and the recruits added to his prestige. He was England's Hindenburg, like him a wooden titan. As virtual war dictator, Kitchener was responsible also for supply[2] and for strategy. These proved his undoing. The war office was equipped only to supply a small army. At the outbreak of war there were twenty clerks in the Army Con-

1. 'Of the many mistakes made in the war, ... probably the most expensive.' *Military Operations: France and Belgium, 1915*, ii. viii.

2. The admiralty always kept supply for the navy in its own hands and enforced the doctrine of 'absolute priority' for naval needs. Even in 1918 it was taking men from working on merchant ships and tanks to build battleships which were never used.

tracts department. Kitchener clung to the cheese-paring economy with which he had once run the campaign in the Sudan. He neglected the finance for expansion which Lloyd George offered him. A Shells committee of the cabinet, which sat between 1 October 1914 and 1 January 1915, failed to move him. The war office refused to extend its list of authorized firms and deluged these firms with orders which they could not fulfil. It insisted that only experienced firms knew how to produce munitions of satisfactory quality, and this was confirmed when the first shells, ordered from a wider list by the ministry of munitions, brought the word 'dud' into common use. Nevertheless, whatever the excuse, there was a shortage of shells. The blame fell on the war office and so on Kitchener.

Strategy was his greatest failure, though no one in the first World war did any better. Kitchener insisted on determining strategy all alone; he was at a loss what to determine. The British army was in France and was being steadily reinforced. Joffre had a single aim, to which he insisted the British ought to conform: liberation of the national territory. Kitchener had no faith in this strategy. The German lines, he believed, had become 'a fortress which cannot be taken by assault'. On the other hand, he 'anticipated a call' to become Supreme Allied Commander some day when the British armies reached full strength, and therefore felt that he must defer to the French now in the hope that they would defer to him later. Hence he became more than usually incoherent when the cabinet looked to him for strategical advice. Civilian ministers were provoked into devising strategy themselves – some of them not at all reluctantly. The key thought for these amateur strategists, Churchill and Lloyd George in particular, was sea power. Surely, they argued, this gigantic power could somehow be used to turn the German flank without the sacrifice of millions of men. They wanted a dodge in a double sense: a clever trick which would evade the deadlock of the western front. They sought a field of action where the Germans could not get at them, and forgot that then they would not

be able to get at the Germans.[1] If this field of action were outside Europe, so much the better: it would bring territorial gains for the British empire.

In November 1914 the cabinet acknowledged that its expectation of a short war had proved false. The committee of imperial defence, which had hitherto been restricted to organizing the conquest of the German colonies,[2] was transformed into a war council. Rival projects were aired. Lloyd George favoured an expedition to Salonika or the Dalmatian coast. Hankey, secretary of the council, suggested an attack on Turkey, who had entered the war against the Allies in October. This idea attracted Kitchener, with his long service in the East. He favoured it still more when an urgent appeal for help against the Turks reached him from Grand Duke Nicholas, Russian commander-in-chief, at the end of the year. Churchill and Fisher (the first sea lord) both wanted some great 'amphibious' operation, though Fisher pointed to Sleswig and Churchill to the Dardanelles. All these schemes were debated without staff advice or consideration of detailed maps. There was no inquiry whether shipping was available, nor whether there were troops to spare – Kitchener ineffectually observing that there were none. The war council cheerfully assumed that great armadas could waft nonexistent armies to the end of the earth in the twinkling of an eye.

The man of most persistence won. Churchill pressed for the Dardanelles. Fisher believed that he ought not to oppose

1. The 'easterners', as they were called, were misled by the analogy of Wellington's campaign in Spain. They overlooked (*a*) that it involved a very large army by the standards of the time; (*b*) that it made only a marginal contribution to the defeat of Napoleon's Grand Army.

2. Togoland was occupied in August. The New Zealanders took Samoa (August), the Australians New Guinea (September), the South Africans South-west Africa (December). The Cameroons were conquered in 1917; German East Africa not until the end of 1917 (at a cost of £75 million). Von Lettow, the German commander there, retreated into Portuguese East Africa and did not surrender until after the armistice.

his political chief at the war council.[1] Also he agreed with Kitchener's judgement that 150,000 men would be needed to take the Dardanelles, and therefore expected the army to be drawn in after all. Kitchener was won over by an opinion, extracted with some difficulty from the British admiral in the Mediterranean, that the navy could force the Dardanelles alone. Sir John French hurried over to assert the unique importance of the western front. The bewildered war council grasped at an apparent way out: a naval attack at the Dardanelles which would break the deadlock of trench warfare without diverting troops from France. On 13 January 1915 the war council unanimously resolved that the Admiralty 'should prepare for a naval expedition to bombard and take the Gallipoli Peninsula, with Constantinople as its objective'. On 28 January the naval plan was approved by the war council, after Fisher (who was technically responsible for it) had been persuaded not to protest against it by Kitchener (who had technically nothing to do with it).

As the great ships massed in the eastern Mediterranean, Kitchener had second thoughts. If the naval action succeeded, troops would be needed to occupy the Peninsula; if it failed, they would be needed to restore British prestige in the East. Somehow, he hoped to trickle forces to the Dardanelles without Joffre or French noticing that they had gone. On 16 February he agreed that the 29th division, composed of regulars from India, could be sent to the eastern Mediterranean.[2] On 20 February he refused to release it. On 24 February he told the war council: 'if the Fleet cannot get through the Straits unaided, the Army will have to see the

1. This constitutional rectitude had not prevented his briefing the Unionist editor, Garvin, against the naval plans of the Liberal government in 1909, nor was it long to prevent his briefing Law against Churchill.

2. To cajole the French, Kitchener suggested that the division might go to Salonika, the one 'side show' which they favoured. Lloyd George, who also favoured Salonika, was the only member of the war council to argue that troops should not be sent to the Dardanelles if the naval attack failed.

business through'. On 10 March he finally decided that the 29th division should go. Two days later he sent for his favourite general, Sir Ian Hamilton,[1] and said to him: 'We are sending a military force to support the Fleet now at the Dardanelles, and you are to have command.' Hamilton received one inaccurate map, no information about the Turkish army and little about the fortifications of the Dardanelles, no firm guidance as to the forces which he could expect. He left without a staff, Kitchener saying to him: 'If the Fleet gets through, Constantinople will fall of its own accord, and you will have won not a battle, but the war.'[2]

The bottom soon fell out of these hopes. On 18 March the British fleet and some French ships entered the Straits. The waters, it was supposed, had been swept clear of mines. The Turkish forts were bombarded. It is now known that their ammunition was exhausted by the end of the day and that no more was available. One line of mines had been missed: it had been laid parallel to the Asiatic shore, not across the Straits. On the way back the fleet ran into it. Two British battleships and a French ship were sunk; one British ship and one French ship were severely damaged. The ships were old and due for scrap. All the same Sir John de Robeck,[3] the admiral in command, was dismayed

1. Ian Standish Monteith Hamilton (1853–1947): chief of staff to Kitchener in South Africa; defended voluntary system of recruitment against Roberts, 1910; commanded Central Force for home defence, 1914; commanded at Gallipoli, 1915; after this, not employed again; wrote agreeable volumes of reminiscences.

2. It is a mystery why most people, then and since, assumed that the fall of Constantinople would lead to the defeat of Germany. The only immediate gain would be to open a line of supply to Russia, and this gain was purely theoretical since neither Great Britain nor France had, at this time, supplies to send. Turkey might have been knocked out of the war, but this would have lessened the burden on Germany. An army would have had no light task to march from Constantinople to Central Europe and, in any case, there was no army to spare. Later, the Allies sent large forces to Salonika, a better port, without achieving any result until the end of the war, when the German army was already defeated.

3. John Michael de Robeck (1862–1928): commanded naval forces at the Dardanelles, 1915–16; commanded second battle squadron, 1916–

at their loss. On 22 March he held a first conference with Hamilton. According to Hamilton, de Robeck said: 'he was now clear that he could not get through without the help of all my troops'. According to de Robeck, Hamilton took the initiative in offering to clear the Straits with the army. At any rate, the naval attack was called off and never renewed. Hamilton discovered that the transports had been sent out in such confusion that no immediate action was possible. He decided to take his army back to Alexandria and to organize it there for a landing in about three weeks' time. During these three weeks, which grew into a month, the Turks increased their forces at Gallipoli from two divisions to six – one more than Hamilton commanded.

Thus, when the campaigning season of 1915 opened, Great Britain was committed to offensive action in France which would absorb more than all her available resources, and to an improvised offensive in Gallipoli. Military failure followed. On 25 April British and Australian troops attacked at Gallipoli. They had no landing craft and were not trained for the difficult operation of landing on a hostile coast. They got safely ashore only by landing at the extreme end of the peninsula, where their presence could do the Turks little harm. Their generals lacked drive, and Hamilton failed to provide it. He was too polite to be a successful commander. He drifted helplessly up and down the coast on a warship, refusing to interfere with his subordinates. The Turks recovered from their surprise and pinned Hamilton's men to the shore. Instead of a war of movement, a new line of trenches was drawn on the Peninsula, more intractable than that on the western front.

In France Sir John French staged an assault, independently of the French, known as the battle of Neuve Chapelle (10–13 March). This attack pierced the German line; the Germans closed the gap before reserves could arrive. The Germans, on their side, first used gas in an attack on the

19; commander-in-chief of Mediterranean fleet, 1919–22; of Atlantic fleet, 1922–4; received thanks of parliament, grant of £10,000, and baronetcy, 1919.

Ypres salient – the 'second battle' of Ypres (22 April–25 May); this, too, miscarried after heavy British losses. Henceforth soldiers had to add gas-masks to their other burdens. Finally, there was an assault, in cooperation with the French, known variously as the battle of Festubert or of Aubers ridge (9–25 May). All three engagements demonstrated the futility of narrow attacks against a fortified line. French cloaked his failure by complaining about the shortage of shells. These complaints reached the ear of Northcliffe,[1] greatest of the press lords. He resolved to launch an outcry against the 'shells scandal', which would drive Kitchener, and maybe the Liberal government, from office.

The press reached perhaps it highest point of influence during the first World war. Radio was in the future. Newspapers were the only source of news, and their circulation rose still more when the casualty lists began to appear. With the politicians almost silent, the newspapers provided opinions as well. Lloyd George said in 1916: 'The Press has performed the function which should have been performed by Parliament, and which the French Parliament has performed.'[2] Great editors, thundering out their convictions, were by no means new. Delane of *The Times* had been their finest example long before. Such editors were now in profusion – Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, Garvin of the *Observer*, Massingham of the (weekly) *Nation*: men placed in authority by the proprietor[3] and expressing in their own terms, policy in the widest sense. Though they were all individuals with pronounced character, they were associated with some broad political circle, Liberal, Unionist, or Radical. Northcliffe was different: hence the hostility which

1. Alfred Harmsworth (1865–1922): created Baron Northcliffe, 1905, Viscount, 1917; head of British mission to the United States, 1917; director of enemy propaganda, 1918; founder of modern journalism; created and inspired the *Daily Mail*; owned *The Times* which he transformed from a derelict property into a profitable undertaking.

2. Riddell, *War Diary*, 151.

3. In the discussions of the freedom of the press, it is often overlooked that the political character of a paper was determined, in every case, by its proprietor. Scott was unique in being, after 1905, owner as well as editor.

he provoked. He was proprietor of the *Daily Mail*, the daily newspaper with the largest circulation, and of *The Times*, which claimed to be, in a particular way, the national voice. He was also, or at any rate regarded himself as being, 'Chief Editor'. He determined policy; the editors were his instruments. Unlike other editors, he did not express the opinions of a party or political group. He was, in Beaverbrook's words, 'the greatest figure who ever strode down Fleet Street',[1] and he expected men to follow his lead merely because he was the great Northcliffe. This was his mistake. Editors succeeded by voicing or by stimulating opinions, not by dictating them. Though men bought Northcliffe's papers for their news, they were no more impressed by his political sense than by that of any other successful businessman. They did not obey his orders. Men did not wear the *Daily Mail* hat; they did not eat the *Daily Mail* loaf. Nor did they accept the *Daily Mail* 'Chief'. Northcliffe could destroy when he used the news properly. He could not step into the vacant place. He aspired to power instead of influence, and as a result forfeited both.

Northcliffe was not alone in planning a political offensive. The Unionist backbenchers resented the silence to which Law had committed them. They, too, wished to force a discussion of the shells scandal, though their target was the Liberal Free Trade ministers, not Kitchener. The Liberal auxiliaries were also preparing to desert. The Irish Nationalists had no reason to support Asquith once Home Rule was laid aside, and much reason to attack Kitchener after his contemptuous handling of the Irish Volunteers. Labour was moving towards independence. The Labour party had opposed the war till the last moment. On 5 August it swung round. Ramsay MacDonald[2] resigned as leader of the parliamentary party. Arthur Henderson[3] took his place.

1. Beaverbrook, *Politicians and the War*, i. 93.

2. James Ramsay MacDonald (1866–1937): leader of Labour party, 1911–14, 1922–31; prime minister and foreign secretary, 1924; prime minister of Labour government, 1929–31; of National government, 1931–5; lord president of the council, 1935–7; died at sea.

3. Arthur Henderson (1863–1935): president of board of education,

On 24 August the trade unions declared an industrial truce for the duration of the war. Labour leaders spoke on recruiting platforms: they pressed for an energetic conduct of the war. They dreaded industrial conscription; this is why they had opposed war earlier. To avert this the unions had to abandon their traditional attitude of leaving decisions to the bosses; they had to become partners, if only junior partners, in the conduct of affairs.

The hand of cooperation which they held out was grasped from within the government by Lloyd George. He had already established himself as 'the man of the people' – product of an elementary school, pioneer of social welfare. He cared nothing for the conventional rules – neither the rules of personal behaviour nor those economic rules of free enterprise to which his Liberal colleagues attached so much importance. Lloyd George lived in the moment, a master of improvisation. He had few friends in political circles. He followed opinion, and sometimes shaped it, by his intimate contact with editors and proprietors of newspapers.[1] Before the war he was the chief industrial conciliator of the government. Then he had been the complement to Asquith, not his rival; the two worked together and ran in harmony. On 19 September 1914 the situation changed. Lloyd George spoke publicly in all-out support for the war. From that moment, he challenged Asquith. He might declare that he would dig potatoes if Asquith ceased to be prime minister. Unconsciously, perhaps even unwillingly, he was offering himself as the man who could run the war better. In his own sphere as chancellor of the exchequer, Lloyd George contributed little. His first war budget of November 1914,

1915–16; member of war cabinet, 1916–17; home secretary, 1924; foreign secretary, 1929–31; president of world disarmament conference, 1932–5; known in the Labour movement as 'Uncle Arthur'.

1. Lloyd George numbered among his close friends and advisers Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian;* Riddell, chairman of the *News of the World;* Dalziel, owner of *Reynolds' News;* and Robertson Nicholl, editor of the *British Weekly*, the most influential nonconformist organ. Robert Donald, editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, was another devoted supporter, at any rate until 1918.

which doubled the income tax,[1] merely added £1 million a week to the revenue when expenditure had already increased by £1 million a day and was going steadily up. His second war budget of May 1915 added no new taxes at all. Lloyd George was no longer interested in balanced budgets, if he ever had been. He was intent only on unlimited supply.

His opportunity soon came. The most urgent problem in the munitions factories was 'dilution'. Unskilled workers and women had to be brought in if the engineering shops were to expand. The skilled workers refused to relax their traditional standards. The government had some compulsory powers under D.O.R.A. and could no doubt get more. The price would be the renewal of industrial strife. The union leaders took a decisive initiative: they would accept 'dilution' if it were carried through voluntarily and under their direction. Lloyd George responded. He met the union leaders at the treasury from 17 to 19 March; other unions, especially the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, were drawn in. The resulting Treasury Agreement revolutionized the position of trade unions: where formerly they had opposed, they now participated. They were to accept and to operate 'dilution'. They received in return three promises. Traditional practices were to be restored at the end of the war; this promise was kept, to everyone's surprise. Profits were to be restricted, in exchange for the sacrifice of union rights; this promise, too, was kept, though less effectively than the unions expected. Finally, the unions were to share in the direction of industry through local joint committees; this promise was not kept – the committees were used only to organize dilution. Nevertheless, Lloyd George was right when he called the treasury agreement 'the great charter for labour'. It was his great charter too: it established his claim to be the man who could enlist 'the people' for the war effort.

The net was closing round Kitchener. On 12 April Lloyd George got a new cabinet committee on munitions, with

1. Basic rate went up from 1s. 3d. to 2s. 6d. in the pound, though the many exceptions made this crude figure misleading.

himself in the chair, and Kitchener excluded. In Fleet Street, Northcliffe was preparing his outcry against the shells scandal. In parliament, Unionist backbenchers, Irish nationalists, and Labour were uniting in common discontent. On 13 May the Unionist Business Committee put down a motion on the shell shortage. This was a direct attack on the Liberal government. It cut clean across Law's strategy: he meant to hold the Liberals to support of the war, not to overthrow them. With great difficulty he persuaded the rebellious Unionists to hold their hand. Suddenly a mine exploded in a different quarter. The failure of 25 April meant that more ships and more men must be sent to Gallipoli. The war council so resolved on 14 May – its first meeting since 6 April. Fisher feared for the strength of the Grand Fleet. He could stand the drain of ships no longer. On 15 May he resigned as first sea lord. This was a stroke of luck for Law: a crisis which he could initiate, instead of having it forced on him by his backbenchers. Moreover, the outcry could be directed solely against Churchill, who was supposedly responsible for the Dardanelles campaign. The Unionists hated him both as a deserter from their ranks and as the man who had planned forcible action – a pogrom, as it was called – against Ulster.

On 17 May Law told Lloyd George that, if Fisher went and Churchill remained, there would be an outcry in the house of commons which he could not restrain, even if he would. Lloyd George replied: 'Of course we must have a Coalition, for the alternative is impossible.' The two men then saw Asquith. He had no belief in the administrative capacity of the Unionists. On the other hand, here was a fine chance to saddle them with the responsibility for 'sidetracking Kitchener': they, not he, would bear the brunt of 'the horrible Harmsworth campaign'.[1] Coalition was made, and the last Liberal government in British history killed, within a quarter of an hour.[2]

1. Addison, *Four and a Half Years*, i. 79.

2. The making of the first Coalition is one of the few political episodes in the first World war on which solid evidence is lacking. I

Asquith's calculations did not altogether work out. The Unionists, instead of throwing Kitchener out, insisted on keeping him. However, this had the advantage in Asquith's eyes of closing the war office against a Unionist. Besides, Kitchener's powers were shorn. Northcliffe's campaign against the shells scandal exploded too late to affect the Liberal government, which was already dead; but it gave the final push to Lloyd George's demand for an independent ministry controlling supply. Who should head it except Lloyd George himself? He became minister of munitions.[1] This apparently exposed the exchequer to a Unionist. Asquith was a match for this problem also: Lloyd George's move was announced to be temporary. Obviously a Tariff Reformer could not keep the place warm for him. McKenna,[2] supposedly a sound Free Trader, was willing to oblige. Grey, of course, remained at the foreign office. The Unionists received only the crumbs. Law, their leader, was fobbed off with the colonial office.

Churchill was the one great casualty,[3] as Law had intended. He was pushed aside to the duchy of Lancaster, a setback from which he did not recover for many years. Balfour,[4] Asquith's only friend among the Unionists, took

am not sure that Lloyd George played so passive a part. Perhaps he pushed Law forward. In any case, this was a foretaste of the future: Law and Lloyd George dictating action to Asquith.

1. Strictly the first 'Minister' in British history. Previously there had been secretaries of state, presidents of boards, etc., but no ministers. The new phrase was an echo of French practice. 'Minister without portfolio' (instead of with a sinecure) was another, introduced at the same time (for Lansdowne).

2. Reginald McKenna (1863–1943): educated K.C.S. and Cambridge; home secretary, 1911–15; chancellor of the exchequer, 1915–16; offered the exchequer by Baldwin in 1923; failed to find a constituency and remained chairman of a bank.

3. The Unionists also insisted on excluding Haldane, the lord chancellor, because of his alleged pro-German sympathies. His two close friends, Grey and Asquith, made no effective protest. Asquith perhaps meant to send a message of explanation, but, write his biographers, 'the moment passed and Haldane went in silence'. Spender and Asquith, *Asquith*, ii. 167.

4. Arthur James Balfour (1848–1930): educated Eton and Cam-

Churchill's place at the admiralty. There were other gestures of national unity. Arthur Henderson joined the cabinet ostensibly in charge of education, actually the voice of 'Labour'. This was a portent: the industrial working class took a share of power, however slight, for the first time. Carson,[1] the former Ulster rebel, became attorney general. Redmond, the Irish Nationalist leader, would also have joined the government if he had been given an Irish post. But this would have recognized his claim to lead Ireland. He was offered an English office, and refused. Thus Redmond, the projected Irish Botha, remained out, just when Botha himself was conquering new territories for the British empire. Otherwise national unity seemed complete. The Opposition vanished.[2] A truce between the parties prevented contests at by-elections – at any rate until the appearance of unofficial candidates. The backbenchers on both sides were exasperated by this coalition between their leaders – a coalition indeed of the front benches against the back. The Liberals saw their government spirited out of existence without a word of explanation;[3] the Unionists were deprived of their expected victory. This was a perfect government, if the object of politics be to silence criticism. Could it be equally successful against the enemy?

bridge; Unionist prime minister, 1902–5; former Unionist leader (resigned 1911); first lord of the admiralty, 1915–16; foreign secretary, 1916–19; lord president of the council, 1919–22, 1925–9; created Earl, 1922. Clemenceau called him 'cette vieille fille'.

1. Edward Henry Carson (1854–1935): educated Portarlington and Dublin; uncrowned 'king of Ulster'; attorney general, 1915; first lord of the admiralty, 1916–17; member of war cabinet, 1917–18; created Lord of Appeal, 1921. Dangerous in opposition, he was ineffective in office.

2. The front Opposition bench was occupied by Henry Chaplin, as the senior ex-cabinet minister, but he did not lead an Opposition.

3. Subsequently Asquith appeased his followers in twenty minutes of emotional oratory at the National Liberal Club. 'Some of the members were moved even to tears as was the Prime Minister himself.' Addison, *Four and a Half Years*, i. 80.

Note

NOTE A. *The battle of the Marne.* The German strategy, devised by a deceased chief-of-staff, Schlieffen, aimed at turning the flank of the French by going through Belgium, and then encircling them. Moltke, the German chief-of-staff, carried out Schlieffen's plan, actually providing a stronger force than Schlieffen had postulated – fifty-five divisions instead of fifty-three. The plan worked. The Germans got beyond the end of the Allied line, and swung south. What were they to do as they approached Paris? They could not sit down and besiege the city, for this would destroy the momentum of their advance. If their 1st and 2nd armies divided, one going west of Paris and the other east, they could be attacked in detail by the Paris garrison; if they kept together and swung east of Paris, they offered an exposed flank to the Paris garrison. Schlieffen had foreseen this problem and failed to solve it. Hence he concluded that his plan was 'an undertaking for which we are too weak'. So it proved. Kluck's 1st army wavered to and fro like the tentacles of an octopus, as it approached Paris. First Kluck intended to go west of Paris. Then he hoped to encircle the French army before the Paris garrison noticed and so swung south-east. Finally, he swung west again to ward off the new French 6th army, which was threatening his flank from Paris. This created the gap into which the B.E.F. so cautiously advanced.

Who deserved the credit for the French counter-attack – Joffre, the commander-in-chief, or Gallićni, the commander in Paris? The answer seems to be: both, though with conflicting strategical ideas. Joffre planned to meet the German advance head on. Galliéni hoped to break through the German rear. In other words, Gallićni was trying to close the neck of the sack behind the Germans, while Joffre was actually hitting the bottom of the sack and so driving them out of Gallićni's trap. Joffre's forces were the stronger. Gallićni did not receive the reinforcements needed to carry out his manoeuvre. The Germans were able to hold their flank, indeed to force Gallićni back, and then to retreat in time. They were not defeated in battle. They retreated because they imagined themselves to be in a dangerous strategical position, as they were by peacetime standards. The battle of the Marne was a last manoeuvre of the prewar type, not mutual slaughter on the first World war pattern. Hence its

effect ran to nothing when the Germans dug trenches on the Aisne. Did the intervention of the B.E.F. make any difference? Not much. The Germans would have fallen back in any case when they saw the gap between their 1st and 2nd armies.

The king attended a service of thanksgiving in St Paul's and received addresses of congratulation from both houses of parliament.

The rejoicing, though even more justified, was this time more temperate. Few Englishmen now imagined that victory was itself a solution, an end of all problems and difficulties. The problems seemed greater, and people were more aware of them. Some of the problems proved less grave than had been feared. There were no great plagues in Europe. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, set up in November 1943, saved Europeans from starvation. Civil order was restored with comparative ease. Communism did not come within sight of success in any European country except where it was sustained by Soviet arms. On the other hand, relations between the Western Powers and Soviet Russia turned sour. Any chance of permanent friendship was lost when President Truman forgot about the reconstruction loan to Soviet Russia which Roosevelt had contemplated. The Allied leaders held their last meeting at Potsdam from 17 July to 2 August. They reached agreement of a kind over the reparations which each of the occupying Powers could exact from its zone of Germany. The Russians annexed Königsberg, and the Poles were authorized to administer German territory as far as the Oder and the Western Neisse until the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany – a treaty never in fact concluded. There was deadlock over every other subject, particularly over the political systems in the countries which the Soviet armies had liberated. The meeting at Potsdam marked indeed the beginning of 'the cold war' and therefore of postwar history.

There was one curious episode at Potsdam which must have surprised the impregnable Soviet dictator. Churchill appeared in glory at the first session as British representative. He was absent from the second. A new prime minister, Attlee, took his place. This was a clear symbol that the British people had abandoned their absorption in world affairs. The end of the German war created an awkward

political situation at home. Parliament was in its tenth year, and Churchill had declared as early as 31 October 1944 that it would be wrong to continue the existing house of commons after the Germans had been defeated.[1] Many of the Labour party, though not all its leaders, were eager to resume independence and to conduct an aggressive campaign against the Conservatives for social welfare. On the other hand, the Japanese war was still to be won – a task which, it was thought, would take a further eighteen months. Churchill was also anxious to carry the government's plans for reconstruction as an agreed programme – no doubt in the hope of moderating them.

On 18 May therefore he proposed to the Labour and Liberal parties that the coalition should continue until the end of the Japanese war.[2] Sinclair, the Liberal leader, hesitated. Attlee, the Labour leader, at first hesitated also, having, it seems, little confidence in a Labour victory. Bevin supported the continuation of coalition more openly. They were pulled back into line by the annual party conference, then in session at Blackpool. On 21 May Attlee replied to Churchill, offering only to continue the coalition until October, when there should be a general election. Churchill rejected this offer and insisted that if there were to be a general election it should take place at once, in early July. This was a sensible decision: it would have been intolerable for the coalition to go on with a general election hanging over it. There was also no doubt some calculation of party advantage. The Conservatives wanted a general election while they could exploit Churchill's national prestige and before economic difficulties accumulated.[3]

On 23 May Churchill resigned, thus bringing the National

1. Churchill, *Second World War*, vi. 510.

2. Churchill proposed to overcome his previous promise of a general election by a referendum, seeking permission for parliament to continue. It would have been awkward if the permission had been refused, and the two other leaders did not look kindly on the idea.

3. Churchill took a straw vote among Conservative ministers. All favoured an immediate election. Churchill, *Second World War*, vi. 511.

government to an end.[1] He then formed a 'caretaker' government, predominantly of Conservatives, with such National Liberals and so-called Independents as were prepared to stay with them. On 28 May he entertained the leading members of the former government at 10 Downing Street and said, 'The light of history will shine on all your helmets', after which the parties resumed their strife as though coalition had never existed. The Conservatives relied chiefly on the glory of Churchill's name, and he, egged on by Beaverbrook, zestfully turned against Labour the talent for political vituperation which he had previously reserved for Hitler. His greatest card was to discover in Professor Harold Laski, then chairman of the Labour party, the sinister head of a future British Gestapo. This card proved ineffective. The electors cheered Churchill and voted against him. They displayed no interest in foreign affairs or imperial might. They were not stirred by any cry to Hang the Kaiser or to extract reparations from Germany.[2]

1. The war cabinet was also automatically dissolved. In the caretaker government, Churchill set up a cabinet of the ordinary peacetime type – including, that is, all the principal ministers. Attlee followed Churchill's example in this as in many other matters, and the cabinet has remained at about twenty members, despite occasional talk of reducing it.

2. Englishmen had been taught by Keynes that a claim for reparations brought general misfortune. In fact considerable reparations were successfully exacted from Germany. The trial of war criminals was agreed policy between the parties and among the great Allies. On 8 August 1945 the British, American, and Soviet governments, subsequently joined by the French, agreed to set up an international tribunal for these trials at Nuremberg. Many German leaders were tried, and most of them convicted. Some of the convictions were for true war crimes – mass murder and the killing of prisoners of war. The tribunal also devised the crime of preparing or waging aggressive war, which meant in practice war against one or more of the Allies. Yet the leaders of the Allied countries were often criticized for not preparing war against Germany effectively or for failing to wage a 'preventive' (that is, an aggressive) war themselves. The German leaders, especially the generals, could assert that they were really convicted for the crime of having lost, and the moral effect of the Nuremberg trials was, at best, questionable.

They cared only for their own future: first housing, and then full employment and social security. Here Labour offered a convincing programme. The Conservatives, though offering much the same programme, managed to give the impression that they did not believe in it. Folk memory counted for much. Many electors remembered the unemployment of the thirties. Some remembered how they had been cheated, or supposed that they had been cheated, after the general election of 1918. Lloyd George brought ruin to Churchill from the grave.

Voting took place on 5 July. There were only three uncontested elections,[1] against forty in 1935. Both Labour and Conservative ran more than 600 candidates; the Liberals ran 306. The results were announced on 26 July, to allow time for the services to vote. It is thought that they voted overwhelmingly for Labour. At all events, the result was a striking Labour victory: 393 Labour M.P.s against 213 Conservatives and their allies, 12 Liberals, and 22 Independents.[2] As usual, the electoral system favoured the winning party. Labour obtained only 47.8 per cent of the votes despite its great majority, and many Labour men sat for constituencies with comparatively few voters. Labour had now much more the appearance of being a national party. Less than half the Labour M.P.s were classified as 'workers' (against no Conservatives), and forty-six had been to Oxford or Cambridge (against 101 Conservatives), formerly the universities of the privileged.

Churchill resigned in the late afternoon of 26 July and advised the king to send for Attlee. Within half an hour Attlee was prime minister, thus thwarting any projects there may have been to put Morrison or Bevin in his place as leader. The new cabinet ministers were more experienced than their predecessors in earlier Labour govern-

1. At Armagh, West Rhondda, and the Scotland division of Liverpool.

2. This was the largest number of Independents returned in modern times – evidence no doubt how the party system had been weakened during the war.

ments. Five of them had sat in the war cabinet at one time or another; all the rest had held some ministerial office, except for Aneurin Bevan, the minister of health. Attlee had intended to make Dalton foreign secretary and Bevin chancellor of the exchequer. At the last minute he changed them round – perhaps prodded by the king, perhaps not.[1] The new parliament met on 1 August. The king's speech on 16 August announced an ambitious programme: nationalization of the coal industry and of the bank of England; social security; a national health service. Hugh Dalton wrote: 'After the long storm of war . . . we saw the sunrise.'[2]

There was a different, unexpected sunrise and a new sort of storm. Great Britain's economic position in the world depended on the continuation of lend-lease, and that seemed safe for a long time in view of the Japanese war. British forces had entered Rangoon on 3 May and were now preparing to go further. The Americans had other ideas and called the tune. They intended a direct invasion of Japan. The British had no choice but to acquiesce. British and Commonwealth forces were placed under American orders.[3] The great operation was, however, never launched. By the end of March 1945 the American scientists were confident that they would have atomic bombs ready for use by the late summer. President Truman decided that the bombs should be used against Japan.[4] By an agreement made at Quebec in August 1943, atomic weapons could not be used without British consent. Despite this, the consent had not been sought. The British authorities[5] hastily gave

1. The king suggested the change when he saw Attlee on 26 July, Wheeler-Bennett, *George VI*, 638. On the morning of 27 July, however, Attlee told Dalton: 'almost certainly the Foreign Office', and informed him of the change only at 4 p.m. Dalton, *The Fateful Years*, 468–9. Either, therefore, Attlee was not influenced by the king or his mind worked slowly.

2. ibid. 483.

3. This last campaign was controlled solely by the American joint chiefs of staff, not by the combined chiefs of staff. The British thought themselves lucky to be kept informed.

4. See Note A, p. 727.

5. The British chiefs of staff were not informed or consulted about

their consent on 2 July without hearing the arguments for using the bombs or inquiring how they were to be used.

This was a sad gesture. The British issued a blank cheque which they could not refuse, and the Americans accepted the cheque without attaching any value to it. They seem indeed to have forgotten that they needed British consent. Two bombs were dropped: the first on Hiroshima on 6 August, the second on Nagasaki on 9 August. On 14 August the Japanese government resolved to accept terms nominally of unconditional surrender, which in fact preserved the authority of the emperor. On 2 September General MacArthur received the formal capitulation of all Japanese forces in Tokio bay. Mountbatten was allowed to receive the Japanese surrender in South-east Asia at Singapore on 12 September, only after MacArthur had given his permission. The Anglo-American relationship had become that of patron and client. The atomic bombs were a sterner portent. Though they ended the war against Japan, they also foreshadowed the coming of Doomsday.

Victory of Japan was officially celebrated on 2 September. This marked the end of the war and the beginning of Great Britain's postwar troubles. On 14 August the optimistic plans of the Labour government were interrupted by a warning from the treasury that the country faced 'a financial Dunkirk'; without substantial American aid, it would be 'virtually bankrupt and the economic basis for the hopes of the public non-existent'.[1] Three days later, on 17 August, American aid was cut off. President Truman directed that lend-lease should end on VJ-day. The legacy of the war seemed almost beyond bearing. Great Britain had drawn on the rest of the world to the extent of £4,198 million. £1,118 million of this had been raised by the sale of over-

atomic weapons, nor was the war cabinet. The affair was confined to Churchill, Sir John Anderson, and Field Marshal Wilson, head of the British joint staff mission in Washington. The decision to consent was made solely by Churchill, without consulting the cabinet.

1. The treasury paper was written by Keynes, Hancock and Gowing, *British War Economy*, 546.

seas investments and other capital assets. British 'invisible' income from overseas had been halved – from £248 million in 1938 to £120 million in 1946. £2,879 million was uncovered external debt, mostly in the form of sterling balances. The British mercantile marine was 30 per cent smaller in June 1945 than it had been at the beginning of the war. Exports were little more than 40 per cent of the prewar figure. On top of this, government expenditure abroad – partly for relief, mainly for the armed forces – remained five times as great as prewar. In 1946, it was calculated, Great Britain would spend abroad £750 million more than she earned.[1]

Great Britain would have to export far more than she had done before the war and seemed less equipped to do it. Something like 10 per cent of the prewar national wealth at home had been destroyed – say £1,700 million – some by physical destruction, the rest by running down capital assets. The coal industry had lost over 80,000 workers; textiles had lost 300,000. Nor could industrial resources be directed exclusively into the export trades. English people expected and deserved immediate improvements in their living conditions after the hardships of the war. At the very lowest, new houses and new clothes could not be delayed. All this seemed to impose impossible tasks.

Yet there were great assets, less visible, on the other side. Despite nearly 400,000 killed in the war,[2] the employed population was three million greater than in 1939, partly from an increase in the labour force, partly from the virtual elimination of unemployment. Moreover, the second war, unlike the first, stimulated or created new industries which could hold their own in peacetime. During the second World war, and not before, Great Britain took the decisive jump industrially from the nineteenth into the twentieth century. Before the war Great Britan was still trying to revive the old staples. After it, she relied on new developing

1. This estimate was excessive, as often happened with Keynes. The actual unfavourable balance turned out to be £295 million.

2. 300,000 members of the armed forces; 60,000 civilians; 35,000 members of the merchant navy.

industries. Electricity, motor cars, iron and steel, machine tools, nylons, and chemicals were all set for expansion, and in all of them output per head was steadily increasing. The very spirit of the nation had changed. No one in 1945 wanted to go back to 1939. The majority were determined to go forward and were confident that they could do so.

In the second World war the British people came of age. This was a people's war. Not only were their needs considered. They themselves wanted to win. Future historians may see the war as a last struggle for the European balance of power or for the maintenance of Empire. This was not how it appeared to those who lived through it. The British people had set out to destroy Hitler and National Socialism – 'Victory at all costs'. They succeeded. No English soldier who rode with the tanks into liberated Belgium or saw the German murder camps at Dachau or Buchenwald could doubt that the war had been a noble crusade. The British were the only people who went through both World wars from beginning to end.[1] Yet they remained a peaceful and civilized people, tolerant, patient, and generous. Traditional values lost much of their force. Other values took their place. Imperial greatness was on the way out; the welfare state was on the way in. The British empire declined; the condition of the people improved. Few now sang 'Land of Hope and Glory'. Few even sang 'England Arise'. England had risen all the same.

Note

NOTE A. *The decision to use the atomic bombs.* This decision, being purely American, is not of direct concern in British history. It was, however, a fateful act of terrifying importance. The

1. 'British' here means, perhaps for the last time, the peoples of the Dominions and of the Empire as well as of the United Kingdom. Strictly, the British were a few days late entering the first war, compared to the continental Powers, and two days late entering the second, compared to Poland and Germany. But their overall participation in the two wars was longer than that of any other country, enemy or Allied.

arguments seem to have been almost entirely practical and strategic. It was believed by most, though not by all, American authorities that blockade and non-nuclear bombing would not force the Japanese to surrender unconditionally and that invasion would be costly and prolonged. Though the Japanese government had put out feelers to end the war, they had not accepted unconditional surrender, and the atomic bombs were used to reinforce the peace party in Japan, as indeed they did. It could even be argued that they caused less Japanese loss of life than the continuation of ordinary warfare would have done. There were more general considerations, though they carried less weight. Soviet Russia was due to enter the war against Japan at the beginning of August. The American chiefs of staff, however, expected this intervention to be effective only on the Chinese mainland and not in the home islands. The President and the state department in the prevailing atmosphere of Soviet-American friction would have liked to get through without Soviet assistance at all. This is, however, far from saying, as some ingenious speculators have done, that the atomic bombs were dropped mainly as a demonstration against Soviet Russia.

There was no doubt a vaguer hope that the display of atomic power would act as a general deterrent against future wars. There was also a more pressing and immediate impulse in the minds of the scientists and others who had been involved in the project. They wished to demonstrate to Congress that the money spent had not been wasted. Many also were actuated by scientific curiosity: having prepared an experiment, they wished to see the results. The discussion showed strange blank spots. Few foresaw the enormous increase in potential nuclear destruction which would follow within a few years. Practically no one imagined that any country except the United States would be able to develop atomic bombs in the near future. Practically no one reflected on the contaminated fall-out which would follow a nuclear explosion. War suspends morality. In wartime men are deliberately killed and maimed, and from this it was an easy step to killing and maiming future generations. Nuclear weapons were 'just another big bomb'. When Truman heard the news from Hiroshima, he was excited and said, 'This is the greatest thing in history.'[1]

1. The decision to use the atomic bomb is analysed in J. Ehrman, *Grand Strategy*, vi. 275–309.

REVISED BIBLIOGRAPHY

HISTORY gets thicker as it approaches recent times: more people, more events, and more books written about them. More evidence is preserved, often, one is tempted to say, too much. Decay and destruction have hardly begun their beneficient work. The student of recent English history has some alleviations. Nearly all the books are in English except for those relating to foreign affairs. Most of them were published in England and are therefore certain to be found in the copyright libraries (the British Museum, the Bodleian, and the Cambridge University Library).[1] The more important books published in the United States are also likely to be in some English library. All, by definition, were published since 1914. There is therefore no need to consult older lists and catalogues.

A recent development has created new problems. When the text of this book was completed in July 1964, that is, exactly fifty years after the first events it records, there was a long-standing rule that kept records of government departments closed for fifty years. One could therefore look forward to an annual trickle of releases that would not be complete until 1995. However in 1967 the government reduced the period of restriction to thirty years. It also accepted the principle that the chronological limit should not be strictly enforced when it broke up records that obviously hung together. All the records for the first World war and then for the second were released *en bloc*. Thus the official records relating to the most crowded thirty years of English history have become available within less than a decade. This has been too short a time for historians to digest them. For the next ten years or more we shall be in a transitional period with adjustments being made here and there, as historians explore some topic and make their findings public.

The change to a thirty-year rule, along with a more liberal policy on the part of the cabinet office, has had a welcome effect

1. This is not true of pamphlets which are often difficult to trace and many of which have vanished altogether.

on the owners of private papers. Previously they feared to lose their papers if they revealed them. Not without reason. All Lansbury's official papers, and most of his private correspondence as well, were spirited away by the cabinet office during the second World war. Lloyd George's papers were ransacked by a representative of the cabinet office after his death, though there is no means of knowing what, if anything, was removed. The cabinet office no longer encroaches on private collections even when these contain official papers that are theoretically government property. The urgent problem now is to ascertain the whereabouts of these papers before they are destroyed or sold to universities in the United States, which for the English historian amounts to much the same thing.

The opening of the archives is not an unmixed boon. There is a danger of taking the new sources too seriously simply because they have previously been secret. The reputation of a statesman who leaves a rich store of papers goes up. That of a statesman not given to writing letters or memoranda goes down. A statement of fact in a secret document is regarded as necessarily truer and an argument as necessarily wiser than one made by a politician or journalist in public. In this way a chief of staff or a member of the foreign office carries more weight than Lloyd George out of office or the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*. Experience of human beings does not confirm this view. Taylor's Law states: 'The Foreign Office knows no secrets.' Much the same applies to other departments of state and even to the cabinet office.

Guides and Sources

The best general guide to both published and unpublished sources is *Great Britain since 1914* (1971) which the lamented C. L. Mowat wrote just before his death. The Public Record Office provides much assistance regarding the unpublished official sources in its charge. Volume III of its *Guide to the Contents of the Public Record Office* (1969) describes documents, mostly modern departmental records, transferred between 1960 and 1966. The *List of Cabinet Papers, 1915 and 1916* (1966) covers also the papers of the war council, the Dardanelles committee, and the war committee. *The Records of the Cabinet Office to 1922* (1966) gives a short history of the cabinet and its

secretariat. It surveys the minutes (of the war cabinet) or conclusions (of the peacetime cabinet restored in October 1919); the papers submitted to the cabinet; the many cabinet committees set up between 1917 and 1922; and international bodies such as the supreme war council, the imperial war cabinet and imperial war conference, and the Paris peace conference. The List and Index Society has published a subject index in two volumes for the minutes of the war cabinet, and in three volumes for the cabinet papers between 1919 and 1922. Other P.R.O. publications of value are *The Second World War: A Guide to Documents in the Public Record Office* (1972) and *Records of Interest to Social Scientists 1919–1939* (1971).

Until recently the only way of finding private papers was to track down the owner or his heir, often after lengthy search at Somerset House. Now the National Register of Archives provides valuable assistance. It maintains card indexes of all the collections on which it has reports and publishes annually a list of *Accessions to Repositories*. Two other useful works are in the offing. Cameron Hazlehurst and Christine Woodland have prepared *A Guide to the Papers of Twentieth Century British Cabinet Ministers*; it will be published by the Royal Historical Society in 1974. Chris Cook is working on *Sources in Contemporary British History*; the first of three volumes will be published at the end of 1974. Cook's volumes will extend to include political parties, trade unions, pressure groups, and constituency organizations. The records of the Conservative Party (National Union, Research Department, and Central Office); of the Labour Party, open under a fifteen-year rule; and more fragmentarily, of the Liberal Party are accessible to researchers. The Communist Party has no archives. Its publications are to be found at the Marx Memorial Library on Clerkenwell Green. The Imperial War Museum has a large collection of private papers relating to both World wars; these range from field-marshals to other ranks.

For printed sources, apart from Mowat's guide, the Historical Association publishes an *Annual Bulletin of Historical Literature*, which has a brief section on history since 1914. The *Author Catalogue of the London Library* covers books to the end of 1950, the *Subject Catalogue* to the end of 1953. The *British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books* and *Subject Index* are of course even fuller. The *British National Bibliography* is an annual list of books published since 1950. Beyond this, the

simplest course is to consult a librarian or to wander round the shelves. Three specialist libraries are particularly useful: that of the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House; the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the London School of Economics; and the collection of books on both World wars at the Imperial War Museum. This museum produces quarterly cyclostyled lists of accessions and also detailed bibliographies, ranging from women's work in the second World war to T. E. Lawrence.

P. and G. Ford have performed a great service to students in their *Guide to Parliamentary Papers* (1956) and *A Breviate of Parliamentary Papers 1900–1916* (1957); *1917–1939* (1951); *1940–1954* (1961). The 1917–39 volume has a general introduction, explaining the compilers' methods and how to use the volumes. They exclude statistical returns, foreign and Dominions affairs, ecclesiastical and military and naval matters. They include 'economic, social, constitutional questions, and matters of legal administration' (i.e. matters which have been, or might have been, the subject of legislation or have dealt with 'public policy'). R. Vogel, *A Breviate of British diplomatic blue books 1919–1939* (1963), fills one gap left by the Fords.

Non-parliamentary papers greatly increased in number during this period as a measure of economy.[1] They are an uncharted sea, and it adds to the confusion that some of them, promised in parliamentary papers, did not come out. There are two introductory guides: *Government Information and the Research Worker* (1952) and *Published by H.M.S.O.* (1960). Then one has to struggle with the annual *Catalogue of Government Publications*, now called *Official Indexes, Lists, Guides, Catalogues.*

To discover exactly what happened and exactly when, *The Times*, with its bi-monthly *Index*, is the most immediate resource and nearly always reliable for its news, thought not of course for its interpretations. No other newspaper produces an index. *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* have given a summary of the news since 1931. The *Annual Register* is still more summary. Its editor, M. Epstein (named as such on the title-page from 1921 to 1945), was a man of strong views: favourable, for instance, to MacDonald, hostile to Baldwin and to appeasement. As he was also editor of *The Statesman's Year-Book* for most of the period,

1. It was not necessary to give free copies to all members of parliament.

a statement is not made truer by appearing in both volumes. Nor was information in *The Statesman's Year-Book* always kept up to date: the figures of religious allegiances remained unchanged for twenty years and, like other figures, are reliable only for the first year of their appearance. Another useful work of reference, the *Constitutional Year Book*, ceased publication in 1939.

The *Survey of International Affairs*, published annually since 1925 with special volumes for the war years, was also stamped with the personality of its editor, A. J. Toynbee, and in its later years particularly is an historical document rather than an objective record. The *Dictionary of National Bibliography*, covering 1912–1921 and then a volume for each decade, together with the *Concise Dictionary 1901–1950*, is an invaluable work of reference, not wholly free from the editorial outlook of Oxford academics. To take two names at random, it does not include E. D. Morel or Ronald Firbank. Yet Morel had great influence on British foreign policy, and Firbank's books are still read, which is more than can be said for many writers included in the Dictionary. Some of the entries are glorified obituaries; some are studies of high value and contain original information. *Who's Who*, published annually, and *Who Was Who* (six volumes covering 1897 to 1970) are also a matter of editorial choice. The entries were provided by the individuals included and are therefore not always accurate. Sometimes there are mistakes, sometimes – as with previous marriages – deliberate omissions.

Most professions published annual lists, as did many government departments. These can be found on the reference shelves of public libraries, as can *Dod's Parliamentary Companion. The Times* has produced a guide to the house of commons after every general election, except between 1922 and 1924. F. W. S. Craig has performed a great service to scholars in compiling *British Parliamentary Election Statistics, 1918–1968* (1968) and *British Parliamentary Election Results, 1918–1949* (1969). *Parliamentary Debates* (commonly known as *Hansard*) have been officially reported since 1908 with a full index. The reports, though still relying on the antiquated method of individual shorthand, are in general extremely accurate. Few members try to tamper with their speeches after delivering them and, when they do, rarely succeed. There are two limitations to *Hansard*'s accuracy. The reporters do not include casual cries unless these contributed

to the progress of debate; hence, for instance they omitted Amery's famous call to Greenwood on 2 September 1939.[1] Nor was any record kept of the secret sessions held in both World wars – unlike the French Chamber, which kept a secret record, published later. It would also be a convenience if *Hansard* abandoned the pretence that the house of commons was composed of some 600 independents and gave the party allegiance of members.

Government statistics are a primary source of great importance. They must be used with caution. They were compiled for the practical use of the department concerned and for no other. The returns of the unemployed, for example, issued by the ministry of labour since 1922, record the registered unemployed, not all those unemployed, and when some 200,000 names were removed from the register, as happened between 1931 and 1933, this did not necessarily mean that the number of unemployed went down. Processed statistics are even more dangerous. Like other processed products, they reduce coarse bits and pieces to a smooth, plausible substance, which is then given a flavour by the manufacturer. Moreover, the terms of reference and the details included were constantly changing, so that comparative statistics over a period of years are often little more precise than the generalizations of a literary historian. An extreme example was the cost-of-living index in the second World war, which was based on estimates of needs made forty years before[2] and could therefore be rigged to allow rises in the real cost of living without complaint from the trade unions. It is unlikely that we shall ever get statistics of perfect accuracy or completeness. We are on safe ground only when we talk of tendencies. Still it is better to flounder among the statistics than not to get wet at all.

The leading source is the *Statistical Abstract of the United Kingdom* (annually to 1939–40) and the *Annual Abstract of Statistics* (since 1946). Most departments produce their own annual returns. Here another word of caution is necessary. Some returns, including the census, relate to England and Wales; some to Great Britain; some to the United Kingdom

1. Though all contemporary newspaper reports name Amery, a myth has now grown up that the call was in fact made by someone else.

2. It included a generous allowance for 'red flannel'.

(i.e. including all Ireland until 1922 and Northern Ireland thereafter). It is very easy to be caught out over this.[1] The most useful are the Census *Reports* and *Tables*, covering each decennial census from 1911 to 1951 (there was no census in 1941), the registrar-general's *Annual Report* (to 1920) and *Statistical Review* (thereafter); the *Census of Production* (1924, 1930, and 1935 only); the *Abstract of Labour Statistics* (to 1936) and the *Labour Gazette; Agricultural Statistics for England and Wales; Annual Report of the Department of Mines* (1920–38) and *Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest* (1944–56); *Annual Statement of Trade; Report of the Commissioners of Custom and Excise* and *of the Commissioners for Inland Revenue; National Income and Expenditure* (since 1941); *Local Taxation Returns; Ministry* (formerly *Board*) *of Education, Annual Reports.*

The official histories of both World wars and the series of British documents on foreign policy between the wars are also in large part original sources, which I have put under their subject-headings as a matter of convenience.

Two compilations do the work for all but the most devoted student. *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* by B. R. Mitchell, with the collaboration of Phyllis Deane (1962), gives economic tables of almost everything from the eighteenth century to 1938 and sometimes later.[2] *British Political Facts 1900–1967* by David Butler and Jennie Freeman (rev. ed. 1968) gives ministers, elections, parties, much other information and a few statistics.

There are now some excellent general accounts. *Britain between the Wars, 1918–1940*, by C. L. Mowat (1955) is rich in bibliographical references and particularly strong on social and economic themes. I have found myself constantly relying on it despite a struggle for independence. *Twentieth-Century Britain* by Alfred F. Havighurst (1962), though slight, is admirably wide and well informed. *Contemporary England 1914–1964* by W. N. Medlicott (1967) is especially valuable for its treatment of

1. One important work of reference gives British Empire casualties for the first World war and United Kingdom casualties for the second without noticing the difference.

2. When Mitchell and Deane stop at 1938, the later figures, so far as they are known, can be found in *Annual Abstract of Statistics*, no. 85, which covers 1937–47. There is also a useful publication by the U.S. Economic Mission to the United Kingdom, including statistics and graphs, entitled *Economic Development in the United Kingdom 1850–1950.*

foreign affairs. In *Britain in the Century of Total War: Peace and Social Change, 1900–1967* (1968), Arthur Marwick develops the theme which he first propounded in *The Deluge*, that war brings advance as well as destruction. I doubt whether older books, such as *The Reign of George V* by D. C. Somervell (1935), have now much value except as showing how events appeared to contemporaries. Two books covering a longer period are useful for their concluding chapters. They are *The Common People, 1746–1946* by G. D. H. Cole and R. W. Postgate (rev. ed. 1946) and *Great Britain since 1688* by K. B. Smellie (1962).

Much of the evidence and still more of the interpretation must be sought in periodicals. The articles are too many to be listed in this bibliography, especially as some of the most important appeared in periodicals not specifically historical – political, economic, administrative, or general. Of historical periodicals, *History Today* and *The Journal of Modern History* are particularly useful for recent history. The *English Historical Review* gives a list of periodical articles each year in its July number, and there is more than one large-scale annual index of periodicals, which can be consulted in any good library.

Non-literary Sources

Until recently our knowledge of the past was mostly second-hand: written accounts by one man of what he and others said and did. Every human witness is fallible, particularly when he writes about himself, and the more evidence we have, the more questioning we often become. Now we have recording instruments for both sight and sound, and these preserve the past for us in a new and more direct way, though they are of course still ultimately operated by a fallible human being. Photographs, both still and moving, are composed by the cameraman and change in style almost as much as paintings do. Even the sound-engineer shapes, to some extent, the voice of the speaker. Still, historians should use these records more than they have done so far. A time will come when every history faculty will possess gramophone-cubicles and film-theatres that will be as much used as libraries or lecture-rooms – perhaps more. Most of the records, when preserved at all, are still in commercial hands. I give only preliminary indications of where they can be found.

PHOTOGRAPHS

These are the oldest form of mechanical record, beginning with Fenton's magnificent pictures of the Crimean war. Victorian photographers were conscious artists. With contemporary photographers the artistry, though perhaps less obtrusive, is still there. No one will have difficulty in distinguishing a human being photographed by Cecil Beaton from one photographed by Karsh. The largest collection in England is the Radio Times Hulton Picture Library, owned by the British Broadcasting Corporation, a commercial library with no facilities for research students. It is particularly rich after 1938, when *Picture Post*, which started the collection, was founded. Most newspapers and press agencies have collections, the largest that of British International Photographic Press Agencies. The Imperial War Museum has more than 3½ million prints and negatives, covering both World wars, though inadequately until 1916. Selections are often displayed. The National Portrait Gallery has a rather haphazard collection, recently enlarged, that can be consulted by arrangement and, more systematically, the National Portrait Record, which contains photographs of every prominent figure (including even Fellows of the British Academy), starting in 1917. The Victoria and Albert Museum has acquired an exhibition covering the first fifty years of press photography. A single national body for the collection and exhibition of photographs is now in distant contemplation.

The outstanding periodical is the *Illustrated London News*. There are also many illustrated books, often with an accompanying text. Among them are Cecil Beaton, *Time Exposure* (1941); Richard Bennett, *A Picture of the Twenties* (1961); James Laver, *Between the Wars* (1961); L. Fritz Gruber, *Famous Portraits of Famous People* ... (1960); Y. Karsh, *Faces of Destiny* (1947) and *Portraits of Greatness* (1959); R. H. Poole, *The Picture History of Fifty Years, 1900–1951* (n.d.); Alan Ross, *The Forties: a Period Piece* (1950); Paul Tabori, *Twenty Tremendous Years: World War II and After* (1961); *The Times, Britain 1921–1951* (1951). For the two World wars: *The Times History of the War (1914–1918)*, 22 vols. (1914–19); H. W. Wilson and J. A. Hammerton (eds.). *The Great War*, 13 vols. (1914–19); A. J. P. Taylor. *The First World War; an Illustrated History* (1963); and Walter Hutchinson (ed.), *Pictorial History of the War*, 15 vols. (1939–45).

Of course the older forms of visual record – sculpture and

PELICAN BOOKS

ENGLISH HISTORY

1914–1945

A J P Taylor was born at Birkdale, Lancashire in 1906. He was educated at Bootham School, York, and at Oriel College, Oxford. He was a lecturer in Modern History at Manchester University from 1930 to 1938 and a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford from 1938 to 1976. From 1976 to 1978 he was Benjamin Meaker Visiting Professor at Bristol University. He is now an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and of Oriel College, Oxford. He was Ford's Lecturer in English History at Oxford, 1955–6, and Leslie Stephen Lecturer at Cambridge, 1960–61. He is an honorary D.C.L. of the University of New Brunswick, D. Univ. of York University and D. Litt. of Bristol and Warwick Universities.

He has given ten series of history lectures on television and is the only lecturer to face the cameras for half-an-hour without notes or visual aids. He has been a prolific journalist, both as a book reviewer and as a columnist.

His books include *The Course of German History*, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848–1918*, *Bismarck*, *The Troublemakers*, *The Last of Old Europe* and *The Russian War 1941–1945*. Many of his books have been published in Penguin: *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809–1918*, *The Origins of the Second World War*, *The First World War: an Illustrated History*, *Europe: Grandeur and Decline*, *Beaverbrook*, *Essays in English History*, *The Second World War: an Illustrated History*, and *The War Lords*. He has also contributed introductions to the Penguin editions of *The Communist Manifesto* and of John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*. His most recent books are *How Wars Begin*, *Revolutions and Revolutionaries*, and *Politicians, Socialism and Historians*.