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GREAT BRITAIN HAD IMPORTANT SECRET SERVICE

Much Work Done By Branch of Which Little Has Been Generally Known.

One branch of effort by Great Britain during the years of war, and before that too, of which nothing official was ever permitted to be known to the public was the Special Intelligence Department. Better known as the Secret Service in the pages of fiction in which it has figured largely of late years, it has accomplished wonderful things, from over which the veil has been lifted for a moment by Brigadier General George K. Cockerill, C. B., M. P., in his farewell message to the staff over which he has been head since 1914.

From Small Beginnings.

"The Directorate of Special intelligence, to give it the title by which it is best known to you," said Sir George, "grew from small beginnings. When the war broke out it consisted of three General Staff officers (all of whom at once joined the Staff of the British Expeditionary Force), and a special bureau of four officers which in the five years preceding the war had been instrumental in tracing and exposing many of the activities of the German Secret Service in this country and in bringing number of its agents to trial. "as soon as war was seen to be inevitable a scheme for censorship of British cables was put into operation. This scheme was prepared with such remarkable provision that it has never been found necessary to modify its principles in any important particular. These two services — viz., the contre-espionage and the cable censorship were designed to safeguard our naval and military secrets and to discover those of the enemy; and every new organization intended to assist in defeating the enemy's spy system naturally came under his control.

So rapidly did the work extend and the necessary staff expand, that in March, 1915, the branch was reorganized as the Directorate of Special Intelligence, whose function it has since been to expose and frustrate the clandestine activities of enemy agents under whatever form they might be encountered. Being thus charged with duties of supreme national importance, the Directorate has gradually attained a size never contemplated in peace, and actually numbers today over 6000 persons. It is, in point of mere size, the sixth largest Department of the Government. But so silently and unobtrusively has it worked that its very existence is almost unknown to the general public.

Spies Quickly Arrested.

The detection and conviction of enemy spies has been your primary business. It is satisfactory to note that in most cases the arrest of the spy has followed quickly upon his entry into this country. You have been in point of fact the chief agency in preventing the leakage of naval and military information. To mention but a few instances of your success, the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the construction of tanks, the preparations for the offensive at Cambrai, and also for the counter-offensives which destroyed the German armies, were all known to numbers of people in this country, but were concealed from the enemy. There is I am informed on the best authority, no evidence that enemy submarines have ever received information of the departure of shipping from British ports. Thanks largely to your efforts, no act of destruction or incendiarism has been committed by enemy agents in this country. This is the more remarkable when the number of enemy aliens at large is considered. You have obtained information of incalculable value to the Naval Intelligence, the Military Intelligence, and the War Trade Intelligence Departments. In the opinion of the Minister of Blockade, your work has contributed in a very large degree to the satisfactory working of the blockade and, so far as the suppression of enemy trade is concerned, the information provided by you has been the most valuable acquired from any source during the war as a means of detecting enemy merchandise carried as neutral goods in neutral ships. It will in-

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One branch of the Directorate of Special Intelligence has prepared and published the "Daily Review of the Foreign Press," with its many supplements, political, economic, and technical; another has been responsible for the study of enemy methods of propaganda. One small section not content with closing certain channels of enemy propaganda, has kept others open for the express purpose of distributing British propaganda in enemy covers on which the postage has been paid by the enemy. Military material suitable for our own propaganda has been collected, prepared and distributed by balloons on the British fronts. Tribute to the startling effectiveness of your work in this connection has been paid by the chief of the German General Staff himself, who in a recent order made specific reference to certain leaflets, all of which were prepared in and distributed under arrangements made by the Directorate of Special Intelligence.

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