

From London to Berlin via Harwich the distance is 603 miles; via Dover and Calais 732 miles.

Vienna has become apparently a Polish city. The inrush of fleeing Poles has become so great, who seek sanctuary in the capital.

The "Berliner Tageblatt" states that the military authorities in Brussels have seized all the stocks of the fashionable military caps for women.

The Iron Cross of the first class carries with it a pension of £25 a year, and that of the second class, £7 thus Germany has loaded itself with a new debt of £4,800,000 a year.

Orders to provide 10,000,000 sets of dominoes, draughts, and chess for the armies of Great Britain, France, and Russia, have been given in England.

In those drives on Calais no Germans have yet been arrested for exceeding the speed limit, remarks one journal.

Only paper money is now used in Germany, states a recent neutral visitor, where sixpenny notes are in circulation. All gold and silver has to be surrendered to the municipal authorities.

Deer-stalkers in the Wairarapa report that sport is not too good yet, and they consider, this year, that the season opened at least a fortnight too early.

Captain Hardham, V.C., who has been promoted, up to 1911 was an active member of the Petone Club, being captain of the senior team for eight years prior to his retirement from active membership.

In Vienna the Government and municipal authorities have alone to deal with nearly 300,000 Galician fugitives. In Prague, the capital of Bohemia, another 40,000 have sought refuge. In Budapest, the chief city of Hungary, there are about 80,000 of them. Thousands of people of Bukowina, who are of the Roumanian race, crossed the frontiers into Roumania proper at the last advance of the Russian invaders several weeks ago, and have been sympathetically received there.

The misery in Poland is very great. In the kingdom of Poland alone there are 15,000 villages burnt or damaged, a thousand churches and chapels have been destroyed. Nine out of ten provinces are occupied by the Germans, who have seized everything, even to the peasants' chicken. Homeless, the villagers have sought shelter in the forests, where, it is no exaggeration to say, women and children are dying from cold and hunger by thousands daily. Children raise their fleshless arms and cry to their mothers for bread, but the Polish mother has nothing to give them—nothing but her fears. Poland has suffered as greatly as Belgium at the hands of the unspeakable Germans.

Prince Henry of Prussia, the Kaiser's brother, is an ardent sailor, but he is more feared than loved by his men: The following story is typical of his methods, and shows that although he expects those under his command to put up with all kinds of hardships, he is not above putting up with a few himself. One day, when he was on board a warship in the North Sea, he suddenly gave the order, "All hands to bathe!" It was a bitterly cold day, and the water was like ice. The order was so evidently distasteful that one of the officers ventured to make a mild protest to the Prince. Without answering him a single word, Prince Henry, although fully clothed, sprang over the vessel's side, swam out a good distance in the icy waters, and returned to the deck dripping from head to foot. After that the sailors took their bath without a demur.

Mr. F. D. Acland, the new financial secretary to the Treasury, is the son of Mr. A. H. Dyke Acland, who was Minister of Education from 1893 to 1895. He is a Rugby and Balliol man, and before entering Parliament was engaged in educational work. He was elected for the Richmond Division of Yorkshire in 1906, but since 1910 has sat for North-west Cornwall. After serving as parliamentary private secretary to Lord Haldane, when Secretary of War, he became financial secretary to the War Office in 1908. Three years later he was appointed Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. A branch of the family is also resident in South Canterbury.

Deer stalkers who have returned to Timaru from the deer country at the back of Albury report that deer are very plentiful there, so plentiful indeed that they are doing a great deal of damage to turnip crops and grass. Mr. T. C. Palliser, one of the stalkers, secured a very fine eighteen-pointer.

In the capital of Galicia, the beautiful city of Lemberg, the Russians have settled down since last September in a manner which shows plainly that they mean to stay there. Of the 250,000 civilian population of Lemberg scarcely 40,000 have remained. Of the 9,000,000 inhabitants which Galicia and Bukowina at the declaration of war could boast of, fully 1,500,000 have fled.

Welsh prisoners of war in Germany cleverly got over the censorship difficulty. A letter which easily passed the German censor contains the following. The words given in parenthesis being the English equivalents of the Welsh word immediately preceding:—"You will be glad to hear news of old friends. Mr. Bwyd (food) is very bad here. Mr. Bara (bread) is very much darker than when you saw him, and is quite hard. I never

extent in Germany since the failure of the "blockade" warning to intimidate the United States, is now also apparent in Belgium. The relations between German officers and Americans engaged in neutral work in the occupied territory, while still polite, are far less cordial than during the campaign of conciliation waged in the United States by the Bernstorff Dernburg bureau.

Closer watch is being kept on American workers for the Belgian relief organisation. They are shadowed during their periodic journeys between Holland and the German lines, and there is a growing disposition to regard them as potential spies because, in the words of one German staff officer at Antwerp (who was educated in England): "American neutrality now means friendship for England." Every neutral who is permitted to circulate in Belgium is watched from the moment he leaves Belgium for Holland on official business until he arrives back in Brussels or Liege. Plain-clothes police agents dog them from the frontier to Rotterdam, dine at the same cafe, note the people they meet and converse with, and make exhaustive reports concerning every movement.



LIEUT. T. SPENCER, a well-known British airman, who is reported missing since the Zeebrugge Raid.

see Mr. Cig (meat), and Mr. Ymenva (butter) but seldom; he was very bad indeed the last few times I met him. I used at first to meet Mr. Llaeth (milk) every day, but he has not been here now for some time." The letter was written in English throughout, excepting the Welsh words, which the German censor evidently took to be the names of other British prisoners.

Of those who are now at the head of Empire affairs, says a "Bulletin" writer, Asquith is the son of a solicitor, who was so poor that he could scarcely afford to send his brilliant son to the City of London School. Kitchener's father was a half-pay Irish colonel. Fisher has Cingalese blood in his veins, and his male progenitor held a commission in an obscure Scottish line regiment. Haldane, who attends to most of England's law, is "self-made," and so is Isaacs, who looks after the rest of it. French's father was a retired naval captain, of the sort that pervades Plymouth and Portsmouth in shoals. He brought money into the family by marrying an Eccles. And then there is Lloyd George, not to mention John Burns. None of these national heroes was at a public school—an unthinkable lapse. It is a blighting commentary on the forecasts of Toryism, that Britain, in the hands of the middle classes, is more formidable than at any time in history.

German resentment against Americans, which has grown to a dangerous

The St. Sophia Mosque stands in the old part of Constantinople, not far from Seraglio Point, a little distant from the ancient Hippodrome, nor far from the fountain of the Sultan Ahmed, and that latter is a wonder. De Amicis called it "A caress in in marble." It is a marble kiosk, carved in the most delicate patterns, enamelled blue; wrought in gold and silver; it is a dream, and for 200 years it has decorated the square near to St. Sophia. Round the edge of the roof is an inscription in Arabic as follows:—"This fountain speaks to you in the following verse by the Sultan Ahmed: 'Turn the key of this pure and tranquil spring, and call upon the name of God; drink of this pure and inexhaustible and limpid waters, and pray for the Sultan.'"

HISTORICAL EGYPT.

A Poverty Bay trooper, Guy Woodward, writing to his parents, gives a fine description of historical Egypt. He says:—"On Sunday last in the afternoon three of us went to the citadel—the oldest fortification now standing in Egypt, and went through the wonderful mosque there, said to be the most elaborate in Egypt. The citadel was built nearly 1000 years ago by an Arabian conqueror of Egypt, Saladin, and has been several times besieged. It was ruled by Saladin's successors until a great Turkish ruler, Mahomet Ali, again conquered it. This Khedive built the mosque we saw, and you will notice in the postcards I sent originally three tall minarets,

representing three mosques, the tallest of the three is that of Mahomet Ali. On passing through the huge gates of the mosque one enters a huge courtyard paved in coloured parquetry of strange and quaint design. In the centre of the courtyard, as is the custom in every temple, there is a huge font. This particular one is connected with an up-to-date water supply now and has a large number of silver taps, at which every believer must wash himself thoroughly clean before he enters the inner temple. The guide showed us the old source of the water supply, a huge well no less than 242 feet deep. One can shout down the mouth and hear echoes apparently down in the nether regions. The old Egyptians had some wonderful method of pumping this water into a huge cistern which occupies the whole of the outer courtyard, and over which the floor was built. Our guide could not explain the system they used, but it must have been very wonderful. This washing font is covered by a large rotunda arrangement of beautiful, elaborate designed stonework in colours; and the top is occupied by a tower which contains a clock presented to Mahomet Ali by King Philip of Spain, and which still keeps most accurate time. By this clock all the services are held, and the Mahomedans point it out with considerable pride. By the way, we had to wear huge sandals over our boots when we entered the mosque, and it is quite contrary to custom to allow anyone to enter with boots on. All pilgrims leave their sandals or boots outside the door.

Passing through other magnificent doors one enters the inner temple, and the first view of this one was wonderful. It was about 300ft by 150ft wide, or rather more if anything. The floor was entirely covered by a huge Turkish pile carpet of a rich crimson colour. The roof, supported by four huge pillars, and the centre of the dome just 200ft from the floor. The walls and pillars are entirely faced with beautiful white alabaster, and at the corners of these pillars, when a match was held behind them, one could almost see through them. The lighting is provided by beautiful stained glass windows in the daytime, and by 365 separate electric chandeliers or clusters at night. These clusters represent the days of the year. A huge chandelier in silver hangs in the centre, and is a masterpiece of cut glass work, and pendants which reflect every light and movement in the huge room. This chandelier was presented to Mahomet Ali by King Louis XIV., of France, and cost thousands of pounds.

Next one was struck by the wonderful ceiling; it is designed by concentric semi-circles working outwards from the huge centre dome. The painting and carving of these ceilings alone is estimated to have cost over £50,000, and one small semi-circle done recently cost £2000. There are inscriptions from the Koran worked into all these designs and the names of Mahomet Ali and all his descendants also appear. In the eastern wall in each mosque there is a huge semi-circular depression or niche which they use as an altar, and every believer must face this when at prayers. Inside there are three separate pulpits or desks; one from which the Koran is recited, not read, remember, as every priest must know the entire Koran by heart. This is the most elaborate, and is inlaid with gold, silver, ebony and ivory in a most wonderful manner, and does not contain a single nail, nothing but wooden pegs hold it together. The second desk, not so good in design, is used for sermons, and the third for special feasts, I imagine conversions, etc. In a separate transept, behind superb carved ivory screens, one sees the casket containing the mummified body of the builder. This casket is a work of art in itself, and something similar to the Koran desk in design. This temple would occupy a writer for a whole week, and I personally could find new interest in it every day for a month, but time is limited, and it's very cold. One's thoughts could not but go back through time and space, and I thought of the tales those walls could unfold of life and death. It was, I think, the most interesting sight I have seen, and later we went through another temple older still, outside the citadel walls. I shall try to tell you about it next week. This citade was besieged by Napoleon about 100 years ago, and the walls of the temples still hold the cannon balls he fired, with no damage to them. Napoleon removed many of the magnificent inlaid doors of the temples, and presented them to the "Louvre" at Paris. Perhaps I may yet see them there.