

tions, and more than half their number owe their incapacity to wounds or sickness incurred while serving with fighting units. The men of the Corps, however, made light of their disabilities. Many companies worked for months on end under shell fire, long marches were willingly undertaken, and the essential work entrusted to them was cheerfully performed often under conditions entailing all the hardship and strain without the excitement of actual fighting. The successive British advances imposed upon all ranks daily increasing work and responsibilities. It is to the credit of the Corps and of the excellent system of command and administration developed in it during the earlier part of the year that the Labour Companies have invariably answered all demands made upon them.

#### *Medical Services.*

During the period under review the Medical Services under the direction of Lieut.-General C. H. Burtchaell, deserve special commendation for the initiative, energy and success which have characterised all branches of their work. The rapid advance of the troops and the extended front on which operations were carried out during the final stages of the offensive created problems in connection with the collection, evacuation and treatment of wounded which had not been met with in the earlier phases of the war. These difficulties were met with the most admirable promptness and efficiency.

My thanks are due to the consulting surgeons and physicians for the invaluable assistance given by them in the application of new methods to the treatment of wounds and disease; to the R.A.M.C. Officers and Permanent Staffs of the Convalescent Depôts for work which enabled many thousands of men to be restored to the fighting ranks; to the untiring and devoted work of the British Red Cross Society, the Order of St. John and all members of the Nursing Services, whose unremitting kindness and constancy has done much to alleviate the sufferings of the sick and wounded; and finally for the very valuable services rendered by the Base Hospital Units and by individual officers of the Medical Corps of the United States of America, attached to the British Army.

#### *The Chaplain's Department.*

Under the direction of the Principal Chaplain, the Rev. J. M. Simms, and the Deputy Chaplain-General, The Right Rev. Bishop Gwynne, the clergy of all denominations ministering to the Army have earned the

admiration and affection of all ranks. I desire once more to express on behalf of all officers and men my profound appreciation of their unflinching devotion and self-sacrifice.

#### *Administrative Services and Departments.*

To all other Administrative Services and Departments I desire to express the thanks of the fighting forces for the loyal and efficient manner in which they have carried out their essential tasks. During a period of great strain and incessant work they have contributed in their various spheres to the smooth working of the Army machine, and are entitled to a full share in the victory of our arms.

#### *The Navy and Home Authorities.*

The thanks of all ranks of the British Armies in France and Flanders are once more due to the Royal Navy and Mercantile Marine for their magnificent work, which throughout the heavy demands of the past year has at all times enabled our needs to be supplied.

We thank also the different Home Authorities and the workers in the great munition factories, both men and women, for the magnificent support they have given us through all stages of the war. We understand and appreciate the value of the work they have done.

#### *Our Allies.*

At the moment when the final triumph of the Allied cause is assured, we and all others of the Allied and Associated Armies can look back on the years that have gone with a satisfaction undimmed by any hint of discord or conflict of interest and ideals. Few alliances of the past can boast such a record. Few can show a purpose more tenaciously and faithfully pursued, or so fully and gloriously realised. If the complete unity and harmony of our action is to be ascribed in part to the justice of our cause, it is due also to the absolute loyalty with which that cause has been pursued by all those entrusted with the control of the different Allied Armies that have fought side by side with ours.

I propose to submit at a later date a further and final despatch dealing with the advance of the British Armies to the Rhine and the occupation of the Cologne bridgehead.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,  
Your Lordship's obedient servant,

D. HAIG,

Field-Marshal.  
Commanding-in-Chief, British Armies  
in France.

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