

BATTLE OF BRITAIN DAY.

To render what we owe to the few who saved the many is a comprehensive, not a particular task. The third anniversary of the Battle of Britain finds us remembering that grim period in many ways.

By a merciful deliverance we came through the savage ordeal. Not by man's hand alone were we given power to resist. Leading their people in a nation-wide act of remembrance, the King and Queen attend Divine Service at St. Pauls. A moment when we give thanks to God "for the success granted to the Royal Air Force, and in commemoration of the courage and devotion by all, whether in the forces, in Civil Defence or in the factories, who helped to guard Britain throughout the prolonged air attack of the enemy".

The chimes which ring today were still three years ago. They were to announce the invasion which never came but had its portent in the skies over Britain. It's at Biggin Hill aerodrome in a memorial chapel that we hear the voice of the Chaplain-in-Chief of the R.A.F.

Group Captain Malan unveils the reposed and pays tribute to the dead and missing pilots of the Biggin Hill Sector.

The high standard of gallantry set by the Battle of Britain airmen is flowering fully today. Here is the Commander-in-Chief Fighter Command, Air Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh Mallory.

"Since the dark days three years ago when the few defeated the many, Fighter Command has become a great offensive force. Its present strength is considerably greater than it was in September 1940. Besides which Britain has built up huge formations which have defeated the Luftwaffe in Italy and the Mediterranean. None of this would have been possible but for the major defeat - which was a major defeat and the first Nazi setback - inflicted on the German airforce in the Battle of Britain.

Today, the Fighter Pilots of Fighter Command are as eager to bring the enemy to battle as were the men in 1940. But today they have to go out to seek it. The roles are reversed, but with this difference. The scores are still well in our favour even when fighting over hostile territory. We have established on the foundations laid in the Battle of Britain complete air supremacy over the Channel and within fighter range over occupied Europe".

Battle of Britain Day sees a representative procession of heroes and heroines marching past the King and Queen outside Buckingham Palace. The men and women who fought through those hideous months in Civil Defence and factory, and must ever share the victory. Those who fought the flames and those who built the Merlin engines for the Spitfires and Hurricanes. The thousands who kept our communications open and essential services intact. The workers of a hundred different trades who broke the heart of the Nazis by their dogged perseverance during the height of the Blitzkrieg. In the marching ranks are those who manned our anti-aircraft defences. The gunners who planted that roof of steel over Britain. Then came the broad blue line of the Royal Air Force - men who bore the heaviest part in the struggle three years ago - pilots of fighter command; United Nations' airmen from every corner of the globe who halted the tide of German aggression spread-eagle across the face of Europe.

Few stories in our National history can outshine the splendour of our Air Force. It is this gigantic instrument which is tearing the heart out of Nazidom and returning with ten-fold interest the destruction which they launched against the civilised world. War, the Germans were sedulously taught, is a grand ennobling exercise. How then are the bristles on the heads of the "Master Race" behaving now?.