

807

PREPARING DEFENCES AT CYPRUS.

Important little island in the Mediterranean --- from the quiet ways of peace with its olive groves and grapes and pomegranates it has become a strategic centre in the Middle East Zone of this world war.

These are the first pictures of Middle East troops embarking for Cyprus. Obviously not many are shown here, because it is undesirable to crowd the docks with masses of troops at one time. But the great importance of Cyprus can be seen from the map: for Germany it would be an excellent jumping-off ground for an attack on Syria, Palestine or Egypt. Now in the harbour at Famagusta another convoy of transport and supply ships is unloading its contribution to the defence of the island an endless stream of the countless requirements of our modern armies. Let us hope that we shall hear no more foolishness about the impossibility of a German invasion by any particular method. Let us hope --- as seems to be the case --- that in Cyprus the military commanders are able to prepare defence for any type of attack. It is of the utmost urgency that aerodromes should be strongly defended; both from air ~~xxx~~ attack and from troops who might be on the ground.

This is the effective though rather primitive means by which guns are hauled into position: ~~A.A. is standing ready,~~ and everywhere sandbags are being filled to build emplacements and light A.A. posts. ^{And} ~~while~~ the big guns go laboriously home.

Cyprus has not lost its touch of the picturesque; indeed the Cypriot islanders have turned to with enthusiasm to help in the building of the camp ~~the~~

But beside the everyday needs of an army, the more urgent work of building aerodromes goes on at full pressure. Ancient and modern join the centuries in preparing the ground for Fleet Air Arm and R.A.F. Water keeps the eternal dust in check while the rollers and levellers are working a non-stop day. No doubt many lessons have been learned from the loss of Crete. One great lesson was the vital necessity of sufficient air strength: ~~this is some~~ *this must never be forgotten.* ~~of the air strength in Cyprus and it looks convincing~~