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* The Weather. *
* Maritime—Fresh west to *
* northwest winds, fair, not much *
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German Offensive at Verdun Is Reported to be Crumbling

Verdun Regarded in Paris as the Gettysburg of the War--- Hidden Elements of Discord Coming to the Surface In Germany---Turning Point of War Near at Hand

PARIS, March 21.—The offensive before Verdun is crumbling. The check is an immense disaster for Germany. It is the Gettysburg of the great war. Henceforth Germany will be on the defensive. Verdun marks the turning point. So a high official of the War Office expressed yesterday the inside opinion of the great battle. Confidence here is now becoming a firm belief that France has won a victory which is likely to shorten the war considerably. The press attaches significance to the progressively lowered morale of German prisoners. The first prisoners did not conceal their expectation that the fortress would be captured. The latest admit that they have lost all hope of success at Verdun.

German forces again made violent attacks in the Verdun sector west of the Meuse last night. The War Office announced today that the Germans had failed to succeed except that they obtained a slight footing southwest of Malancourt wood. East of the Meuse, the night was calm.

A Great Change for the Worse Has

Come Over the Situation in Germany

LONDON, March 21.—A despatch to the Daily Telegraph from Rotterdam says: While a note of warning against founding too great expectations on the political developments in Germany is justified, there is no reason for not attaching very high importance to them.

To assume a positive early collapse of the enemy's resistance would be foolish. To ignore the present symptoms would be going too far in the opposite extreme.

Private information, as well as the obvious trend of events proves unmistakably that within the last few weeks a great change for the worse has come over the situation, politically and economically. In the former respect a crisis has arisen of a character more serious than anything since the war began. For six months at least it has been developing. Now it has come with the resignation of Von Tirpitz, and that event has precipitated a ferment in which all the hidden elements of discord, discontent and anxiety within the German Empire have come to the surface.

The Huns Have Suddenly Awakened to

Knowledge That They May Lose the War

In brief, the German people have suddenly awakened to the knowledge (before perhaps a tragic secret in the breast of the government) that after all they may lose the war. Accompanying the revelation of naval weakness, as it is regarded, is now the apparent failure of the great offensive against Verdun. As yet there is no news of any concerted outbreak of terrible disappointment following the failure of those operations, but neutral travellers leaving Berlin last week record already there a complete change in the atmosphere of the capital.

Rejoicings have given place to recriminations and, as one such witness put it, the bulletins speak of victory, but the faces of everybody I saw were eloquent of defeat.

British and German Destroyers in a

Little Scrap Off the Coast of Belgium

LONDON, March 21.—An engagement occurred yesterday off the Belgian coast between four British and three German destroyers. Two of the German vessels were hit. Four men on the British boats were wounded. The official account of the action is as follows:

"Yesterday morning four British destroyers sighted three German destroyers off the Belgian coast. The German destroyers at once turned and ran for Zeebrugge, chased by our destroyers. Shots were exchanged during this short running fight and two of the enemy's boats were observed to have been hit. Our casualties were four men wounded."

THE GERMAN VERSION.

BERLIN, March 21 (via London).—The German Admiralty account of the battle between British destroyers and German torpedo boats off the Belgian coast follows: "On March 20, off the coast of Flanders, a fight which was successful for us, took place between three German torpedo boats and a division of five British destroyers. The enemy broke off the engagement after he had received several direct hits, and he steamed out of sight at full speed. We suffered only unimportant damages."

RESTRICTION ON LUXURIES.

LONDON, March 21.—Further restrictions in the importation of luxuries were imposed today. At a meeting of the Privy Council King George signed a proclamation prohibiting the buying of automobiles, motor cycles, various musical instruments, such as player pianos and phonographs, and spirits and other strong drinks, with the exception of brandy and rum.

IRISH RIOTERS FIRE ON POLICE

London, March 21.—Sinn Fein rioters fired on the police last night.

Three of the police were wounded. The rioting occurred at Tullamore, in Kings county, Ireland.

A police sergeant was wounded seriously and a county inspector and a district inspector received some slight wounds.

Tullamore is a town of about 5,000 inhabitants, 58 miles west of Dublin. It has a considerable trade in agricultural produce. There have been intimations of disturbed conditions in some parts of Ireland in several recent dispatches. On March 14 the police of Cork raided the residences of the principal officials of the Sinn Fein party and seized documents.

The London Post last week said the situation in Ireland was serious on account of the activity of the Sinn Fein society.

It asserted a vigorous campaign against recruiting was being carried out without serious hindrance in the west and south and that several persons had been indicted and tried, but had been acquitted.

Mr. R. P. Steeves of Sussex, is in the city.

Mr. James Lonergan of Toronto, is at the Queen.

Mr. J. A. Rundle of Newcastle, is registered at the Queen.

GERMAN OFFICIAL REPORT ON THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE

Berlin, March 20 (via London, March 21).—The Russian offensive which began last Friday is, according to despatches from the eastern headquarters, evidently a serious attempt to relieve the pressure at Verdun.

Between Lakes Dresviaty and Wichnevske the artillery began range finding Friday, and infantry attacks began Saturday morning in strong force on all parts of this section of the front.

Northward of Postavy and at several other points heavy divisions attempted surprise attacks at dawn with artillery preparation, but were easily repulsed. Two hours later the Russian artillery began shelling the German positions furiously, especially to the south of Wichnevske lake and to the north of Postavy. Nevertheless the results of this gun fire were remarkably slight.

Thereupon the Russian infantry advanced forward in thick masses to

within range of the withering fire of the German machine guns, which played terrible havoc with them. The Russians fell in heaps. None of them lived to reach the German entanglements, although the lines range only between 80 and 400 yards.

Many Russian Dead.

Southward of Narocz, where the German line bends, making flank fire possible, 3,000 Russian dead were counted. The Russians continued their attack there all day, but made no further serious attack at Postavy after their first repulse. Notwithstanding this determined fighting, the reports say that the Russians are showing less of their former recklessness in sacrificing troops.

The German losses are described as astonishingly slight and the spirits of the troops are excellent, there being a sense of relief in the serious work after a long period of inactivity.

Russians Occupy City Of Ishapen

London, March 21.—A Reuter despatch from Teheran says that Russian forces entered Ishapen, the old capital of Persia, on March 19.

Ishapen is one of the important cities of Persia with a population of over 80,000. It is 218 miles southeast of Teheran.

The foregoing despatch indicates a Russian movement further to the south than has been reported hitherto. Russian forces, after the capture of Hamadan, advanced southwest towards Kermanshah in the direction of the Turkish frontier. The army now reported at Ishapen is evidently striking southward from the main Russian forces in the direction of the Persian Gulf.

Grand Orange Lodge At St. Stephen Today

St. Stephen, N. B., March 21.—The Orange Grand Lodge of New Brunswick met here today in annual session. Grand Master W. B. Wallace, of St. John, presided. It was stated that the usual large increase in membership was missing, but that the order had more than held its own numerically and financially. The net gain in membership was 280.

Mr. E. S. Carter of Fairvale, Kings county, is a guest at the Queen.

Bulgars Are Showing Activity

Milan, via Paris, March 21.—A Bucharest despatch to the Secolo says that the Bulgarians are making extraordinary preparations along the Roumanian frontier.

A number of boats laden with mines have arrived at Giurgevo and it is believed that the Bulgarians intend to scatter the mines broadcast in the Danube.

The Bulgairan newspapers, the despatch adds, are becoming daily more threatening in tone toward Roumania.

Giurgevo is a Roumanian town on the Danube forty miles southwest of Bucharest, of which it is the port.

Asquith Libal Suit Has Been Settled

(Canadian Press.)

London, March 21.—The libel suit of Mrs. Herbert Asquith, wife of the Premier, against the Globe, was settled today. The suit was brought on account of publication by the Globe of statements that Mrs. Asquith had visited German prisoners of war confined at Donington Hall and had sent presents to them. When the case was called today announcement was made that the Globe had consented to judgment for £1,000 and costs.

The defendants made unreserved public apology for the statement in the Globe.

LORD NORTHCLIFFE DESCRIBES SCENES AT THE BATTLEFRONT

People at Home Know Nothing of the Real Horrors of War---The Two Proud to Die People Could Get Pointers Says an American.

LONDON, March 21.—The Daily Mail publishes an article dated Bar Leduc, from Lord Northcliffe, written previously to his despatch from before Verdun. The article was delayed on the way to Paris, and has only just reached London. Describing his journey to the battle front, Lord Northcliffe writes:

"Several little happenings in this evening's journey to Bar Leduc stand out in my mind and must be recorded. At home in England, except for the comparatively few people who have seen the victims of Zeppelins and of the bombardment of Hartlepool, Whitby and Scarborough, we know nothing of the real horrors of war. France has four hundred miles of them every day—wrecked towns in which women and children have been destroyed before the eyes of their neighbors.

TOUCHING SCENES.

"One little incident today was a conversation with a young American, who combined stretcher-bearing with his work of ambulance driving. Evening was falling and wounded were being brought into the first dressing station. One splendid young Frenchman, a beautiful boy, lay on a stretcher with the lower part of his body blown to pieces. They were wiping his lips with a sponge and he was dying. Another great fellow, whose steel hat lay on his chest, smashed to pieces, was not only wounded, but demented as well. A third, an older man, judging by his gray hair, had the lower part of his face shot away. The scene was one that would have moved even the conscientious objector, if such human rats (the Society of Friends I except) have any feelings.

TERRIBLE OBJECT LESSON.

"The thin, hard faced young western American said: 'Some of our too-proud-to-fight people ought to see what is going on here.' I agreed with him.

"It seems to me," he added, 'that this sort of thing ought to be known to the world. The comfortable, elegant people at home, looking at the theatrical representations or the movies, ought to have some of these realities handed out to them. It is unjust that the women and children in France and Belgium should have to face this kind of horror and the English slackers should get off with rose-water newspaper reporting.'

GERMAN PRISONERS DEMORALIZED.

Another portion of the despatches reads: "At one point on the road is a convoy of German prisoners, on the way probably to some railway station. We are surprised the the small number of French guards around them. They were in charge of their own sergeants, who shouted to them as if they were dogs. For some reason the French do not care to publish reports as to the large number of German prisoners they take except when the Germans make unusually outrageous reports."

TURKISH OFFICIAL REPORT.

CONSTANTINOPLE, March 21 (via London).—An official statement given out by the Turkish War Office says:

"On the Irak front the situation is unchanged. On the Caucasian front there is no important news to report. At the Dardanelles on the afternoon of March 19, a torpedo boat and a cruiser shelled the neighborhood of Seddul Bahr and Tekke-Burnu. The bombardment was unsuccessful and the ships retired. A British division with two machine guns advanced in the direction of El Saile, north of Sheik Hosman, and was attacked by our troops, which were sent out against it. The enemy fled towards Sheik Hosman."

RUSSIANS SHOWING ACTIVITY.

COPENHAGEN, March 21 (via London).—A despatch to the Politiken from Berlin says that a great concentration of Russian troops is occurring in Southern Poland. It is supposed that the Russians are preparing an attack on the line from Cartorysk to Kovel.

FIRE FOLLOWS BOMBARDMENT.

AMSTERDAM, March 21 (via London).—The Telegraaf states that the bombardment of German positions on the Belgian coast yesterday by a squadron of sixty-five Allied aeroplanes, lasted several hours. It says a great fire was observed at Zeebrugge after the raid over that point.

CAPTURED FRENCH POSITIONS.

BERLIN, March 21 (via London).—French positions north-east of Avoncourt were captured by the Germans, who took 2,500 prisoners, the War Office announced today.