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THE MAIL AND ADVOCATE.

Official Organ of The Fishermen's Protective Union of Newfoundland.

Vol. III. No. 44.

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1916.

Price: 1 Cent.

Germans Are Now Engaged in Greatest Battle of the War

Germans Have Been Unable Despite a Rain of Shells and Furious Onslaughts of Their Artillery to Break the French Lines—Battlefield Between the Meuse and Ornes Are Piled With German Dead—On the Russian Front no Great Results Have Been Obtained by Either Side—Russians Still Press Turks Back

London, Feb. 25.—Inspired by the presence of their Emperor, today, and Crown Prince Frederick William, German troops are engaged in one of the greatest battles of the war on the front centering around the fortress of Verdun. Attack succeeded against the French line after bombardments, incessant and terrific, continuing for several days; while the Germans have not been able, despite a rain of shells and furious onslaughts by their artillery, to break the French lines. Nevertheless, the French on their right and left wings have been compelled to withdraw to lines respectively to South of Ornes, behind the town of Samogneux and six miles North of the fortress.

Only between Malancourt and the left bank of the Meuse has there been any diminution in the intensity of the artillery fire. With Bradbant, Haumont and Samogneux and the wooded sections North of Beaumont in their possession the Germans from the Meuse, Eastward to Fromezey, are forcing the fighting, seemingly regardless of the cost in life.

French guns answer the German guns shell for shell, and casualties on both sides are very great. A French official report describes the battlefield between the Meuse and Ornes as piled with German dead.

On the Russian front, from Riga region to East Galicia, there have been engagements at various points but no great results have been attained by either side.

In the Caucasus, Petrograd reports the Russians continue to successfully press back the Turks. The usual activities by the Austrians and Italians on the Austro-Italian line continues.

A French air squadron dropped a large number of bombs on the outskirts of Metz, a big fire being observed after the attack.

Earl Derby has accepted the Chairmanship of the Joint Army and Navy Board, which will control the British air service.

Wants "Jacky" Fisher to Assume Command

Says Fisher is Only Man Who Has Beaten Germans Brain Power

London, Feb. 25.—The British Weekly, which recently suggested Lord Northcliffe as air defence minister, now cries for Lord "Jacky" Fisher to resume naval command.

"Lacking whom," says the British Weekly, "England will lack the greatest war brain she has bred since the days of Nelson. The greatest war ever waged has produced very few war brains. Only one has beaten Germans brain power, and that man is Lord Fisher."

ADVERTISE IN THE MAIL AND ADVOCATE

JAPAN WILL NOT SEND TROOPS TO RUSSIA

TOKIO, Feb. 24.—Foreign Minister Baron Ishi denied in the Diet to-day that Japan intends to send troops to the assistance of Russia.

CUNARD LINER RELEASED

LONDON, Feb. 24.—The Government has decided that the steamer Mauretania can be released from hospital duty, and returned to her owners.

ROUMANIA RECEIVES NOTE FROM AUSTRO-BULGARIANS

Zurich, Feb. 25.—Poster Lloyd says joint Austro-Bulgarian note to Roumania presented on Monday invites amicable assurances regarding constant strengthening of troops and fortifications near the Bulgarian frontier.

Essen Bank Fails—Krupps Men Hard Hit

London, Feb. 25.—A despatch to the Exchange Telegraph Co. from Zurich says:

"The failure of important Bank of Essen, Germany, is announced. It is believed that many men in Krupps works lost their savings."

Fire Destroy Plant in Pittsburg, Pa., U.S.A.

Union Storage Co. Plant Destroyed by Fire—Loss \$500,000

Pittsburg, Feb. 25.—Fire swept through the plant of the Union Storage Co. here to-day, completely destroying one warehouse and wrecking another with a loss of \$500,000.

Twenty-five men working in the plant are believed to have escaped although a number of men were reported as missing.

After the walls were destroyed the building collapsed.

Have Ten Men To Every 3 Feet On Verdun Front

Military Reviewer Says That Operations Are Not Necessarily Preliminary to an Attempt to Besiege Verdun—French Have 3 Other Lines of Works

Paris, Feb. 25.—The Temps in its military review estimates the Germans are employing on an average ten infantrymen to every three feet of front where attack is the fiercest North of Verdun, that is a line eight miles in length between Bradbant and Ornes.

The reviewer maintains that operations are not necessarily preliminary to an attempt to besiege Verdun; but comprise an attack upon a wide part of the front of which Verdun forms the part of rear support. The attack, he declares, still hold within the first line of works, while there are three other lines at strategic intervals behind the first; these lines are more solidly constructed, more elaborate in their nature than the first lines, as work on them could be done at leisure with out the workers being within reach of German fire.

BLOWN UP IN SIGHT OF CRUISER

Career of British Steamer Westburne is Ended in Rather Dramatic Manner—German Prize Crew Take Her Out of Harbor and Blow Her Up

LONDON, Feb. 25.—The career of the British steamer Westburne, which put into Tenerife in charge of a German prize crew, believed to have been from the German raider Moeve, has been ended in a highly dramatic manner. She was taken out of the harbor by her German crew to-day and blown up in sight of a British cruiser which was lying in wait to recapture her just outside the three-mile limit. A despatch to the Telegraph from Madrid says that when the Westburne was captured, her name was changed to Moeve and that the original German raider named Moeve was then sunk. This action was taken because the original Moeve had been badly damaged.

Kaiser William at Verdun, Busy Speech Making

LONDON, Feb. 24.—Emperor William has established his headquarters at the German positions facing Verdun, according to information received from Berlin by the Evening News.

The despatch dated Feb. 23, says: "According to information received from Berlin, Emperor William, since his visit to the Balkans, has been in Belgium and France, and his headquarters now have been removed to Verdun. It is reported that the Emperor is more energetic than ever, making daily speeches to his troops, and encouraging the soldiers not to yield. His Majesty is mainly inspired at present with the purpose to defeat the French Army at any cost."

AMERICAN CAPTAIN ENTERS PROTEST

NAGASAKI, Feb. 24.—Before sailing for San Francisco, the captain of the American steamer China lodged a protest with the United States Consul against the action of the British converted cruiser Laurentic in holding up his vessel off Shanghai, on the last western voyage, and removing 206 Germans, 8 Austrians and 2 Turks of military age. Twenty Germans, for the most part missionaries, expelled by Japan from her insular possessions, embarked on the China at Nagasaki.

Battle Still Rages Near Verdun

Piles of German Dead Are Left on Ground—French Front Still Unbroken—Germans Still Bombard French Front With Great Intensity

Paris, Feb. 25.—We have carried out a concentrated fire on the enemy organizations West of Maisons de Champagne and South of St. Marie Apy in Argonne. A destructive fire has been directed against the German works at La Fille Morte.

In the region North of Verdun the enemy continued to bombard with same intensity our front from the Meuse up to the South of Fromezey. Between the right bank of the Meuse and Ornes the enemy has shown the same ferocity as on preceding day, multiplied by attacks, leaving on the ground piles of dead without having succeeded in breaking our front.

On both wings we have withdrawn our line at one part behind Samogneux and at another to the South of Ornes. Our artillery replied with respite to the artillery of the enemy.

In Lorraine we repulsed and pursued an enemy reconnoitering party which attempted to approach one of our small posts North of Saint Martin.

Amsterdam Faces Grave Trouble as Result of Storm

Strong North Easter With Snow Storm Cause Great Strain on Dykes—Feared They May Burst and Inundate City

LONDON, Feb. 25.—A despatch to the "Times" from Amsterdam says that a strong north-easter with a snow storm is causing great anxiety there, as the dykes protecting Amsterdam are subject to great strain from the water flooded regions, and it is feared they may yield at any moment and inundate the city. Troops are busy strengthening the dykes. Many villages bordering the flooded districts have been abandoned and are now devastated.

KAISER ORDERED REHERSAL

Takes Personal Charge of Offensive on Verdun and to Make Sure That Nothing Went Wrong Ordered a Full Dress Rehearsal Behind the Lines

PARIS, Feb. 25.—The Petit Parisien's correspondent at the front says that the great German offensive at Verdun is under the personal direction of Emperor William, who arrived at headquarters on Saturday last, and who in order that nothing should go wrong, immediately ordered that a sort of dress rehearsal of attack be made. At a given signal, the correspondent says, every infantryman and gunner took the post assigned to him in advance and motions of a general attack were gone through behind the lines. The Emperor, seemingly, was satisfied and gave the order to begin the offensive on Sunday night.

Another Liner Held Up, Mail Matter Seized

NEW YORK, Feb. 24.—The Holland-American liner Nieuw Amsterdam arrived here to-day from Rotterdam and Falmouth. She reported having been held up in the Downs by a British patrol ship. Four German stowaways were taken off the liner, and later, when she reached Falmouth, she was again boarded by British naval officers who removed 255 bags of mail. Only mail destined for Canada and Japan were not disturbed.

Among the passengers on board were several members of the Ford peace exhibition. Another passenger was Francisco Le Barra, formerly provisional president of Mexico.

WHY PORTUGAL SEIZED INTERNED SHIPPING

LISBON, Feb. 24.—The official gazette publishes a decree under which thirty-six German and Austrian merchant ships lying in the Tagus river, were seized by the Commander of a Naval Division here yesterday. It appears that the seizure was under the law passed by Parliament on Feb. 7, so the Premier said in an interview. He affirms that the seizure is not an act of war, but simply a measure in the public interest.

The Portuguese Minister at Berlin has been instructed to explain to the German Government the significance of the seizure, and to give assurances that the rights of owners will be respected. Portuguese crews have been placed aboard the ships seized.

States Will Stand for the Freedom of the Seas For Its Citizens

OFFICIAL

FRENCH

PARIS, Feb. 24 (official)—There is grenade fighting in Artois and east of Souchez. In the district north of Verdun a fierce and desperate struggle continued all night from the right bank of the Meuse up to south of Ornes. Owing to the very fierce bombardment of our advanced position of Brabant on the Meuse, our troops evacuated this village under cover of darkness, protected by the flanking fires from our left positions on the Meuse.

An enemy attack against Samogneux was repulsed. Another attack, one brigade strong, was launched against Couves Wood, succeeded in retaking from us a portion of this wood, but we still occupy the southern point.

Every German attack against Beaumont is absolutely powerless to dislodge us from this position. East of the attacked front, beyond Ornes, we still dominate the alley running south of Herbe Bois. Our movement of falling back, ordered to avoid useless losses, was effected with perfect cohesion, the enemy only managing to advance under considerable sacrifices, and was unable to break our front on any point.

There is a slow but continuous cannonade in the district situated between Ornes and Fromezey.

In Lorraine the Germans gained a footing in one of our advanced trenches, but were immediately dislodged. During the night one of our bombing air fleets dropped 45 large shells on Metz station and gas factory. Large fires broke out.

London, Feb. 25.—An official tonight on campaign on the Western front reads:

"We sprang a mine opposite Hulluch last night and occupied the crater. To-day an artillery duel about Bac St. Maur ended in our favor. Our artillery bombarded hostile trenches near Frelinghien on Ypres Comines Canal, East of Boesinghe, with success."

Much Damage Done as Gale Sweeps Over British Isles

Steamer Sunk in Gale off Deal—Women Died in Streets of Birmingham as Result of Cold—Heavy Snow Falls in Various Parts of England Reported

LONDON, Feb. 25.—Ten lives were lost and extensive damage done to shipping as a result of yesterday's snowstorm which swept the British Isles. Nine men on the steamer Carlton were drowned when that vessel sank during the gale off Deal.

In Birmingham, where eight inches of snow fell, women died in the streets as a result of the intense cold.

Reports from the provinces show snow falls in various parts of England, varying from five to ten inches in depth. Only two inches fell in London, but traffic was greatly hampered because men were unavailable to clear the snow away. The need of men for this purpose was also felt in the provinces.

RUBBER SEIZED FROM MAIL ON DUTCH STEAMER

LONDON, Feb. 24.—From the first-class mail on the Dutch steamer Holland detained at Falmouth recently, while on a voyage from Buenos Aires to Amsterdam, 1,285 parcels of raw rubber were taken and from the mail of the Dutch steamer Gelria, detained at Falmouth on a voyage from South America, 1,290 parcels of rubber were taken.

READ THE MAIL & ADVOCATE

Wilson Warns Senate He Will Not Consent to Any Abridgment of the Rights of American Citizens—Says "The Honor and Self Respect of the Nation is Involved"—We Covet Peace Says Wilson and we Shall Preserve it at Any Cost but Not at the Loss of Our Honor

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25.—President Wilson, in a letter to Senator Stone, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, announces that with regard to the movement in Congress in favor of warning Americans from taking passage on armed merchant ships, he will not consent to any abridgment of the rights of American citizens in any respect.

In announcing the stand of the United States on the situation, the President said: "The honor and self-respect of the nation is involved. We covet peace. We shall preserve it at any cost, but not at the loss of our honor."

The President's letter was written in answer to one written late in the afternoon by Senator Stone, outlining the situation existing in the capital, where since yesterday morning, persistent demands have been made for some action which might lessen the possibility of war between the United States and Germany. The President's statement will be repeated to-morrow morning.

Speaker Champ Clarke, Representative Claude Kitchin, Majority leader in the House and Representative Flood, chairman of the House on Foreign Affairs Committee, who late today asked for an engagement in order to explain the position in which the House found itself, asked the President for a statement of the Administration's views. The President wrote a letter, after telephone conferences with Cabinet members and other close advisers. His decision was an end to all speculation over what position the Government was in and it let Congress and the country know the Administration believed the United States could do nothing but stand behind the rights of its citizens to the freedom of the seas.

FRENCH ARE CONFIDENT

LONDON, Feb. 25.—The "Times" this morning says it has information that the French are more than usually confident and serene and are inclined to contemplate the German onslaught with considerable satisfaction.

GERMANS UNABLE TO BREAK FRENCH FRONT

PARIS, Feb. 24.—North of Verdun the artillery duel continued, but there were no infantry attacks, says an official communication issued to-night. Between the Meuse and Ornes several furious German attacks occurred, but our front was broken nowhere.

EUROPE IN THE GRIP OF BIG SNOWSTORM

LONDON, Feb. 24.—The British Isles to-day are in the grip of the severest snowstorm for several years. Reports from the continent show that severe weather prevails throughout Europe.

German Sea Raider Now in North Atlantic

NEW YORK, Feb. 24.—Possibility that a German sea raider is at large in the North Atlantic, was suggested when the Italian liner Guiseppi Verdi from Italian ports, arrived to-day and reported that she had received wireless warnings from Halifax to be on the look out for such a vessel.

On her last outward trip she received a similar warning as she approached Gibraltar.

The message from Halifax, which was received the day before yesterday gave no details, the officer said, as to the probable location of the raider.

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