

## Sweeping Offensive on Eighty-Mile Front | Greatest Advance of the War Made by Allies | Huns in Full Flight on Western Battle Front

# United States Once More Upon the Brink of War

### American Warships May be Despatched to Destroy Subs in the Ocean

Washington, March 19.—The United States to-day faced the pressing question of war with Germany over the immediate issue of the ruthless destruction of three unarmed American merchant ships. Technically an armed neutrality still existed, but unofficially it was admitted that Germany had committed the "overt act" which precipitates a virtual state of war.

The next step beyond the arming of merchantmen, now going forward, is the despatch of warships to clear the transatlantic lanes of submarines.

President Wilson was considering carefully all courses open to him. He might continue arming merchantmen as at present, until the special session of congress called for April 16, he might summon congress to meet immediately to authorize him to take aggressive action against the submarine menace, or he might declare forthwith that a state of war exists.

Some officials state he already has ample power for the last course, but that this would be subject to approval by congress.

Despatches from the various battle fronts took on added interest to-day as officials realized that the United States is practically certain to become involved in hostilities with Germany. The war and navy departments particularly were confronted anew with problems of precisely what plans they shall follow if war comes.

Many Senators and representatives who remained in Washington to-day, expressed the opinion that the German submarines' latest act constitute a clear cause for war.

### TEUTONS USED GAS SHELLS ON MONASTIR

Bulletin, Saloniki, March 19.—Via London.—A heavy bombardment of Monastir with gas causing heavy loss of life is announced in a Serbian official statement issued to-day which reads:

"Enemy artillery during Friday night threw a large number of shells loaded with asphyxiating gas into Monastir, resulting in heavy loss of life of civilians, including numerous women and children."

**SPRING COMING**  
Spring, according to the general reckoning, is due to commence in earnest on Wednesday of this week, March 21. And the weather to-day provides ground for hopeful expectations. Another of the Courier's early robins was sighted this morning in the neighborhood of Mount Hope cemetery by Mr. A. G. Brown.

**COAL INSPECTION.**  
During the month of February, eleven weights of coal were taken from different dealers, one of which was ninety pounds below weight. Of the remainder, four were exactly the correct weight, three were lacking slightly, while three were above.

### Weather Bulletin

Toronto, Mar. 19.—The disturbance, which was over the Straits of Mackinac on Sunday now covers Newfound and while a cold wave has spread into Ontario and Quebec. In the West the weather is fair and fairly mild.  
Forecasts  
Fair and cold to-day. Tuesday, Fresh southerly winds fair and milder.

### HUNS ARE STILL IN RETREAT

Teuton Line of Arras-Roye is Shattered Beyond Repair

PERONNE CAPTURED

Without a Casualty Among the British Forces

HUNS BURN VILLAGES

And Render the Homes Desolate

By Courier Leased Wire.  
London, March 19.—The newspapers generally take a fairly sober view of the German retreat on the western front and, while insisting, the retreat has been forced, refrain from making any claim that the Germans are on the run. That the same viewpoint is held at the front is indicated in one despatch which quotes an unnamed "distinguished staff officer" as depreciating the idea that the retreat had become a "helpless flight." At the same time this officer is quoted as saying: "The thing has suddenly become too big and too active, to keep pace with."

**Line Dissolved**  
While newspaper comment is moderate in tone, the retreat is described as unprecedented except period following the battle of the Marne and it is emphasized that there is nothing yet to indicate where the German line will be halted. One correspondent writes that it would be easier now to say where the German line between Arras and Roye is, than where it is. He says that it is dissolved and has not yet settled anywhere definitely.

**Cavalry Unseen**  
The correspondents tell but little of the work of the British cavalry. "They are over the hills and far away" says one. The Germans have a cavalry screen behind their rear-guard reconnoitering the roads in an attempt to ascertain the volume of the British advance. One feature of the operations generally remarked upon is that the British advance south from Bapaume has produced no important fighting. Peronne itself was occupied without a single shot being fired. The place is said to have been thoroughly looted but, although many buildings were fired, a great number are undamaged and Peronne, unlike Bapaume, is still a town.

**Villages Burned**  
Further north, however, the destruction is complete and it is declared that at least three hundred villages were burned to cinders. The small town of Athies is described as a flaming torch, visible for miles around and many villages are still burning. "Of all this great tract of France which the enemy has been forced to abandon," says one correspondent, "there is no heavy left, no homesteads, no farms, only black ruins and devastation everywhere. There was never a moment in the war when the French inhabitants felt such a fury of rage against the German quality of cold and logical plunder and destruction."

### Poisoning Case Was Suspected

Peculiar circumstances surrounding the death in the hospital on Saturday morning of George E. Walker, caused a post mortem examination to be held in the undertaking parlors of Mr. H. B. Beckett, on Saturday night. Coroner Dr. Hicks being in charge, while the jury members were Messrs. Charles Van Fleet, F. James, T. Poulton, George Mitchell, Wm. Hawthorne, A. G. West, R. J. Eacret and Frank Jackson. It was thought that death had been caused by poisoning, but the examination disclosed the fact that there was no ground for such a suspicion. An inquest will be held in the police station on Thursday night at eight o'clock.  
The deceased is survived by a widow and two small children. The funeral took place from the residence of the sister of the deceased, 97 Lyons Avenue to Mount Hope Cemetery.

### A Day of Big Events in Several Theatres of War

Despatches bulletined by The Courier on Sunday announced: A continued withdrawal of German troops from the Somme area, with the British and French forces pressing the enemy hard and cavalry of the Allies also in use. The advance was along a front of eighty-two miles and the maximum depth reached was twelve miles. In all over six hundred square miles of French territory were wrested from the foe. The British went ahead on a forty-five mile area and have taken in addition to Bapaume and Peronne sixty villages. The French had thirty seven miles as their total and have taken Puroy and likewise many villages. The German official report admitted the withdrawal, but did not give any reason.

On the Tigris Gen. Maude's forces have reached a point 75 miles north of Baghdad, with the Turks in full retreat. They tried to make a stand there but were smashed and some have fled into the mountains.

In Turkish Armenia the Russians have captured Van and in Persia the Czar's forces are pursuing the shattered foe who is utterly demoralized.

Berlin makes the admission that north of Monastir in Macedonia the British have taken Poroy station.

Three United States boats were sunk by Hun submarines.

In Russia the full power is held by the Duma and Grand Duke Michael assumes the duties of the Throne pending the decision of the people.

### RAILROAD STRIKE HAS BEEN AVERTED IN UNITED STATES

By Courier Leased Wire.  
New York, March 19.—The railroad strike has been averted. Yielding to the appeal of President Wilson and facing the probability of the United States entrance into the world war, the railroads, early to-day granted the demands of the four employees' brotherhoods for a basic eight hour day. The telegraph wires this morning are carrying throughout the country messages from the brotherhood chiefs rescinding the orders for the inauguration of the great progressive strike at 7 o'clock to-night. The decision is regarded as a complete surrender to the brotherhoods, brought about, however, after what they considered their last trump card, were not successful in their mission until after more than fifty hours of anxious conferences all of which pointed within a short time before the decision was announced to an inevitable deadlock.  
By the terms of the settlement, the combined list of the railroads will be increased approximately \$60,000,000 a year, according to conservative estimates. The number of workmen profiting by this increase will be more than 300,000.  
The crisis resulting from the sinking of three American ships by German submarines was the prime factor in clearing the situation and restoring the country to normal conditions insofar as its transportation facilities were concerned, was conceded by all.

### CZAR FEARED FOR HIS FAMILY AND ONCE MEDITATED SUICIDE

Ex-Ruler May Go Abroad to Italy—Political Prisoners in Russia Released by Grand Duke Nicholas—Michael Once More Renouces Throne—Jew to be Freed by the Newly Established Government

By Courier Leased Wire.  
London, March 19.—What most perturbed Emperor Nicholas, says the Petrograd correspondent of The Times, was that sufficient guarantees should be given that his life and those of his family be spared. It is said he was reassured by General Ruzsky, who vouched in the name of the whole army under his command, that no harm would befall any member of the family. The first request made by the Emperor was that he be allowed to see his wife, but this was refused point blank. There are reports that he even contemplated suicide, but eventually was induced by his confessor to accept his fortunes calmly and submit to the inevitable. His last words as Emperor are said to have been that he had been betrayed by those whom he trusted most.

The Times' correspondent says he has been told the former ruler will go abroad to reside in the Taurus Palace in Crimea with his family, but eventually will be allowed to go to some allied country, probably Italy.

The abdication of Emperor Nicholas was signed at the town of Psiloff, where the train on which he was travelling toward Petrograd, was halted early in the week.

**Prisoners Freed**  
London, March 19.—Grand Duke Nicholas has ordered the release of the political prisoners who have been incarcerated at Baku, in the Transcaucasus. Reuter's "Tiflis" correspondent telegraphs. The Grand Duke enjoined senior and junior officers to advise the soldiers and sailors, now that the throne has been renounced by Emperor Nicholas, that they should quietly await an expression of will from the Russian people. It is their sacred duty, the Grand Duke said, to continue to obey the lawful chiefs, to defend the country from its enemies and by their exploits to support their allies.

**Michael's Abdication**  
Petrograd, via London, March 19.—The renunciation of the Grand Duke Michael was signed at his private residence, whither he went with a large part of the Duma committee, headed by Prince Ivoft, Prof. Milukoff and President Rodzianko. The Grand Duke addressed the committee and declared that the responsibility devolving upon him, found him undecided because of the existing differences of opinion. He added that since the happiness of Russia was the only consideration, he believed this would be best assured by his abdication and therefore surrendered his throne.

**Troops Paraded**  
London, March 19.—Thirty-three thousand troops paraded in the Red square of Moscow Sunday, says Reuter's Petrograd correspondent. Many of the regiments were headed by red flags, and most of the soldiers and some of the officers wore red buttons.

**Finland Free?**  
London, March 19.—Home rule for Finland is the policy of the new

### PROVINCES OF FRANCE TO BE FREE

Today May See Total Expulsion of the Hun From Oise and Aisne

FRENCH SUCCESSFUL

In Retaking 620 Square Miles of Territory

ADVANCE TO VICTORY

And France Must Soon be Liberated

By Courier Leased Wire.  
Paris, March 19.—To-morrow the day after two entire departments, those of the Oise and Aisne, will be liberated from the German invader, according to reports from the fighting front. The total territory now regained is roughly calculated at 620 square miles. The nature of the ground over which the Germans retreated was almost all against them and they were harried by cavalry, which is now being used in force for the first time since the battle of the Marne.

**Hot Fighting.**  
At a few points where nature offered an opportunity for resistance, the Germans tried to make a stand and fell back only after considerable fighting. The principal of these points, were the forest of Ourcamp and the village and part of the wood of Carlepoint, south of Noyon. There was also a sharp struggle for the important Crouy plateau the river from Soissons, the capture of which is believed likely by military critics to be followed by highly favorable developments. In this section, the French have approximately restored the line which existed before the battle of Crouy, fought in the spring of 1915 by General Berthelot, who is now in Roumania. The battle was lost by the French owing to a sudden rise in the River Aisne. The situation in the whole section was at one moment compromised, but was saved by General Nivelle, who was given credit for the French being able to retain the bridgehead at Soissons and Laon Coucy, Le Chateau and Beaucy-le-Long, also lost in 1915, have not, however, been recaptured. The newspapers are overjoyed at the liberation of such an extent of territory. Henri Bidou, one of the best known military writers, says:

**Advance to Victory.**  
"Our troops are advancing to victory, which long waiting in underground holes and trenches, spreads her young wings in the broad light of day which she sees again."

The comment on the military aspect of the situation is moderate and even cautious. Le Petit Parisien believes that the rapid retreat of the Germans very probably conceals some design, but that there can be no doubt that, notwithstanding the great confidence inspired by Von Hindenburg, the German public will learn with stupefaction of the evacuation of a region where so many Germans have fallen.

"The spirit of the population and troops," says this paper, "will be affected and to wipe out this bad effect it will be necessary to attempt some operation on a vast scale. This will certainly be undertaken, and at a date which cannot be far off."

### DUFFS TO BE RE-MOBILIZE

Ottawa, March 19.—Instructions were issued to-day for the mobilization of forty-eight city battalions, under the new plan of militia re-organization. Those for Toronto division are 2nd Queen's Own, 10th Grenadiers, 48th, 109th, 110th, Toronto, 13th, Hamilton, 19th, St. Catharines, 38th, Brantford, 91st, Hamilton, 51st, St. S. Marie.

### RIVER BREAKS UP.

The Noble Grand has at last succumbed to the warmer weather, and late yesterday afternoon yielded up a portion of its winter coat of ice from Lorne Bridge some distance up. The ice higher up the river however, has not as yet come down.

### Three U. S. Vessels Wantonly Destroyed by German Subs in Past Two Days

New York, March 19.—Eighty-five Americans comprising a large majority of the crews were aboard the three American steamers Vigilancia, City of Memphis and Illinois, sunk by German submarines on Saturday and Sunday in the blockade zone. The latest information here is that fourteen men are missing from the Vigilancia and eight from the City of Memphis. The crew of the Illinois was landed safely.

The City of Memphis left Cardiff, Wales, Friday in ballast for New York. She encountered the submarines yesterday evening and the crew was given fifteen minutes to take to the boats. The vessel was owned by the Ocean Steamship Company and valued at \$600,000. She left New York, January 23, with a cargo of cotton, which was delivered at Havre, France. There were 57 men in her crew.

The Vigilancia was torpedoed without warning according to the survivors' story, and the submarine did not appear. She carried a crew of 45 men, 21 of whom were Americans. Thirty-one of these have been landed at the Sicily Islands. The Vigilancia sailed from New York February 28, with a cargo consisting in part of provisions and valued at nearly \$760,000. The ship herself is said to be worth one million dollars.

Beyond the fact that the crew was saved no details had been received here early to-day regarding the destruction of the Illinois. She was reported merely as having been "sunk." The Illinois was a tank ship owned by the Texas Oil Company. She left Port Arthur, Texas, on February 17 for London with a full cargo. There were 16 Americans on board, including all the officers and eight members of the crew. Her entire crew consisted of thirty-five men. Her home port was New York.

### REVOLUTION CALLED FOR IN GERMANY

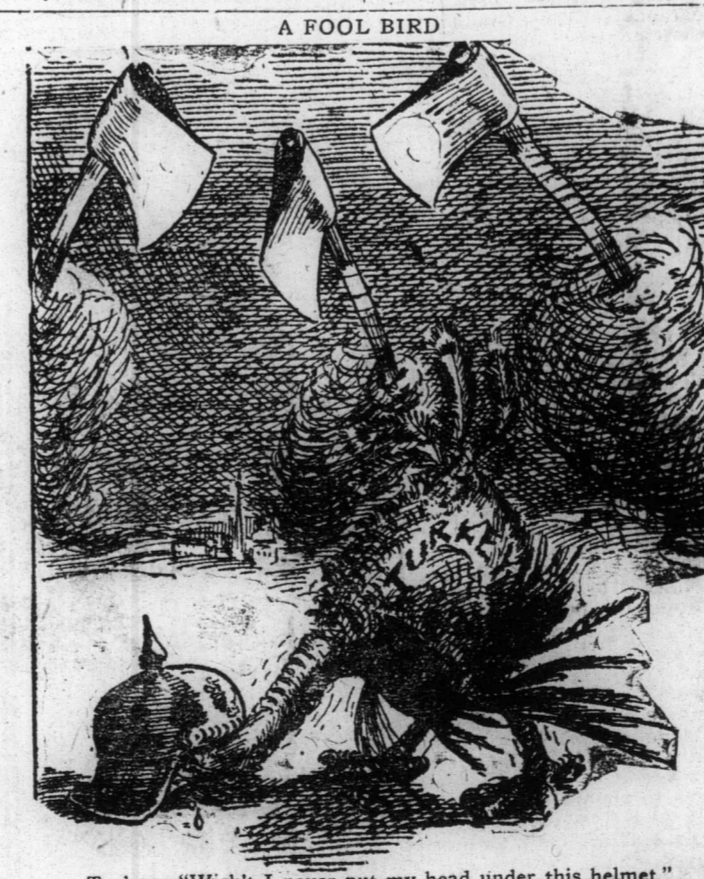
Amsterdam, March 19.—Via London.—The Berlin Vorwarts, comparing the situation in Russia with that in Germany, says: "Shall the world say that all the nations are free except Germany?" The newspaper compares the declaration of the Russian provisional government with the declaration of Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg in the Prussian Diet to the discredit of the latter. It comments: "How much longer? The King should straightaway give back to the Prussian people their franchise, which was taken away in 1848."

### SAILORS' RELIEF FUND

Mr. M. P. Fennell, Honorary Secretary of the British Sailors' Relief Fund, in acknowledging the gifts of the Brantford people writes as follows: "We have already sent \$500,000 to the other side, and the total amount collected to date now amounts to \$670,000. I feel sure that before long the amount will be \$700,000 which is certainly an indelible mark of appreciation by the Canadian people of the heroic work that has been performed by the British Sailors during the past thirty months."

### GOES TO TILSONBURG

Mr. Chris. Cleator has left the city for Tilsonburg to take up his position as assistant accountant of the Royal Bank of Canada. He will be greatly missed in the different circles of activities in which he has participated. His many friends wish him success.



ant Theatre  
Home of Features  
Harmony Boys  
Classy Entertainers  
Try & Guess  
Comedy Novelty  
Huff and  
Jack Pickford  
Great  
Expectations  
Dickens' Celebrated  
Novel  
13th Episode  
Shielding Shadow  
and Jeff Comedy  
Pathe Gazette  
ing Mon., Tues.,  
and Wed.  
lanche Sweet  
IN  
e Evil Eye  
HOUSE  
R. 17  
IGHT  
ANTFORD OF  
GERS'  
EDY TRIUMPH  
s' Haunting Melod-  
ies will linger in  
our memory like  
the fragrance from  
a bouquet of lovely  
Flowers  
McLellan  
el in the myriad de-  
cal Comedy de Luxe  
New Amsterdam  
for one entire season.  
d date only—  
\$1.00. Night: 25c.,  
\$1.50.  
DRUG STORE  
ion Dollar Doll."  
eputation  
WEDNESDAY  
MARCH 20TH ::  
COMEDY SURPRISE  
Played Park  
ar Doll"  
and Music Dispensers  
D—PEOPLE—40  
CTION WITH  
old Orr  
DANCE  
ON  
ity—The Illuminated  
Audience  
VATING CHORUS  
ones Ever Carried  
es  
PRETTY GIRLS!  
prices—\$1.00, 75c.,  
es' Drug Store  
ay, March 22  
L  
E HOLLINSHEAD  
NADA'S LEADING  
TENOR  
E  
PIANIST  
nd Paris, Mgr. Whit-  
eria of artists that  
tra House Stage  
Seats now on sale at