

RUSSIAN RETREAT FROM BEFORE CRACOW AN ADVANTAGE, MILITARY EXPERTS SAY

Frustrated Attempt of Austrians to Divide Czar's Forces in Galicia and Brought About Decisive Defeat of the Enemy at Tuchow on Christmas Day — Western Army of Austrians Reported Crippled and Gen. Ermolli's Forces in Retreat.

Petrograd, Dec. 28 (via London).—The investment by the Russians of the Austrian fortress of Cracow has again been raised. Following the discovery of an attempt made by the Austrians to divide the Russian forces in Galicia the Russians retreated eastward for a distance of fifty miles.

The Russian Galician army which a short time ago was in touch on the south with the Austrian garrison defending Cracow, moved back to the Biala river, which is some fifty miles east of the former Russian position. Notwithstanding the fact that the Russian retrogression completely relieved the investment of the fortress of Cracow, it is claimed by military observers to be a marked advantage for the Russians, the retirement being due to the discovery of the Austrian aim to cut into halves the Russian forces in this region.

The Austrians, reports from the Russian southern front say, began advancing December 23 from Tymbark, thirty-five miles south of Cracow, with the apparent object of swinging around the left of the Russians along the River Biala, northward of Tarnow, and joining forces with the army of General Boehm-Ermolli which was advancing along the railroad from Sanok and Lisko. The premature appearance of General Boehm-Ermolli's army to the south of Przemyel, however, put the Russians on their guard, and the Russians concentrated along the Biala river, moved down and attacked the Austrians at Tuchow, fifteen miles south of Tarnow, where they were successful in preventing a junction of the Austrian armies.

A CHRISTMAS VICTORY

Meanwhile the attention of the Russians was directed to the Austrians advance from Sanok which movement was checked. After their successes in this district the Russians took the offensive along the Biala river.

Christmas Day the Russians won the battle of Tuchow, the Austrians retreating throughout the following day. The Russians captured 3,500 prisoners and eighteen machine guns.

Later the Russians crossed to the west, to the western bank of the Biala and successfully stormed the heights of Siedliska, four miles south of Tuchow. The Russians took possession of a twenty mile strip of territory and thus succeeded in separating the two Austrian forces.

General Ermolli's army is said by the Russians to be in full retreat and the western army of the Austrians is reported to be badly crippled. Paris, Dec. 28 (10.30 p.m.).—The following official communication was issued by the War Office tonight:

"During the entire day a violent storm has interfered with the operations along the greater part of the front. It is reported, notwithstanding, that we have made some progress in the Argonne region."

JAPAN NOT READY TO SHEATH SWORD YET

Fall of Tsing-Tau does not mean Japanese activities are at end—Sudden affection between Russia and Japan significant phase of present war.

Tokio, Nov. 28.—In a recent interview the Premier, Count Okuma, declared that Japan could not afford to sheath the sword, for Germany was not yet defeated and the situation in Europe might at any moment call for further military activity on the part of Japan. This is taken to mean that in any untoward emergency in India or Africa, or even further west, Japan stands ready to come to the assistance of the Allies. In fact, Japan has the same determination as Britain, France and Russia to insure once and for all the vanquishment of Teutonic militarism, even to the extent of despatching her armies to Europe to assist in achieving that end.

The repeated mention in European military circles of the possibility of Japanese troops being invited to Europe has met with flattering notice in certain quarters in Japan, while in other circles the practicability of such a proposal is gravely doubted, even if it should come. But the section anxious for it is very influential, and doubtless many would welcome it as affording Japan an opportunity to show the world, with what facile celerity and efficiency she can accomplish the supposedly impossible. The remarks of Count Okuma certainly suggest that he would not hesitate to accept such an invitation.

Could Raise Big Army.

At all events it cannot fail to prove a source of comfort and assurance to the British allies to realize that even if the millions of Russia, France, Britain and Belgium should be hard put to it to suppress the Teutonic eruption, the millions of Japan have still to be reckoned with; for Japan could raise an army of 5,000,000 without much difficulty, as she has now no enemies in the East.

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viewed with some degree of misgiving by America, not to say anything of the millions of Russia, France, Britain and Belgium should be hard put to it to suppress the Teutonic eruption, the millions of Japan have still to be reckoned with; for Japan could raise an army of 5,000,000 without much difficulty, as she has now no enemies in the East.

Strong Guard on Chinese Soil.

As to the present and immediate issues, Japan feels that she must keep a strong military guard in the Chinese territory taken from Germany, lest trouble should arise in China, where every move on the part of Japan is regarded with anxious suspicion. There is no doubt that the revolutionary spirit in China is still smouldering, and anxious to take every advantage of the present situation, in order to force Japan to action. People from China have assured me that, of the two, the Chinese prefer to have Germany at Tsing-Tau. I mention this, not to acquiesce, but to show what Japan has to contend with in maintaining amicable relations with the Far Eastern republic.

Internally, Japan at present appears earnestly concerned with impressing on her people the meaning of the war, emphasizing its seriousness and the capacity of the national virtues to meet the emergency. Notably, she is pointing out the vast difference between the Japanese and the Occidental soldier in regard to ideals of honor, the one surrendering in the face of hopeless odds, the other taught never to surrender. The samurai of Japan read the tales of surrender in Europe with unmeasured amazement. Despatches to the effect that the Russians have taken 50,000 Austrians, and the British 5,000 Germans, at one sweep, and that altogether there are nearly half a million prisoners on all sides in Europe, suggest to the Japanese soldier, not war, but immigration.

Financially, the war is having a more or less serious effect on Japan. All her anticipated loans for redemption of bonds and various municipal and other enterprises have to be abandoned for the present, while there is at the same time a tremendous falling off in revenue from trade, imports and exports alike showing a marked decrease. The protectionists are aggressively promoting a movement for using only goods made in Japan, and the people are exhorted to greater simplicity of living.

The early fall of Tsing-Tau will relieve the government of anticipated outlay to some extent; but, with the season of the Imperial Diet early in December, there is expected to be some hot discussion as to the best way of meeting the financial situation. The crops promise abundant increase, however, and, though silk and cotton industries are hard hit, the public mind seems confident of a hopeful future. N. Y. Evening Post.

LACK OF WARM CLOTHING AND BATHING FACILITIES THE CHIEF DISCOMFORT

Special attache to American Embassy in London reports on conditions in Prisoners' Camps of Europe — Finds little difference and all fairly well treated

Washington, Dec. 28.—Chandler Anderson, who as a special attache of the American embassy in London, made an investigation of military prison camps in practically all the European belligerent countries, declared today there was no substantial difference in the treatment of prisoners of war, and that probably in every case they were cared for as well as their captors could afford, considering their own military necessities. Mr. Anderson made personal investigations in England, Belgium and Germany and Austria, and also had knowledge from reliable sources as to conditions in France and Russia.

Mr. Anderson has just returned to Washington on account of the illness of his wife. It is probable he will return to London in a few weeks. The Germans at the date of Mr. Anderson's departure from Europe, had about 450,000 prisoners of war. About 200,000 were Russians, an equal number French and about 17,000 British. Of the remainder being Belgians, the total, he says, about 400,000 were civilians who had been rounded up in Germany and Belgium and confined in one vast prison camp near Berlin.

The prisoners were given the regular army ration and their principal lack was clothing, suitable for the season, and opportunities for bathing. Most of them had been arrested in summer and fall, wearing light clothing, and were consequently suffering somewhat from the cold. The military prisoners particularly were found in worse circumstances, because the German government would not allow them to accept and wear civilian clothes, lest it facilitate their escape and the British government, occupied with other matters, had not found the opportunity to forward the clothing to the prisoners. In England, the German and Austrian prisoners had been confined to the race courses, but more recently have been transferred to ocean liners, lying idle at their docks.

The quarters on the vessels are good, with every facility for keeping the prisoners warm and properly fed. Conditions in Austria, Mr. Anderson believes, are very like those in Germany and the same is true of Russia. One of the unavoidable hardships of the prisoners camps in all countries was the enforced association of all elements of society.

FIRING BY TURKS ON AMERICAN LAUNCH WAS MERELY WARNING

Naval officers back from service in Aegean Sea say incident did not justify prominence it received.

New York, Dec. 28.—The Red Star liner Finland returned today from Mediterranean ports, bringing with her four naval officers from the cruiser North Carolina which has been stationed in the Aegean Sea since the outbreak of the war. They were Lt. Commander Henry C. Mustin, Lt. Richard C. Sautley, and Lt. Patrick L. Bellinger and Ensign W. C. Hart.

The situation in Turkey with respect to the attitude toward foreigners when they left, they said, was decidedly peaceful. The incident of the firing upon the launch of the Tennessee by the Turks was given more prominence, they thought, than it was justified, as the shot was merely a warning to the warship's boat crew not to run to a mine field.

The officers are attached to the Navy Aviation Corps and part of their time abroad has been spent in observing the aerial work of the British and French. They declined to discuss the matter saying they had a report to make to the naval authorities at Washington.

THE VETERAN WAR HORSE ON THE FIRING LINE

London, Dec. 24.—If war has no other virtue, it cements the friendship of men and horses. There are many English gunners—and if gunners, much more cavalrymen—whose greatest ambition is to bring a favorite horse or two safe through the war and home again. In spite of the terrible waste of horses by sudden death and by disease, a notable number are as fit now as when they started on the campaign.

These old horses are as valuable as experienced soldiers. They have nothing to learn about war, and can teach a new driver a good deal. For example, many of these animals know with mathematical exactness the proper interval of one gun from another. To swing the gun round at the due distance is now ingrained as an instinct and performed with the regularity of a ploughing horse when he turns at the headland of the field. If the driver, less skilful or wise in the art, attempts to bring one gun too near its neighbor, the horse takes the matter into his own hands with an Olympian disregard of bit or whip.

After a certain length and closeness of association between met and beast the distinction of genus tends to disappear. The experiences are too similar in many ways. The fodder comes up along with the food. It is as carefully selected and its distribution is as precisely arranged. When the mean have leisure to shave the horses also are better groomed; and when the men have time to polish belt or buttons, the harness becomes resplendent. The whole organization of the daily life of the horses is singularly human. The system of base and clearing hospitals is at least as well and carefully done by the Veterinary Corps as by the work of the R. A. M. C. and the Red Cross, and the surgery has been wonderful. The old idea that a wounded horse is as good as a dead horse is as precisely arranged. When the mean have leisure to shave the horses also are better groomed; and when the men have time to polish belt or buttons, the harness becomes resplendent. 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