

How French Retook Douaumont Position.

A wounded colonial infantryman, who reached Paris recently, gives your correspondent a picture of the making and retaking of Douaumont. The German cannonade had levelled the parapets and trenches until the position looked like a new plowed field," he said. "It seemed as if every gun in the world was concentrated upon that one point. The noise was far greater than in the battle of Champagne.

"Some Bosche infantry were creeping up a narrow ravine on the right front, others were crawling through the wood directly before the position. Suddenly they surged forward in a grey mass from both quarters at once. There must have been 5,000 in the ravine and perhaps 20,000 from the wood. As the former reached the plateau a single shell burst right among them, flinging pieces in all directions. The front was enveloped in a storm of shells, fragments of men and lumps of earth.

"Through the smoke one could see them advancing, heads down, as if sheltering themselves from rain. Soon the ravine was choked with bodies. Others tried to clamber over and kept falling down the hillside. The heaps of dead gave us a more effective bar than our own entrenchments. They simply could not pass.

"But in front, where the slaughter was even greater, they came on incessantly.

"Truly, they are brave, those Bosches. I would never have believed that human beings could face such a terrific fire. Yet they knew it was certain death, for the wounded were piled under corpses or torn in pieces by fresh shells.

Battle Without Quarter.

"Wave after wave advanced. At last they reached the spot where our fortifications had been on the spur of the hill, and began piling up bodies to protect them from our fire. Douaumont was theirs, but at a ghastly cost. Further back our hearts were burning. Were the Germans to be allowed to consolidate their victory? For three days they had kept us idle while the gunners did all the work. Since we retook Caures Wood they told us, saying it was useless sacrifice.

"We watched our shells concentrate upon Douaumont, tearing the German defences into fragments. Our hearts beat fast. Surely we should attack soon.

"At last our turn came. I took part in the Champagne charge, but it was nothing like this. We were mad. Nothing could have stopped us. Despite the German fire, which, perhaps, was hampered by the fear of hitting their own men on the spur, we hurled ourselves at them with the utmost among the shell holes and mined emplacements.

"This was real war as I had never known it. For a moment it was furious and equal. Then came another wave and another. We hurried them back, screaming, over the hillside. It was a battle without quarter. We only captured corpses.

"They had had enough. Fort de Douaumont was French once more. As we lay there, patting and too exhausted to cheer, I suddenly found that my thigh was bleeding from a stab wound. My boot was almost full of blood, but I had not noticed it."

Joffre Economizing Effectives.

The Germans are no nearer breaking the French army to-day than they were a week ago, but because the economizing of effectives is a military principle, never more respected than under General Joffre, and because it is an evident commonsense in a grand action to fight on your strongest side, they have won four miles of French soil by sacrifices which, when they are known, will send a shiver of horror through the German nation.

The abandonment of the French segment lying beyond the hills in the flats of the Woivre is rather different. The French staff decided upon the movement on Friday night without any special pressure from the Germans. It is not difficult to one who knows the region to define their motives. Although marshy in winter, the clay on the plain would be like a sponge under Friday's sheet of snow.

Moreover, the trenches here facing eastward would be under a rear and flank fire from the new German position on the hills, while it only the northern portion on the crescent were given up the remainder would be a most difficult to defend. Hence, the withdrawal to the foot of the hills. So far from being forced, it was fully twelve hours before the German watchers discovered that the position had been evacuated.

On Slopes of Douaumont.

Throughout Saturday the combat continued with undiminished intensity between Champagneville and Douaumont, and even with increased desperation on the right.

When General Sarrail laid down the present scheme of defence, the old fort, with its stone glacis, moat, and bridge, was dismantled. The ridge was sanded with entrenchments which since have multiplied, and the slopes spread with horrible networks of barbed wire at every critical point.

The momentary capture of such a position was far from being an altogether discouraging piece of news for the Allies. The re-capture of the position proves if that were needed, that the French point at the end of the line days of mortal trial are as strong as many Hfandenburgers the Kaiser can hurl at them.

The ways of approach to Douaumont are narrow, being limited to a

defile between Hill 378 and the Vauche Wood, with a few hill tracks coming over the spur of the M. Guvenost Hills on the northwest.

The Germans were swept back into the approaches by the French assault of Saturday afternoon and the plateau, thus cleared is now, it is believed, securely held.

The French counter-stroke at Verdun may mark the battle raging there as the beginning of the end of the war on the western front, according to military authorities here, reading between the lines of to-night's official bulletin.

That trenches have lately been

scrapped and the long-drawn field fortress deadlocked displaced by an old-fashioned pitched battle is the great lesson of the German attempt to take Verdun. But in teaching it, there are good reasons to believe, according to the views here, that Germany may have signed her own death warrant.

What has been already indicated in the Champagne battle is now clearly proved by the German cannonade at Verdun, that under the concentrated fire of hundreds of great howitzers hurling shells weighing from one-half to three-quarters of a ton, even the strongest trenches are smashed into a defenceless chaos, and the mitrailleuse emplacements which have previously rendered the heroism of infantry fruitless, are blasted into nothingness.

Foot soldiers have become once more, as throughout history the decisive factor of warfare.

Two facts stand out clearly from

the week's orgy of slaughter. The first is that German artillery cannot silence French, and the second is that if sacrifices are ignored and reserves are sufficient, infantry can advance despite the artillery and because of the practical obliteration of the mitrailleuse, may only be checked by infantry.

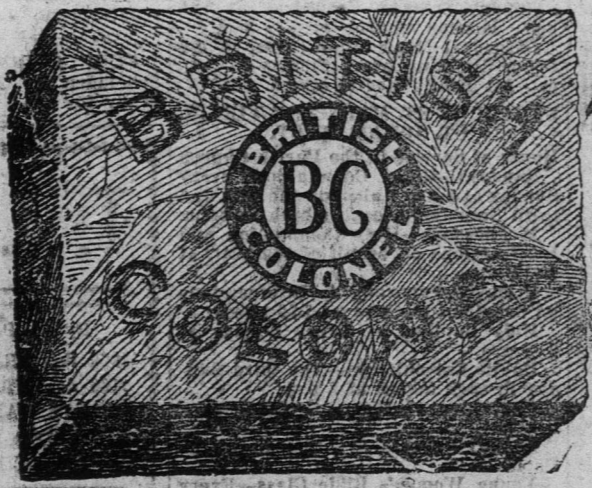
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Hr. Grace Notes.

Mr. A. L. Collis intends holding his annual concert on Thursday of Easter week.

Mr. John Snow, a familiar figure about town for many years, passed away at the home of Mr. John Sheehan, yesterday morning.

Owing to an accident along the line, yesterday's mid-day train reached here a few minutes before 6 o'clock, and left shortly on the return run to the capital.

Last night's recruiting meeting was well attended and the speakers did full justice to the subject. Only one volunteer, James Garland, of Charles, came forward, but it is hoped the good seed sown by the various speakers will bear fruit from time to time.

A gentleman of this town received a letter from a friend at St. John's a few days ago with the request that he secure for him a barrel of (listen, Sunny Jim) mussels, the request coming as a result of an item in our notes some little time ago. He adds, "can't get them here fit to use."

The ladies of the Methodist Aid will hold a tea and sociable in Coughlan Hall on St. Patrick's night. Half the proceeds will be devoted to the Patriotic Fund.

Mr. Albert Rogers met with a rather serious accident to his left hand on Saturday last. Mr. Rogers was in the woods, when the slipping of an axe in the hands of his assistant caused the trouble. He suffered much pain.

Mr. Charles Webber, shoemaker, formerly of this town, but for several years residing at Sydney, has volunteered for service in a Canadian regiment. He is now in training in Halifax. Mr. Webber has a son also serving in the regiment. —COR.

Hr. Grace, March 10, 1916.

St. John Ambulance Brigade Hospital Fund.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND BEDS.

Amount acknowledged	\$17,942.75
Members of L. O. L. Bonavista, per C. A. Forbes, M.D.	40 00
Mrs. Harold Ayre	5 00
Royal Scarlet Chapter, No. 2	
Carbonear, per Arthur Parsons	20 00
Tack's Beach, per Samuel J. Brown (2nd instalment)	11 00
Members S. U. E. Change Islands, per Wm. H. Earle	7 50
Patriotic Committee of Fortune per H. B. Clyde Lake, Sec.	50 00
Hermitage, per Rev. W. R. Courage (2nd instalment)	8 00
Elliston, T. B., per Thos. E. Cloutier	34 85
Proceeds of Dance held by Mrs. M. Kavanagh, 28 1/2 Bond Street, per Daily News	15 00
Heart's Delight Lodge, S. U. F., per J. G. Hodder, Sec.	5 00
Additional subscription by Teachers and Pupils of Hr. Grace Diocese per Thos. Hanrahan, M. A. Supt.	23 00
William J. Ellis	25 00
Collected by the Boy Scouts of Moreton's Harbour, per J. B. Osmond, as follows:	
Coll. by Austin Osmond	15 00
Coll. by Otton Osmond	40 00
Coll. by Bert Brett	9 00
Coll. by Jas. E. Thoms	5 50
Coll. by Winfield Jennings	50
Royal Black Preceptory, Twillingate, per George B. Knott	10 00
Bonavista, per John Roper, S. M. and Daily News as follows:	
Mrs. T. J. McGrath	4 00
Small Amounts	50
Total	\$18,272.60

J. G. HIGGINS, Hon. Treasurer.

In the last list of acknowledgments, members of Royal Albert Lodge, No. 12, L. O. A., \$5.00, should have read, \$2.70.

BONEHEAD PLAYS.

We might, as graveyard we advance, know naught but golden days, if we did not at every chance, indulge in bonehead plays. For nearly all the ill we know, and all the pains and aches, originated long ago, in our own foolish habits. Man labors in his stalwart years, and when he draws his pay, he blows it in for long cold beers, and that's a bonehead play. The school-boy, Mother's Little Pet, upon a summer's day, learns how to smoke a cigarette, and that's a bonehead play. The damsel learns to paint and sing, to dance the night away, but sidesteps every useful thing, and that's a bonehead play. All carelessly man goes in debt for grub and clothes and hay, and knows, when lawyers make him sweat, it was a bonehead play. To buy a gaudy choo-choo cart, man signs his home away, and says some day, with shaking heart, "It was a bonehead play." This life of our should be sublime, our hearts should all be glad; but we pull boneheads all the time, and that's why life is sad.

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