News and Comment of the Great European War

PROGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

Distinguished Military Critic Says It Now Becomes Contest Between Horse and Motor.

(Special Despatch.)

LONDON, Nov. 13.

Discussing Russia's recovery and her share in the Balkan campaign, the distinguished military critic Waclaw Czerniewski writes to the Pall Mall Gazette:—

"The recent victories of the Russian army in Eastern Galicia are of great significance, as they clearly demonstrate the entire change in the military situation on the whole Russian front. As far back even as last year, while I was in the Russian firing line, I everywhere heard among Russian officers a regret that the Grand Duke Nicholas intended to carry on his campaign on the left bank of the Vistula.

"The German army was able there to develop an enormous mobility. Russia possesses more men and more resources than Germany, but she is inferior in regard to munitions and lacks the ability to effect sudden changes in the disposing of her armies. The German army was able to deal a blow in the weakest spot, thus compelling the recall of Russian troops from their intended objectives and giving to the German General Staff the opportunity of starting a new offensive against localities so depleted. By these tactics the German army compelled the Russian to retreat, for they were always threatening them with an enveloping movement.

"The German press repeatedly states that Germany will not make Napoleon's blunder. Not to make Napoleon's blunder means not to penetrate into Russia, but this mistake Germany has already committed. They have overrun a country where they have lost their advantages. They have to struggle now, not only with the Russian army and with the Lithuanian climate, but also with the Lithuanian roads. I know from my own experience that there is no possibility in Lithuania of using motor vehicles. There are places which could be reached only on horseback or by the very narrow and specially adapted carts.

"In these circumstances Russia has gained the superiority. The Russian army lacks motor vehicles, but it has at its disposal an enormous number of horses. In consequence of this the Russians are able to turn from the defensive to the offensive. Nor is this all. Russia has gained the necessary time to develop her production of munitions. Huge factories near Ekaterinoslav, in the south; at Tula, in the centre, and at Petrograd, in the north of Russia, work day and night to supply the munitions for the army, while train after train loaded with munitions is arriving by the Trans-Siberian railway from Japan.

"At the same time the calling up of the second reserve to arms gave to Russia such a number of new troops that she is enabled, not only to meet the Germans successfully, but to send more men to the Caucases, that they may be at the disposal of the Grand Duke Nicholas, and there would still be sufficient to join the Allies in their operations with the object of defending Serbia.

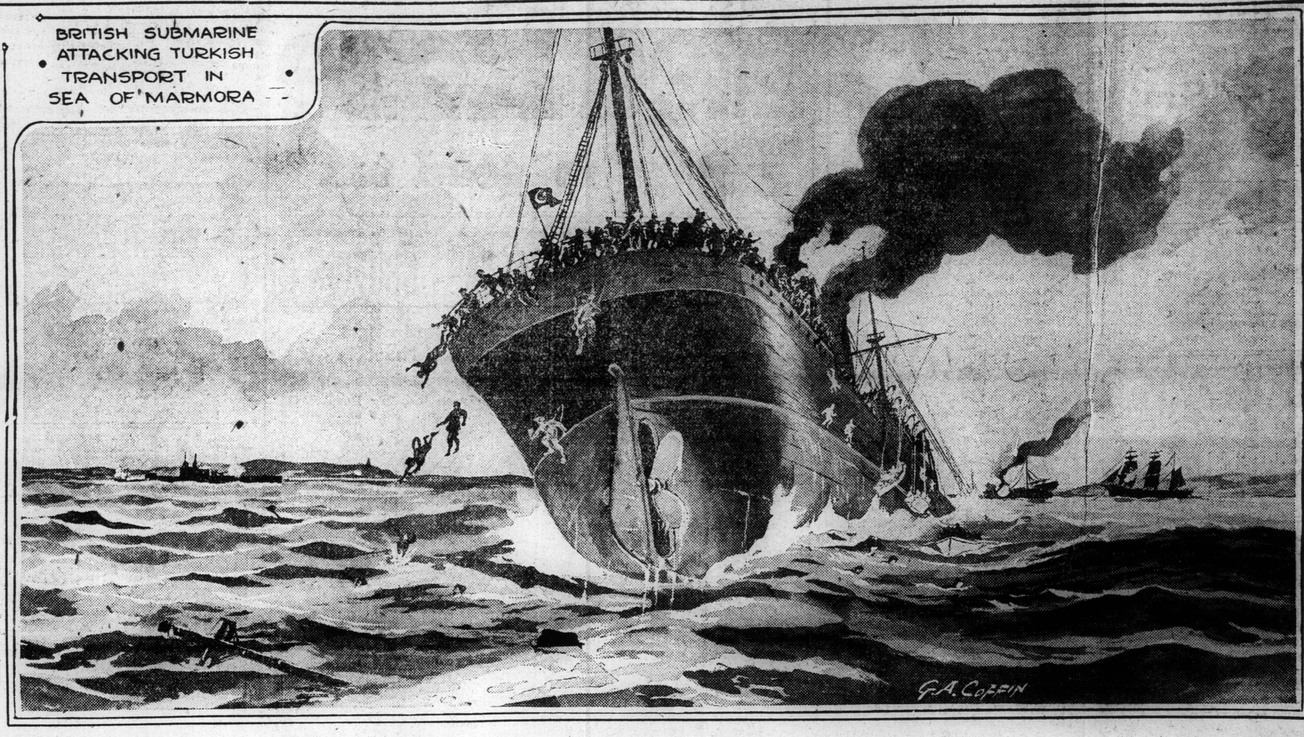
"What is most important in the present Russian campaign is the undaunted spirit of the Russian troops; and if no retreat could demoralize them, the taking of the supreme command of the Russian army by the Tsar has made their spirit still more determined. Those only who know Russia thoroughly can understand the real importance of this event. The Russian moujik has religious fear of, and at the same time a deep attachment to, his Tsar. He takes his hat off at the presence of the Tsar's picture, and in his cottage the portraits of the members of the imperial family are framed and hung along with the sacred ikons.

"Since the taking up of the supreme command by the Tsar everything has been altered. The Tsar concentrates in his person all authority, and his orders need not be submitted to anybody else, but can be carried out directly. Any possible intrigues or jealousies between the military or the civil authorities also cease at once. These differences were felt, for instance, in Galicia when the Russian army occupied almost all that province. The Grand Duke had his own policy, while Count Bobrinski often differed from him, and Mr. Maclakoff, then the Minister of the Interior, had his own plans, and defied both of them.

"On the other hand, as the Tsar himself pointed out, it was absolutely necessary to increase military activity in the Caucasus, and the only possible man who could firmly carry on the Russian campaign against Turkey was the Grand Duke Nicholas. This front has particular significance for the British and French troops, who will soon feel its effect in their campaign in Gallipoli, and it would not be surprising if the future historian should make the discovery that this was the real reason of the changes in the high command.

"The present line of Russian defences, the change of supreme command, the development of the output of munitions and last, but not least, the political situation in regard to the interior affairs of Russia, allow her with the approaching winter to join the operations in the Balkan peninsula. The Russian navy has completely the upper hand in the Black Sea, and can easily embark troops into the new theatre of operations, in which for the first time, be it noted, in this great war Russian, British, French, Italian and Serbian soldiers will fight side by side."

BRITISH SUBMARINE ATTACKING TURKISH TRANSPORT IN SEA OF MARMORA



Despatches from London recently told of the success Great Britain is having with her submarines in the Sea of Marmora against enemy transports and war ships. According to Premier Asquith, two German or Turkish battle ships, five gunboats, one torpedo boat, eight transports and 197 supply ships were sunk or damaged in the Sea of Marmora up to October 20.

TRENCH REPARTEE ON FIRING LINE

Exchange of Oral Shots Between British Soldiers and the Germans Lightens War's Burdens.

(Special Despatch.)

LONDON, Nov. 13.

An account of the repartee that passes between the British soldiers and the enemy in the nearest trenches is given in an article in a late issue of Cornhill. The writer, Mr. Boyd Cable, first tells the story of "The Tower Bridge Rifles" exchanging oral shots with the enemy:—

A voice from the German parapet:—"Hullo, Tower Bridge Rifles! Pleased to meet you again."

"Hullo, Boshy," retorted one of the Towers. "You're makin' a mistake this time. We ain't the Tower Bridges. We're the Kamchatka 'Ighlanders."

"An' you're a liar if you says you're pleased to meet us again," put in another. "If you've met us afore I lay you was too dash sorry for it to want to meet us again."

"You can't take any more trenches," said a voice. "You haven't shells enough."

"Anyhow," replied the English corporal, "we ain't short of bombs. 'Ave a few to be goin' on with," and he and his party let fly.

Then, a bit later:—

"Hi, there! Where's that Soho barber's assistant that thinks he can talk 'Henglish?" demanded the Towers' spokesman cheerfully.

That annoyed the English speaking German, as, of course, it was meant to do.

"I'm here, Private Petticoat Lane," retorted the voice, "and if I couldn't speak better English than you I'd be shaming Soho."

"You're doing that, anyway, you bloomin' renegade dog stealer!" called back the private. "Wy didn't you pay your landlady in Lunnon for the lodgin's you owed when you run away?"

"Schweinhund!" said the voice, angrily, and a bullet slapped into the parapet in front of the taunting private.

After a while, in good English:—"We'll make you learn German when we've taken England."

"Oh, it's England you're takin' now!" said Private Robinson. "But all you'll ever take of England will be same as you took before—a tuppeny tip if you serves the soup up nice."

"I got 'im," said the Corporal three minutes later. "One bloke was looking with a periscope, and I saw a little cap an' one eye come over the parapet. 'E copped it right enough."

After a while:—"Now, then, where's the orchestra?" demanded some one, and the orchestra, one mouth organ strong, promptly struck up a lilting music hall ditty, followed by "My Little Grey Home." Then the Germans sang "Deutschland über Alles" in full strength and harmony, and then "The Watch on the Rhine." Private Robinson and the rest of the Towers recognized the song, and capped it in great glee with "When We've Wound Up the Watch on the Rhine," a parody which does not go out of its way to spare German feelings.

"'An 'ow d'you like that, ol' sossidge scoffers?" demanded Private Robinson, loudly.

"You wait," bellowed a guttural voice. "Us vind you op quick!"

"'Ark!" said Private Robinson, in eager anticipation. I do believe it's—s-sh! There," triumphantly, as again the word rang out—the one word at the end of the verse * * * 'England.'"

"It's it. It's the 'ymn of 'ate."

Every man sat drinking the air in eagerly. Hadn't every regiment heard about the famous hymn and longed to hear the tune? And here it was being sung to them in full chorus by the Germans themselves.

The mouth organist was listening as if afraid to miss a single note.

"'Ave you got it, Snapper?" whispered Private Robinson. Snapper, with his eyes fixed on vacancy, began to play the air over softly and doubtfully.

"Let's kid 'em to sing it again," said Robinson. A loud "Encore" rang from the trench.

"Was you know vat we haf sing?" asked a German voice.

"It's great, Dutchie. Sing it again."

"You haf not understand," said the German angrily. Then a clear tenor in the German trench gave it in English.

Before the last sound of it has passed the singer had plunged into the next stanza, his voice soaring and sinking with an intensity of feeling. The whole effect was inspiring, wonderful, dramatic. One felt that it was emblematic, the heart and soul of the German people poured out in music and words. His Majesty's regiment of Tower Bridge Rifles was most obviously not impressed with fear and trembling. Private 'Enery Irving, clapping his hands and stamping his feet in the trench bottom, voiced the impression exactly. "It beats Saturday night in the gallery o' the old Brit," he said, enthusiastically. "That bloke—blimy—'e ought to be doin' the star part at Drury Lane."

Each evening after that and later on when marching to the reserve billets the Towers made a particular point of singing the "Hymn of Hate."

'Ite of the 'eart, an' 'ite of the 'and,
'Ite by water, an' 'ite by land,
'Oo do we 'ite to beat the band?

The answering roar of "England" startled the horse of a brigadier. "What on earth are those fellows singing?" he asked one of his officers. He was told and rocked with laughter.

USE BALLOONS TO CARRY POISON GAS

(Special Despatch.)

PARIS, Nov. 13.

A unique method of administering poison gas to the inmates of a fortress is attributed to the Germans in recent despatches from Petrograd. The system of getting the poison inside the walls of the fort depends on small balloons something of the type with which children amuse themselves, only slightly larger.

At Ossowetz, where the scheme was first tried, it was so successful that the defenders were only able to hold the fort for two days. The balloons are filled for the greater part with illuminating gas. This permits them to float, carrying the heavier poisonous gas in a bottom compartment. When a favorable wind has carried the balloons over the fortress sharpshooters puncture them with rifle bullets. The bursting of the thin covering completely destroys the balloons. The illuminating gas which floats them rises and the poisonous gas, being heavier than air, drops into the fort. During the two days of attack 1,800 of these balloons were floated into the fortress at Ossowetz.

Roumania and the European War

By CHARLES E. WHITTAKER.

Roumania's entrance into the war has been more or less of a certainty since last winter, when, after a tour of the Continental capitals, in which their longest periods of stay were in Rome and Paris, a Roumanian political delegation, accompanied by representatives of banking interests, returned home after having negotiated a loan of $25,000,000 in London.

For more than thirty years such finances as the country had wanted had been obtained in Berlin and Vienna, but a change came in 1912, and the loans of 1913 and that of November, 1914, just mentioned, set the seal on the change of politics. Since the latter date a Roumanian commission has sat in Paris, buying both military and Red Cross supplies, and many such orders, as is known, have been placed with firms in the United States.

Roumania definitely ranged herself on the side of the Triple Entente in 1912. Ever since 1878 she had been dependent on and supporting the Triple Alliance. It took her more than thirty years to find out that such a policy was not merely unprofitable, but actually detrimental to her own interests and unfaithful to the aspirations of her harassed and oppressed brethren living in the Austrian Carpathian Mountains. That change of policy in the more recent years was due in a large measure to the work of one enlightened statesman, Take Ionescu, who attained his end by the expedient of being a thorn in the flesh of the two chief political parties in the State, the liberals and the conservatives, creating therefor a separate independent "wedge" similar to the Irish party in the British House of Commons.

Long Struggle for Home Rule.

Possibly a nearer and more exact parallel would be to compare the Roumanian followers of Take Ionescu with the liberal unionist party headed by Joseph Chamberlain in the British Parliament after the split in politics caused by Gladstone's introduction for the second time of the Home rule bill, in 1886. The Roumanian "conservative democratic" party, as it was termed, was incapable by itself of governing, but it was powerful enough to make political existence impossible without its aid to either of the two prominent parties.

The Roumanians are no Balkan people. Indeed, to call a Roumanian a Balkan would be construed as being, at the least, tactless; at the worst, a positive insult. They are Latins in appearance, complexion, intelligence and language. They are more Latin than even the Italians, whom they so closely resemble. Roumania is, roughly, the same size as Ireland, a matter of fifty thousand square miles; has a population in her own borders of about seven and a half millions, and has been discontented with her political situation for years.

She declares, not without some justice, that it was her soldiers, fighting on the side of the Russians at Plevna, that turned the tide of battle in favor of Russia and led to the rout of the Turks. For one hundred years Roumania had been living under a Turkish protectorate "enjoying" much the same sort of protection as the inhabitants of Crete and Macedonia or the unfortunate Armenians. Separated only nominally—much as England and Scotland—during the Middle Ages into Moldavia and Valachia, she had been pounced upon by the Sultans and condemned to live under a protectorate of the kind already indicated.

But education acquired outside Roumania made itself felt. The better class of land owner sent his sons to be educated in Paris, and a popular uprising occurred, as the result of which the twin States of Moldavia and Valachia were combined in one kingdom, a king of the Roumanians—in the person of Prince Charles Hohenzollern—elected, a constitution proclaimed, and her independence recognized by Europe generally.

This was in 1868. Ten years afterward the Russo-Turkish War began, and at the preliminary peace treaty of San Stefano the Turks ceded to the victorious Russians some (but not all) of their empire which they were unable to hold, and gave away, among other provinces, Bessarabia, lying on the north and eastern side of Roumania.

In exchange for the fertile wine and tobacco lands of Bessarabia Roumania was to have the sandy marshes of the Dobrudja, situated on her southeast.

Bulgars and Dobrudja.

The treaty of Berlin was signed in July, 1878, and provided that the new Dobrudja province should be surveyed at once by a commission which would settle on the spot the natural and most practical boundaries, and it provided furthermore that the new State of Bulgaria, which then and there was created, should be "an autonomous and tributary principality under the suzerainty of the Sultan."

Six months after the treaty was signed the surveying commission had finished its frontier limitation of the Dobrudja, which was at that time in the possession of the new State of Bulgaria, and the survey was put forward over and over again for ratification by the great Powers.

For years Bulgaria consistently and continuously refused to hand over the Dobrudja. The years passed away; Roumania knew that she had been cheated, and realized that the promise had not been fulfilled and never would be fulfilled. Yet the Dobrudja was not worth a war, and there was no way of recovering by lawsuit. Then an odd thing happened—Bulgaria renounced the suzerainty of Turkey and Ferdinand declared her independence. That settled the Dobrudja question for Roumania. The country that refused to carry out its promises as a vassal was unlikely to perform them as a sovereign State.

What had been really the matter was not entirely due to the strength of Bulgaria as to a mistaken policy on the part of Roumania. King Charles was a capable monarch only as domestic affairs went. And because Bessarabia had been torn from her King Charles concluded that for all time it would pay Roumania to remain an appanage of the Tripice, forgetful of the diplomatic motto that the enemies of today are the friends of to-morrow.

The weakness of his theory lay in the fact that Austria, possessing nearly three million Roumanians in her own borders, was not likely to view an extension of territory on the part of her small neighbor with any great complacency. Feeble old Franz Joseph, the Austrian Emperor, knew this; knew, too, that the Austro-Hungarian Empire, built like a house of cards, was so unstable that a blow in any spot would cause the whole fabric to disintegrate—and cleverly enough kept King Charles of Roumania quiet.

But while to King Charles was given a soporific there were men in the country who were not so tamed by the Austrian amenities and to whom the holy name of Hohenzollern signified very little. "God gives us our relations; thank God we can choose our friends," said the Frenchman; in no metier is this truth more abundantly proved than in kingcraft. The man who preached to the country that the old rôle of understudy to the Triple Alliance was too expensive to be useful and quite unfruitful of anything but vain regrets at unfulfilled pledges was Take Ionescu, whose name may be freely translated into English as Jack Johnson.

In appearance he closely resembles Mr. John Drew, the actor. By profession a barrister (and with a successful practice); by sympathy a man of the middle classes; by force of circumstances a politician, forced thereinto by his own natural talents and his friends' persuadings, and married to an Englishwoman, this D'Artagnan of the Balkans forced his policy to the steps of the Roumanian throne.

Tricked by King Ferdinand.

There was no love lost between Take (as he always is called) and King Charles for some years; the mutterings of the people, however, proclaimed that they had enough of the old idols and had found them false. King Charles came down to earth and realized, with no little reluctance, that the day of old traditions was on the wane.

Then the Balkan war of 1912 broke out.

At a private interview between King Charles and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria held in the Roumanian summer palace, at Sinaia, in June, King Ferdinand had promised definitely that if Roumania remained neutral the Dobrudja lands would be handed over immediately after the war. Gueshoff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, confirmed and ratified this through the usual diplomatic channels, adding that in the event of the Balkan Alliance triumphing over Turkey there would be no territorial acquisition on Bulgaria's part. The war was to be a Holy War, Cross versus Crescent.

Of course, Bulgaria's monarch cheated again. Gueshoff was deposed and Daneff became Prime Minister. Daneff had got it into his head that Bulgaria was a first class Power. He had been cajoled by Ferdinand into the belief.

It was Take Ionescu who made him change his mind. The astute Roumanian, who had received the portfolio of Minister of Finance in the coalition Ministry that had been formed at the outbreak of their neighbors' war, went to London while the Conference of London in January, 1913, was sitting. That conference was supposed to arrange for the general partition of so much of Turkey in Europe as had been captured by the Balkan allies.

March Into Bulgaria.

Only three interviews took place between Take Ionescu and Dr. Daneff. The Bulgarian offered nothing; wanted, indeed, to hold on to everything. The Dobrudja is a piece of land about twenty-five thousand square miles in area. Daneff offered something smaller than Manhattan Island. Take Ionescu went back to Bucharest.

The snows melted in the late spring. By May all the other members of the Balkan alliance were fighting against Bulgaria, fighting in their spare time among themselves. Very quietly and with no great haste the Roumanian army, 600,000 strong, was mobilized. It walked, not marched, into Bulgaria in the month of July. There was nothing to stop it. On it went, while King Ferdinand, half frantic by this time, telegraphed to his royal confrère, King Charles, to delay the advance of the army, which camped within twelve miles of Sofia.

For the oddness of the situation was that the Roumanians were, in effect, not a hostile army—no war had been declared—but merely a half million of game keepers engaged in watching the poachers, who formed the Bulgarian Cabinet. Finally King Charles agreed to halt his army on condition that all the Balkan States attended a conference to be summoned at once in Bucharest. The army was halted on July 25. By August 10 the treaty of Bucharest was signed and sealed. Peace reigned in the Balkans; a larger Dobrudja of nearly twice the size of the original was at last handed over to Roumania.

Bulgaria, which had announced its own independence some years before, had been bought body and soul by the Triple Alliance. The declaration of independence amounted to usurpation, so far as Roumania was concerned, and was therefore regarded as a danger to Roumanian safety. It was apparent that the German influence (noticeably exercised, as it was, during some years by the German Ambassador, Baron Marshall von Bieberstein, at Constantinople) was spreading too rapidly all over the Balkans from the Black Sea to the Adriatic. Turkey had succumbed—witness the Bagdad Railway—Bulgaria had been drawn into the net, and Roumania felt her own position none too safe. A general riot among the small States could have but one result, a grand clash between Russia and the Central Empires, in the net result of which the small States, whoever was victor, would suffer.

Changes more subtle had been working. The Crown Prince twenty years before had married an English Princess. Actually her title at the time of marriage was Princess Marie of Saxe-Coburg, but she was born as a daughter of the brother of King Edward VII., the Duke of Edinburgh, who afterward, on the German duchy falling vacant, had been invited to the custody of Saxe-Coburg's destinies. Princess Marie, however, was English to the core, with the smack and flavor of her Russian mother and with all the beauty of the Russian royal family. For at least twelve years after marriage she lived under a light of criticism so fierce and so harsh that life was nearly unbearable. The old Roumanian Queen, Elizabeth (Carmen Sylva), had had the insane idea of marrying the Crown Prince to a Roumanian, with the object of consolidating the dynasty.

Marie's Unhappy Lot.

To Marie, brought up as she was in the extraordinarily free environment that in royal circles is the privilege of the minor English royalties, the stuffy atmosphere of a petty court was as near slavery as could be imagined. The old Queen's entourage left nothing unsaid or undone to blast the character and soil the reputation of the Princess. For twelve years the struggle went on between the old experienced hand and the younger woman who had been pitchforked into this maze of intrigue.

Marie was clothed as a Roumanian; her English friends were cut off; she was not permitted to write to England; her English maid was dismissed; even the use of the Irish linen and lace that formed part of her trousseau was forbidden. Marie wore down the opposition by doing nothing at all. With apparent content she went on bearing beautiful children; she kept her light heart, despite all rumors, despite slanders which came from one poisoned source. She gave the lie to the worst by remaining quite faithful to her husband. Her children were frank, joyous, boisterous, even tomboyish, and made friends rapidly.

The storm wore itself out and Marie came into her own. She became positively popular, and those who had thought it chic to malign her became at length her stoutest adherents.

Italy a Natural Ally.

The natural ally of Roumania at last became apparent; it was Italy, bound by the ties of two thousand years of race, tongue and blood; Italy, which had stood aloof from the war, but saw the Trentino, Italia Irredenta, almost within reach. Austria, far from being a friend, had for years been the common enemy of both.

For years the men of Bucharest had been pleading for better treatment to be accorded to their fellow Roumanians living on the other side of the Carpathians. They lead the life of serfs, these Roumanians, and Austria has only listened to one argument in all history—that of the conqueror's sword. A pact with Italy was drafted, the terms of which were first disclosed to Paris and not to Berlin. It was for joint but not necessarily simultaneous action if Austria (having thoroughly upset the Balkan status quo by her attack on Serbia) should refuse to restore the disturbed balance of power by withholding territorial compensation.

It is for the future to see the spectacular fight for the passes of the Carpathians, but if organization is worth anything, and if the sentiment of a united people serves, the Roumanians should give a good account of themselves.

INTRENCHED SERVIAN TROOPS