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War News.

Messages Received Previous to 9 A.M.

MORE VILLAGES CAPTURED.

LONDON, March 20. Despite less favourable weather conditions, says the official report from the British headquarters in France to-night, we made considerable progress again to-day along the greater part of the front in our advance south of Arras, and further 14 villages have been cleared of the enemy. Our troops have now passed the general line of Calisy, Estree en Chausse, Nurlu, Veu and Slemere.

FRENCH OCCUPY IMPORTANT RAILWAY JUNCTION.

PARIS, March 20. The French have occupied Tergnier, an important railroad junction on the line between Amiens and Rheims, and have crossed the St. Quentin Canal. French aviators report the destruction by the Germans of the historic ruins of Coucy-le-Chateau, one of the most striking monuments of feudal ages in Europe. It was built early in the 13th century. The French war office officially announces that in the evacuation of Noyon the Germans carried away by force fifty young girls, ranging in age from 15 to 25 years old. The text of the statement reads: From the Somme to the Aisne our troops while making new progress occupied the reconquered zone. North of the Somme our cavalry pushed forward as far as the outskirts of Roupv, about 7 kilometres (4½ miles) from St. Quentin, where they gave chase to German cavalry patrols. Northeast of Chaunoy our infantry occupied Tergnier to-day and crossed the Canal. Several lively skirmishes with enemy detachments ended to our advantage. In the course of this pursuit extending over several days we have suffered insignificant losses on the entire front. Everywhere our advances have been able to observe the proven vandalism and systematic destruction carried out by the enemy, which for the greater part was of no military advantage. This afternoon our aviators report the ruins of Coucy le Chateau have been destroyed by explosion. Evacuating Noyon the enemy carried off by force fifty young girls from 15 to 25 years of age. The day was relatively calm on the rest of the front.

Fresh Smelts and Fresh Herring at ELLIS.

PURSUIT OF GERMANS CONTINUES.

From Staff Correspondent British Headquarters, France, March 20, via London, March 21.—The pursuit of the Germans by the British troops continues and at places sharp fighting ensued to-day. This was particularly true in the neighborhood of Croisilles northeast of St. Leger which is still strongly held by machine gun companies. The armies have been in such close touch in other places that field fighting tactics have been employed, men firing from skirmish lanes. Wherever the British troops penetrate the territory formerly held by the Germans they encounter the same condition of destruction as at Bapaume and Peronne. Only a few villages escaped, the Germans in these instances having been compelled to leave before their plans to lay waste could be carried out. The use of cavalry by the British and French seems to have taken the Germans by surprise, upsetting some of their calculations. In one village supper which had been laid out was abandoned together with much ammunition, and at other places newly opened boxes of high explosives were found with which the Germans had planned to destroy the villages before leaving. That wholesale destruction in the systematic manner characteristic of German thoroughness is no longer a matter of course. They directed the blowing up of all houses, wells, cellars, except those occupied by rearward outposts, the rearward being held responsible for making the shelters uninhabitable before falling back. Farming implements are all burned or destroyed. Wherever a building was spared it was first rendered filthy. The order also directed the assembling of filth in the neighborhood of all wells for the purpose of contaminating the water. The destruction of fruit trees now apparently covers the entire belt of evacuated territory. Even those clinging to walls have been stripped off. In one abandoned position a large black cat was found nailed to an upright board. A cap was on its head and a cigar in its mouth. A British observation party working forward to-day on horse back had rather an exciting experience. The patrol was attacked with machine guns by three German airplanes, which swooped very low, but failed to hit any member of the party. Prisoners recently taken appeared entirely bewildered when told of the extent of the German retreat. They said they thought it a great joke when they first heard of the German retreat. They supposed it was solely for the purpose of getting the British deeper and deeper into the mud of the Somme. But when it came to abandoning positions that had

been fortified with months and years of labor, there was much depression in the ranks. Most of the German guns, which formerly bombarded along the Somme, have been entirely swallowed up. There is no longer any doubt that the main German forces have already installed themselves on the line before Cambrai and St. Quentin, but to-day the first could be seen beyond this line as the retreat had not yet been carried out to the full limit, and in the meantime the picture behind the British lines is one of the greatest activity. The movement has given the army wonderful joy.

DEFENCE OF DARDANELLES CAMPAIGN.

LONDON, March 20. An energetic defence of the late Lord Kitchener was made in the House of Commons to-day by former Premier Asquith, who replied to the criticisms levelled at his Government in the recently published report of the Dardanelles Commission. "Lord Kitchener was a masterful man, endowed with a formidable personality, disposed by nature to keep his own counsel," said Asquith, "but it is a mistake to suggest he lived in isolation and did not consult military opinion as to the conduct of the war. That is untrue, but it is true that during the early months of the war he acted as his own chief of staff. When the war broke out the General Staff were sent to the front. Their places were taken by officers who had been in retirement. The best and highest authority at that time was Lord Kitchener himself. Upon no man in history had a heavier burden been cast. Nothing fills me with greater indignation than the attacks made upon Lord Kitchener, whose memory is in no danger and will live." Asquith said the Dardanelles expedition was primarily a naval one because Lord Kitchener proved to the satisfaction of the War Council that the troops to make it a joint military and naval undertaking were not available. The War Council spent three weeks examining the country's available resources in men and obtaining opinions of experts. British and French naval expert opinion favored the enterprise. The adverse view of Lord Fisher, then First Sea Lord, was not founded on technical naval objections, but upon his preference for defence. The objective was in a totally different sphere of operations. The delay in sending troops, Asquith continued, was due to the Russian position which was then bad. Pressure was brought to bear by both the British and the French commanders-in-Chief to keep the troops in France. Asquith asserted the Dardanelles operations had saved the situation in the Caucasus, prevented for months the defection of

And the Worst is Yet to Come



Bulgaria to the Central Powers, kept 300,000 Turks mobilized, destroyed some of the finest troops in the Turkish army, and contributed to the favorable events witnessed in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Persia. The suggestion that no good purpose would be served by the Dardanelles Commission continuing its labors, was received by the House with loud cheers. The suggestion was made by Sir Mark Sykes, who vigorously defended the Dardanelles operations. Winston Churchill, former First Lord of the Admiralty, severely criticized the manner in which the Dardanelles Commission report had been prepared. They built up the narrative by clippings and snippings from documents and by single sentences from the evidence of witnesses, said Churchill. This method was in direct conflict with accepted principles, and detrimental to public and personal interests. Churchill admitted, however, that the Commissioners had swept away, directly or by implication, many serious and reckless charges, and that the burden of responsibility which he had borne alone for the last two years was now shared with a government of eminent men as the

not press him. Then, Churchill said, the difference between Lord Fisher and himself began for the first time.

RUSSIAN POLITICS.

PETROGRAD, March 20. The Russian Government, it was learned to-day at the Foreign Office, will rest exclusively in control of the Council of Ministers, until the convocation of the Constitutional Assembly. The Duma, which has fulfilled its task as a temporary governing body during the days of the revolution, will thus pass out of existence as the chief executive body of the nation and will surrender its extraordinary powers to the Cabinet, whose Premier, Prince Lvoff, will have authority approximating that of a President of a Republic. It is impossible as yet to forecast the final form which the Government will assume, since it will depend entirely upon the collection of the will of the entire population, which has been extended in the proclamation of the new Government regarding universal suffrage. The belief prevails in official circles that the opinion of the country will be found to favor a Republican form of Government, not under a President, but under a Commission similar to the governing body of Switzerland. If this becomes an eventuality it is not unlikely that from the present Cabinet containing the most popular leaders in the country will be drawn the principal names for the Commission which will govern the country. In any event the old regime is dead. The Foreign Office to-day informed the Associated Press that nothing can resurrect it. If the people decide upon a monarch it will be a monarch who will be stripped of all traditional powers which belonged to the Emperor. He will be little more than a ruler in name only. The Foreign Office reiterated the declaration already made by the new Government concerning the liberty and full rights for all races which are the component parts of the nation.

RASPUTIN'S FUNERAL.

PETROGRAD, March 20. The Petrograd press, no longer under the strict censorship of the old regime, is taking advantage of its new liberty to publish facts hitherto suppressed with regard to the assassination of Gregory Rasputin, Mystic, whose influence in Court circles stirred the country. While the whole nation was breathing a sigh of relief, at the deliverance from Rasputin's malign influence, the Imperial family was laying away his remains with great reverence and pomp at Tsarskoe Selo. After the body was found in the Neva it was taken to Tsarskoe Selo in the Imperial car in which rode the then Minister of Interior, M. Protopopoff and General Voyekoff. The

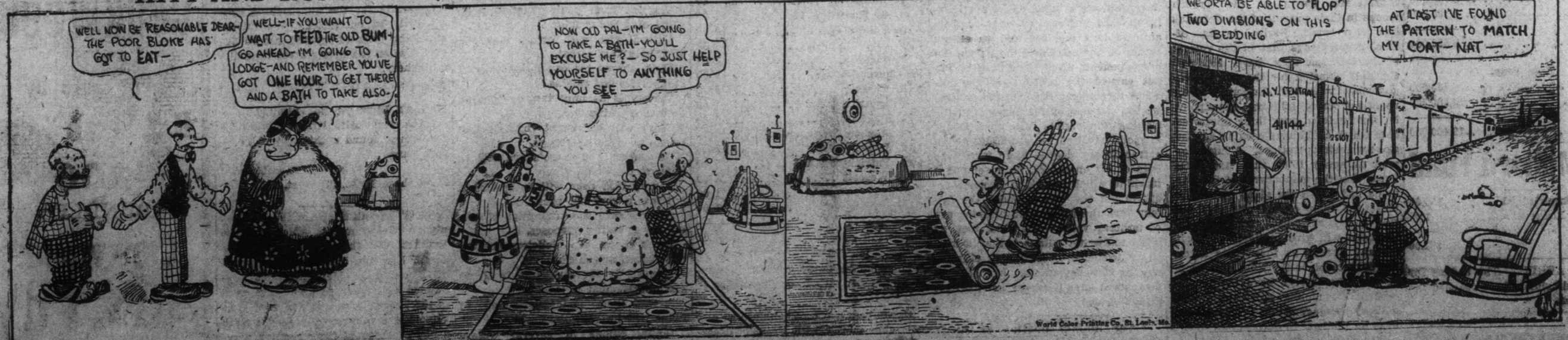
body was taken direct to the Imperial Palace. The funeral ceremony was held in the Imperial church and the silver coffin containing his body was carried to its resting place by the Emperor, M. Protopopoff, General Voyekoff and others, followed by the Empress in deep mourning. The affair caused a great scandal at the time and further inflamed the people against the Empress.

CONFERENCE BEGINS.

LONDON, March 20. (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—The first of the series of the historic cabinet conferences at which the Overseas Dominions and India are represented, commenced to-day at the official residence of the Premier, Rt. Hon. Lloyd George. Groups of journalists and photographers gathered about Downing Street but a bleak piercing wind prevented anything like a crowd. The first arrival was the Rt. Hon. Walter Long, Colonial Secretary, followed by the Hon. Sir Edward Morris, Premier of Nfld., who returned to London from France only yesterday. Following the arrival of the cabinet ministers came a succession of motor cars containing Premier Borden, of Canada, Hon. J. D. Hezen, Canadian Minister of Marine, and Messrs. Ward and Massey of New Zealand. Austen Chamberlain, Secretary for India, with the Indian representatives, walked over from the India office. Sir George Perley, acting High Commissioner for Canada, also arrived. The last to reach the Conference was General Smuts, representative of South Africa. General Smuts and the senior representative from India were in uniform, all the others being in civvies. The Rt. Hon. Walter Long, on behalf of the Colonial Office to-day, assured the large gathering of overseas journalists of his determination to see they were given all the facilities that would be enjoyed by the home press with regard to the Imperial War Conference. This gathering was the result of steps taken by Lord Burnham as President of the Empire Press Union. At the initial meeting to-morrow the conference will formulate a programme of procedure pending which no one knows what subjects will be considered. The war cabinet and war conference will meet on alternate days. As proceedings may continue for more than a month, Sir Robert Borden and his colleagues will probably be here longer than they expected. The functions of the two bodies have been the subject of much confusion, but it is understood the Imperial War Cabinet composed of Premiers and one colleague together with permanent members will deal with the immediate prosecution of the war while the Imperial War

(Continued on 4th page.)

HITT AND RUNN—Weary Willie Had a Literal Understanding of Bull's Invitation and Proceeded to "See" Everything!



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