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FAIR AND MILD.

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BRITISH ARMY MAKES A STRONG STAND AGAINST GERMAN HOST

NEW OFFENSIVE BY GERMANS BEGINNING OF SECOND STAGE OF THE BATTLE OF PICARDY

After Violently Bombarding British Line the Huns Launch Great Infantry Attack Towards Arras, But Are Held Back—British Hold Tenaciously Strong Natural Defenses Running from Arras to Albert—Germans Have 2,000,000 Soldiers Engaged.

Teutons Capture Montdidier, Fifteen Miles from Amiens—Although Allied Line Bulges Dangerously Southwest of Amiens, Enemy is Still Far from Winning Strategic Success—Quarter of Million Austrian Troops in France.

Special cable to The N. Y. Tribune and St. John Standard. (By Arthur S. Draper).

London, Mar. 28.—As predicted in these dispatches on Tuesday, the Germans have begun a new attack in the Arras sector, widening their battle front by another ten miles. A violent bombardment of the British line, which runs some six miles east of this battered French city, preceded the infantry attack.

Three are three reasons for a drive in this quarter: first the German line was beginning to form a rather sharp salient south of Arras second the main enemy attack has been checked in the Albert sector and he can hope for little progress until the artillery catches up; third, the enemy evidently believes that the British have withdrawn their troops from the Arras sector to support Cough's army.

The new offensive which opened the eighth day of the battle of Picardy must be considered as definitely marking the second stage of the colossal struggle in which approximately 2,000,000 soldiers are engaged. The Germans won a considerable success against the Allies during the night, capturing Montdidier, eleven miles southwest of Roye, an important railroad and railway centre. By massing huge forces at the junction of the allied armies the Germans have borne them back so that the French are now occupying the heights to the westward of this ancient town. This necessitates a considerable readjustment and brings the enemy dangerously close to the Amiens-Paris line. (Continued on page 2)

The French Troops Drive Back Enemy

On Front from Lassigny to Noyon Petain's Men Hurl Back Hun Hordes Over Line About Ten Kilometres Long to Depth of Two Kilometres, Capturing Three Villages.

Paris, Mar. 28.—On the front from Lassigny to Noyon our troops have advanced over a line about ten kilometres long to a depth of two kilometres, says the war office statement issued tonight. The repulse of the Germans in villages further west is also announced. The statement reads:

"Continuing to attack with strong forces in the region of Montdidier during the whole morning the enemy attempted to enlarge his gains west and south of this town, but with magnificent ead our troops counter-attacked with the bayonet and drove the Germans out of the villages of Courte-manche, Mesnil-St. Georges and Anserennes, which we have occupied and held solidly. On the Somme sector we are holding our line solidly.

"Our troops have made an advance over a front about ten kilometres long and two kilometres deep on the front from Lassigny to Noyon. On the left bank of the Oise average attacks by the enemy have given him no advantage, our troops holding their positions unshakably.

"Eastern theatre, Mar. 27.—There has been considerable artillery activity northwest of Doiran in the region of Vetrnik and the Cerna Bend. British aviators carried out with success many bombardments in the region of Doiran and at Ferree, Heres and Darina."

Aerial Operations. Paris, Mar. 28.—The following statement has been issued on French aerial operations: "On March 23 one of our groups of escadrilles carried out 126 patrols and 120 reconnoitering missions in the region of St. Quentin, Ham, La Fere and Noyon. More than 50,000 kilos of projectiles were dropped from March 22nd to 28th on convoys, trains and enemy troop concentrations, which suffered heavy losses.

"Descending at times to within about sixty feet above the earth, our pilots attacked with machine guns enemy contingents, firing thousands of cartridges. Forty-two German aeroplanes and six captive balloons were brought down."

POLICE STATION WRECKED BY QUEBEC MOB

Arrest by Dominion Constable May Lead to a Fatality.

OFFICER SUSTAINS SKULL FRACTURE

Several Others Injured in Disorderly Outbreak by Hot Heads.

ARRESTED MAN HAD EXEMPTION PAPERS

Door Smashed at Christian Brothers' School by Enraged Rabble.

Quebec, Mar. 28.—Bitterly enraged because a young man named Mercier had been arrested by Dominion constables, acting for the military service department, though he had the necessary papers at home at the time of his arrest, a crowd of young men late last night attacked the police station after the man had been liberated, in search of the constables who had effected the arrest and literally tore the place to pieces. They were especially intent on the capture of a constable named Leon Belanger, a well known sporting man and boxing referee, but they failed to find him until almost one o'clock this morning, when a small party of watchers, who remained by the greater part of the crowd, dragged another policeman named Pilon from all over the streets. They discovered Belanger as he was making his escape from a small cupboard in the police station and when he boarded a car for the upper town they gave chase, hauled the trolley off the wire and jumped aboard.

Cracked His Skull. Someone smashed the unfortunate man over the head with a stick or, according to some, the butt end of a revolver, and cracked his skull. Bleeding profusely, Belanger was carried to Dr. Fortier's a short way off and at an early hour this morning the doctor announced that if the man could be removed to the hospital in time and an operation performed his life might be saved. The crowd still remained around the residence of the doctor and even when the priest who had administered the last rites to the man told them that he might die, there were cries of "he got what he deserved."

Mob Rules. During all the melee the police remained passive and the crowd practically ruled. The mayor came upon the scene early in the affair and advised that he would investigate the affair and find out the true particulars. He also conferred with General Landry, officer commanding the 5th military district, but it looked as if the whole trouble was being made by a few hot heads who took pleasure in smashing up the station and apparently the constables had made their escape, it was thought that the affair would pass off without any more casualties. The provost marshal, Major Desrochers, was (Continued on page 2).

The British Forces Beat Off the Germans With Heavy Losses, Says Haig

London, Mar. 28.—After an all-day battle north and south of the Somme, with Arras as the chief centre, the British forces have beaten off the Germans, with heavy losses to the enemy, according to the report from Field Marshal Haig tonight.

The text of the statement says: "Heavy fighting occurred during the day along the whole British line from southeast of the Somme to northeast of Arras, a battle front of some fifty-five miles.

"This morning, after an intense artillery bombardment and covered by a cloud of smoke, the enemy opened a fresh attack in great strength on a wide front south and north of the Scarpe. At the same time a series of partial attacks was delivered by him along our line southward to the Somme.

"In the new sector of battle, east of Arras, the enemy succeeded in forcing his way through our outpost line and hard fighting has been proceeding all day in our battle positions. Here all the enemy's assaults have been repulsed with heavy loss to him.

"Fierce fighting is still taking place south of the Scarpe. At Beyelles, Moyenneville, Ablainville Bucquey and Puisseux our troops also have been repeatedly attacked and have beaten off a number of determined assaults. At Dernancourt the enemy succeeded in forcing his way for the second time into the village, but was driven out once more by our counter-attack with the loss of many killed or taken prisoners.

"South of the Somme our troops have been fiercely engaged all day in the neighborhood of Arvillers, Vrely and Hamel. Different localities have changed hands frequently in bitter fighting, but our positions have been maintained. Heavy fighting continues in this sector also."

Canadians Engaged In The Battle of Picardy

Sir Robert Borden Receives Cable to That Effect—Enemy Crosses the Somme and British Fall Back Towards Hamel—In Other Sections British Victorious—Line Unbroken North of the Somme.

Ottawa, Mar. 28.—That a portion of the Canadian forces in France are now engaged in the great battle on the west front is the statement made in a cable received by Sir Robert Borden tonight from Sir Edward Kemp. It has been known in government circles for the past three days that the Canadians would be drawn into the fight before the end of the week, but for obvious military reasons the press, although informed of the situation, was requested not to mention it. The announcement that the Canadians are now engaging the enemy in the vicinity of Arras is received without surprise. No details as to the size of the Canadian force thrown into the fight up to the present time, or the progress of the fighting, have yet been received. Sir Edward Kemp's message describes the situation at the front as being obscure.

Montdidier Captured. London, Mar. 28.—A British official summary of the situation issued this evening states that the Germans last night entered Montdidier. Last night the Germans effected a crossing of the Somme near Chipilly, compelling the British left flank south of the river to fall back. The statement follows: "During the night the enemy succeeded in crossing the Somme from the north to the south near Chipilly and consequently the left bank of our troops south of the Somme was compelled to fall back towards Hamel. From that place the line runs through Lamotte-En-Santerre, Catz, Vrely and Warvillers.

"South of this the French were last night pressed back along the Roye Breteuil road and the enemy entered Montdidier.

"The French pressure on the enemy is continuing in the area of their counter-attack south of Noyon.

French Beat Enemy. "In the Montdidier region the entire line now runs from Warvillers, through Arvillers, Dernancourt, Criville and Mesnil-St. Georges to Ham-

villers. (This line encloses Montdidier within a sharp salient, the apex of which is at Mesnil-St. Georges, about 2½ miles southwest of Montdidier.)"

Between the latter place and Pont-L'Evêque, south of Noyon, the French this morning counter-attacked in force and with great dash drove back the enemy on a front of ten kilometres to a depth of 3 kilometres. The French pressure on the enemy in this area continues.

"North of the Somme our line remains substantially the same as last night. Several attacks were made during the night in the neighborhood of Beaumont Hamel, Rossignol Wood and northwest of Puisseux. These were all repulsed.

"This morning the enemy opened a heavy bombardment north and south of the Scarpe River, and followed this by an attack opposite Arras with at least seven divisions. The enemy on this front penetrated our forward zone and a fierce engagement took place in the battle zone.

"Our line here now runs from Arleux to Fampoux, Neuville-Le-Vitasse and Boisieux and thence as before. The fighting here has been severe and the enemy is reported to have lost very heavily."

PERSIA MAY CAST HER LOT WITH THE HUNS

Moscow, Mar. 28.—The newspapers report that a Persian delegation has left Tehran for Berlin by way of Constantinople, to arrange a permanent alliance between Persia and Germany, based on a large loan by Germany to finance Persian railways and to equip the Persian army with German instructors.

The Persian Charge at Petrograd, denying this report, states that Persia is endeavoring merely to arrange a settlement of the damages suffered and to secure Persian representation at the ultimate peace conference in order to insure payment from the belligerents.

NEW BRUNSWICK POWER CO. BILL IN LEGISLATURE

Measure Introduced by Mr. Pinder Acting in Behalf of Mr. Dickson and Read First Time—It Will Probably Find Its Way to Committee Next Week—Hon. Mr. Tweeddale Gets Peeved and Claims He is the Right Man in the Right Place.

Special to The Standard.

Fredericton, March 28.—The N. B. Power Company bill was introduced in the Legislature this afternoon by Mr. J. K. Pinder of York, acting in behalf of Mr. H. V. Dickson of Kings. The bill was read a first time and will probably find its way to committee next week. It is expected that there will be considerable discussion in committee before the measure is returned for the consideration of the House.

There was an interesting few minutes at the expense of the Minister for Agriculture who, in the interim since Wednesday night had decided that the bill to change the method of electing directors of cheese and butter manufacturing associations was really what he wanted. On Wednesday he did not appear to be sure of it but today when he brought the bill in for the second time he told the House that he had decided that it would meet the purpose he had in mind. The bill was allowed to go through.

Mr. Baxter suggested that in future the time of the House might be saved if the Minister of Agriculture understood his departmental bills before he brought them in for consideration. (Continued on page 9.)

COUNTER OFFENSIVE IS BEGUN BY FRENCH NEAR NOYON

Allied World Anxiously Looking for News of Success of French Thrust Into Flank of the German Forces—French Success Would Cut Off Teutons Fighting at Very Tip of "Ploughshare"—Berlin Admits Heavy Losses—Americans Are Fighting.

Slowly assuming the shape of a giant ploughshare the German drive in Picardy has come almost to a halt, except at the very tip of the salient driven into the lines of the Entente Allies. As the area covered by the Teutonic offensive stands now, it runs on the south in an almost straight line from Landriestourt, on the old "Hindenburg line" to Montdidier, well behind the allied positions as they stood in 1916. Savage fighting has taken place on the French part of the line. The German attempts to advance on the extreme tip of the salient driven into the French positions have been fruitless and they have been driven back at the point of the bayonet. The British, on the front north of the Scarpe, have also repulsed the enemy, but south of this river they have been forced to retire.

Two New Features. From Montdidier the line to the northeast runs with a sharp angle to Warvillers and there it turns northward and passes along the Somme river to above Albert, where it again turns to the northeast, until it joins the old lines held by the contending armies on the morning of March 21st.

Out of the confusion of the battle and the contrary claims of the contesting armies, two new features stand prominently. The first is that the French, over a front of six miles, have driven into the German lines along the southern side of the salient established by the Teutonic drive. The other is that the Germans have begun a new operation to the east of Arras, which may be the inception of a widening of the area of battle to the northward.

Counter Offensive. At the present moment the Allied world is looking anxiously for news

of the success of the French thrust into the flank of the German forces. The fact that the drive progressed rapidly, and cut a deep notch into the German held ground in the region of Noyon, may indicate that this movement is the counter-offensive which has been expected for the past three days. Progress by the French for a considerable distance into the German forces would cut off the Teutonic fighting at the very tip of the "ploughshare" and compel them to retreat, or at least pause, until the menace to their communications can be removed. A further advance by the French might easily overturn the whole plan of the Germans and bring about a new phase of the battle, in which the Allies would strike hard all along the front and compel the Germans to relinquish their dearly-bought conquests.

The German activity near Arras may have for its purpose either a new drive at the Allies' lines or a defensive operation intended to stop a British blow from the north, co-incident with that begun by the French.

British Firm North. The British held firm north of the Scarpe, but to the south of the river have been driven back. Their line is now near that occupied in July, 1916, and runs straight from Arleux, north of Arras, to Boisieux, on the line held by the British on the north side of the dent driven into their lines by the German thrust.

Berlin admits that the losses have been very heavy. The casualties are referred to as "normal" which, in view of the magnitude of the battle, may mean that the Germans have paid heavily for the ground they have won. (Continued on page 2)