

THE WEATHER.
Maritime—Southerly and south-westerly winds, gradually increasing, with snow and rain.

The St. John Standard,

NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA.

OPERA HOUSE
TONIGHT
"BRINGING UP FATHER"

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ROUMANIA DECIDED AT LAST TO TAKE PART IN WAR ON SIDE OF THE ALLIES?

IMPORTANT GAINS CLAIMED BY HUNS; FIERCE ARTILLERY DUEL GOES ON AROUND VERDUN

Infantry Attacks Cease for Present—Huns, in Last Assaults at Douaumont, Advance in Columns of Four and Mowed Down by French

Russians Occupy Town of Kirinw in Persia but Lost a Destroyer in Black Sea—British Fleet Auxiliary Strikes Mine and Goes to Bottom Taking Fourteen of Crew to Grave.

Except for artillery action, the fighting in the Verdun region has ceased for the moment. To the north and east of the fortress there has been no infantry engagement since Saturday afternoon, when the Germans succeeded in entering a small French trench to the north of Elix.

On both sides of the Meuse, from the northwest of Verdun, along the entire front around to the southeast of the fortress, the artillery of both sides has continued the tremendous shelling that has been in progress for some days.

The Germans claim to have captured in the fighting around Verdun thus far, 26,472 unrounded French soldiers and 189 guns, and 232 machine guns.

To the south of the Meuse river, in the Argonne forest, and the Bat-De-Sapt sector of the Vosges, the French guns have heavily bombarded German entrenchments.

The Russians have captured trenches from the Germans in the Diester region of East Galicia and have made further progress against the Turks in Persia by taking the town of Kirinw. The Russians admit the sinking of a Russian torpedo boat destroyer by a submarine of the Central Powers in the Black Sea off the Bulgarian port of Varna. Part of the crew of the destroyer were rescued.

Despite the unfavorable weather conditions in the mountains the Italians are keeping up their operations against the Austro-Hungarians. They are also intensifying their aerial bombardment of the Italian front. The town of Gorizia has had to sustain another hail of Italian shells.

"Black Sea: On the 9th, two of our destroyers, reconnoitering near Varna, were attacked by enemy submarines, which sank the destroyer Lieutenant Pushteln. Part of her crew was rescued by the other destroyer.

"Caucasus front: We have occupied the town of Kirinw, Persia, in the direction of Bagdad."

French Airman Brings Down His 8th Victim.

Paris, March 12 (10.40 p. m.)—The official communication issued by the war office tonight says:

"In the region north of Verdun there was no infantry action during the course of the day. The bombardment has been quite violent today on the part of the two artilleries on both banks of the Meuse.

"Our heavy artillery took under its fire groups of the enemy in the ravine north of Cote Du Poivre, and German batteries in the region west of Douaumont."

"This morning Sub-Lieut. Guyver brought down a German aeroplane, which fell in flames inside our lines near Thiescourt, being the eighth aeroplane brought down by this pilot, six having fallen within our lines, and two inside the German lines.

"Another aviator similarly brought down an enemy aeroplane inside our lines near Dombasle, in the Argonne. The passengers of the two destroyed machines were killed. The same day our battle aeroplanes fought eighteen aerial engagements in the region of Elix, in the course of which the adversaries were put to flight."

Germans Claim Important Gains.

Berlin, March 11, via London (3.35 p. m.)—Capture of French positions 1,400 yards wide and about two-thirds of a mile deep south of Ville-Aux-Bois, near Rheims, was announced today by the war office.

The text of the statement follows:

"Western front: Saxon regiments stormed, with very slight losses, strongly fortified positions in the wood sector southwest and south of Ville-Aux-Bois, eleven miles northwest of Rheims, over a width of about 1,400 yards, and for a depth of about two-thirds of a mile. Twelve injured and 725 unrounded men fell into our hands. The booty consisted of one revolver, three machine guns, and thirteen mine throwers.

Two More Neutral Ships Seized.

London, March 10—(Friday)—British patrol ships have taken into Kirkwall, Scotland, the Dutch steamship Palembang, which left Philadelphia Feb. 22, with a cargo of petroleum for Alessand, Norway, and the Danish steamer Arkansas, bound from Boston and New York, Feb. 22, with a general cargo for Copenhagen.

British Auxiliary Sunk, Fifteen of Crew Drowned.

London—March 12—It was officially announced at the British Admiralty today that the mercantile fleet auxiliary Fauvette, of 2,644 tons gross, has been sunk as the result of striking a mine off the east coast of England. Fourteen members of the crew were lost.

The Admiralty statement says:

"His Majesty's mercantile fleet auxiliary Fauvette has struck a mine off the east coast and has sunk. Casualties, two officers and twelve men."

The Fauvette was formerly in the service of the General Steam Navigation Company, Limited, of London. The vessel was built at Middlesbrough in 1912. She was 315 feet long, 43 feet beam, and 18 feet deep.

Germans Mowed Down.

Paris, March 12—The following dispatch communication was issued by the war office last night:

"The enemy did not attempt any infantry action along the whole of our front. According to the latest reports fruitless assaults launched yesterday against our trenches west of Douaumont were very disastrous to the enemy. The Germans attacked three times in columns of four, but were mowed down by our artillery fire and the fire of our machine guns. They were obliged to retire leaving the ground covered with dead bodies.

"Today in the region of Douaumont one of our aeroplanes brought down a Fokker which fell in flames inside the German lines."

Russian Destroyer Sunk.

Berlin, Mar. 11, via wireless to Sayville—The Russian torpedo boat destroyer Lieutenant Pushteln has been sunk by a mine, according to a report from Sofia, given out by the Overseas News Agency. Four officers and eleven sailors of the crew of the destroyer were rescued by Bulgarians.

The Lieutenant is a unit of the Russian Black Sea fleet, and probably was lost in the Black Sea off the coast of Bulgaria. She was 210 feet in length, and displaced 325 tons. Her complement in peace times was sixty-seven men.

Russian Success Continued.

Petrograd, via London, March 12, 10.44 p. m.—The following official communication was issued today:

"Western (Roumanian) front: Near Boreas the enemy exploded mines of heavy calibre on our trenches.

"In Galicia, on the Diester, our skirmishers attacked the village of Latalche, and despite a severe enemy fire entered his trenches.

EVIDENCE CONCLUDED IN GAULT DIVORCE CASE.

Ottawa, March 12, (via Canadian Press).—The Senate divorce committee has concluded hearing evidence in the Hamilton Gault divorce case, and will make a recommendation to the senate Tuesday evening as to whether or not a bill of divorce should be granted. Major A. Hamilton Gault, the founder of the famous Princess Patricia's Regiment, is the petitioner.

MORGAN SAILS FOR HOME.

London, Mar. 11—J. P. Morgan, who has been in London for several weeks, sailed today from Liverpool for New York on the steamship Philadelphia.

EXTRA STR. MATATUA WRECKED AT EARLY HOUR BY EXPLOSIONS; CAPT. GILMAN BELIEVED DEAD

EXPLOSIONS FOLLOWED BY FIRE AT 4 A. M. THIS MORNING—STEAMER TOTAL LOSS—CAPTAIN, LAST SEEN IN HIS ROOM SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT AND BELIEVED HE HAS LOST LIFE.

What remained of the Australian steamer Matatua, docked at West St. John, after the fire aboard her had exhausted its fury, will probably be destroyed by a series of explosions at an early hour this morning, the first of which occurred at four o'clock.

That Capt. Gilman has lost his life in the accident is the prevailing opinion of those who were working on the ship or around the docks. When the second fire, which broke out last night about 9 o'clock, had been extinguished and smoke cleared away sufficiently for him to board her, Capt. Gilman went back to his ship at about 12.30. His berth was off the bridge and consequently when the explosions occurred this morning and fire broke out he was probably alone and unable to make his way to safety. The fire and smoke also formed an impenetrable obstacle to any attempts to search that part of the ship to make certain whether he was dead or not.

Capt. Gilman had been advised by his friends to go home and take a much needed rest, but refused and returned to the ship.

With the roar like thunder the explosions broke the stillness of the early morning. Those whose avocations kept them out of bed at that hour surmised the cause of the explosions, while their doubts were soon dispelled by the lurid flames which followed the explosions and lighted the sky. For miles the noise of the explosions could be heard, and re-echoed thunderlike through the stillness. Many of those already enjoying their second sleep were awakened and The Standard's telephone system was quickly converted into an information bureau.

Lending a sensational touch to the whole affair was the statement of an official of the company, made shortly after the explosions began, to the effect that in his opinion the original fire aboard the Matatua was deliberately set either late Saturday night or early Sunday morning.

To the calcium carbide in which the fire was discovered Sunday morning are due the explosions which promised to complete the havoc already done by the first fire. Of highly explosive nature the carbide is likely to completely demolish the vessel.

A Standard reporter was walking along Prince William street at Reed's Point at four o'clock this morning when a terrific explosion resembling a heavy gun fire occurred. Fire did not follow the first explosion, but in less than two minutes a second explosion, not quite so loud as the first was followed immediately by a burst of flame from the bow of the steamer.

Three minutes later a third detonation, even greater than the first shook the West Side and aroused the occupants of hotels and dwellings on streets near the water front in the city proper.

That part of the Matatua's bow not submerged blazed furiously, lighting up part of the harbor and the wharves and sheds in the vicinity for ten minutes. An alarm called out the fire department, which immediately laid hoses to protect the sheds near which the steamer was moored. The fire-boat of the Canadian Pacific Railway and tug directed powerful streams on the blaze, but the tired fire fighters were unable to approach too closely to the burning carbide on the deck.

A fourth explosion occurred at 4.33. This one was heard all over the city. Within the next five minutes there were two more explosions and dense smoke poured from the holds as from a volcano. As the streams of water came in contact with the carbide the chemical blazed furiously. The explosions appeared to blow to pieces many of the cans containing the carbide and it was a long time before the flames were subdued.

Crew Had Just Left Her.

The terrific explosions aroused many people on both sides of the harbor and many called up The Standard office on the telephone to enquire what caused the detonations.

Just a few minutes before the first explosion the crew of the steamer

went ashore and although a number of men were standing on the wharf no one was injured.

The vortex of flame from the hold licked up the woodwork on deck and soon everything inflammable forward above water was ablaze. The sheds were not in serious danger from the flames, the firemen being favored in this particular by the absence of a strong wind. They took every precaution, however, and were prepared to turn the streams on the shore property should further heavy explosions endanger the sheds and wharf.

The calcium carbide cans weigh about 115 pounds and are enclosed in crates. The more water poured on the chemical the more inflammable it becomes. It was this characteristic of the chemical which made the fire one of the most difficult to combat that has ever been handled at this port.

H. R. McLellan, commissioner of public safety, drove to the scene of the fire as soon as he heard the explosion and directed the flight of the department against the flames. The spectacular blaze and the terrific detonations, attracted a large number of west siders to the vicinity, although few were allowed to pass the military guards at the rates.

Quite a number of spectators occupied vantage points on Prince William street and at Reed's Point during the progress of the fire.

Gases from the explosive penetrated No. 3 hold and blew off the hatch covers, scattering things on deck in many directions. At this time several men were on the steamer well aft. They escaped by clambering aboard the tug. Capt. Gilman was on the ship at the time, and those who escaped to the tugs feared that he was in serious danger, if indeed he had not lost his life.

At five a.m. the stern of the ship was well up in the air and from amid

RUSSIA AND ROUMANIA HAVE SIGNED AGREEMENT

Roumania Given Permission to Buy War Materials in Russia and Transport those Bought Elsewhere Through Russian Territory—Reported She Has Also Been Promised Part of Bessarabia—Agreement Regarded as Definite Decision to Join Allies.

London, March 13.—An agreement has been reached between Roumania and Russia which is believed to indicate the definite decision of Roumania to adhere to the cause of the Entente Allies, according to a Bucharest despatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company. The agreement permits Roumania to purchase war materials in Russia, and to transport through Russia war materials purchased elsewhere.

It is reported that Russia has agreed further to give Roumania part of Bessarabia.

Roumanians and Bulgars Clash.

London, March 13.—An engagement is reported to have taken place on the Danube between Roumanians and Bulgarians near the town of Rahova, says the Daily Mail's Odessa correspondent. A Bulgarian frontier guard is said to have fired on a Roumanian ship which was loading another vessel in Roumanian waters.

"The Bulgarians signalled an Austrian gunboat," the correspondent adds, "which ordered the Roumanian vessels to the Bulgarian shore. They refused to comply, whereupon the gunboat opened fire with machine guns and rifles. Roumanian troops replied to the fire. There were many casualties on both sides."

Drugged with Ether German Infantry were Sent Forward in Masses Against French

Lord Northcliffe Says German Prisoners a Pitiable Sight—Worn Out and Weary of War—Mad Crown Prince Gambling with Human Life to Extend Unparalleled in War.

London, March 12.—Lord Northcliffe who has just visited the Verdun battlefield, in a message to the Weekly Dispatch declares that Verdun is a great deal more interesting than important. The newspaper publisher continues:

"It does not need a personal visit to the battlefield to realize this: If the Germans really think that an attack on the unarmoured and dismantled forts of Verdun opens the road to Paris they have a very faint notion of the French preparations and the French power of resistance."

Comparing the present German troops with those who fought early in the war, Lord Northcliffe says:

"Last week I saw German prisoners who had escaped the hellish fire of the French 75's at Verdun. Where had gone those splendid stalwarts captured at the battle of the Marne? Much of the rank and file now left of the Germans is under-sized and badly dressed, with faces that bear a look of fright that seems as if it would last a lifetime. Their appearance is such as to move a heart of stone. With two exceptions among those with whom I spoke all were utterly weary of warfare, and begged to be told

when peace could be expected.

"The fact about the whole war is that Germany is in the position of a beleagued city, and she is striking out blindly by land at Verdun. She will presently, I am convinced, strike out by sea."

Turning to the actual fighting at Verdun, Lord Northcliffe says:

"Not a word is hinted in anything sent out from Germany of the horrible slaughter to which the German troops have been subjected this week, Thursday was a black day for the Germans, when, drugged with ether, the men came on in mass formation to be mown down by the French 75's and machine gun, as usual."

Reports published in the English newspapers from Paris are to my personal knowledge, on the whole, most accurate, and they show that for one or many reasons the Crown Prince is gambling with human life to an extent unprecedented even in this war."

Lord Northcliffe asserts that if the Germans possess a number of guns of greater calibre than those used by the English and French they have no weapons in their armory equal to the French 75, or gunners at all comparable to the Frenchmen."

Discussing the western theatre, as a whole, Lord Northcliffe says that "the Allied defensive wall right across France, in so far as attaining definite military position is concerned, is absolutely impregnable. This remark may equally apply to the German line across France and Belgium."

ships forward the vessel was almost awash. The fire was still burning at that hour.

The ferry boat, which had steamed up, made a special trip to the city and look over fire apparatus to aid the firemen on the west side.

At 5.30 a.m. the fire swept through the saloon of the ship completely gutting it. The flames continued to work their way aft. The steamer gradually continued to settle until the entire forward part of the vessel up to the tall funnel was submerged.

The stern at that time stood up to an angle of about forty degrees, but steadily settled and from all appearances it looked as if the vessel and cargo would be a total loss. The steamer was valued at about \$1,000,000 and the cargo at \$500,000.

Commissioner McLellan at 5 o'clock telephoned to the city for a fire engine. A special trip of the ferry took the apparatus over at 5.30.

KAISER ABSENT FROM SON'S WEDDING.

Amsterdam, March 11.—The marriage of Prince Joachim, the fifth son of Emperor William and Princess Marie Augustine, daughter of Prince Edward of Anhalt, was celebrated today in the Royal Castle of Bellevue, according to a despatch from Berlin. The marriage took place in the presence of the Emperor of Germany, the Duke and Duchess of Anhalt and other relatives. Emperor William was not present.