

GERMAN ADVANCE DELAYED

Ample Reinforcements in Men and Guns Are in France or on the Way, Says Lloyd George—
British Make Gallant Stand at Mory, Bapaume and Nesle—Enemy's Slight
Gains Made at Tremendous Sacrifice—French Counter-Attacks
at Noyon Retard the Advance—Tremendous Struggle
Still Proceeds at Vital Points.

BATTLING for every point of vantage, giving ground only when overwhelmed by numbers and exacting a frightful toll of lives for every foot of ground abandoned, the British line in Picardy is still intact. While the German onslaught gained ground at a number of points on Monday, there was no sign of disintegration in the British forces, which at many points, especially on the northern end of the long line of battle, are standing firm.

The German official report tells of the defeat of the British and their "retreat via Ypres and Sully." This would seem to indicate heavy fighting far to the north of the Somme battlefield, of which no British report has spoken. There is, however, a town called Sully south of Bapaume, and eastward of this place is a town known as Ypres. It is probable that these were the points referred to in the statement from Berlin.

The largest gains made by the Germans have been west of St. Quentin, where they have captured Nesle and Guiscard. These points, which are at the tip of the Teutonic attack, are over ten miles from the front as it stood on March 21.

Military observers discern in the scheme of the German attack a repetition of the German "pincer" system of attack, which was used by Von Mackensen in Russia, Rumania and Serbia. This attack consists of two attacks some distance apart, which, after progressing to some depth, turn toward each other, compelling the forces caught between them to fall back or be in danger of capture.

British Foresee the Danger.

The British have foreseen this danger and have met it by first checking, then forcing the northern jaw of the pincer southward, while they have dropped back on the centre and have not fallen into the German trap. The pressure of the defenders of the Somme front seems to be bending the whole German attack to the south, where it is hoped its force will be dissipated.

The French positions joined the British to the south of St. Quentin, but there have been no reports showing that the French have fallen back from their advanced positions. On the other hand, reports would indicate that the original French lines now virtually outflank the advancing Germans along the Oise River.

In the meantime, the British strategy seems to be devoted to the task of meeting the attack, so that it is directed no longer straight at the line, but is diverted toward the Oise, where the German advance has been most rapid.

French troops have taken over sectors of the front and have released British units for work farther north. Berlin states that Americans have also joined in the fighting, but nothing has as yet been officially reported on this point.

The fall of Bapaume in the early hours of Monday was a blow to the British, but it was the result of a determination to fall back slowly all along the line that is being attacked. Official reports state that repeated heavy attacks on Bapaume were beaten off by the British, who also forced the Germans back across the Somme at a number of points, only to fall back when the safe retreat of the main body of the army had been assured.

The Storm Has Been Weathered.

While the German wedge is still moving, its progress is not alarmingly rapid, as it was in the first rush of the Teutonic hordes. The yielding line, it is asserted, has absorbed the impetus of the shock and has weathered the storm remarkably well. Berlin claims that 45,000 prisoners have been taken. These were probably units which were left to hold the easier defended points, while the main portion of Field Marshal Haig's army fell back.

The British losses have been heavy, but it is officially announced that, considering the magnitude of the struggle, they are not unduly large. On the other hand, the Germans have suffered terribly, even Berlin admitting that Teutonic casualties before Peronne were "comparatively heavy."

Paris has again been bombarded by the mysterious German cannon, which is said to have been located in the forest of St. Gobain, south of La Fere. An interruption in the bombardment on Monday was considered as an indication that the mysterious guns, or possibly a battery of them, had been located by the French aerial forces.

In the face of reports of continued falling back on the part of the British, the people of London and Paris have preserved a remarkable calm. This is reflected by the attitude of Washington, where it is felt that the momentum of the German thrust will have soon spent itself. President Wilson has sent congratulations to Field Marshal Haig and expressed confidence in the ability of the British to stop the enemy.

No Cessation in Awful Fighting Since Sunday

WITH THE BRITISH ARMY IN FRANCE, March 25.—This has been another day of most desperate and sanguinary fighting along the whole front of the new battle zone. In fact, in the northern

sector there has been no cessation in the awful work since yesterday morning.

The Germans have continued to hurl great forces of infantry into the conflict, depending largely on weight of numbers to overcome the increasing opposition offered by the heroically resisting British.

On the northern wing of the offensive the enemy this morning brought up additional troops after an all-night struggle of the fiercest nature and renewed his efforts to break the British front in the region of Ervillers. To the south, near the centre of the line, an equally strong attempt was being made by the invaders to extend the long, narrow salient which they had pushed in south of Bapaume, near Longueval—famous in the annals of the battle of the Somme. These places were again the scene of shambles, in which the British machine gunners and riflemen exacted a terrible toll of death from the closely-pressing enemy.

Still further south the Germans were pounding the front hard in an endeavor to push on and get a firm grip on Nesle and swing the British right flank back, while the determined defenders were battling doggedly to force the enemy back and reclaim the positions previously held by them along the river.

British Resistance Spectacular.

The decision at all of these centres is yet in abeyance, so far as is known at this time, and the struggle goes on with unabated fury. The resistance of the British right wing has been particularly spectacular. On Saturday the Germans essayed the crossing of the Somme on rats in the Nesle sector, but these expeditionary forces were caught in a hail of artillery, machine gun and rifle fire, and virtually wiped out. Yesterday, however, the Germans succeeded in getting troops across in this manner, and followed these advanced guards up with strong forces, which pushed on in the neighborhood of Morchain. The British were contesting the enemy advance fiercely and, at latest reports, were holding the hard-hitting enemy strongly.

The battle today on the historic ground about Longueval was perhaps the most spectacular of any along the front. It was a day for machine gunners and infantry. The Germans were pursuing their tactics of working forward in massed formation, and the British rapid firing squads and riflemen were reaping a horrid harvest from their positions on the high ground.

Havoc in Ranks of Enemy.

Despite their terrible losses, the Germans kept coming on, filling in the places of those who had fallen and pressing their attack. The British artillery, in the meantime, poured in a perfect rain of shells on the enemy, carrying havoc into their ranks. In this section the Germans were operating without the full support of their guns because of their rapid advance.

In the north, in the region of Ervillers, the British last night were forced once more to abandon Mory, which had changed hands several times in the past few days. They fell back a short distance, and the battle this morning was staged largely along the Bapaume-Aevas road. The Germans employed a large number of divisions in this assault, which, in the early hours, was held off by the British gunners.

For the past four days French refugees have been streaming back from the evacuated towns in large numbers. Everywhere along the roads leading to the front were to be met old men, women and children, all trudging stolidly behind their horse-drawn carts of household furniture, or even packing a few belongings in a bag on their backs.

It is possible today to give details of that most important phase of the battle fought in the sector between Gouzeaucourt and St. Quentin. The country here was shrouded in mist Thursday morning, and the Germans advanced without being seen. Strong forces of infantry flung themselves against the British front line, and after a fierce struggle broke thru it at several places. They then continued driving hard to Templeux, near Hargicourt.

Terrific Fight for Quarries.

Just in front of the former village were quarries in which the British had taken up positions, and here a battle of great ferocity was staged. The Germans repeatedly tried to take the quarries by storm, but so gallant was the defence of the comparatively small forces that the attacking troops were unable to push their way thru.

While this struggle was in progress the enemy flung five divisions against the line in front of Hargicourt and compelled the British to fall back from that place. This automatically ended the struggle in the Templeux quarries, and the defenders fell back a little.

On Friday a fierce engagement was waged about Le Verguer, which the Germans captured, but not until the British infantry holding the place had fought to the last man and inflicted extremely heavy losses on the enemy. The British again fell back, this time to a line thru Hervilly, just east of Roisel, and Vermand.

The Germans captured Hervilly, but the British came back with the help of tanks in a dashing counter-

attack which forced the enemy to withdraw. The Germans, however, in an attack further down the line, had forced the British line to swing back, and the whole front of this sector was compelled to give way, falling back to the line of the Somme.

Magnificent Work Done.

Every inch of ground was contested as the British withdrew, and some of the most magnificent work of the war was done by the hardy troops who fought the rear guard action and allowed the main force to retire in an orderly and moderate manner.

The fighting southwest of Roisel was especially severe. On Saturday the Germans were tired and there was no very heavy fighting in this section. The enemy forces pushed forward to occupy the evacuated territory, and as they came they were deluged with shells by the British artillery.

No finer targets could have been offered to the defending artillerymen, who shot all day with open sights and covered the ground in front of them with dead and dying.

On Sunday the Germans advanced against the Somme defences, and, having pierced some of these, are seemingly pushing their advances to the full in the hope of overcoming all opposition to the objectives which they have planned.

Men to Replace Casualties in France or on the Way

LONDON, March 25.—In a message to Field Marshal Haig, David Lloyd George, the British premier, says that the men necessary to replace those lost are either now in France or already on their way. All guns will be replaced and still further reinforcements of men and guns are ready to enter the battle.

The Premier's Message Follows:

"The British cabinet wishes to express to the army the nation's thanks for its splendid defence. The whole empire is filled with pride as it watches the heroic resistance offered by its brave troops to overwhelming odds.

"Knowing their steadfastness and courage whenever the honor of their country depends on their valor, the empire awaits with confidence the result of this struggle to defeat the enemy's last desperate effort to trample down the free nations of the world.

"At home we are prepared to do all in our power to help in a true spirit of comradeship. The men necessary to replace all casualties, and cannon and machine guns required to make good all those lost, are either now in France or already on their way, and still further reinforcements of men and guns are ready to be thrown into the battle."

Enemy's Artillery Is Decreasing.

Reuter's headquarters correspondent sends the following on the great battle in France:

"With scarcely a lull and no abatement in intensity the titanic struggle continues. The enemy artillery shows a tendency to decrease in volume, doubtless owing to the increasing difficulty of bringing guns forward. The manner in which our guns, tanks and transport have been withdrawn behind the obstinately retiring line amounts to a marvelous feat.

"After falling back across the Somme we cleared all the bridges except one, which was so commanded by our gunfire that it was more advantageous to leave it standing. The enemy casualties in his efforts to get across this narrow strip of water have been prodigious."

Haig's Official Reports.

"Fighting of the most severe description has been taking place all day on wide fronts south of Peronne and south and north of Bapaume," says Field Marshal Haig's report from British headquarters in France tonight. "In both sectors the enemy has attacked our positions in great strength with fresh forces, and in spite of the gallant resistance of our troops has forced us to give ground.

"German troops are in Nesle and Bapaume. Heavy fighting continues."

The text of the British evening statement reads: "During the morning of March 25 our troops on the front from the Somme as far north as Wancourt had beaten off continuous and heavy attacks with complete success. Heavy losses have been inflicted on the enemy by our artillery and machine guns, whilst our low-flying airplanes repeatedly attacked the enemy's advancing columns further to the rear.

"A heavy attack delivered by fresh enemy troops in the afternoon enabled them to make progress west and southwest of Bapaume, in the direction of Courcellette. South of Peronne our troops have been pressed back in several places slightly west of the Somme, while further south the enemy has succeeded in making some progress and has captured Nesle and Guiscard.

"French reinforcements are arriving in this neighborhood.

"Our troops, altho tired, are in good heart and are fighting splendidly, and the enemy is only pro-

gressing at the cost of heavy sacrifices," the evening official statement says. "Our losses in material have been heavy, and include a certain number of tanks."

Field Marshal Haig has sent the following reply to the King's message:

"Your majesty's gracious message has given universal encouragement to the whole army in France. I beg your majesty to accept our respectful and grateful thanks, and the assurance that we will steadfastly continue to do our utmost to deserve the inspiring confidence your majesty and the people through the empire have placed in us in this hour of national stress."

First Act Is Ended Says Von Hindenburg

AMSTERDAM, March 25.—The war correspondent of The Berlin Lokal Anzeiger reports that Field Marshal von Hindenburg remarked after the opening battle: "The thing is over, we have begun to move. The first act is ended."

The fall of Bapaume was announced tonight in a telegram from the German emperor to the empress, it is announced officially. The emperor's telegram reads:

"Bapaume fell last night after a hard struggle. My victorious troops are pressing forward from Bapaume, and further south are advancing on Albert. The Somme has been crossed at many points above Peronne. The spirits of the troops are as fresh as on the first day of the battle.

"Over 45,000 prisoners, more than 600 guns, thousands of machine guns and enormous quantities of ammunition and provisions have been taken just as after the Isonzo battle in Italy.

"May God be with us.

"Wilhelm."

Strong Counter Attacks Carried Out by the French

PARIS, March 25.—The French forces which are fighting to the south of St. Quentin, around Noyon, the retiring slowly, are carrying out strong counter-attacks and inflicting heavy losses on the Germans, says the war office statement tonight. The text reads:

"In the region of Noyon the battle continues with stubbornness, the Germans bringing in without cessation new forces. Our troops in conformity with orders are giving ground foot by foot, but are carrying out vigorous counter-attacks and inflicting heavy losses on the enemy.

"Desperate fighting has taken place around Nesle, which has been lost and regained several times. There is artillery fighting at various points along the front. "Shells to the number of 1,375 were fired into Rheims last night and during the course of the day."

German Drive Is Slowing Under Elastic Defence Policy

WASHINGTON, March 25.—The German drive at the British lines appeared to be slowing under the policy of elastic defence pursued by Field Marshal Haig, according to the opinion of allied and American army officers here, based on official statements from London, Paris and Berlin. The greatest battle of the war, thus far, they believe, is entering its second stage, with the German forces facing an increasingly stubborn resistance. The outcome of this stage may not be discernible for several days.

The attitude of American military authorities was officially stated by Maj.-Gen. March, acting chief of staff. He said:

"The war department sees no cause for alarm on the part of the people of the United States. Sir Douglas Haig has announced that the British withdrawal was in accordance with a definite plan. The announcement is to be accepted."

Similar confidence of the ultimate defeat of the German effort was expressed by Maj.-Gen. Leonard Wood before the senate military committee, and Maj.-Gen. Macdonald, British military attache, voiced the feeling of British officers here as to the work of their comrades in France in a statement noting that nothing resembling a break in the British lines yet had been achieved by the German rush.

There was much speculation here today as to the purpose of the German leaders in pressing the main attack in the direction of Amiens. The capture of Nesle, admitted in London, indicates this to be the apex of the great wedge that is being forced into the British lines near the point where the British and French forces connect.

The question raised was whether the German plan contemplated a swing to their right toward the coast, designed to hem up all British forces in restricted field of operations with the channel behind them, or a sweep toward Paris to their left front. As yet the developments reported do not indicate the ultimate objective of the assault.

One view expressed was that a blow elsewhere might follow the checking of the present drive, or even ac-