

FORTY-FIFTH YEAR

Bombardment Increasing North of Verdun
Germans Claim Advances in Woevre District
Prohibition Forecasted in Govt. Program

THE GREAT CRISIS OF THE WAR IS NOW AT HAND; GERMANY PUTS INTO FORCE THE PLANS OF YEARS

Allies Have Now Been Dealt a Heavy Blow by the Loss of Five Miles on a Ten Mile Front, and the Loss of Verdun, a Week Ago Thought Impossible, Now Discussed as Possibility.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

London, Feb. 29.—(Cable to the New York Tribune)—The momentous events at Verdun leave no doubt that the crisis of the great war has been reached. This statement by the Fall, Mail Gazette fairly represents the general feelings in well informed quarters here in regard to the German onslaught. It is believed, the world now is witnessing the final culmination of the plan which the German high command determined on long before the war began, and for which preparations have been in steady progress for more than a year. It is estimated that the Germans have dealt the Allies a heavy blow by gaining four or five miles on a front of nine or ten miles, and capturing some extremely important positions. It would not be true to say that no uneasiness is felt in regard to the outcome, despite the glorious defence of the French soldiers, who are resisting the German advance with the utmost gallantry, self-sacrifice and heroism.

The capture of Verdun, which only a week ago would have been considered absolutely impossible by military authorities here, is now discussed as a possibility, which the allies may have to face. It is not denied that the fall of the great French fortress would be a serious matter for the allies, but on the other hand to quote Lord Syden-

ham, who brings to bear on the great issues of the war, one of the most acute and well informed minds in this country.

"If when the issue becomes clear, it proves that the Germans have only some quite moderate territorial gains with extravagant expenditure of life and munitions, the effect upon the enemy must necessarily be profound. Failure, even partial failure of a great offensive following upon the splendid successes of the Russian army in Asia, would bring about a complete change in the whole military situation, and probably would be the herald of the coming victory of the allies."

CITY WAS SHELLED.

Paris, Feb. 29.—Reports from Verdun indicate that the German aviation population have been killed by shells which fell in the city. A small remnant of the population were still reluctant to leave, but were urged by the authorities to go, and they crowded on open freight cars, used for the handling of artillery and exposed to the snow and the cold. They departed for a safer region. One aged woman had refused to go, stating that she was resigned to die, but her maid, who was herself 60 years old, pleaded with her and finally placed her in a wheelbarrow and wheeled her eight-

(Continued on Page Five.)

Former Brantfordite is Killed at the Front

Ottawa, Feb. 29.—Last night's casualty list received from the front by Major-General Sir Sam Hughes announced the death in action of A. J. Matthews, of the 27th Battalion. The late officer is a son of George Matthews, the well-known meat packer, and was one of the partners in the business. The casualties are still keeping down to the normal daily average, indicating that the German offensive has not yet reached the British and Canadian lines.

Major-General Huggins, wired his condolences last night to the father and wife and to the brothers. The late Capt. Matthews was for years an officer in Sir Sam's own regiment, the 45th, and the Minister speaks in the highest terms both of his personal character and of his ability as a thoroughly good soldier. He was a veteran of the South African war, and when the present war broke out he was one of the first to offer his services.

LIVED IN BRANTFORD The above refers to the youngest brother of Mr. G. S. Matthews of this city. He resided here for some three or four years as the assistant manager of the Park Packing establishment on the Burford road. He was an officer of the Dufferin Rifles, and by his affable manner had made many

CONSERVATIVE NOTICE

The annual ward meetings of Ward 1, 2 and 3, will take place at the rooms of the Association, corner of King and Dalhousie Sts., on Wednesday night March 1st at 8 p.m. sharp, for the election of Ward Chairmen, sub-chairmen and other business. All Conservatives of said Wards, cordially invited.

N. D. Neill, H. Cockshutt, Secretary, President.

WILL MAINTAIN PEACE IN EAST

Great Britain Has Confidence in Japan's Good Faith With China.

Tokio, Feb. 29.—Count Okuma, Japanese premier, today sold a delegation of Japanese who are avowedly hostile to Yuan-Shi-Kai, the Chinese president, that, while he could not disclose the government's policy, with regard to China, they might rest assured that Japan would take proper measures to maintain peace in the Orient. He added that relations between Japan and Great Britain as far as Chinese questions are concerned have improved and that Great Britain shows confidence in Japan's good faith. The delegation, which visited Count Okuma was from a meeting of 300 Japanese politicians, including a dozen members of parliament. One of the resolutions passed by the meeting, demanded that Yuan-Shi-Kai resign and the revolution in southern China, which the resolution declared to be justifiable in view of Yuan's attempt to make himself a monarch.

HASTILY RETREATING.

LONDON, Feb. 29, 1.25 p.m.—A Central News despatch from Petrograd says the Turks are hastily evacuating Trebizond and the neighboring towns on the Black Sea coast of the Caucasus region.

STREET RAILWAY RECEIPTS FROM JAN. 1ST TO DATE

Compared With Same Period Last Year Shows Increase.

Table with 2 columns: Week ending, Receipts. Data includes weeks ending Jan 7, 14, 21, 28, Feb 4, 11, 18, 25.

It will be noticed that for the latter half of February there has been a falling off in receipts, owing to the suspension of the operation of the line from Paris to Galt. The savings, including track maintenance, amounts to about \$450 a month, and in any event L. E. and N. competition would probably have brought about a like reduction.

BRITISH CASUALTIES.

LONDON, Feb. 29, 11.20 a.m.—The British casualties in all the war during the month of February showed a total of 739 officers and 17,847 men.

COURIER'S DAILY CARTOON

Looks Like a Spring Cleaning U. S. "I'm sorry to disturb your pets, but I'm going to get a pair of real dogs for those kennels."



FRENCH CRUISER SUNK

PARIS, Feb. 29, via London.—The auxiliary French cruiser Provence was sunk in the Mediterranean last Saturday, it was announced officially today. At Malta 296 survivors have been landed. The ministry of marine estimates the number of survivors at 870.

THREE QUARTERS OF A MILLION GERMANS DRIVING AT VERDUN

"Situation is Now Decidedly Better" is the Way Struggle is Summed up by Paris—No Such Fighting Ever Seen Hitherto in This War—German Losses are Frightful.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

Paris, Feb. 29.—Military critics here express the opinion that the German forces which at the beginning of the battle numbered probably half a million, now exceed 750,000. "The situation is now decidedly better," is the phrase commonly used regarding the struggle for the great French stronghold. The French are beginning to react vigorously against the German "bludgeon strokes" which are having less and less effect, and are being delivered with diminished energy. It is expected, however, that they will be renewed again today, but at new points. The fact that the battle is now shifting is taken as a sign that the German general staff has begun to despair of making a real impression on the French defence. "I fought since the beginning of the war," says a soldier who has returned to Paris and who was present at the fighting at Ornes.

"I saw the shambles at Suippes and Saouin. They were nothing to what we witnessed here. The enemy advanced and we retired under orders, but we killed them by the dozens. It was so terrible that I, who have watched my comrades fall around me almost with

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE STATES THAT PROHIBITION QUESTION WILL BE PUT TO PEOPLE TO VOTE ON

Trades and Labor Branch of the Public Works Department to be Formed—Settlers to be Aided in Northern Ontario—Summary of Province's Generosity in Helping in Great War.

Prohibition for Ontario is forecasted in the speech from the throne delivered at the opening of the Ontario Legislature this afternoon. Mention is made that the temperance provision will be subject to a vote of the people. Further taxation for the purpose of increasing the revenues, aid to northern settlers and the creation of a labor branch of the public works department, are the other features of the government program as outlined in the speech.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly: I welcome you to the discharge of your duties at the second session of the fourteenth legislature of this province. We have followed the varying fortunes of the great war with deep concern and with a full realization of the grave issues involved. The determination of this country to help by every means in its power to achieve complete and final victory for the allies has grown stronger as the war has progressed and as the magnitude of the struggle has become more apparent.

It has been a matter of justifiable pride that services of the greatest value have been rendered by Canadian soldiers, who have displayed courage and heroism that will be a lasting glory to our country. I am glad to observe that the efforts being made to recruit additional forces in this province are meeting with satisfactory results, aided by the inspiring example and heroic conduct of our soldiers who have gone to the front, many of whom have given their lives for the great cause.

It has been our privilege as a province to assist the Empire in a number of ways through the expenditure of the proceeds of the war tax authorized by this legislature. In addition to this, our people have responded generously to every appeal made to them on behalf of patriotic funds. The results of the collection on Trafalgar Day, made at the instance of the president of the British Red Cross Society, was specially gratifying and have received thankful acknowledgment. Greater and heavier sacrifices will yet be required, but I am convinced that the people of the province will ungrudgingly assume every burden and make every effort that may be required of them for the security of the Empire and the preservation of the liberties of the world.

Our thanks are due to Almighty God for the abundant harvest of the past year, which has contributed greatly to the prosperity and comfort of our people. I desire to express the deep regret of the people of Ontario for the destruction by fire of the historic parliament buildings at Ottawa, an event rendered more melancholy by reason sented.

Peace Session.

London, Feb. 29.—The first official session of the neutral conference for continuous mediation, established as the result of the Henry Ford peace expedition, was held at Stockholm yesterday, according to a despatch from that city to Reuters' Telegram Company. The United States, Switzerland, and all the Scandinavian countries, the despatch added, were represented more melancholy by reason sented.

German Commerce Raider

Attacking Atlantic Shipping

New York, Feb. 29.—Wireless warnings that a German commerce raider, possibly accompanied by consort, was attacking shipping in the Atlantic were received by the Standard Oil Tanker Communiapaw which arrived here today from Algiers. The first message was received on February 17, and was partially in code. It read: "Albion calling casaw and reported being chased by a suspicious ship which she believes to be a German raider. Position wch and wmx. Course west." The Communiapaw was some miles south of the Azores when this message was received. At noon a second message apparently from the same ship arrived. It said: "Altered course to wpn and nna. The third and most significant message was received about 8 o'clock that evening. Its text was: "German steamer is attacking shipping in the Atlantic and may be assisted by captured vessels which are armed. Description, 5,000 tons, speed fifteen knots, combination freight and passenger steamer. Carries two guns, and is posing as neutral." The Communiapaw was the centre of sensational rumors last December when it was reported that she had been attacked and sunk by a submarine in the Mediterranean. After some days, during which Washington tried in vain to ascertain her whereabouts, she put into Algiers and her captain denied that any attack had been made.

BIG GERMAN DRIVE ON EASTERN FRONT

PETROGRAD, Feb. 29, via London.—Announcement was made semi-officially today that tremendous activity has been observed over the whole length of the German front in the East. There are various indications that spring will see another great effort by the Germans on the Russian front.

Enormous quantities of incendiary and explosive bombs have been collected by the Germans. Another feature of these preparations is the bringing up of apparatus for aerial warfare on an increasing scale. Aerodromes are being enlarged and great numbers of aeroplanes forwarded from Germany.

MINE DISASTER.

CUMBERLAND, Md., Feb. 29.—Six miners were reported dead and twenty buried by an explosion in the mine of the Davis Coal & Coke Company at Kempton, W.Va., near here, today. Large forces of volunteers are trying to save the entombed men.

ITALIAN OFFICIAL

Along the Isonzo front an artillery duel and small infantry engagements have occurred. Near Lucinico we took fifteen men of the twenty second Dalmatian regiment prisoners. East of Vermigliano enemy detachments, waving white flags, but hiding their arms, were put to flight by rifle fire. Much train activity has been noticed on the Dabresina line.

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