

HOW THE WAR LOOKS NOW

TWO considerable battles have been fought within the last week, that is to say, two considerable parts of the same battle.

The first part was fought over a front of about ten miles immediately to the east of Ypres, and the result was summarized fairly accurately in the German bulletin which said "the enemy advanced one kilometre into our defence zone and at Passchendaele and Gheluvelt passed further forward. West of Passchendaele he was pressed back by our counter attacks. North of the Menin-Ypres road a portion of terrain remained in his hands." The second portion of the battle began on September 26, and once more we may quote the German bulletin to the effect that "the battle in Flanders between Langemarck and Hollebeke—a front of fifteen kilometres—still continues. The enemy has succeeded in places in penetrating as far as one kilometre deep into our fighting zone, where desperate fighting is proceeding. The battle is, of course, a continuous one. It is only the actual assaults that are separated one from another. Zonnebeke is reported as taken, and this brings the British within six miles of the railroad from Ostend to Lille. This railroad is one of the great arteries of supplies for the German armies in the north, and it is significant that British ships bombarded Ostend while the land operations were in course of completion. The British front is now about seven miles from Roulers where the German headquarters are situated.

It may have been assumed too hastily that the object of the present fighting is to reach Zeebrugge and Bruges, and so to exclude the submarines from those very convenient bases. Certainly an extension of the British advance would have that effect, but that is not the only goal, since a glance at the map shows that the direction of the advance is southeast as well as northeast, that is to say, it is toward Menin as well as toward Roulers. It seems more likely that Sir Douglas Haig is trying to enlarge the great salient that now projects eastward from Ypres in the hope of dragging the German lines from their present position on the ocean, and compelling them to fall back along the coast eastward. This would, of course, have the ultimate effect of uncovering Zeebrugge and Bruges, but it would do very much more than this if it forced a general retirement of these northern lines, a retirement that would certainly extend far beyond the area of the present fighting. And we may reasonably believe that such a retirement must inevitably follow a continuation of the present British successes. It has probably already been arranged, just as the great Hindenburg retreat was decided on long before it was actually accomplished. The evacuation of the civil population, and the many activities in road-making, all point in that direction, apart from the obvious fact that an enlargement of the Ypres salient must of itself compel such a step. The obstinacy of the German defence in no way disproves such a theory of German intentions. An extensive preparation of new positions would be necessary, and we may remember also that Germany is about to float a new war loan, and this would certainly not be facilitated by the news of a fresh retreat.

Although the reports are very meagre it is evident that there has been desperate fighting quite apart from the successful assaults that have been reported in the bulletins. This is conclusively shown by the British casualty lists. For several weeks before these assaults were delivered the British losses were 15,000 a week, but during the last three weeks they have arisen to 27,000. The artillery fighting alone would hardly account for over two thousand men a day. The reported but continuous struggle for Lens is no doubt a costly one, but even then we must suppose that there has been plenty of heavy fighting up and down the line to produce

THOSE who argue that Germany is as strong in the field now as ever she was, are indulging in pessimistic bunkum. With less manpower than formerly, she is obviously weaker in artillery, in ammunition, and in morale. Besides the Germans are heavily outnumbered as well as out-generated by the Allies.

such heavy casualties. We have no means of ascertaining the comparative losses of the two sides, but we may find such consolation as we may in the indisputable fact that the German armies are far less able than the British to stand so terrible an attrition.

The battle will, of course, be resumed. It is a feature of the modern fighting that the various sections are assigned to their respective objectives and that under no conditions are they allowed to pass beyond them. Impetuosity took its full toll of lives in the earlier battles of the war, and particularly at the battle of the Somme, where isolated detachments were allowed to push their way along any and every road that seemed open to them, irrespective of supports and co-operation, only to find themselves isolated and surrounded. It was one of the lessons that only experience could teach, but it seems at last to have been learned thoroughly. Every unit is now precisely instructed as to its aims, and it resists all the temptations of apparent opportunity to pass beyond it. The officers are furnished with detailed maps explanatory of every obstacle that they are likely to encounter and of the precise nature of the defences that confront them. These maps are compiled from aviation photographs and from direct observation, and as a result every detachment knows precisely what it is expected to do and how it is to be done. And, still more important, every detachment understands that it must do no more than the task assigned to it, no matter how great the temptation of an apparently open road. This accounts for the regularity and evenness of the advance, and also for its rigid limitations under the restrictions of caution.

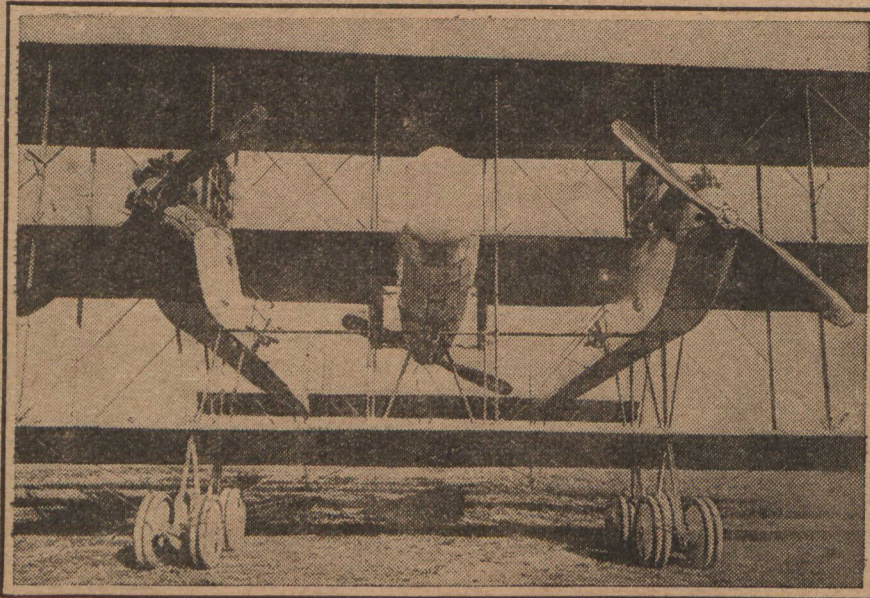
THE Russian situation does not seem to have enabled Germany to recall any of her troops from that front if we may trust the figures compiled by the Revue de Deux Mondes. According to these figures, that seem to be the result of careful research, Germany has now 137 divisions in the east, and 148 divisions in the west, and this is about the proportion that has been maintained since the beginning of the war. The eastern forces include Aus-

trians, Bulgarians, and Turks, in addition to Germans, and we may suppose that the Bulgarians at least would not be available for western service. The Turks are evidently more amenable, since a certain number of Turkish prisoners have been taken by the Italians during the recent fighting on the Isonzo. The Bulgarians are doubtless willing enough to fight against Roumanians and to aid in opposing Sarraill's army at Saloniki, but it is very unlikely that they would go farther afield than this. The Bulgarians have not allowed themselves to be so entirely dominated by the Germans as have the Turks or to be diverted from the immediate pursuit of their own interests. Indeed Bulgaria

has been showing some anxiety lest her interests be forgotten in the obvious Teutonic movements toward peace. Probably she is now sufficiently acquainted with her allies to distrust them and to fear that she may be entirely ignored if it should suit the interests of Germany and Austria to do so. So far as Russia is concerned it may be repeated that Germany has nothing to hope for from the chaos in Russia short of a separate peace. She can not weaken her forces on that front so long as Russia is even nominally at war with her. She can not even continue her advance against Roumania and toward Odessa, and there are still no signs that she can give any real value to her Riga success. Riga might possibly be useful to her for trading purposes at a peace conference, just as Riga has already been useful to her for the creation of a little hectic jubilation in Berlin. But there are no indications of any military value.

WHILE on the subject of French calculations of German strength we may notice the figures recently published by the Associated Press and compiled from official sources. They should be received with a certain amount of caution, but they are probably correct. Germany, we are told, has called out a total of 10,600,000 men. Of these there are now 5,500,000 men in the armies and actually on service. Depot troops account for 600,000. There are 500,000 wounded men in the hospitals and 4,000,000 men have been permanently lost. The German reserves up to 1920 amount to 1,200,000 men, and these are composed of part of the class of 1919 not yet called and amounting to 150,000 men, the class of 1920 amounting to 450,000 men, and also 600,000 men who are indispensable to industry and who can not therefore be counted in the actual military strength of the country. This leaves a purely military reserve of 600,000 men, or rather boys, who can still be called upon, but whose actual fighting value can not be high. To say that Germany is now as strong in the field as she ever has been is patently incorrect. Apart from the fact that we have no positive knowledge of Germany's earlier man power it is obvious that strength does not depend upon power alone.

It depends to an even greater extent upon artillery and upon the ammunition supply, and in this respect it is evident that Germany is far outclassed. Strength depends also upon morale, and here again it is evident that Germany is on the downhill. Perhaps the best of all tests of military strength is military achievements, and certainly Germany has nothing to hope for from the application of such a test as this. It is now a demonstrated fact that she can not resist any well-planned attack even though she is fully warned as to the threatened area and has ample time to reinforce and strengthen it. Germany's western record during the present year is one of undeviating failure, of continuous defeat. The British have at least 2,000,000 men in Belgium and France, and perhaps considerably more than this, and the French, according to M. Tardieu, have nearly three million. This gives an Allied total of something under 5,000,000 as against a German strength of 3,500,000 at most.



Probably the first airship to cross the Atlantic on her own power will be this giant Italian triplane, the Caproni; driven by three 700 h.p. engines and three propellers, any one of which can keep her going if the others are disabled. She can carry 4,000 pounds, including fuel for 34 hours, a crew of three and 2,700 pounds of bombs.