

# War News.

Messages Received  
Previous to 9 A. M.

BRITISH OFFICIAL.

LONDON, June 8.

The position captured by us yesterday was one of the enemy's most important strongholds on the West front dominating as it did the Ypres salient and giving complete observation over it. He neglected no precaution to render the position impregnable. These conditions enabled the enemy to overlook all of our preparations for the attack and he had moved up reinforcements to meet us. The battle, therefore, has become a gauge of the ability of the German troops to stop our advance under conditions as favorable to them as an army can ever hope for, with every advantage of ground and preparation and with the knowledge that an attack was impending. The German forward defences consisted of an elaborate intricate system of well wired trenches and strong points forming a defensive belt over a mile in depth. Numerous farms and woods were thoroughly prepared for the defence. There were large numbers of machine guns and the German garrisons with guns of all calibres recently increased, and numbers were placed to hear not only on the front but on the flanks of the attack. Numerous communicating trenches and switch lines radiating in all directions were amply provided with strongly constructed concrete dug-outs and machine gun emplacements designed to protect the enemy garrison and machine gunners from the effect of our bombardment. In short no precaution was omitted that could be provided by incessant labor of years guided by experience gained by the enemy in his previous defeats on the Somme and Arras and Vimy Ridge. Despite the difficulties and disadvantages which our troops had to overcome, further details of yesterday's fighting show that our first assault and subsequent attacks were carried out almost in accordance with the time table previously arranged. At 3.10 a.m. nineteen deep mines were exploded simultaneously beneath the enemy's defenses by which a large portion of both his front and support trenches, including extensive dug out and mining systems were completely wrecked. Immediately upon the explosion of the mines our guns opened and our infantry assault was launched. Within a few minutes the enemy's first line system was carried on the whole front attacked. Our troops then pressed on with scarcely a pause up the western slopes of the Messines-Wytschaete ridge. Three hours after the commencement of the attack they had stormed the entire crest line from south to north. Shortly afterwards the whole of Messines was captured and before midday the capture of Wytschaete village had been completed after hard fighting. In the second stage of the attack our troops pushed down the eastern slopes of the ridge and advanced against the powerful line of German rear defences which lay like a chord arc across the base of the salient formed by the ridge itself. Heavy fighting took place in a further series of woods and strong points, but at 3.45 p.m. the village of Oost Taverne, lying just west of the centre of the line was captured. By nightfall practically the whole of this trench system was also in our hands, and we had maintained the whole day's objectives. The great number of German dead lying in the captured positions proved the severity of the enemy's losses, a large proportion of which were again borne by the Bavarians. Our own losses were light. The enemy made no attempt during the night to recover the lost ground. Following the great care and thoroughness of the preparations made under the orders of General Plumer, the complete success gained may be ascribed chiefly to the destruction caused by our

mines, the violence and accuracy of our bombardment, the very fine work of the Royal Flying Corps and the dash and courage of the infantry. The whole force acted in perfect combination. Excellent work was done by the tanks and every means of offence at our disposal was made use of, so that every arm of the service had a share in the victory. We captured a German post last night north of Harricour Wood and took a few prisoners. A hostile raiding party was repulsed southwest of LaBassee.

THE IRISH TROOPS.

British Headquarters in France, June 8.—On all sides was heard great praise of the Irish troops who participated in the victorious sweep over the very centre of Messines ridge to the farthest objective line beyond. Troops from the south of Ireland fought alongside organizations from Ulster. There was considerable rivalry among the Irish forces as to which would make a better showing. When the fighting came there was nothing to choose between them. The Irishmen swept forward irresistibly and everywhere the German lines fell away broken by their assaults. They fought gallantly and the only difficulty experienced was in holding them back to the fixed schedule. On the position map at the British headquarters office, the south Irishmen were represented by green flags and the Ulstermen by orange, and they by side by side. The German forces holding the ridge and the salient surrounding it seemed to be utterly demoralized by the force of the British attack. They attempted three counter attacks late yesterday, but there was no power in any of them. The heaviest was absolutely broken up by the British artillery barrage before reaching the infantry lines. The other two counter attacks were attempted by disorganized German infantry without artillery preparation or any support whatever. Very heavy losses were inflicted on the Germans and in consequence only a few who went into these attacks came out unscathed. For absolute precision of action and completeness of success yesterday's battle of Messines Ridge will always stand out boldly in the history of the world war. All that it was hoped to accomplish had been arranged like a railway schedule. The British troops were told they were expected to reach certain definite objectives at certain times and to hold on. This they did. The whole machinery of this big undertaking worked so smoothly that there is little left to tell of it. All the ground gained has been held after a quiet night during which the British soldiers dug themselves in, further east of the line they were told to take. This is known as the Oost Taverne line which runs directly north and south, just east of the little Belgian village of that name. The so-called Wytschaete salient which followed the Messines Ridge and projected into the British line has been wiped out. This also eliminates the southern part of the Ypres salient which the British have held so doggedly and so long, notwithstanding the fact that their positions at this sharp angle were constantly raked by German fire from three sides.

THE GERMAN REPORT.

BERLIN, June 8.

The enemy succeeded as a result of numerous explosions in penetrating our positions at St. Eloi, Wytschaete and Messines, advancing after stubborn and variable fighting via Wytschaete and Messines. A strong counter attack by the Bavarian troops drove the enemy back in the direction of Messines. Further north he was brought to a standstill by fresh reserves. Later on our regiments which were fighting bravely were withdrawn from the salient projecting toward the west into a prepared reserve position between the bend of the canal to the north and Douve Basin, two kilometres west of Warnefontaine. On the Arras front the artillery duel was greater in intensity in several sectors.

The Army Group of the German Crown Prince: On the western part of Chemin des Dames Ridge the ac-

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tivity of the artillery has been marked for several days. Artillery fighting has been revived on the Aisne-Marne Canal.

Army Group Duke Albrecht: In the Vosges reconnoitering detachments of French troops, advancing after violent waves of fire, were repulsed. Many aerial engagements occurred, principally on the Flanders front. Twelve airplanes were brought down, three enemy machines were brought down by anti-aircraft guns.

Eastern Theatre: General situation is unchanged.

WILL BE GIVEN PASSPORTS.

LONDON, June 8.

Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.—The conditions under which representatives of the British Independent Labor Party are to be allowed to visit Petrograd were explained in the Commons to-day by Lord Robert Cecil, Minister of Blockade. Lord Robert stated that the War Cabinet, after very careful consideration, had decided it was desirable to issue passports to Messrs. Ramsay MacDonald and Mowat to go to Petrograd, if they applied for them, because the Russian Government had strongly and repeatedly expressed a desire that representatives of the minority as well as the majority working class opinion should be allowed to visit Petrograd. They expressly mentioned the Independent Labor Party as one of the bodies which they desired to have that opportunity. The War Cabinet were advised, he said, by those qualified to express an opinion, including Messrs. Henderson and Buchanan, that a refusal would lead to a very serious misconception among our Russian allies and cause great discouragement to those in Russia most anxious to carry on the struggle for freedom with the fullest energy. If passports were issued they would be issued for Petrograd; they were not intended to enable the holders to participate in any International Conference at Stockholm, still less to communicate directly or indirectly with enemy subjects at Stockholm or elsewhere. It was only on this understanding that the passports were issued. Passports for Petrograd would also be issued, said Lord Cecil, to representatives of the views of the great majority of the working class, if asked for. Captain Bellaire suggested that the holders of passports should give a written undertaking not to participate in any conference at Stockholm or elsewhere. Every reasonable precaution will be taken, replied Lord Cecil. Ramsay MacDonald asked whether conversations at Stockholm with persons like Branting were precluded. Lord Cecil reiterated the condition laid down by the War Cabinet that there must be no communication with enemy subjects. Branting was a very respected Swedish statesman, and by no means hostile to the cause of the Allies.

CONCENTRATING ON ITALIAN FRONT.

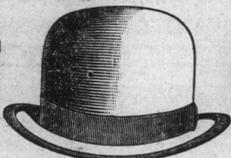
UDINE, Italy, June 8.

A semi-official announcement says

that Austria has made formidable concentration of forces on the Italian front by the withdrawal of troops from the Russian front. The state-

ment says the Italians are now confronted by an estimated two-thirds of the entire Austrian army.

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AMERICAN DESTROYERS.

PARIS, June 8.

One additional American flotilla of destroyers and patrol boats to cooperate with French forces in the English Channel and Atlantic are expected shortly.

OSTEND CRIPPLED.

LONDON, June 8.

A series of photographic plates of the bombardment of Ostend, which have arrived in London, afford a remarkable example of development of photographic observation and record by aeroplanes. They show in undeniable fashion that the British bombardment of Ostend last Tuesday was the most successful of its kind yet accomplished, ensuring that Ostend will be crippled as a useful German base for weeks, if not permanently.

SHIPBUILDING PLANT.

OTTAWA, June 8.

Among the notices of incorporation in this week's Gazette is that of the Halifax Shipbuilding Company with a capital of three million dollars.



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