

CURRENT EVENTS.

The great war is growing greater — greater in its horrors, in its terrors, in its violence and in its area — and the end seems farther off than ever. To sum up in a few words the events of May and their results is quite impossible. The news of the day is more than usually contradictory and misleading; and many things have occurred the meaning of which is not yet understood.

There has been little change in the position of the lines in France and Flanders, where the Allies, at great cost, have been able to hold back the German armies, or, for the most part, to regain any territory which they have lost. In some places where they have made slight gains, they have been able to hold their new ground. What success the Germans have achieved in Flanders within the last month has been won by the use of the poisonous gas, or gases, which they have introduced as a means of attack. Many of the men affected by gas die in the trenches; many more die in the hospitals, after living in the greatest agony for days; some who live through it will be permanently injured.

The Canadians on the battle front have suffered terribly during the month. They are now all together, under General Alderson, holding their own part of the line, and doing their work as well as any of the trained troops of the British Expeditionary Force.

On the eastern front, the German and Austrian armies have driven the Russians from the Carpathians, and recaptured the fortress of Przemyśl; and are now advancing upon Lemberg, the capture of which would virtually put them in possession of the whole of Galicia. The Russians have been obliged to fall back for want of ammunition.

It has long been expected that Italy would enter the war on the side of the Allies if she found that her help were needed. In the meantime her fleet and army were fully prepared for action. On the twenty-fourth of May, too late to save the Russians from severe defeat, but not too late, we may hope, to affect the final result, Italy declared war and sent an army into Austrian territory near the head of the Gulf of Trieste, and into the mountain regions on the west side of the Austrian Tyrol. Both districts are inhabited chiefly by Italian speaking people who have not been well treated by their Austrian rulers, and therefore welcome the Italians as liberators. Austrian and German troops are hastening to meet the Italians, but no great battle has yet been fought.

The troops from Australia and New Zealand are making slow but steady progress on the Gallipoli Peninsula, and have gained an important position about four miles from the tip of the peninsula. Three more British battleships were lost in May in supporting these troops, which makes a total of six battleships of the Allies lost in the attempt to force the Dardanelles.

Though the Canadian contingents in the British forces form the largest army that ever crossed the Atlantic, and though the British army in Flanders is the largest that ever crossed the channel, they are together very small and insignificant as compared with the immense armies of France and Russia; yet, for the want of munitions of war, these great armies are to-day unable to defeat the well prepared armies of the central empires. The war is to be won by the workmen in the factories and chiefly by the men in the British workshops if the Allies are to win. The British Government has been reorganized to meet this situation by inviting men of all parties to form a national cabinet; and Mr. Lloyd-George, former Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been appointed to the new office of Minister of Munitions. The new Minister has stated that we are fighting three enemies, Germany, Austria and Drink; and so far as he can see the greatest of these deadly foes is Drink. This refers to the fact that the output of the factories is greatly hampered by drunkenness among the workmen; and it is to be expected that Britain will follow the example of Russia and France by restricting the sale of intoxicating liquors for the sake of efficiency.

Since the Germans began their submarine warfare upon merchant ships and fishing vessels, in January last, there have been less than a hundred vessels sunk in that way, and about one-fifth of these were neutral vessels. Like the attacks by airships, by which a few persons lost their lives, and some little damage to property was caused, these submarine attacks were regarded as but instances of the German policy of frightfulness, of little effect as war measures. When, however, on the seventh of May, the great passenger steamer "Lusitania" was sunk, with the loss of more than a thousand lives, and when it was learned that this was done deliberately, and hailed with satisfaction by the German people, the whole world outside of Germany regarded it as wholesale murder. Several of the neutral nations, including United States of America, protested because some of their citizens were thus murdered; and it is not improbable that the incident will be the direct cause of bringing one or more of these nations into the war.

A new instrument now in use in England sends telegrams by a keyboard like that of a typewriter, and the message is received in typewritten characters at the distant end of the wire. In the London Office of the Central Telegraph, women typists are employed in place of men telegraphists who are now at the front.

It is estimated that by the first of July the number of officers and men sent overseas by the Canadian Government will reach approximately seventy thousand. More than five hundred nurses also have gone. It is said that the Canadian share of the expenses of the war is nearly a million dollars a day.