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FRIDAY MORNING MARCH 29 1918—FOURTEEN PAGES

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Savage Fighting on French Front

German Attempts to Advance on Extreme Tip of Salient Driven Into French Positions Have Been Fruitless and Enemy Has Been Driven Back—British Repulse the Enemy North of the Scarpe, But Are Forced to Retire South of the River.

ACTIVITY ON FRENCH FRONT MAY START COUNTER-ATTACK

German Energy Near Arras May Be New Drive or Defensive Operation Intended to Stop British Blow From North, Coincident With That Begun By French.

SLOWLY assuming the shape of a giant plowshare, the German drive in Picardy has come almost to a halt, except at the very tip of the salient driven into the lines of the entente allies. As the area covered by the Teutonic offensive stands now, it runs, on the south, in an almost straight line from Landricourt, on the old "Hindenburg line," to Montdidier, well behind the allied positions as they stood in 1914.

Savage fighting has taken place on the French part of the line. The German attempts to advance on the extreme tip of the salient driven into the French positions have been fruitless and they have been driven back at the point of the bayonet. The British on the front north of the Scarpe have also repulsed the enemy, but south of this river they have been forced to retire.

From Montdidier the line to the northeast runs with a sharp angle to Warvillers and there it turns northward and passes along the Somme River to above Albert, where it again turns to the northeast until it joins the old lines held by the contending armies on the morning of March 21.

From the confusion of the battle and the confusion of the contending armies, two new features stand out. The first is that the French, over a front of six miles, have driven into the German lines along the southern side of the salient established by the Teutonic drive. The other is that the Germans have begun a new operation to the east of Arras, which may be the inception of a widening of the area of battle to the northward.

At the present moment the allied world is looking anxiously for news of the success of the French thrust into the flank of the German forces. The fact that the drive progresses rapidly and out a deep notch in the German-held ground in the region of Noyon, may indicate that this movement is the counter-offensive which has been expected for the past three days. Progress by the French for a considerable distance into the German forces would cut off the Teutonic fighting and compel them to retreat, or at least pause until the menace to their communications can be removed. If the Germans have the whole plan of the Germans and bring about a new phase of the battle, in which the allies would strike hard along the front and compel the Germans to relinquish their dearly bought conquests.

The German activity near Arras may have for its purpose either a new drive at the allies' lines or a defensive operation intended to stop a British blow from the north, coincident with that begun by the French. The British held firm north of the Scarpe, but to the south of the river have been driven back. Their line is now near that occupied in July, 1916, and runs straight from Arleux, north of Arras, to Bois-lez-Aux, on the line held by the British on the north side of the salient driven into their lines by the German thrust.

Berlin admits that the losses have been very heavy. The casualties are referred to as "normal," which, in view of the magnitude of the battle, may mean that the Germans have paid heavily for the ground they have won. It is admitted that at certain points the losses have been greater, but it is pointed out that the prominent slightly wounded is very high proportionally.

Papers Prepare German Public For Slow Down in Offensive

Amsterdam, March 28.—Berlin advices state that on Wednesday evening German newspapers showed remarkable unanimity in voicing the difficulties which lay in the way of the German advance on the western front. It is observed that these difficulties are increasing daily, and the public must expect a somewhat slower advance in the forthcoming days.

Field Marshal von Hindenburg, they add, is as confident as ever that he will overcome the new difficulties, the nature of which is not revealed.

PORTION OF CANADIAN FORCES NOW ENGAGED IN GREAT BATTLE

Sir Robert Borden Receives Cable From Kemp That They Are Fighting in the Vicinity of Arras.

Ottawa, March 28.—That at least a portion of the Canadian forces in France are now engaged in the great battle on the west front is the statement made in a cable received by Sir Robert Borden tonight from Sir Edward Kemp.

It has been known in government circles for the past three days that the Canadians would be drawn into the fight before the end of the week, but for obvious military reasons the press, also informed of the situation, was requested not to mention it. The announcement that the Canadians are now engaging the enemy in the vicinity of Arras is received without surprise.

No details as to the size of the Canadian force thrown into the fight up to the present time, or the progress of the fighting, have yet been received. Sir Edward Kemp's message describes the situation at the front as being obscure.

NEW DRIVE FOR ARRAS IS CHECKED AND FAILS

Conviction Grows in London That Strong Strategy of the Allies Will Triumph, While Observers See Only Defeat For Germany.

WASHINGTON, March 28.—Announcement by Field Marshal Haig tonight that the German war machine along the whole British front was beaten off today with heavy losses, gave new zest tonight to speculation here as to the allied counter assault which officers feel certain will not long be delayed.

The new outbreak of the German thrust at Arras, reported early in the day, caused some apprehension here lest the allies might find it necessary further to delay their effort to catch the German forces on the rebound and seek victory after bitter days of steady yielding of ground. Definite word from Field Marshal Haig that this new drive also had been checked, added to the growing conviction that the strategy of the allies will triumph.

If their reasoning is correct, the Germans face the prospect of seeing their third great effort on the western front since the beginning of the war, meet the fate of the others. Only twice before have the Germans undertaken major operations in this main theatre of the war. Their first thrust in 1914 was stopped as their last, and, perhaps, their final effort, nearly four years later, is now apparently being stopped by skillful re-arguing. Their only other great assault, at Verdun, was an unqualified defeat.

The thrust at Arras may have been for the purpose of diverting British reserves from the real objective of German strategy far to the south, where French and British lines connect. The success of that purpose is highly doubtful, since the initial effort was parried by troops already in position on this sector. There was no time to bring divisions back from the south, so it seems certain that the regular garrison of this portion of the British lines was sufficient to repel the enemy. This fact alone is regarded as eloquent evidence of the waning power of the German war machine.

May Be Great Movement.

In the meantime, attention here was not diverted from the chief theatre, the British-French junction. The French counter-attack there was closely watched. It may develop into a great movement, the early reports

FRENCH RESTORE LINE AT DANGEROUS POINT

Reserves Drive Back Enemy Where Gains Threatened Most Serious Results.

LOSS SOUTH OF SCARPE

London, March 28.—Tonight's reports from the front were of a checked character. While the British sustained a couple of setbacks, the most encouraging news came from sectors on the French front, where the advance was most threatening.

The French, having brought up reserves, have been able on their hither side to yield the line between Hainvillers, south of Montdidier, Pont l'Evêque and south of Noyon by a fine counter-attack to drive the enemy back a distance of three kilometres on a front of ten kilometres.

Coupled with this hopeful news come reports of a sinking barometer and a threat of snow, which would seriously hamper German operations also had for the British air service, which has hitherto "done grand work behind the German line."

The British setback occurred on the Somme and the Scarpe. The Germans succeeded in crossing the Somme from the north to south in the neighbourhood of Obigny, east of the Scarpe. The British fell back on the Hamel line, bringing the Germans nearer to their objective, Amiens. This will be regarded with less anxiety here than the new German move against Arras, where the British line has hitherto held firm. The British held the line both north and south of the Scarpe. The former seems to have failed, but the southern attack was successful, forcing the British to retire to a position nearer the line they held in July, 1916.

BRITISH BOMB TOWNS IN BRIGHT MOONLIGHT

Thousand Projectiles Dropped on Germans in Bapaume, Bray, Peronne.

BURST WITH BIG EFFECT

Explosions Occur in Middle of Columns of Troops, Transports, Encampments.

London, March 28.—In its official statement on the British aviation work at the battlefront, the British war office says that a proportion of the 18 British bombers reported on the British side of the line. A very heavy fire directed against the British machines from the ground accounted for the greater proportion of the British casualties. The statement continues:

"During the night the bombing of Bapaume, Bray and Peronne continued with the utmost vigor. Over a thousand bombs were dropped and thousands of rounds of ammunition were fired at good targets which were plentiful and easy to see in the moonlight. Our pilots saw their bombs bursting in the middle of columns of troops, transports, and encampments."

We Are "Against Caesar"

If thou [Pilate] list this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: who-soever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar."

BOYS OF SEVENTEEN MAY BE CALLED ON

Paris, March 28.—The German consul-general at Zurich has inserted advertisements in the newspapers, inviting all German subjects of the age of 17 years to contribute with their consulate with a view to their being called to the colors, according to the Zurich correspondent of the Petit Journal.

Drafting of the class of 1921 began in several parts of Germany in the first days of March, according to information from a trustworthy source, and a large number of youths have been sent directly into the war zone in civilian clothing without having received any preliminary military training.

HEAVY ATTACKS MADE IN REGION OF ARRAS

Another Sector of Front Added to North End of New Battle Line.

INTENSE FIGHT COMING

Six Enemy Attacks Delivered During the Day, But No Change is Made.

With the British Army in France, March 28.—Another sector of the front was added to the north end of the new battle line today when the Germans attacked heavily on both sides of the Scarpe towards Arras. Bitter fighting took place from Gavrelle on the north to Boyelles, below the river, and in some sections the Germans succeeded in pushing forward somewhat in the face of desperate resistance.

Whether the enemy was really making a serious thrust against the battle-scarred City of Arras cannot yet be said, but it is patent that a diversion, which might prevent the British from moving troops and guns southward to the main battle front, it would be of advantage to the Germans, who have not yet got their artillery forward.

Further south, astride the Somme, there are indications that another intense conflict is imminent. The Germans this morning were advancing from the neighbourhood of Bray, while south of here the British were conducting operations in the direction of Sully, Laurette and Froyart.

All along the front there is heavy fighting. The assault opposite Arras was preceded by a heavy enemy bombardment, which began early in the morning. The Germans directed their infantry drives towards the high ground represented by Orange Hill and Telegraph Hill, near Arras, both of which elevations were the scene of desperate engagements during the battle of Arras.

The fighting on Telegraph Hill just below the Scarpe was particularly bitter and at latest reports this hill was covered with swirling masses of British and German battling at close quarters.

The fighting yesterday in the north centred about Bois-lez-St. Marie, Ayette, Courcelles and Ablainzeville, here the Germans made a successive series of heavy assaults for the purpose of obtaining high ground, but in each case the attacking infantry either came to a halt or was driven back by vigorous counter-attacks.

At least six attacks were delivered during the day by the Germans and the engagements here resulted in virtually no change in the situation. The British are still rushing up artillery guns as the continuation of the battle, but in some sectors the guns are coming forward somewhat slowly. Prisoners say that food supplies are also coming up badly, because of the lengthening of communications.

Certainly no small part of the German difficulty in getting guns, troops and supplies forward has been due to the marvelous work of the British airmen since the inception of the battle. The British aviators have waged such intense warfare over the enemy territory that the Germans have been forced to abandon some of their routes. A striking example of this is the Albert-Bapaume road, which is one of the main arteries and which the Germans are compelled to avoid.

The British pilots have been bombing and gunning their way over the German lines, and the result has been very heavy casualties have been inflicted on the German infantry, cavalry and transport by these intrepid, low-flying fighters. The battles in the air have been unmerciful, and in these the British aviators have maintained the upper hand throughout. The bravery and skill of the British fliers is illustrated well by two rather ordinary battles which took place yesterday. One British fighter, when attacked by ten German abductees, stood them all off and brought down one before he retired in safety. Another British machine was attacked by nine German triplanes. The pilot returned after a hot fight in which he brought down one of the enemy.

BRITISH FRONT HEAVY ATTACKS MADE IN REGION OF ARRAS

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FRENCH FRONT FRESH TROOPS MAKE BREACH IN THE LINE

Enemy Breaks Thru at Montdidier, But is Held in Places Further South.

RESERVES OVERPOWERED

Could Not See From Whence Came the Deadly Rain of Death.

With the French Army in France, Wednesday, March 27.—Fresh German troops were thrown today against the French army maintaining the junction between the French and British lines, and despite the determined stand made by the French, they were forced to retire towards the west, the Germans breaking thru at Montdidier and occupying that place. Further south, the French held well, resisting all the German efforts.

In the rear of the French army the movement was so "circular" that it was impossible to approach the firing line. Notwithstanding the continued advance of the Germans, the battle has become more or less stationary in the past two days. The French are pushing northward in order to keep in close touch with the British, who have been forced back by overwhelming numbers. French troops have relieved part of the British line.

Allied intentions hidden. Nothing has yet been allowed to develop regarding the intentions of the allied commanders, but it is certain that at an opportune moment they will make a counter-stroke. The general idea of the battle as far as it has gone shows that the Germans chose to make their principal attack against the British front. At the same time they made a demonstration just where the two armies, French and British, join.

The Germans succeeded in making a breach in the British line, which the French forces closed, first sending cavalry to fill the gap. The German corps rehearsing the parts they were to play when the moment came, they were deluged with shells for a short period and with projectiles charged with noxious gases. Then came thick waves of infantry, closely following one another. The first waves, which remained of them, reached their objectives and held on until further waves came along and cleared them out with obstinacy, using for that purpose jets of liquid flame.

Reserves Overpowered. Reinforcements joined the German ranks from the captured first British line a murderous fire with rifles, machine guns and automatics were opened on the rear lines of the British at distances up to 2,000 yards. This rain of death was so deadly as to overpower the British reserves, who could not see whence it came and were unable owing to its severity to advance to the assistance of their comrades in the first line.

Under cover of this hail of bullets the German waves of infantry made their way into the second British line. The Germans lay down when they had advanced for some distance and allowed still other waves to pass through the intervals. Simultaneously, large numbers of small cannon and three-inch guns mounted on low carriages, for quick movement and low visibility, were brought up close behind the advancing infantry.

The tenacious resistance of the British at many points of the line caused the Germans to bring into action all of their immediately available reserves and also to bring up other divisions from the quieter parts of the front. Approximately 70 divisions have been definitely recognized as having been engaged in the battle, all of which suffered very severe losses.

At the present moment the German movement is in the direction of Amiens.

Good Friday and Easter of the War.

The Kaiser and his militarists are out on the Good Friday to crucify democracy; the allies fight for and pray for a newer and brighter Easter for civilization.

HEAVY ATTACKS NEAR ARRAS END IN SLIGHT ENEMY GAIN

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Dense Waves of Germans, Supported by Tremendous Artillery Bombardment, Make Some Advance, But Other Attacks Fail.

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