

The St. John Standard

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THE CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE

While the result of the naval operations during the past twenty-four hours has been disappointing, the news from the campaign in Northern France and Flanders indicates that the backbone of the German attack on the Channel Ports has been broken. From the Belgian headquarters, and from the Paris official news bureau, come reports, authenticated, that the German forces have retreated and the Allies are now conducting a vigorous offensive movement in pursuit.

Statements from the British official news bureau are to the effect that the British force on duty in France and Flanders numbers in the vicinity of 300,000 men, and Sir John French will, by December 1st, have under his command approximately 200,000 more. This will bring the British field army in that territory up to the half million mark. Meanwhile, France is straining every nerve to bring more men to the front and is succeeding well, while the Belgian army, though sadly cut up, continues to display the valor which has made Belgium a name synonymous with bravery and fighting quality.

The German attack upon the French coast towns was more desperate than any undertaking in which the Kaiser's troops had engaged since the opening of hostilities. To win meant the securing of bases of extreme value for a campaign against England; to lose meant that Germany must draw back from Belgium and that future fighting would be in defence of her own towns. Expert observers expect that the hardest test will come when the Germans, driven over the border, are fighting on their own territory, with their supply bases secure, and a friendly country behind them. This was the position of the French troops during the German advance upon Paris, and no doubt, in part at least, was responsible for the fact that an Allied army could put up such determined opposition against a German force of far superior numbers.

To crush Germany on German soil will require more men than are now on the fighting line, and it is plainly evident that to reduce her, as she must be reduced before it is possible to bring the conflict to a close, will furnish work for every man Great Britain or the Overseas Dominions can supply. As Lord Kitchener has expressed it, the need is for men. Up to the present the situation in France and Belgium has been very satisfactory, but to continue to win decisively, against the German might, it will be necessary to put every pound of strength into the striking line. The war will be a prolonged and desperate one, the fighting which has already taken place, it is predicted, will be but the prelude to more terrible conflicts to come. There can be but one result,—the triumph of the Allied forces,—but to bring this result about with the most possible speed will require many more men than are at present engaged. The need of the day is for men.

THE SEA LOSSES.

Once more the fortunes of war have smiled upon Germany in a naval clash. It is reported that one British vessel has been sunk, a second badly damaged, and a third forced to take refuge in a neutral harbor where she must remain until after the cessation of hostilities. The losses mentioned came as the result of an engagement off the South American coast in Pacific waters, when the three vessels encountered a superior number of German ships and unhesitatingly gave battle. A day or two ago the cruiser Hermes was sunk in the Channel by a German submarine. Altogether, in actual ships lost, the advantage is now with Germany, but it is not expected to remain so.

There is a great British fleet in the North Sea, a powerful British and French fleet in the Mediterranean, and British vessels off the Belgian coast, to say nothing of the number engaged all over the world in keeping the trade routes open. It was to be expected that some British ships would be lost but the supreme test of naval ability will not come until "Jellicoe's grim, grey ships" have an opportunity of meeting the "Von Tirpitz fleet" in action. Then will Britain wreak terrible vengeance for the losses already sustained.

In the meantime, it is well to remember that, despite all efforts of Germany and Austria, the navy of Britain has succeeded in keeping safe the British Dominions all over the world, and in insuring the continuance of trade between the heart of the Empire and the most distant members of the Empire body. Britain's food supply has not been interfered with, while German commerce has been practically driven from the seas. All the German colonies have been stripped from her,

and German interests, outside of the Fatherland itself, reduced to the point where they are valueless; and this has been accomplished in less than three months of actual fighting.

True, German ships of war still find an opportunity to do damage in the outlying parts of the Empire, as witnessed by the mischievous activities of the Emden, and the occurrence of yesterday, but there is no doubt they will be accounted for in time, and when reports of British losses confront us it is comforting to know that Britain can lose five ships to Germany's two and still emerge with a sizeable navy after the last German vessel has been sent to the bottom.

THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

While the chief interest and attention is fixed upon the western side of the war zone in Europe, for the reason that there the British and French troops are holding back the Kaiser's legions, it is well not to lose sight of the mighty task being performed in workmanlike fashion by the soldiers of the Great White Tsar in Russian Poland and Galicia. A German writer, expressing an opinion on the war recently, said "Germany hates England but fears Russia," and it is noticeable that all the bombastic utterances of the Kaiser have been aimed at England and the English rather than at the Muscovites who, just now, constitute a dreaded menace on the Eastern Frontier.

The Russian army is advancing like a gigantic arrow-head, with the point aimed directly at Berlin. Possibly, Canadians are not as familiar with the geography of the country over which the Russians are operating, as they are with Flanders and North France, and it may be of interest to point out that the front of the Russian centre, "the point of the arrow" is on the Silesian border, between 200 and 250 miles from Berlin.

In the Province of Suwalki, Russian Poland, the Muscovite forces have defeated large bodies of Germans, but the idea seems to be not to change the formation or plan of attack, consequently the most important news of the next few days is expected to develop in the centre, on the Silesian border. In the south, the Russians are some 450 miles from Berlin and are engaged with the Austrians on the River San. The fighting there has been especially severe, and during the last few days very heavy casualties have been reported. In all, the Russian line of battle is almost 350 miles in length, and fighting along the whole front is practically continuous.

There can be no doubt that it was with the idea of distracting Russian attention, and thus securing relief from the terrible pounding power of this splendid fighting force, that Germany induced Turkey to plunge into the vortex of war. Turkish opposition, however, is not likely to be serious, especially as reports of yesterday indicate that the attempts to start a "Holy War" of Moslem against Christian, are not expected to succeed. From all over India come declarations to the effect that the Mohammedans will remain true to their British allegiance, and influential Mohammedan newspapers are expressing the opinion that Turkish participation in the conflict is a terrible mistake.

This being the case Germany's plot will have failed, as Turkey alone can offer little assistance to the sorely pressed German and Austrian lines on the eastern frontier.

As to the strength of the Russian forces there has been no accurate idea given; it has been estimated that from 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 men are now actually engaged on the fighting line, while vague reports have filtered through of a second Russian army, of equal or greater strength, equipped with heavy clothing in preparation for a winter campaign, and which has yet not been engaged. This army is said to be awaiting colder weather when it will be ready to take the place of the men now on the fighting line and thus oppose the tired Germans with fresh troops from the extreme north of the line of attack to the lower reaches of the San River.

The possibility of the projection into the conflict of such a mighty, well equipped force, just as the German troops commence to feel the effects of colder weather, may have been the motive impelling Germany to secure Turkish aid, but the plan is expected to fail. Even in London it is now generally recognized that the chief determining factor of the war, in the near future, is likely to arise from the operations of the great Muscovite forces, slowly but surely drawing nearer to Berlin.

The report from Ottawa that Mr. F. J. Robidoux, M. P., for Kent County, is regarded as a possible successor to Hon. Pierre Blondin, as Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, will be received with interest in this province, where the talented young member for

Kent numbers very many friends, and all will unite in the hope that the report may be an accurate prediction. Mr. Robidoux, since his election to the Dominion Parliament, has won the respect and esteem of all members by his ability and uniform courtesy. It was his duty to preside over sessions of the House in Committee during the strenuous and, at times, bitter debate on the naval question and in that time he made many friends by his dignity and absolute fairness. As Deputy Speaker of the Commons he should prove a pronounced success.

A reader of The Standard, interested in the ability of the Turkish army, because of the prospect of trouble from that quarter, says he was induced to read something of the record of the Turkish soldiers when fighting as allies of Great Britain and France in the Crimean war. After perusing several chapters of history on the question, he reports that the most persistent reference he found to the soldiers of the Ottoman Empire was contained in the words "The Turkish troops then retired."

Morning paper reports credit the new British Dreadnought, H. M. S. Tiger, with a speed of 32 knots. As there appears to be comparatively little to interest the Tiger in the North Sea, just at present, it would seem that she would be a good ship to send in pursuit of the Emden or the Karlsruhe.

A Broken Idol.

High Summer time and Europe's all asleep,
Or patient toiling in the arts of peace,
When an assassin's gun starts echoes deep,
That sounded ominous o'er all the seas;
And tender women to their bosoms pressed
Husbands and sons, and sighed with much unrest.

The sound was pleasing to one lord alone,
And to his satellites who thrave on strife;
Visions of mighty empire on him shone,
All Europe bowing low for its life.
And he approved of God, Who did devise
Things which for him would make a paradise.

"The Bear is slothful, and his lair is far;
The Hun will hold him while I smite the Frank;
Ireland's division is an unhealed scar
That Albion maims, and hinders,
Gott sei dank;
Therefore, to arms, lay the Engländer low;
Die Wacht am Rhein, and on the Thames also.

"What say you slave? The Belge does bar our way,
Does the wretch know what may to him befall?
In times of peace we will uphold his sway,
But when 't is inconvenient, not at all.
They will not yield to me? Their altars break,
And wreck their homes and shrines, for culture's sake.

"With weight of numbers, trample Liege to dust,
Level Leuven; despoil their treasures quite.
Spare not, nor young nor old; let loose your lust;
Let terror tame them; quell them with fright.
That they may know that I alone am He,
And all is mine, and I am Germany.

"Drop bombs upon non-combatants asleep;
Fire on the Red Cross; play the white flag game;
Teach them our culture; let it sink in deep,
And whose murmur, give them to the flame.
When this is done let Albion feel the rod,
That she may know it is the will of God."

Havoc was wrought that figures may not tell,
And blood was spilled that never joined the strife;
Rape and lust did high the horrors swell,
And Teuton culture planted, brought to life.
The lasting curse by mourning mothers prayed,
And widowed wives, and many a manless maid.

Thou'lt pay the Belgians for the havoc wrought!
Thy pledges are gone, bankrupt in the past—
Honor and truth cannot with gold be bought—
This infamy to Belgium is thy last.
Not all the gold thy empire's thrift could own
Can Belgian mother 'reft and altars wreck atone.

Yet hast thou builded better than we know—
All deadly poisons desperate cures require—
The melting pot for Autocrats is due.
And thou at once dross, crucible and fire.
Thou'lt make the name of "Kaiser" by-word bad,
For despot doomed whom God had first made mad.

Hast thou a purpose more than dog run mad?
Canst take same pleasure, thou in blood-stained clay?
Do lands laid desolate thy heart make glad?
Thy trail of falsehood will thy God O. K.?
Does God sit tight and wink upon such things?

Or is a butcher god the King of Kings?
Not so; the Highest, in mysterious ways
Permits the weeds to grow, the mildew blast;
Disease, drought, floods; we cry of evil days!
The husbandman learns wisdom at the last.

A weed plowed down will make soil rich and black—
The hand that's at the plow will not turn back.

Or weed or pestilence, thy sand is run;
The net thou plann'st is closing on thy head.
Thy empire's greatness, yesterday began,
Through thee already numbered with the dead.
When thou with feet of iron and head of clay
Art fallen, there will arise a brighter day.
—D. S. Macorquodale.

Stories From The Front.

Interesting war stories, more valuable by far than the pre-digested or denatured material being supplied as "official statements" come from wounded soldiers in the British hospitals. Some newspaper correspondents in London are devoting much attention to that field of news and the results they are obtaining are decidedly good. Some recent stories of experiences are as follows:—

A private of the Royal Munster Fusiliers said, as he waited his turn to be removed from Waterloo station by ambulance: "It was a level of a fact anyhow and the Munsters have not been behind the other regiments. After five days of the hardest fighting I've ever been in we got cut off by the Germans, who worked right round us all day until we were completely surrounded. We had about 800 effective men, but they must have had thousands on thousands besides the crowds of machine guns that kept pouring lead into us for all the world like a big shower of hailstones.

"When they had us at their mercy as they thought, and the rest of our army had fallen back, they called on us to surrender, but we didn't do it. We just fought and fought until we were coming up to take us. I can't tell how many of us got away, but I know that we suffered cruelly, as my company had more than half of its men hit when I was bowled over myself by a big German who got at me from behind when I was stopping to help my chum who had been badly hit in the breast. There was never any thought of giving in and the regiment would have fought to the last gasp even if it had the whole German army to fight.

British Outnumbered.
"In cavalry alone they had more men than us every time," said a lad of the 5th Lancers. They were everywhere and pressed our infantry very hard indeed. Three times in one day we were ordered to charge the advancing German horse and we scattered them like chaff before the wind, though they outnumbered us by at least three to one each time.

"The fact is that the Germans are being overworked and are beginning to

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