

GERMANS STILL FALL BACK; TERIBLE FIGHTING LIKELY

FRENCH ARE NEAR THE TOWN OF ST. QUENTIN

Important Point Probably Strongly Defended by Germans and Big Battle May Occur—Germans Carry Off Fifty Young Girls When They Evacuated Noyon.

Paris, March 20.—French cavalry has advanced to within about four and a half miles of St. Quentin, one of the largest towns believed to be strongly defended by the Germans. Further progress by the French is reported in the official statement of the war office issued tonight, and considerable territory has been recaptured between the Somme and the Aisne.

Cavalry Pushes On. "North of the Somme our cavalry pushed forward as far as the outskirts of Ruppy, about seven kilometers from St. Quentin, where they gave chase to German cavalry patrols. "Northeast of Chauny our infantry occupied Tergier today and crossed the canal of St. Quentin. Several lively skirmishes with enemy detachments ended to our advantage. "In the course of this pursuit, extending over several days, we have suffered quite insignificant losses on the entire front. Everywhere in our advance we have been able to observe proven vandalism and systematic destruction carried out by the enemy, which for the greater part was of no military value."

French aviators report the destruction by the Germans of the historic ruins of Coucy-Le-Chateau, one of the most striking monuments of the feudal ages in Europe, built early in the 13th century. The French war office officially announces that in evacuating Noyon the Germans carried away by force fifty young girls, ranging in age from fifteen to twenty-five years.

Fifty Girls Taken. "This afternoon our aviators reported that the historic ruins of Coucy-Le-Chateau have been destroyed by an explosion. "Evacuating Noyon, the enemy carried off by force fifty young girls, from fifteen to twenty-five years of age. "The day was relatively calm on the rest of the front."

IS MONCTON CITY TO BE CONTESTED?

Report Says Robinson to Give Way to Dr. Smith for Cabinet Ranks—Two Opposition Men Looking for Harry Blair's Former Job.

Moncton, March 20.—The people of Moncton are naturally wondering whether this constituency will be opened in the by-elections in an endeavor to secure a seat for Hon. C. W. Robinson. While Mr. Robinson's name has been persistently mentioned for cabinet rank, there are many who are rather dubious as to his chances of carrying the seat here. Dr. Price's many friends are showing indignation over the canvasses that were made against his candidature and are confident that the exposure of the canvasses would result in a different verdict than that given by the voters on February 24 last.

JOHN DILLON THREATENS THE GOVT

London, March 20.—Protestants in the House of Commons tonight against the government's refusal to publish the proceedings of the court martial of the members of the Sinn Fein in Dublin, thus violating former Premier Asquith's pledge, John Dillon, one of the Nationalist leaders, who also referred to the recent statement of Andrew Bonar Law, chancellor of the exchequer, regarding a settlement of the Irish question, and a general election, said the Nationalists do not injure the government in the prosecution of the war.

INSPIRED BY PATRIOTISM, THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, HON. P. E. BLONDIN, DESIGNS

Resignation is for Purpose of Enabling Him to Enlist in Overseas Service—Hon. Mr. Blondin Will be Requested by Sir Edward Kemp to Recruit a Battalion—Session at Ottawa.

Ottawa, March 20.—P. E. Blondin, postmaster-general, has tendered his resignation. Sir George Foster has cabled it to Sir Robert Borden. Mr. Blondin has resigned for the purpose of enlisting in the overseas forces. He has written a letter to the Minister of Militia and Defence in the following terms: "Dear Sir Edward: I must inform you that I have put my resignation in the hands of the acting Premier in order to offer my services in the overseas forces. I am willing to myself at your orders and consequently I apply for enlistment in the overseas forces of Canada."

"You're there," (Sd.) "P. E. BLONDIN." Sir Edward Kemp said tonight that he proposed to ask Mr. Blondin to recruit a battalion for service at the front as a part of the Canadian expeditionary force. Mr. Blondin's offer to serve overseas, and his resignation, have caused a sensation here. His enthusiasm, however, in the cause of the Allies, since the war began has been very marked, and he has been one of the very best recruiting speakers in the country.

SKY IN FRANCE LIT UP SUNDAY

Canadian headquarters in France, via London, Mar. 20.—(By Stewart Lyon, special correspondent of the Canadian Press)—Interest is keyed up to a high point here by the news that the Germans at last are on a move backward in the region between Arras and Bapaume. The retention of their positions there is impossible, now that Bapaume is lost to them. The report is not officially confirmed that the enemy, covering his retreat south of Arras, is in action with the advancing British infantry. The sky along the Canadian front was lit up last Sunday night. The reflection of large fires was seen in the direction of important towns held by the enemy.

SAY FRENCH BATTLESHIP SUBMARINED

Berlin, Mar. 20, via Sayville.—A French battleship of the Danton class was sunk by a German submarine in the Mediterranean yesterday, the admiralty announced today. The statement reads: "German submarine, commanded by Lieut. Captain Morant, on March 19, in the western Mediterranean, sank a French battleship of the Danton class, sixteen 23 inch guns, ten 15 inch guns, twelve 9.4 inch guns, sixteen 2.9 inch guns, ten 1.6 inch guns, and two torpedo tubes, submerged. They average about 19.5 knots in speed. Their displacement is 18,028 tons, and the complement consists of 681 officers and men."

UNITED STATES TO DECLARE WAR SOON

Washington, March 20.—For two hours today President Wilson discussed the international crisis with his cabinet, and heard urgent suggestions that the date for the extra session of congress, fixed for April 16, be set forward to consider further steps in defense of American commerce against German submarines. It is understood there was not a dissenting voice against this advice.

EMPIRE OF DEATH AWAITS ALLIES SAYS GERMAN

Amsterdam, Mar. 20, via London.—A Berlin despatch received here quotes Major Morant, former military critic of the Berliner Tageblatt, as saying in an article written for the Lokal Anzeiger: "Our leaders have tried to create an entirely new situation and spare the terrible bloodshed, which an assault on our enemies' positions must have involved. Our retreat is from the projected great Anglo-French spring offensive against our centre on the western front."

HUN GUN-BOAT SUNK

London, March 20.—A German gun-boat in the harbor of Tsing-Tau, China, has been blown up and sunk, says a Reuter despatch from Hong Kong.

BRITISH PREPARE FOR FERCE FIGHT

They Make Further Considerable Gains Along Greater Part of Front South of Arras and Fourteen More Villages Have Been Cleared of Enemy--Tr Pass General Line of Canizy, Estree-en-Chaun Nulu, Velu and St. Lemer.

HOW CZAR HEARD THE BAD NEWS

Was Awakened on Train at 2 a. m. to Hear that He Had Been Dethroned—Refused to be Traitor to Russia and Let Huns in.

Petrograd, via London, March 20.—The history of the last hour of Emperor Nicholas as ruler of Russia is related by a correspondent of the Outlook from Moscow, as follows: "Two trains arrived at the station at Vishera (on the Moscow-Petrograd railway, southeast of Petrograd) on the night of March 14. One train carried the Emperor's suite, the second the Emperor, General Baron Fredericks, minister of the imperial house, Rear-Admiral Niloff and others. Emperor Nicholas, called from headquarters by the Empress, was on the way to the Tsarkoe-Selo."

SHARP FIGHTING DURING DAY—DESTRUCTION AND DEVASTATION MARK PATH LEFT BY FURIOUS HUNS IN THEIR RETREAT—USE OF CAVALRY SURPRISE TO TEUTONS.

London, Mar. 20.—"Despite the less favorable weather conditions," says the official report from British headquarters in France tonight, "we made considerable gains again today along the greater part of the front of our advance, south of Arras, and a further fourteen villages have been cleared of the enemy. "Our troops have now passed the general line of Canizy, Estree-en-Chaussee, Nulu, Velu and St. Lemer. "Our machine gun fire drove off an enemy attempt to counter-attack south of Arras. We successfully raided last night northeast of Neuville-St. Vaast and brought back a few prisoners."

London, Mar. 20.—(Montreal Gazette cable)—The Rt. Hon. Walter Long, on behalf of the colonial office, today assured a large gathering of overseas journalists of his determination that if they were given all the facilities that would be enjoyed by the home press in regard to the Imperial war conference. This gathering was the result of the steps being taken by Lord Bunsford as president of the Empire Press Union.

WAR COUNCIL OF EMPIRE

London, Mar. 20.—The use of cavalry by the British and French seems to have taken the Germans by surprise, upsetting some of their calculations. In one village supper, which had been laid out, was abandoned, together with much ammunition, and in other places newly planned boxes of high explosives were found, with which the Germans had planned to destroy the villages before leaving. That the wholesale destruction was systematized in a manner characteristic of German thoroughness was shown by captured orders on the subject. These directed the blowing up of all houses, wells and cellars, except those occupied by rear guard outposts, the rear guard being held responsible for making their shelters uninhabitable before falling back. Farming implements were all burned or destroyed. Wherever a building was spared, it was first rendered filthy. The orders also directed the assembling of filth in the neighborhood of all wells for the purpose of contaminating the water. The destruction of fruit trees now apparent covers the entire belt of evacuated territory, even those clinging to the walls having been stripped. In abandoned position a large black cat was found nailed to an upright board. A cap was on its head, and a cigar was in its mouth.

U. S. WILL PROBABLY RECOGNIZE RUSSIA

Washington, Mar. 20.—Early recognition by the United States of the new government set up by revolution in Russia was forecasted here today in the belief that, with good order prevailing, the plans being made for a permanent constitutional government call for the moral support of the United States. All reports to the state department indicate that the army and navy are supporting the provisional government.

YORK MILLS CLOSED

Bridford, Me., March 20.—Because of a strike of weavers for more money all of the cotton mills of the York Corporation of Saco were shut down today. Nearly 4,000 operatives, many of them French-Canadians, are idle.