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THURSDAY MORNING MARCH 28 1918—SIXTEEN PAGES

VOL. XXXVIII—No. 13,651 TWO CENTS

CANADIANS IN BIG BATTLE

Moment is Near When Reserves of Allies Will Enter Into Action, and Great Battle Will Take on New Phase--Slackening in Enemy's Effort is Already Noticed, and Franco-British Line Holds Firm--British Cavalry Wins Brilliant Success.

ALLIED RESERVES ARE READY NOW TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE

Next Few Days May Change Situation Entirely, as German Rush Has Failed and Anglo-French Line is on Strong Positions.

PARIS, March 27.—Premier Clemenceau told the army committee of the chamber of deputies today that the moment was near when the reserves of the allies would enter into action. The great battle now being waged in France would then take on a new phase, and, he added, there was every reason to hope that the enemy would not retain the benefit of the gains made at such a bloody price.

There was a settling down along the British and French fronts where the Germans were trying to break thru, and even within the last few hours there had been a noted slackening in the enemy's efforts.

The premier was before the committee for more than an hour and a half. He dealt at length with the situation and spoke with full confidence in the future. Strategic considerations, he said, did not belong to the domain of the government, but he gave details of the military situation, with an explanation of the measures taken in agreement between the high commands of the Franco-British armies to assure effective direction of the operations.

German Drive Is Checked Counter Blow Comes Soon

Army of Manoeuvre Is Being Gathered For Work Ahead Which Is Expected to Develop at Any Moment, When New and Fresh Troops Will Be Poured Down on Tired and Shell-Torn Germans.

WASHINGTON, March 27.—French and British official statements were scanned eagerly tonight by officials and military men here for first signs of the counter blow which they think will be delivered soon by the allied armies in France, where the rush of the German drive apparently has been definitely checked.

Tonight's report from London showed the British defence to have stiffened sharply in the last few hours. Counter-attacks mentioned, it was indicated, were of a local character and not to be confused with the great efforts to be expected to develop now at any moment. Officers said the shock of the German drive appeared to have been absorbed by the withdrawal strategy of Gen. Haig. Like the recoil mechanism of a great gun the blow has been prevented from striking with its full force by the withdrawal conducted with mastery skill in the face of the enemy assault.

All depends, it is said, upon the forces the allies have been able to muster to deliver the counter-stroke. There has been every indication that both British and French have been using reinforcements sparingly, conserving the reserve power for the day that is just ahead. The strategic reserve plans of the supreme war council at Versailles are now to be

tested, it is indicated, for despatches from all quarters mention the gathering of the "army of manoeuvre" for the work in hand.

French Stand Like a Wall.
Again tonight the map of the battle line seemed to show that the assault of the allies might come first, at least, from some point on the French sector. There the French troops have stood like a wall against German assaults for many hours, and they are looking out over the nerve centres of the enemy advance, his communication lines which parallel their front. Success there might mean the capture of men by the thousand and guns by the hundred. Cut off from their base, the Germans could do nothing but surrender when their ammunition gave out.

Whether by their own desire or because of the elusive tactics employed by General Haig, the Germans apparently stand committed to their present effort beyond withdrawal. For six days they have battered at the British lines, reckless of the loss of life involved, bent apparently upon only one purpose, to strike with such terrific force that the British army should be crushed and useless. Now, it is pointed out, the first force of their rush has been dissipated and they have not been allowed to come to grips with the foe in a final struggle. Always Haig's men have slipped away to fight again, and again within a few days after time. Now, for the first time, they are striking back at certain points and retaking ground that they had surrendered.

Drawn Into a Net.
It is the view of many officers tonight that the Germans face the prospect of finding themselves firmly en-

meshed in the net into which they have been drawn. Around them stand the undaunted French and British battlefronts and behind these fronts there is gathering a storm in the shape of new and fresh armies soon to be poured down on their tired and shell-torn ranks.

The army of manoeuvre referred to in despatches is understood to be composed of the general reserves of all the allied forces. Primarily in the very nature of things it is an army of attack, and its units would be assembled only when the assault was to be launched.

Unofficial reports have estimated the German casualties at 400,000 men. That means whole divisions shot to pieces and out of action definitely until they can be reorganized and recruited. It means transport lines laden beyond belief with wounded; it means scattered regiments and lost equipment.

One thing has impressed everybody here. Reports from London and Paris indicate only high purpose and confidence. They read like despatches from victorious armies. There was not one hint of panic or foreboding.

CANADIAN GUNS SWEEP THE ADVANCING ENEMY

Horse Artillery, Construction Troops and Machine Guns Take Part in Big Battle With Comparatively Slight Losses, While the Enemy Suffers Terribly.

OTTAWA, Ont., March 27.—In a cable message, given out by the prime minister's office tonight, Roland Hill states that "in the stupendous gun duel which was the prelude to the greatest of all battles now raging between the Scapa and the Oise, Canadians played their own little, but not altogether insignificant part. The railway construction troops, the horse artillery and the motor machine gun batteries, were in the thick of the great struggle, yet every unit today is congratulating itself. Our casualties were very light, our losses in material not worth considering."

"We had horseshoes strung all round us," declared the commander of a railway battalion

whose old camp is for the present in the Huns' hands. All thru the first day the guns of the Canadian horse artillery swept gaps in the thick advancing hordes of Hun storm troops. Sometimes before they limbered up to take a new position they were firing point blank on the Germans, mowing lines in each succeeding wave, said a Canadian officer. Sometimes the attackers would divide and sweep by us and we would find we were actually in front of our own infantry, but not for long did that sheer weight of human flesh stay in our rear.

Irishmen Wonderful.
"Fighting, sometimes outnumbered by ten to one, some Irish troops around us with bayonets and bombs, came flinging back into the fray until the infantry line was again securely in front of us. Those men were wonderful and never for a minute looked as if they could be beaten. During

most of the early morning the work had to be done with gas masks on, so great was the number of gas shells poured in on each battery. After locating the desired gun positions the enemy made a complete and narrowing circle of light shrapnel shells around it and then poured in heavy shells on the gunners. As yet I cannot obtain exact details of what the R. C. H. A. suffered, but I hear that in spite of changing position seven or eight times, bringing horses inside the barrage and taking the guns but only two of the Canadian batteries were lost or destroyed. At one time some Hun cavalry were behind them, but the teams with the undamaged guns drove crashing thru the small troop that tried to stop them. All the guns that fell into the enemy's hands were blown up before the crews left them."

Heavy Guns Involved.
"In another part of the attack-

ed line I met a Winnipeg major who had a battery of heavy guns. He was alert and smiling after two days of ceaseless fighting and quite ready to go in again at a minute's notice. Two of his subalterns were Canadians who had served their apprenticeship in Canadian heavy batteries. We kept the game going, said one of them, until we had the strictest orders to get further back in case the way was closed behind us. We ran into one break and the crew that came to the rescue was a Canadian railway construction battalion. The captain in command was an old school chum I had not seen since I left Toronto. "Heavy Canadian batteries are in action," concluded the message, "where they came from and how they got there is a marvel. When I found the battery it was pegging away as if they had been in that position all their military lives."

MASSES OF AIRCRAFT STRIKE ENEMY HARD

Fifty-Eight Tons of Bombs Used Against Germans on Battle Field.

CONTINUOUS NIGHT ATTACK

Enemy Troops in Bapaume, Cambrai and Peronne Given No Rest by British Airplanes.

London, March 27.—The official report on aerial operations tonight says:

"Great concentrations of our airplanes were carried out today over points threatened by the enemy, and masses of our machines attacked with machine gunfire and bombs the enemy infantry and cavalry."

"Thirty tons of bombs were dropped by us and hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition were fired into the enemy. While this fighting was maintained throughout the day, our infantry airplanes kept watch along the front and reported changes in the situation as they occurred."

"Twenty hostile machines were brought down in air fighting and two others were shot down by anti-aircraft guns. Twelve of ours are missing."

SOME GROUND IS REGAINED AND FRONT REMAINS FIRM

British Cavalry Has Been in Action and Achieved a Brilliant Success--Battle Line Strongest Since Tremendous Fight Commenced.

LONDON, March 27.—Reuter's correspondent at British headquarters says tonight: "Our cavalry has been in action and achieved a brilliant success, but no details have been given."

"The British forces are not only offering strong resistance to heavy enemy attacks both north and south of the River Somme, but have carried out numerous counter-attacks during the day, resulting in the regaining of ground and the driving back of the Germans at various points."

The report from Field Marshal Haig tonight declared that in these operations heavy casualties have been inflicted on the enemy. The text of the statement reads: "The battle was renewed this morning with great violence south and north of the Somme. Intense fighting has taken place during the day from

south of Roosieres to north of Abainville (Abainzeville). "An unsuccessful attempt made by the enemy last night to drive in our line south of the Somme was followed this morning by a series of heavy attacks in the neighborhood of Roosieres and to the south of that place. At Roosieres all the enemy's assaults have been beaten off by our troops, who inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy."

Further north our line was maintained thru the earlier part of the day despite great pressure from large hostile forces. "Later in the day a fresh German attack developed in this area, with the result that our line was taken back a short distance to the west. Later reports show that our counter-attacks have again completely restored the situation."

More Fierce Fighting.
"During the day the enemy made a number of determined attacks against our positions between the Somme and the Ancre and north and south of Albert. Fierce fighting has taken place in this sector also."

of the course of the day to debouch westward from the Town of Albert have been driven back in each instance with the heaviest casualties. "This afternoon the enemy attacked in great strength in the neighborhood of Bucoy and Abainville and gained a footing in the latter village. At all other points his infantry has been beaten off with great loss."

"Our troops have again fought magnificently and, as shown in the above account, have today thrown back the enemy all along the British front with heavy losses, despite most bitter and determined attacks and his superiority in numbers. Heavy fighting still continues on the whole battle front."

British Front is Strong.
The British front is standing firm along the whole line, which appears to be the strongest it has occupied since the battle began, says Reuter's correspondent with the British headquarters in France. "Even at points where the line is not strong, the correspondent adds, it is being held in orderly array, alike of men and guns, and nowhere is showing any signs of enforced retirement. The enemy, says the correspondent, attacked at various points today, but from all reports these efforts made no progress. British airmen report the whole of the enemy front areas to be black with troops. "Bringing Up Reserves. Tonight's news from the battlefront confirms the hopeful impression formed early in the day that the British now appear to be on a line they are

