

ROUMANIA IS NOT YET CRUSHED —FAR FROM IT!

LAST week it was said that the struggle in Roumania had become the pivot of the war, and this is even more apparent after another week of fighting. The forces engaged are still small as armies go nowadays, but they will not remain so. Men and munitions are converging upon Roumania from the north, the south, and the west. The Russians are straining every nerve to send help from the north. The Allied forces in the south are moving in a great fan formation, and doing what they can to hold the Bulgarians in front of them, and we are told that the French are sending some of their best strategists to reinforce the skill of the Roumanian commanders. Perhaps these commanders are defective in practical experience rather than in military skill, and it may be that their reverses are no more than those incidental to the beginning of a campaign. Moreover, they may have been overruled by political counsellors. However that may be, we can now see that they made a mistake in invading Transylvania, and that a concentration of their strength would have been much better than the present extension, for which they obviously have not enough men. Under the shelter of the Carpathians and the Alps they would have been comparatively safe from the attacks of Falkenhayn, and they might then have been strong enough to keep the Dobrudja road open for the eastern assault upon Bulgaria in conjunction with the Russians. Almost anything would have been possible to them had they been able to sweep Mackensen to one side and to flood southward to Varna on the Black Sea. But they were not strong enough to do this and also to invade Transylvania, and as a result they have been able to do neither. Although they may presently be able to remedy their misfortunes, their position at the moment is by no means a favourable one.

AT the same time there is no need to exaggerate these misfortunes, and this we are very likely to do if we depend for guidance upon newspaper headlines. Roumania has been foiled in her effort to invade Transylvania, and to a certain extent she has been compelled to fall back to the shelter of the mountains that she ought never to have left. But the struggle here is by no means over, nor need we assume that she must abandon the invasion of Transylvania. At the moment of writing come reports of definite Roumanian successes against the Teutons, and the recapture of certain small positions that were lost in the first rush. These successes are attributed to the Roumanian and Russian cavalry, and it is quite possible that they will be continued. An attempt to predict would be merely foolish, seeing that we have no idea of the relative strength of the armies. Nor have we any means of knowing the extent of the Russian aid that is being sent. It is possible that Roumania will decide to abandon the Transylvania enterprise altogether, and to fall back into her own territory. In that case her position in this respect will be precisely what it was before she went to war. To suppose that the crushing of Roumania is even in sight from anything that has yet happened is wholly unjustified. No real step has been taken toward the crushing of Roumania, although we have an unconfirmed report that a German force has made its way through the passes and is on Roumanian soil. Falkenhayn has been conducting a successful defensive, not offensive. Before he can crush Roumania he must cross the Carpathians in force, and every day of delay means that his difficulties are increased in view of the aid that is being sent from Russia, and the increasing need of the Bulgarians to defend their own southern frontier and to prevent the Serbians from reaching Monastir. The misfortunes of Roumania are evident enough, but they are not disasters, nor anything approaching disasters, whatever they may eventually become.

IT may therefore be repeated that the critical centres of the whole war are in Transylvania and in the Dobrudja. It still seems that the Dobrudja is the more important of the two, and this view is confirmed by the brevity of the bulletins from that part of the field. The bulletins are short, but they speak of a great battle that is still being waged, and of Russian forces that are constantly arriving to sustain the Roumanian line to the south of Constanza. Within a few days it is probable that the struggle will be decided in view of the immense efforts that

*The So-Called German Offensive is
Only Another Defensive Campaign*

By SIDNEY CORYN

are being made to do something final before the coming of winter. If the Allies are successful it will mean that Germany's eastern conquests have been lopped off, and that Bulgaria will be crushed at once. If the Teutons are successful it will mean that their advantage is great from the moral point of view, but not otherwise, seeing that the war in Russia and the west will be just where it was before. As was said last week, the struggle in Roumania is one that is being carried on within the circle and without any necessary effects upon its circumference, except indirect effects. So far as one may judge from the scanty information that is available it would seem that the prospects are more favourable to Roumania than to the Teutons, and this in spite of the marked successes that have attended Falkenhayn's efforts. It is highly unlikely that the Germans can be reinforced to any great extent, while Roumania can be reinforced. Fairly reliable reports say that Falken-

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hayn has not more than forty thousand Germans with him, the remainder of his army being made up of Bulgarians and possibly Turks. Probably his successes are due more to his own ability as a commander than to the quality of the men under him. Roumania has been outgeneraled and outwitted, but these are faults that she may be able to remedy when she gets her second breath. The first few weeks of the war saw the Allies being steadily driven southward through France, but they were a long way from being crushed. And Roumania also may be a very long way from the fate of Serbia.

THE importance of the Dobrudja campaign over all others is shown by the announcement of the appointment of the Grand Duke Nicholas to the chief command in that field. Presumably the Turkish situation can be left to itself for the present, in view of the far greater opportunities to Russia that have been opened by Roumanian intervention. Russia's aim is, of course, Constantinople, and it was the intention to approach the Turkish capital by the back door, so to speak, that first led Russia into Asia Minor. Doubtless the advance westward from Erzeroum and Trebizond would have been attempted, in spite of the difficulties of that inhospitable country, but for the new and better road that is now offered through the Dobrudja. Moreover, an advance through the Dobrudja southward must be at the cost of Bulgaria, a much more formidable adversary than Turkey. Naturally we know nothing of the forces that will be placed at the disposal of the Grand Duke, but we may be quite sure that they will be large. He has to meet his old adversary Mackensen and an army that already has successes to its credit. Russia is the most secretive and the most stealthy of all the powers at war. She never indicates her intentions if it is possible to avoid doing so, and she never reports a battle until it is won or lost. But the appointment of the Grand Duke speaks for itself, and it may be said that the obvious facts speak even louder. The Dobrudja is now friendly territory. It connects directly with Bulgaria, and immediately to the south of Bulgaria is Adrianople and the international railroad to Constantinople. The one obstacle is Mackensen, whose lines are drawn right across the Dobrudja to the south of Constanza and who is already being held there and unable to advance. No matter how interesting other parts of the field may be or how tremendous the events transpiring in them, we may reasonably believe that the Dobrudja is the heart and kernel of the war and that

Russia knows it. It is a situation that she will not play with. She will use every man and gun at her command to force her way southward and to sweep Mackensen from her path.

The Russian success of Lutsk, reported under date of October 15th, may be taken as further

evidence of a fact now well established that a special Teuton effort upon any part of the line must mean a corresponding weakening of the line elsewhere. When Austria began her attack upon Italy she drew men from Galicia for that purpose. The Russians at once began their offensive, and with spectacular successes. The Germans drew men from the west in order to mend their Galician fences, and the victorious Allied attack upon the Somme was the result. The new war in the Balkans demanded the supply of a practically fresh German army, and this was largely at the cost of the Teuton lines to the north. Brussiloff at once renews his attack, which has been brought to a standstill, and the first definite bulletin that reaches us speaks of the capture of several lines of German trenches after a "colossal battle of two weeks."

THERE is no need minutely to chronicle the Allied advance in the west or the capture of a succession of small villages that can be found only on automobile maps. Peronne and Bapaume are both in pockets and both can be taken at will. The great military road that joins them is practically in possession of the Allies and is under their guns. With the fall of these two cities the Allied line will be straightened and the pressure will then be continued. But the rate of speed will be increased, since there are no fortifications to the east of these places that can in any way be compared with those that have been already taken at such enormous cost. The reports show that the trenches now confronting the French and British are distinctly inferior. They are described as either ditch trenches or isolated dug-outs strengthened with cement and defended by machine guns.

THE pressure, as has been said, will be continued, but none the less we may confidently expect that new tactics of the most dramatic kind will disclose themselves. No serious effort has yet been made to pierce the German line, nor could there be such an effort in the face of the tremendous fortifications of the front trenches, which have the effect of quadrupling the strength of their defenders. But with those fortifications out of the way, with Bapaume and Peronne taken, we may expect that the policy of pressure against successive points will presently give way to a determined effort to break the line and to roll it up north and south from the two flanks. With inferior trench fortifications the Germans must either summarily retire with the dire dangers attendant on such a retirement, or they must accept battle in the open with inferior numbers and the anxieties caused by their heavy artillery. We need not suppose for a moment that the scope of the Allied offensive in the west will be confined to the present process of blasting their enemies from point to point. Such methods are demanded by heavy fortifications, but they will be unnecessary when those fortifications, now represented by Bapaume and Peronne, have been left behind. So far the British, at least, have been using only a small amount of their available force. They have vast reserves that have hardly yet been in action. But with the Germans in the open we are likely to see these reserves brought into play. They will be hurled against the weakest point in the German line with the view of breaking through at any sacrifice. If a break is once made the attackers will then turn north and south and roll up the German lines. For such an attack every available man would be used to widen the breach and to prevent a re-formation. To suppose that the present monotonous system of attack will continue, that it is intended to continue, is to suppose that the war will go on forever. It is the only possible system of dealing with fortifications, but it will not continue for long when the fortifications have been disposed of. Then we shall see a concentrated attack by the Allied forces upon a single point, not with the object of pushing the German lines back, but of piercing them. When such an attack will be brought it is impossible to say, but it will be brought. To speak of the Allied offensive as exhausting itself, to compare its advance with the

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