

# ENEMY CROSSES VESLE!

## GREAT GERMAN MOMENTUM LAST NIGHT SHOWED SIGNS OF SLACKENING ON VESLE

**Situation More Reassuring, But Still Serious—Army of German Crown Prince Succeeds in Forcing Its Way South and Crossing the Vesle River, British and French Falling Back on Twenty Mile Front — While Violence of Enemy's Effort Has Not Abated, He Is Only Making Headway in the Centre, Allies Beginning To React With Effect on the Wings.**

**French Left Is Holding Well and Blocking the German Attempts To Widen the Salient Toward Soissons—French Retain Wide Bridgehead North of the Aisne Above Soissons, Circumstance Highly Menacing For the Enemy's Flank—On Right British Still Cling Successfully To Group of Hills North of the Vesle.**

Paris, May 28—The situation tonight is more reassuring. The latest advices from the front show that while the violence of the enemy's effort as yet is unabated he is only making headway on the center and that even there the German momentum is giving signs of slackening. The Allies are beginning to react with effect on the wings.

The French left is holding well and blocking the German attempts to widen the salient toward Soissons. The French retain a wide bridgehead north of the Aisne above that city—a circumstance highly menacing for the enemy's flank. On the right the British still cling successfully to the group of hills north of the Vesle river.

### Advance Stopped.

Heavy counter-attacks by the French troops stopped the German advance on the heights of Neuville-Sur-Margival and Vregny, northeast of Soissons, and other heights dominating the valley of the Vesle river, according to the war office statement tonight. The Germans, however, succeeded in crossing the Vesle in the region of Bazoches and Fismes.

The text of the statement reads: "Last night and today the enemy, taking advantage of his numerical superiority, renewed his thrust more strongly southeast of Soissons. On our left we counter-attacked vigorously, stopped the German advance and broke up attacks on the heights of Neuville-Sur-Margival and Vregny, northeast of Soissons, and on the heights in the region of Ciry-Salsogne and Vasseny, dominating the Vesle valley.

### Rolling Back Centre.

The principal effort was directed towards rolling back the centre of the line of the Vesle, which the Germans succeeded in crossing at several points notably in the region of Bazoches and Fismes.

On our right the British withstood the assaults against the Massif of St. Thierry, inflicting particularly heavy losses.

West of Montdidier the Americans supported by our tanks, brilliantly occupied a salient along a front of two kilometres and the strongly fortified village of Cantigny, capturing 170 prisoners and war material. They repulsed counter-attacks. "The enemy in consequence of this has succeeded in crossing the Aisne between Vailly and Berry-Au-Bac on a front of about twenty miles. The Franco-British forces withdrew to the valley of the Vesle, which flows some six miles south of the Aisne, in the region of the plateau behind which our reserves are arriving."

### Thirty Hun Divisions.

Henry Bidou, the military critic of the Journal Des Debats says the enemy began the offensive with some thirty divisions.

"He had enormous numerical superiority," M. Bidou continues. "On the allied side the front was held by a few French divisions and on the right in Champagne by a small number of exhausted British divisions."

M. Bidou calculates that the Germans had from ninety to one hundred divisions for use in the battle, of which they employed one-third for the initial shock.

300,000 Germans.

With the French Army in France, May 28.—(Noon, by the A. F.)—At least twenty-five German divisions (about 300,000 men) today joined in the attack and forced further back the French and British divisions holding the line.

Poison gas shells were the principal factors in the advance of the numerically superior forces of Germans.

Notwithstanding the smallness of the Allied armies they did their utmost to stay the enormous push of the enemy troops, ten times their number. The German advance, which was one of the most rapid since the war, could not be held, however, as

### NEW CONCERN WILL BE FEDERAL EXPRESS CO.

Capitalization Will Exceed \$30,000,000 and Wages Will Be Raised.

Ottawa, May 28.—It is officially announced, through the chief press censors' office that the following troops arrived safely in England: Infantry—Central Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and British Columbia. Composite Battalion from Halifax. Railway Construction Battalion. Siege Artillery, details.

### FIFTEEN AIRPLANES DOWNED BY BRITISH

Three Others Driven Down Out of Control — Mannheim, Metz, Station Bombed.

London, May 28.—Fifteen German airplanes have been destroyed by British aviators and three others driven down out of control, according to the British official communication on aviation issued tonight. The communication says also that five tons of bombs have been dropped on the Mannheim-Metz railway station.

wave after wave in dense lines came forward.

The Allied flanks maintained their positions well and reserves are hurrying toward the danger point of the greatest advance. The retreat of the French and British was made in orderly fashion, the troops destroying their material as they left or taking it along with them. The army staff still retains the fullest confidence in the outcome of the battle.

### GEORGE L. HANINGTON DIES AT MIDDLETON

Was Formerly Well Known Hotel Man — Funeral at Shediac Today.

The death is announced at Middleton, N. S., of George L. Hanington, formerly a well known hotel man of Point du Chene, Sydney, and Truro. Mr. Hanington was born at Shediac Cape sixty-eight years ago. He was unmarried. Albert Murray, formerly station agent at Shediac, is a brother-in-law, and numerous relatives of the deceased reside in that place, St. John and elsewhere.

### MARKET TOLLS WILL BE MORE IN MONCTON

H. C. of L. Affecting Consumers Will Also Be Felt By Producers — Church Mortgage To Be Burned.

Special to The Standard. Moncton, May 28.—The City Council in view of the increased price of agricultural products are revising the market tolls schedule, considerably increasing rates. In many instances tolls are being more than doubled. Some thirty-five Salvation Army officers headed by Major Barr, divisional commander in New Brunswick, will arrive here tomorrow for a convention. They will be welcomed by the mayor at a big meeting tomorrow night. At the annual roll call of the Highfield Baptist church tomorrow night a mortgage, which has been on the church property thirty-five years will be burned.

### A CORRECTION.

The Standard headline yesterday over a business despatch announcing the death of a soldier in England should have read: "Pte. Charles Freeze, son of J. Arthur Freeze, of Sussex, dead." The despatch itself was correct.

## British Re-establish Their Flanders Line At Dickebusch Lake

London, May 28.—Field Marshal Haig reports from France tonight: "Counter attacks this morning by French and British troops re-established our line east of Dickebusch Lake."

The text of the official report from Field Marshal Haig tonight reads:

"Counter attacks carried out early this morning by French and British troops successfully re-established our line east of Dickebusch Lake. Several prisoners were captured. In the enemy's attacks yesterday morning in this sector and to the south as far as Loere four German divisions (about 50,000 men) are known to have been engaged.

"In the course of the fighting heavy losses were inflicted on these divisions. The allied line has been maintained at all points.

"On the remainder of the British front there is nothing to report, but artillery activity on both sides."

Paris, May 28.—The Germans are trying to force a passage of the Vesle at Fismes, which is the centre of most important communications, according to the Liberta correspondent at the front, who adds: "The battle is being fiercely contested, with alternating fortunes. Our reserves are commencing to arrive south of the Vesle and the effect is already felt at Fismes."

## ITALIANS STILL DO GOOD WORK

**At Caposile, Near the Adriatic Sea Coast, They Penetrate Enemy Lines and Capture Several Hundred Prisoners.**

Rome, May 28.—The Italians are keeping up their offensive against the Austrians on various sectors in the mountain region and along the lower reaches of the Piave river. The official statement says: "On the night of May 26-27, our assault parties broke into successive enemy defences at Caposile to a depth of more than 700 yards. In spite of the enemy's violent reaction the positions rescued were maintained. There were considerable enemy losses, 450 prisoners being taken and four trench mortars, ten machine guns, several hundred rifles and ammunition and material being captured."

## YOUTHFUL FIREBUG APPREHENDED BY MONCTON POLICE

Mystery of Recent Fires Solved By Alertness of Police Officer.

## CULPRIT WAS BOY SEVEN YEARS OLD

Hon. J. B. M. Baxter Will Address Maritime Manufacturers Tonight.

## Special to The Standard.

Moncton, May 28.—Several fires in the central part of the city of late have such strong suspicions they were of incendiary origin that the police have been on the alert for a fire bug. Today an officer caught a fire bug redhanded, but was greatly surprised to find the culprit was a seven year old boy who didn't realize the seriousness of his actions. The lad was in the act of setting another fire in the vicinity of the recent fires. When questioned as to his object the boy said he wanted to see firemen running to the fire.

He was taken to the police station, but the magistrate sent him home to his parents to be dealt with later, if his mania for fires isn't cured. Fortunately none of the fires set by the lad did much damage. They were all started in the day time and discovered before getting under headway.

The Maritime Manufacturers' Association opens in Moncton tomorrow morning and delegates from Nova Scotia are arriving tonight. Tomorrow evening the convention will be addressed on Maritime Union by Hon. J. B. M. Baxter of St. John and H. J. Logan Esq., P. of Amherst. About fifty or sixty manufacturers are expected to be present.

## GIGANTIC EXPRESS MERGER ON JULY 1 IN UNITED STATES

Adams, American, Wells-Fargo and Southern Companies Form Union.

Washington, May 28.—One union express company for the United States was created today by agreement between Director McAdoo and the Adams, American, Wells-Fargo and Southern companies, whose transportation business will be merged under a new private corporation with a capital of more than \$30,000,000 to be known as the Federal Express Company. On July 1 the combination becomes effective.

## MARVELLOUS ADVANCE BY CANADA I. O. D. E.

Delegates Representing Some 700 Chapters Meet in Toronto.

Toronto, May 28.—A marvelous advance in the importance of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, as a national institution, accomplishing a monumental work in Canada's war effort was the outstanding and notable feature of the reading of reports at today's session by provincial regents of New Brunswick, Manitoba, British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

Delegates representing some 700 chapters throughout the dominion were present and Mrs. A. E. Gooderham, president, was in the chair.

## HERRING PLENTIFUL.

Herring are plentiful at the Magdalen Islands and at some places in Prince Edward Island. The schooner Sparrow loaded 2,400 barrels of herring at the Magdalen. They will be smoked at Lunenburg. The fish is worth 60 cents a barrel.

## THE FRENCH LOSE FISMES, IMPORTANT RAILWAY CENTRE

**Following Up Their Gains of Monday German Armies Drive British and French Back Along Twenty Mile Front Between Vailly and Berry-Au-Bac and Cross the Vesle River and Capture Important Town of Fismes and Dozen Others — Rheims Cut Off.**

**Measured Between Pont Arcy, Point Where German Armies Crossed River Aisne Monday, and Fismes, Where They Crossed the Vesle, Their Gains Have Maximum Depth of Seven Miles—Berlin Claims 15,000 Prisoners — Allied Reserves Moving.**

Special Cable to New York Tribune and St. John Standard. (By Arthur S. Draper).

London, May 28.—The Crown Prince's show may have started as a diversion of the Kaiser's battle, but it has developed into one of the biggest operations of the war.

Following up their gains of yesterday with unabated force, the German armies today drove the British and French back along the twenty miles front between Vailly and Berry-Au-Bac. Greatly outnumbered and almost overwhelmed by the enemy's superior forces, the allied forces were forced to fall back rapidly.

Putting their greatest forces against the center of the Anglo-French line, the Germans pushed their way across the plateau that rises between the Aisne and Vesle rivers. Late today they had succeeded in crossing the Vesle river at several points near Fismes, the French war office stated tonight.

The loss of Fismes, an important railroad center on the north side of the Vesle river is serious. The German gains cut off Rheims from the west and will seriously cripple the allied communications in this sector.

Seven Mile Gain. Measured between Pont Arcy, the point where the German armies crossed the Aisne yesterday, and Fismes, where they crossed the Vesle late today, their gains have a maximum depth of seven miles. Berlin reported tonight the capture of 15,000 prisoners.

Already the force of the French and British reserves, which have been drawn up south of Fismes, is coming into play. Following up his policy of exacting a maximum toll from the advancing Germans and withholding his own reserves, General Foch has given ground rapidly today but not without results. Powerful forces are being rushed to the scene of the onslaught and will be thrown in as the occasion warrants.

On the northern front, southeast of Loere, the French and British counter-attacked in great force today, winning back the ground on the lower slopes of Mount Kemmel that they lost in the first onrush of the Germans in this sector yesterday.

Terrific artillery fire along the whole west front marked the second day of the new drive, which the Allies attempt to force the allied positions before Ypres proved fruitless. Ludendorff turned attention to the southern front. His attack there was launched between Vauxhallon and Brimont.

Drenched With Gas. For two hours before the attack, the allied lines were drenched with gas shells, followed by a short bombardment with high explosive shells.

Four British divisions, the 25, 50, 8 and 21, entrusted with the defense of the bending line astride the Aisne River, suffered heavy punishment from the outset, but the British right held stubbornly throughout the attack. The Tommies fought as though they were tackling the enemy for the first time in many months instead of for the third time in a few weeks.

The enemy has moved nearer Paris but he still has a long journey to travel. Ludendorff evidently is planning more to crush the Allies than to win territory, but nothing would please the Crown Prince so much as to lead his army through the gates of Paris.

Whether the Germans can turn their present success into a strategic victory will depend upon the strength of Foch's reserves now going into battle. Experience has shown that the momentum gained in the initial attacks often carry the army forward several days.

Critical Stage. The battle has already reached a critical stage. The forcing of the Aisne west of Soissons seriously endangers that city, for should the Germans be able to move enough troops across the river to start a flanking movement westward Soissons and the entire Allied line from Coucy to the Oise would be threatened. This is probably what the Germans expect to do. The whole purpose of the Aisne attack was to remove the danger to their positions on the Somme from the long exposed flank running from Coucy to Montdidier.

Having bent the Allied line in at Montdidier the Germans had that to hold that place it is necessary for them to again straighten out the front by removing the menace to their flanks. Their big general plan in the campaign of 1918 has been to drive a wedge far into the enemy lines at some particular point and then follow this up by striking at the flanks, thus removing the wedge by pushing back the rest of the line. In a way, it resembles a man driving a chisel into a piece of wood and then working it from side to side to split the wood.

A Somme Attack? The attack in the Aisne Valley does not mean that Ludendorff has abandoned his objectives in the north or in Picardy. Once he has battered his positions, he probably will shift the weight of his attack to the Somme area, especially to the sector between Arras and Amiens for a powerful attack delivered here, if successful, would endanger both Paris and the (Continued on page 2)