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French Repulse All Hun Attacks Woevre Region

Artillery Duels of Vast Proportions Mark the Fighting Around Verdun Sector—Germans Succeeded by Surprise Attack in Champagne District in Entering a French Trench and Capturing 1000 Men—Heavy Artillery Fire Reported From Russian Front—Russians Repulse all Austro-Hungarian Attacks on Stripa River—Austrians Claim Success Over the Italians

LONDON, Feb. 29.—Throughout the entire sector of Verdun, except on the western bank of the Meuse River where the German bombardment has slackened somewhat, artillery duels are still in progress in vast proportions. To the south-east the French at Fresnes, in the Woevre region, have put down all German attacks against that town, but the Germans have inaugurated an important movement in the Champagne district where by a surprise attack, they succeeded in entering a French advanced position of a supporting trench over a front of nearly a mile, capturing more than one thousand men. Notwithstanding the fresh reserves which the French have thrown into the fray in front of Douaumont, the German War Office declared their efforts have been fruitless and that the Germans have advanced their lines towards Bras and Vacheraville. It is also claimed by the Germans that they have entirely expelled the French from the Meuse Plateau southward from Samogneux and west of Vacheraville.

On the Russian front, around Friedriehstadt and Iloukst, there has been heavy artillery, machine gun and rifle firing. In Galicia the Russians repulsed an attempt by the Austro-Hungarians to capture trenches on the Middle Stripa River. The Austrians, according to Vienna, have put down, with sanguinary losses, an Italian attack against their positions on both sides of Monte San Michele, east of Azzo. They also claim to have destroyed an Italian trench on the Gorizia bridgehead.

The Russian are still operating successfully against the Turks who fled from Erzerum and the Ottoman forces in the Persian battle zone.

DEAD

NEW YORK, Feb. 28.—The death of S.S. Raymond, Vice-President of the Clyde and Mallory Steamship Companies, is announced here to-day.

LONDON, Feb. 28.—Henry James, the novelist, died to-day.

THINKS NEUTRAL SHIPPING WAS EMPLOYED

LONDON, Feb. 28.—The British press is almost unanimous in assuming that the Maloja and other vessels, sunk by mines during the week-end, were the victims of fresh sowing of German mines.

There is much speculation as to how these mines could have been laid. The theory most frequently advanced is that certain classes of neutral shipping have been employed.

NATIONAL INTERESTS COME FIRST

PARIS, Feb. 28.—The Ministry of War announced to-day that owing to present military needs and suspension of navigation, freight cars cannot be placed at the disposal of commerce, except to a very limited extent.

The public will understand, says the announcement, that the interests of national defence must take precedence over private interests, and will accept with patriotic abnegation the new sacrifices which are imposed.

Huns Hand New Note To Lansing

Reiterates Assurances Regarding Future Conduct of Submarine Warfare—Attempts to Prove Britain Instructed Merchantmen to Use Armament for Purpose of Attack

WASHINGTON, Feb. 29.—Germany, in a formal Note presented by Count Von Bernstorff to Secretary of State Lansing to-day, reiterates the assurances regarding the future conduct of submarine warfare given in the Lusitania case and declares these assurances have not been modified by the memorandum setting forth its intentions to treat armed merchantmen of the Entente Allies as auxiliary cruisers after mid-night to-morrow.

Attempts to justify the issuance of the memorandum was made by presenting evidence and assertions designed to prove that the British Government have instructed merchantmen to use their armament for the purpose of attack in violation of assurances given to the United States.

Outlines Big Navy For States

Naval Board Seeks Two Fleets—One in Pacific Powerful Enough to Defeat Any Enemy There—The Other in the Atlantic—Exceeded in Strength Only by Britain

WASHINGTON, Feb. 29.—The Navy General Board's conception of the needs of the United States as a naval power were outlined to House Naval Committee to-day by Rear-Admiral Knight, President of the War Navy College.

In formulating the policy that the Navy should equal the strongest afloat by 1925, he said the Board had in mind the establishment of two fleets, one in the Pacific, powerful enough to overcome any enemy there, the other in the Atlantic, where it would be exceeded in strength only by the British fleet. He said to accomplish this would insure the country against 99 out of 100 possibilities of international complications.

FROM THE "MALOJA"

DOVER, Feb. 28.—A later official announcement said that the number of passengers on the Maloja, known to be saved, exceeds seventy.

Insurance Rates Take Big Jump

Heavy Losses in Shipping Recently From Mines and Other Causes Have Stiffened Insurance Rates—Companies Fear Fresh Submarine Activity by Germans on March 1st

London, Feb. 29.—Recent heavy losses in shipping, especially during the week end, from floating mines and other causes has resulted in stiffening insurance rates. Underwriters last week quoted rates on shipping to the continent which were almost prohibitive.

To-day's figures for east coast traffic show an increase of from ten shillings to twenty shillings per cent.; insurance for the Mediterranean and other voyages have not changed greatly, although there is more hesitation than heretofore in accepting risks.

This probably is due to the fear of fresh submarine activity beginning March 1st when the German and Austrians decrees concerning the treatment of armed merchantmen as warships will take effect.

Huns Attempt to Break Thru French Lines

Germans Make Terrific Attempt to Break French Lines Upon Novevre Plains—Hope to Throw Heavy Forces Across the Meuse and Cut off Verdun From the South

PARIS, Feb. 28.—The French have been compelled to yield further ground to Germans in the great battle at Verdun, but heavy reinforcements have been rushed to the firing line, and enormous losses are being inflicted upon the attacking forces, as they roll forward against the devastating fire of machine guns and artillery. Although the Germans are making their greatest effort north east of Verdun, particularly around Douaumont, violent fighting is in progress all along the front from Champ Neuville to St. Mihiel about 50 miles away. A terrific attempt is being made by the Teutons to break the French lines upon the Woevre plains and to allow them to throw heavy forces across the Meuse at St. Mihiel to cut off Verdun from the south.

The French War Office admits a withdrawal in that region for strategic reasons, but claims that the fresh attacks of the Germans have been repulsed. Both sides are being constantly reinforced, and it is reported, but without confirmation, that British troops may be sent to Verdun to help the French if the situation there becomes any more serious. It is believed, however, that this may not be necessary as military experts declare that German assaults have already begun to grow weaker and that their rightful losses are having a deplorable effect upon the morale of the Teuton troops. Fewer infantry attacks have been made by the Germans and they have been relying more upon their artillery.

On the other hand, the French have just begun to deliver their counter attacks in earnest, and mighty drives are being made against the German positions.

Great Violence Marks the Fight For Verdun

St. Pierre Bulletin

Paris vit St. Pierre, midnight, Feb. 28.—(Official).—In the Argonne our heavy batteries and field artillery opened up fire on the enemy's communications, especially in the district of Cheppy Wood.

At Hill 285 we exploded a mine and occupied the excavation.

In district north of Verdun both artilleries are very active, except in the sector west of Meuse where the German bombardment had decreased.

During the day the Germans attempted several partial attacks, which were repulsed by our fire, and counter attacks west of Douaumont. Our troops engaged Germans in a hand to hand struggle, throwing them from a small redoubt they had succeeded in occupying.

In Woevre sector two attacks on Fresnes completely failed.

In Lorraine our artillery was very active in Reillon, Lomeve, and Badonviller sections.

Mutual but slight bombardment on the Belgian front.

Losses Have Got Beyond Calculators—Military Critics Think Few of the 300,000 Germans Who Began the Attack Will be Left at the Finish—If German's Succeed in Taking Verdun They Will Find it an Empty Shell—French People Show Calm Confidence in French Army

PARIS, Feb. 29.—The fight for the possession of Verdun goes on with increasing violence and multiplying in dead and wounded. At this point losses have got beyond the calculators. It is impossible to verify how many reinforcements the Germans have brought up, but military critics believe that of the three hundred thousand men who began the attack, few will be left at the end of the first week's fighting for Verdun. The object of all this sacrifice is now nothing but an ancient fortress, according to authoritative information. If the Germans take it they will find it but an empty shell. Fort Douaumont, before which such a sacrifice of lives has been made by its assailants, holds neither cannon nor garrison. It is six months since the French, putting into practice the lesson of the war showing that fortresses are more vulnerable than field works, stripped Verdun of all its provisions and munitions, as well as those in the surrounding forts, and sent them to the rear. Eighty thousand men and several hundred cannon would have been the trophy of the conquest of the place in September, 1914, but to-day Verdun is not a fortress. It has neither cannon nor garrison and no provisions except for the current needs of the population. The value of the town itself is scarcely more than that of any one of the villages to the north taken by the Germans the last six days.

The attitude of the people and Press of France show a calm confidence, which is heightened by pride in the heroic counter attacks the French are making. Their reliance is placed not in Verdun, nor in any other stronghold, but in the army, which the Germans must destroy before French confidence is shaken.

MORE OF IT

NEW YORK, Feb. 28.—Fire broke out here to-day on the Eurymachos, a Russian ship, laden with munitions of war and about to sail for Vladivostok. The fire was extinguished after the ship had been seriously damaged.

The cause is unknown.

of British coastal waters for a specified time, since otherwise we cannot assume responsibility for their ship losses.

Leading German statesmen, Herr Bernhard continues, must soon determine whether to take this course and he adds, it is not without risk, but the greatest risk would be neglected opportunity. Moreover the risk perhaps is smaller since the American congress shows signs of demanding that the decision of international affairs be taken from the President's hands and placed in those of Congress.

ATTENTION IS DIVIDED BETWEEN BATTLE FOR VERDUN AND NEW HUN OFFENSIVE IN CHAMPAGNE

London Morning Papers Devote Much Editorial Comment on the Situation on West Front—The Times Thinks Situation Regarding Verdun as Serious—The Daily Telegraph Says Lull Will Enable Germans to Bring up Heavy Artillery—The Daily Mail Compares Verdun to Hun Attacks on Russians at Dunajec River Last April—Situation Regarded as Well in Hand

LONDON, Feb. 29.—The morning newspapers to-day devote many columns of space to the situation on the Western battle front. The fighting around Verdun divides attention with the new German offensive in Champagne to which the Times particularly attaches much importance. The expected offensive in Champagne, says the Times, has not been long in coming. The German stroke was sudden and succeeded in penetrating both the advanced and supporting trenches in the neighbourhood of Navarin Farm; but the claims made by the German official communication may safely be regarded as exaggerated. The region is deeply scored with French defence works, as formidable as these around Verdun. Should the German offensive develop further the French will be found to be fully prepared.

ONE MORE ADDED TO LIST

LONDON, Feb. 28.—According to Lloyds the British steamer Southford formerly the Sinaad, has been sunk. Eleven of the vessel's crew were saved and two killed.

The Southford was a vessel of 897 tons.

THE BATTLE OF VERDUN DESCRIBED AS A FRIGHTFUL MASSACRE

"Advance no Matter What the Losses May be" Was Order Given Troops Before Attack on Fortress—Clash Was Murderous as French Infantry Charge First Ranks of the Germans—Events Have Taken a Turn Favorable to French Arms During the Past Twenty-Four Hours

PARIS, Feb. 29.—A frightful massacre is how the German soldiers taken prisoners in the battle of Verdun describe the effect of the French artillery, machine gun and rifle fire, but the impetus of the assaulting forces have not been diminished thereby during the first four days, because fresh troops were thrown into the battle unceasingly. "Advance, no matter what the losses may be," was the order given the German troops before the attack. This has been verified by documents found on one of the captured officers.

The most critical moment in the six days' action was when the Germans gained a footing in an entrenched camp, by the capture of Fort Douaumont. The least hesitation on the part of the defenders would have been fatal.

However, the attacks are made repeatedly with such heavy masses as the Germans are constantly bringing up that it is admitted by the military authorities is always likely they officers are willing to pay the price in human life.

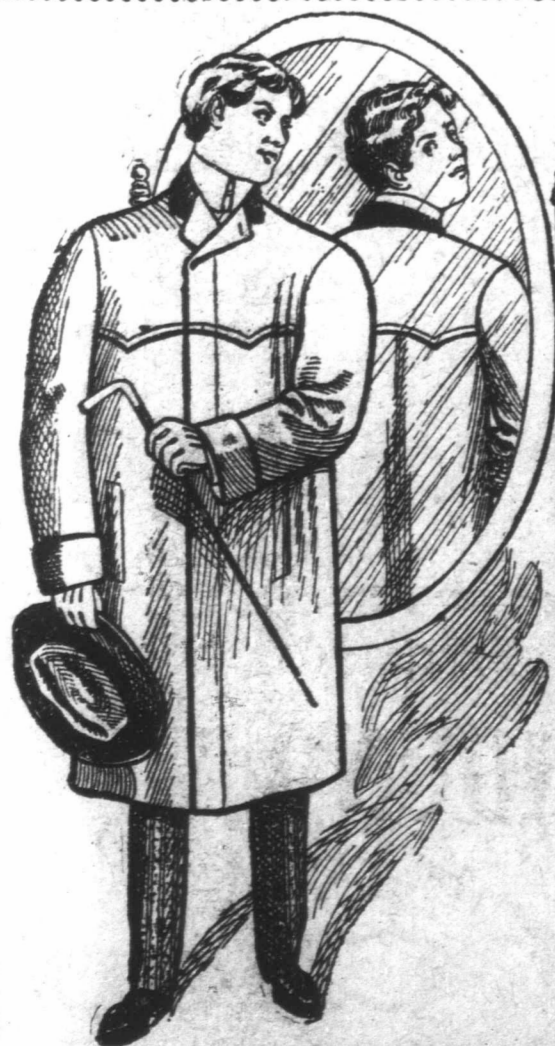
There is no exaggerated optimism to be found in military circles here, but the check given the Germans when attacking in such formidable numbers is regarded by them as one of the great achievements of the war, and it is generally held that events have taken a turn quite favorable to the French arms during the last 24 hours.

disastrous as the Germans redoubled their efforts to take advantage of any confusion, but the French immediately began a counter offensive. The French infantry advanced in double quick time when the trumpet sounded the charge and leaped at the first ranks of the Germans with irresistible fury. The clash was murderous. Both sides were thinned. The French ranks were not to be denied victory, but went on to the second German wing, while reinforcements were hurried to their support. The German lines wavered, at first west of Douaumont and then they were driven out of the ruins of the fort. A cry of triumph went up all along the French line and the order of counter-attack was redoubled. In the meantime an artillery duel surpassing in intensity any previous action of the war, added to the carnage of the battle, which seems now to have reached a critical point. The assaulting forces recoiled slightly in the region of Douaumont leaving the regiments which occupied the fort cut off and surrounded by French troops. Attacks upon the French left at Cote du Poivre seemed to have completely failed.

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