

French Troops Heavily Engaged.

Belgians Gallantly Defend Yser Sector—Guns Give Enemy Warm Reception—Ghastly Slaughter of Attackers.

FRANCE HEAVILY ENGAGED.
LONDON, April 18. (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—The French are heavily in action on the northern battle area.

FRENCH OFFICIAL.

PARIS, April 18. (Official.)—We have attacked various enemy positions on the Aves on a front of four kilometers between Thennes and Matly Rainout. East of the Aves we have made progress west of it we have taken the greater part of the Concoat Wood and further south we reached the slopes west of the Concoat Wood. The number of prisoners taken by us exceeds up to the present five hundred, of whom fifteen are officers. We captured several machine guns. It is confirmed that an enemy raid last night east of Courcy was deadly for the assailants. We shot about forty German bodies on the ground, and we took twenty prisoners, including an officer.

Barriers There.—There was great activity on the part of both artilleries along this sector of the front. An important surprise attack carried out by the British and Belgian troops on the morning of April 16th had most satisfactory results and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.

BRITISH COUNTER ATTACKING.

LONDON, April 18.

(Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—There is a somewhat more cheerful note in the newspapers to-day, following the reports that the British counter attacking, and having inflicted heavy losses on the German attack at Robecq, that the enemy is diverting his main effort further south, again assaulting Bethune. This is probably due to the fact that French reinforcements are coming into the line, but there is still anxiety as to the success of the British counter attack. The British are now following the course of the main German reserves estimated at 420,000 men, in a fashion which led the French writers to describe the British armies as "the saviors of the world." Experts do not endorse the opinion advanced in some quarters that the advance in the northern sector has been definitely checked. It is agreed that the Germans have not obtained the decisive result aimed at, thanks to the extreme stubbornness of the British resistance. The battle in fact appears to have been following the course of the main German reserves since October, 1914, which ended in Ypres, and failure for the enemy. There was no Allied reserves. That reserve has been used and has not yet been used. There will probably be continuous

fluctuations in the northern area for some time to come. But the salient fact of the fighting is the staying power of the British soldier. He has withstood the severest tests for a month, and the frequency wherewith the enemy has been repulsed at various points and is now being counter-attacked is the healthiest sign.

ENEMY HELD BACK.

WITH THE BRITISH ARMIES IN FRANCE, April 18. (By the Associated Press.)—The enemy had brought up fresh divisions for the hard thrusts which they made yesterday. Although the British were unable to hold Wytchachte and Meteren, which they had retaken by a brilliant counter attack, they beat off the enemy elsewhere. The British maintained their line throughout the night. A renewed heavy bombardment of the British front between La Bassée Canal, Givency, and the Nieppe Forest, suggests the Germans contemplate another heavy drive in this region in the hope of taking Bethune and creating a new salient. All the areas back of this section of the front were sprinkled with gas shells through last night. At six o'clock this morning the bombardment was nearly of drum fire intensity, between Locon and Robecq, where the enemy has tried repeatedly to advance his line to the Canal. An effort made by the fourth German Army, which holds the enemy's right flank to the sea, to drive in the front of the Allies from the coast was extended yesterday to the Yser region held by the Belgians. At 8.30 in the morning, after an all night bombardment, the Germans attacked on a front of four miles, between Langemark and Kippe. The Germans gained a footing in the Belgian advance position, but they were thrown out after a fight lasting nearly all day. The Belgians took 800 prisoners, including many officers, belonging to seven different regiments which represented one Bavarian, two Prussian and one Marine Infantry Division. Six heavy attacks were delivered by the Germans in the course of yesterday afternoon between Bailleul and Ypres in an attempt to bend back the British front still further and to create another dangerous salient in the Flemish marshes. Kemmel Hill was assaulted by three waves of Germans about one o'clock in the afternoon, but the enemy was thrown back with heavy casualties, and a counter attack completely restored the British lines. Other attacks were broken by British machine gun fire.

BRITISH HEADQUARTERS IN FRANCE, April 18. (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—Yesterday was a strenuous time for our infantry in co-operation with the French, who are

now engaged in the northern battle area. The day was satisfactory, the record balancing heavily in our favor. The German waves dashed against our lines in half a dozen places, but only at Beaver Hill did they force us to yield ground which was counter-attacked and regained. The heaviest onslaughts occurred southeast of Kemmel Hill and west of Merris, and there were two attempts northwest of Wulverstem. The enemy's objective is undoubtedly domination of the ridge system from Kemmel Hill to Wytchachte. While the Germans have not made any definite gains, their losses have been appalling. Our gunners anticipating the enemy's occupation of Paschendale salient, prepared to give them a warm reception, and when the German infantry advanced over the dreary waste, the great cemetery in the cockpit of Europe gathered another ghastly toll. The German attack against the Belgian positions nearer the coast is especially noteworthy. In this stage of the campaign the enemy employed four divisions, viz., one of the Marine Infantry, one Bavarian and two Prussian. An intense night long bombardment was probably counted upon to forestall all resistance, but the Germans speedily found that they were mistaken, the Belgians put up a fight ranking as one of the epics of their splendid war story, finally driving back the Germans in confusion, and taking more than 600 prisoners. This brilliant victory was on a stretch of six kilometers, between Langemark and Kippe.

ANXIOUS TIMES.

LONDON, April 18. The last few days has been the most anxious the British people have known since the beginning of the war. The first phase of the German attack was directed against both the British and French fronts and British troops have had to bear the whole force of the second attack. There is no lack of confidence that the British soldiers will do all any men can do, and there is the greatest pride in their gallantry and their stubbornness with backs to the wall against great odds. But as the Germans have continued day after day nibbling away sectors of the Belgian front south of the Hooflanders front, regaining towns small and unimportant themselves, but historic scenes of bloody and successful battles waged on ground gained the past two years by the British, Canadians, Australians and South Africans with tremendous costs, the question has forced itself upon the public whether it is fair to expect them to continue fighting indefinitely against superior masses. No other question is whether blame does not rest in high quarters that the soldiers are placed in the position of being outnumbered constantly. It is great anxiety for news of the French reinforcements which Field Marshal Haig told his army were coming to its support. General Maurice yesterday, likened the battle to a Waterloo where all depended upon the arrival of Blucher. Since he fell to arrive is a contingency hardly discussed, but last night's announcement that the French are co-operating with the British in the north gives hope as far as it goes in the meantime. The newspapers are discussing the situation with the greatest freedom. The War Cabinet is being criticized sharply by some military experts and editors. Colonel Repington, *of the Morning Post*, says the British forces are greatly inferior in numbers to the Germans, and says this inferiority is due to the refusal of the War Cabinet to act on the advice of the General Staff and the French Staff for an increase in man-power given months ago. Several newspapers are calling for the return of Sir William Robertson, former Chief of the Imperial General Staff. The retirement of General Robertson was a blow during the past week by that of Major General Trenchard, Chief of the Air Staff. General Trenchard was appointed only three months ago, and was welcomed generally as the one man for the work. He now goes because of differences with Lord Rothermere, the civilian head of the Air establishment, as General Robertson was supposed to have gone after difficulties with the Premier. Bringing back of Robertson is the appeal with which the weekly paper "John Bull," having a great circulation among the masses, has placarded the country to-day. It would be no surprise if that becomes a general demand to-morrow.

NO CHANGE IN FRONT.

LONDON, April 18. There has been no change on the British front during the night. The hostile artillery has shown great activity on the southern portion of the Yser battlefield between Givency and east of Robecq. A heavy bombardment of our positions between Locon and Robecq, was still continuing at dawn. Local attacks were repulsed by our troops yesterday evening in the Merris sector. More detailed account of the fighting of yesterday on the Forest of Nieppe, Wytchachte front, establish the severity of the enemy's losses. Southeast of Kemmel Hill the German infantry attacked in three waves and at one point pressed back our line slightly in this locality. The situation was restored by a counter attack and shortly after midday the attack had been repulsed at all points. In the Bailleul sector the enemy attacked three times before midday, and in each case suffered a complete repulse. Our line yesterday evening was reported intact on their whole front.

IRISH UNITED AGAINST CONSCRIPTION.

LONDON, April 17. The leaders of the Nationalists in Ireland, including the Redmondites, who are now led by John Dillon, the Sinn Feiners, O'Brientes, Laborites and Clericals, are united in their determination to resist conscription "by the most effective means at our disposal," which is the wording of a resolution passed at a meeting of Blah-

A MATTER OF RESISTANCE.

BRITISH HEADQUARTERS IN FRANCE, April 18. (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—The Germans this morning developed an attack on a long front between Givency and Robecq, pressing hard towards Givency. The enemy is apparently attacking the reserves. In the course of the great battle, more than thirty enemy divisions have so far appeared, and it is certain that the German command is exploiting every success by the most prodigal expenditure of man-power and not counting the cost. In the great German attack of yesterday our troops fought with Homeric valour against tremendous numerical odds. They are fighting in the same irresistible manner in the battle between Givency forest and Nieppe, now progressing. For nearly a week the German gains in the battle of Flanders have been limited to the smallest extent. It has been a terribly costly advance at certain points. If he measures the extent of the gains by the price paid, he certainly must be looking gloomily at the bold counter-attacks from Cassels to Messines which

TO THE Young Men of the Outports of Newfoundland!

On Soldiers' Day, April 12th, the people of St. John's proclaimed the spirit of the country towards the War. On the evening of that day the city spoke in a way no one who was present will ever forget.

A new chapter is opened in the story of our Native Land. A new spirit is passing over its length and breadth.

Its is more than a Recruiting Campaign that has been begun. It is a Crusade calling through the voice of conscience to each one of you who is free to go.

You hear it and it will not be still. You will offer yourself. Whether accepted or rejected you will have peace of mind from the knowledge of duty done.

You can find it in no other way.

(Signed) THE SOLDIERS and THE REJECTED MEN.

St. John's, April 17, 1918.

he is practically bound to attempt to take. The attempt to break through the Hooflanders front was probably inspired by the discovery of our withdrawal in the Morning Post, says the British forces are greatly inferior in numbers to the Germans, and says this inferiority is due to the refusal of the War Cabinet to act on the advice of the General Staff and the French Staff for an increase in man-power given months ago. Several newspapers are calling for the return of Sir William Robertson, former Chief of the Imperial General Staff. The retirement of General Robertson was a blow during the past week by that of Major General Trenchard, Chief of the Air Staff. General Trenchard was appointed only three months ago, and was welcomed generally as the one man for the work. He now goes because of differences with Lord Rothermere, the civilian head of the Air establishment, as General Robertson was supposed to have gone after difficulties with the Premier. Bringing back of Robertson is the appeal with which the weekly paper "John Bull," having a great circulation among the masses, has placarded the country to-day. It would be no surprise if that becomes a general demand to-morrow.

For The Spring!

Everybody needs something new for spring and here are a few thing we are offering:

Ladies' Spring Coats, in black and white checked, Blouses in lawns, voile and silk, Skirts in cloth and serge, Sweater Coats, the colors range in red, saxe, navy and V. rose, all neatly trimmed with white collars and cuffs. Also, Underskirts, Camisoles, Dressing Gowns and Jackets, House Dresses, Tea Aprons, Corsets, Hose, Gloves, Middy Blouses, etc.

THEN WE HAVE—

Men's Fancy Top Shirts, Braces, Sweater Coats, Pants and many other things.

WHY NOT GIVE US A CALL?

The C. L. MARCH CO., Ltd.,
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ops at Maynooth yesterday. For the first time in many years the Nationalists met the Dublin Sinn Feiners and their other enemies, Wm. O'Brien and Timothy Healey, while the Labor representatives who have not been friendly to the Nationalists in recent years, were also present at the conference, which was held under the chairmanship of the Mayor. The Sinn Feiners were loudly cheered when they arrived at the Mansion House. The outcome of conference was that a committee composed of John Dillon, Edwin De Valera, Timothy Healey and the Labor representatives, with the Mayor of Dublin was appointed to attend the Bishops' meeting at Maynooth where the resolution quoted was then passed. The meeting also directed that public meetings should be held in the Parish next Sunday, at which a pledge should be administered in the words of the resolution.

Masses of intercession will also be held in every Catholic church. In the meantime the authorities although they do not anticipate that any conscripts will be called until the Home Rule Bill is on the Statute books, are taking steps to deal with the situation which is to say the least is threatening. Field Marshal French, Commander in Chief of the forces in the United Kingdom, arrived in Dublin yesterday with his staff. The Nationalists, or at least the majority of them, are understood to have decided to abstain from attendance in Commons during the crisis thus adopting the attitude of the Sinn Feiners who were elected to Parliament, but have never attended.

ENEMY ATTACK BROKEN.
PARIS, April 18. After preliminary bombardment a

strong German detachment attempted to advance last night near Corbeny on the Aisne front. To-day's official statement says the attack was broken up by the French.

MAN-POWER BILL IN LAW.

LONDON, April 19. All the remaining stages of the Man-Power Bill were concluded to-day, and the Royal assent was given to the measure.

CABINET CHANGES.

LONDON, April 18. Official announcement was made to-day that the Earl of Derby has been appointed Ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary on a special mission to France in succession to Lord Bertie. Viscount Milner, becomes Secretary of War and J. Austin Chamberlain, a member of the War Cabinet.

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