

BIG WAR OPERATION IN WEST THOUGHT TO BE NEAR AT HAND

Good Ground for Belief That Big Push Will Begin Sooner This Year Than Last.

London, Feb. 18.—Development of operations on the western front, each day on a larger scale leads to the belief that the long expected big operations there are at hand.

Importance is attached to the German official report of German airmen bombing ammunition dumps at the rear of the British lines. This fact recalls the liveliness of the British airmen before the Somme attack began last year. It is possible that the Germans are trying to emulate British methods in preparing the first blow of the forthcoming clash. Also it is the first time in many months

that the German aviators have operated successfully in the British rear.

There is good ground for the belief that the big push may begin sooner this year than last. Both sides have rushed work on their lines of communication, and are now prepared to maintain the ammunition supply at all points without interruption.

The increased efficiency of both sides makes them independent of weather conditions, allows them to begin operations on a small scale, and maintain ever increasing attacks until the ground thaws and dries and then deliver a knockout blow.

BRITAIN SEEKS TO CLOSE LAST EXIT FOR SUBMARINES

New Danger Zone Proclaimed Through Route North of Scotland and Down Irish Coast.

A despatch from Washington says:—Two important moves by Great Britain to meet the submarine menace were announced on Friday. A new danger zone was proclaimed, seeking to block practically the whole route of exit towards the Atlantic of the German U-boats from their bases in Germany and Belgium. With the English Channel practically closed by an elaborate system of nets, mines and patrols, the means of exit for the submarines has been through the route north of Scotland and down the Irish coast. The new danger zone, design-

ed to close that way out, is understood to have been liberally strewn with mines.

Details of plans for changing the point of call and examination for boats between this country and the North-Atlantic European neutrals from Kirkwall to Halifax were made public. The idea is to allow the vessels to avoid the German submarine zone by swinging around Ireland and Scotland and down the Norwegian coast instead of touching the British Isles. A second port for the examination of southern commerce may be established later at the Bahamas or Bermuda.

2,000 OTTOMANS MADE PRISONER

Important British Success on the Tigris, Near Kut-el-Amara.

London, Feb. 18.—By a series of attacks uniformly successful the British in Mesopotamia have tightened their hold upon the defences of Kut-el-Amara. Turkish resistance was almost paralyzed on Thursday and Friday, and the capture of almost 2,000 prisoners, including high officers, and much war material, is reported by the War Office.

This spoil, unusually large for the Mesopotamian fighting, fell into British hands as a result of assaults upon the strong Turkish fortifications on both banks of the Tigris where it winds about Kut. A considerable sector on the right bank was completely cleared of Turks, and advanced troops now hold the south-west corner of the strong Shumran loop positions five miles from Kut.

An unusual feature is that the Turkish statements admit the British success, which usually they totally ignore. Two Turkish statements of Thursday and Friday admit that "part of our positions were evacuated according to orders to prevent needless losses" on Thursday, and that on Friday "we executed a slight backward movement to avoid unnecessary casualties."

EMPIRE'S WOOL CLIP
NEEDED FOR ARMIES.

Shrinkage of World's Supply Compels Britain to Safeguard Output.

A despatch from London says:—Replying in the House of Commons to criticism of the Government's method of requisitioning the wool clip of the Empire, H. W. Forster, financial secretary to the War Office, explained that the shrinkage of the world's supply of wool had compelled the Government to safeguard the enormous supplies needed for the Entente armies. He declared with emphasis that this action was solely a war measure, and without ulterior motives. Recognizing the importance of exporting wool in order to maintain the rates of exchange, Mr. Forster said that if it proved practicable the Government would do its utmost to stimulate exports even at the sacrifice of some part of the wool required for home consumption.

ALL COAL MINES IN BRITAIN TAKEN OVER BY GOVERNMENT

A New Officer Known As "Controller of Coal Mines" Will be in Charge of Department.

A despatch from London says: It has been decided by the Board of Trade to take possession of all coal mines in the United Kingdom for the period of the war in addition to those in South Wales already taken over. The President of the Board of Trade has decided to set up a new depart-

ment to control the coal mines. The directors of the London and North-Western Railway have placed the services of their general manager, Guy Calthrop, at the disposal of the Board. Mr. Calthrop's official designation will be "Controller of Coal Mines."

LEADING MARKETS FIVE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS

Success of British Loan Bitter Pill for Germany to Swallow.

A despatch from London says: The Times financial editor on Saturday writes: "The Stock Exchange is talking confidently about a thousand millions of 'new money' from the loan. We repeat the estimate under all reserve, for, of course, it is only guesswork, but undoubtedly the figure is beyond all precedent, and all the early expectations of Stock Exchange tips, which are usually based on fairly elaborate calculations arising out of data which is more accessible there than elsewhere. Five weeks ago nothing even remotely approaching such a huge figure was believed attainable. For the purpose of checking any estimate of the gross figures of the loan we repeat the amounts of the earlier securities which carried the rights of conversion. These were £899,927,000 four and a half per cent. war loan, £333,515,000 five per cent. Exchequer bonds, though the latter naturally are less likely to be converted.

"A feature of the subscriptions in many country districts has been the quantity of gold brought to the banks and post offices by working men and women. In Enfield, a busy munitions area, £7,000 in gold was paid for small amounts of stock certificates during the week. Among Saturday's subscriptions were £1,000,000, Lord Nicholam; £650,000, Rio Tinto Company; £150,000, Kodak Co.; £50,000, Singer Sewing Machine Co. One gratifying feature of the war loan is seen in the extent which the County of Dublin farmers subscribed. For the most part it is new money in hard cash. On Friday the amount of subscriptions received at the head office of the Bank of Ireland in College Green exceeded £1,000,000."

Japan Heavy Purchaser.

"Heavy purchases of Japanese bonds for sinking fund purposes have been the feature of the foreign market. The object is the obvious release of funds invested in Japanese securities for investment in the war loan. Down to the last minute on Friday, when there was yet time to subscribe to the loan, agents of the Japanese Government were busy purchasing bonds almost regardless of amounts. This assistance of our Eastern ally, as unostentatious as it is effective, made a favorable impression in the city. We understand that since the beginning of the year £2,840,000 of Japanese bonds have been bought for sinking funds, making a total since the outbreak of war of £9,615,880. The Japanese Government is already repaying its loan for its action. For credit is higher in this market than that of any other country."

The Weekly Nation says it hears that the war loan is a great success and that sums have been mentioned suggesting that the collection of new money is approaching £1,000,000,000. Arthur Neville Chamberlain, Director-General of National Service, speaking at Bristol on Saturday, said that he ventured to predict that the result of the war loan would be a bitter pill for Germany to swallow.

GERMANS ARE BLUFFING ABOUT SUB NUMBERS

But American Says There is Surprising Lot of New Troops.

A despatch from London says:—An Amsterdam despatch to The Times quotes an American who has just arrived from Frankfurt, where he had resided for eighteen months, as saying that the Germans have a great and surprising number of new troops. The despatch says that every German man of military age who is not engaged in the munition industry has been ordered into the army, with the result that the German troops are now more numerous than at the beginning of the war.

In reference to the submarine campaign the American said that the stories current in Holland about the immense number of German submarines was a German bluff, as he claimed to have information that there were not two hundred of the undersea craft available. Referring to the food situation he said:

"The allies have them down pretty well, but they are prepared for more hardships. The Germans can stand anything. I left Germany because the situation was growing too bad to be pleasant. Life in Frankfurt was very hard for the people. Any other population would rebel. There was a very bitter feeling there against the higher authorities and the people who were responsible for the war."

TO REDUCE TRAVEL IN SUBMARINE ZONE

A despatch from Ottawa says:—Action which will reduce the number of women and children leaving Canada for European countries adjacent to the zone of Germany's submarine operations or which may even prevent such travel entirely, will probably be taken by the Government. The dangers of navigation, consequent upon the submarine warfare and the necessity of passing through the danger zone, make it inadvisable to allow women and children to undertake such voyages at the present time.

TRY TO RAISE INTEREST ON THE LAST WAR LOAN.

A despatch from London says: The German Government is now discussing with the Bundesrat new direct and indirect taxes to raise £50,000,000 interest on the last war loan, according to Berlin newspapers, quoted in a Hague despatch to the Exchange Telegraph Co. It is probable, also, the papers, that the new taxes will apply to coal mine exploitation and railway traffic, with an increased tax on war profits.

BRITISH ATTACK ON TWO-MILE FRONT TAKE DEFENCES NEAR MIRAUMONT

About 800 Prisoners, Virtually All Prussians, Were Taken, in Addition To Heavy Losses Inflicted on Enemy.

London, Feb. 18.—Again the British have struck on both sides of the Ancre, cutting a wide gap in the German lines and pushing within a few hundred yards of Petit Miraumont. A successful attack Saturday captured trenches on a front totalling more than two miles to an almost uniform depth of a half mile.

It was another of the thoroughly planned attacks the British have developed recently on the Somme-Ancre front, far different from trench raids. Its main object was to push closer to the immediate objectives of Miraumont and Petit Miraumont, north and south respectively of the Ancre and on the road to Bapaume.

On Sunday the Germans tried to regain the positions taken from them by the British, but their attempts were fruitless. Attacking in waves, the Germans came under the concentrated fire of the British guns and were swept back to their trenches, suffering heavy casualties. At no place did the attacking forces reach the British line, and the British suffered no casualties. The British captured 780 officers and men.

CUBAN BAY MAY BE THE REFUGE FROM WHICH U-BOATS OPERATE

News of the Revolutionary Outbreak in Cuba Greatly Interests British Officials.

A despatch from London says: British officials are greatly interested in the news of the revolutionary outbreak in Cuba, where, they assert, they have reason to suspect German agents have been at work for a long time. Only a few weeks ago Captain Hans Boehm, a German army officer, was taken from the Dutch steamer Zeelandia at Falmouth. He had in his possession a chart of Santa Lucia Bay, Cuba, where, according to other papers seized at the same time, German agents had secured an oil con-

cession. It is the belief here that the Santa Lucia project was being developed by means of money sent from New York to Havana.

The British naval authorities, while they have failed to discover any German submarine base in the West Indies, declare that they have long had reason to suspect the intention of the Germans to establish one there, and as a consequence they look with suspicion upon the Cuban oil project, as possibly a blind to hide the establishment of a refuge from which submarines could operate.

DOMINION TO ISSUE ANOTHER WAR LOAN

Flotation Early in March to be Payable in Canada and New York.

A despatch from Ottawa says: Another Canadian war loan, the third to be issued in the Dominion, will be floated probably early in March. In view of the exchange situation between Canada and the United States, which is at present adverse to this country, it is regarded as likely that the securities of the new loan will be made payable both in Canada and New York.

HALIFAX IS PORT OF EXAMINATION

Neutral Vessels Leaving the U.S. to Call There Instead of at Falmouth.

A despatch from Ottawa says:—Confirmation of the report that the British Admiralty had designated Halifax as the port of examination for neutral ships leaving American ports, instead of Falmouth, was obtained from the Government on Thursday. It was stated by Sir George Foster, Acting-Minister of Marine, that negotiations in progress had reached a head and that it was definitely decided Halifax would be an examination port.

Whether it will be for all sailings in both directions, however, has not yet been decided. The latter arrangement might tax accommodation at the Winterport somewhat severely.

Officials of the Naval Service, Customs, Justice and Post-Office Departments will go down to Halifax to form an examination staff, which will be augmented by experts from Great Britain. Arrangements will be made to avoid all possible delay to the vessels examined. The new plan has been adopted at the request of neutral ship interests, who are anxious to avoid the dangers incident to examination at English ports in the blockaded area.

INDIA HAS CURTAILED RAILWAY SERVICES.

London, Feb. 18.—A Reuter despatch from Delhi says that among the new war measures adopted by the Indian Government are the severe curtailment of railway services and the organization of India's industrial and natural resources, with a view to increasing the output of munitions. In addition, an order has been issued forbidding women and children to sail for England except for the most urgent reasons.

FRANCE HAS ADOPTED DAYLIGHT SAVING

A despatch from Paris says:—The Chamber of Deputies on Friday adopted a bill permanently advancing the legal time one hour during the Summer. The nation on of the clock is to begin the first Sunday in April and this time will be in force until the first Sunday in October.

OVER 1,400 SOLDIERS VOTED AGAINST IT AND 221 FOR IT.

A despatch from Vancouver says:—A vote gives the result of the prohibition vote overseas up to Wednesday evening as 1,406 against, 221 for and 41 spoiled ballots.

WITHOUT FIRING A SHOT CAPTURED STRONG POSITION

Russian Detachments Surprise Austro-German Garrison in the Carpathians.

Petrograd, Feb. 18.—German statement issued to-day by the War Department, immediately drove out the Teutons. In the Carpathians Russian detachments surprised and captured without firing a shot a strongly fortified Austro-German position south-west of Okna. Teuton counter-attacks were repulsed.

ARE PLAYING GERMAN GAME

So Long as U. S. Ships Remain in Port for Fear of Attack.

A despatch from Washington says: The ruthless German submarine campaign and its effects upon the United States were discussed late on Friday by President Wilson and the Cabinet. The meeting lasted only an hour, and afterward it was said no new steps had been decided on.

Arming of American merchantmen and the economic effects of the partial tie-up of shipping out of American ports were the subjects on which the Cabinet centered attention. Secretary McAdoo is compiling a list of vessels held in port and Secretary Redfield is making a comprehensive analysis of the inroads submarines are making on shipping generally.

Consideration is given by the Government to all the different phases of the situation that have developed since the break in relations with Germany, including the detention of the Yarrowdale prisoners, the crisis with Austria, the plight of Americans in Turkey, and Belgian relief. High officials took pains to-day, however, to emphasize that the great fundamental problem before the nation is the illegal submarine campaign itself. Against this campaign the United States has made the most vigorous protest possible, short of war, but the Administration realizes that so long as it permits American ships to be held in port for fear of attack by submarines it is in effect acquiescing in the German policy. This state of affairs, it is admitted, cannot be permitted to continue indefinitely.

What the United States must do to end it, and when, are the only questions. The President is understood to have a very definite opinion as to what should be done, but he has not yet decided that the time to do it has come.

MILITIA TO DRILL 2 NIGHTS EACH WEEK

Active Campaign to be Instituted to Bring Units Up to Strength.

A despatch from Ottawa says: The calling out of the militia in large towns and cities for two nights of drill every week will, it is understood, be the entering wedge of the Government's new recruiting plans foreshadowed by the statement issued on Tuesday by Sir Edward Kemp. Together with the resumption of militia drill there will be an active campaign to bring the militia units up to strength. This, it is understood, will at first be conducted along the lines of voluntary enlistment, with the alternative of applying the Militia Act in some form if enough recruits are not secured in this way.

It is understood that the work of bringing existing incomplete overseas units up to strength and sending the remainder over as drafts is to be pushed with even greater vigor, and that there may be some radical amalgamating done if no other way is found of dealing with this matter. On account of the fact that many Canadian superior officers in England have dropped their rank and gone to the front as lieutenants, and that the breaking up of units into drafts has left a surplus, even of lieutenants, in the Mother Country, only two per cent. of officers will meet muster, and that there may be some radical amalgamating done if no other way is found of dealing with this matter. On account of the fact that many Canadian superior officers in England have dropped their rank and gone to the front as lieutenants, and that the breaking up of units into drafts has left a surplus, even of lieutenants, in the Mother Country, only two per cent. of officers will meet muster, and that there may be some radical amalgamating done if no other way is found of dealing with this matter.

MAXIMUM DAIRY PRICES ARE FIXED IN FRANCE

All Must Be Conspicuously Displayed in the Shop Windows.

A despatch from Paris says:—The Food Ministry has decided that from Feb. 19 maximum prices are to be fixed throughout France for milk, butter and cheese. In the Department of the Seine, including Paris, the price of milk must not exceed ten cents for a litre (about a pint and three-quarters) if bought in a shop, or eleven cents is delivered. The maximum prices for butter vary from \$1.12 to \$1.34 per kilo—roughly two pounds—according to the quality and source.

The only cheese prices fixed so far are camembert, from thirteen cents to twenty-six cents the kilo, according to quality, and point l'Eveque at slightly higher prices. All prices must be conspicuously displayed in the shops concerned.

There will be no celebration of Mardi Gras next Tuesday, but all theatres will be permitted to give both morning and evening performances. The two-course meal regulation, which applies to all hotels and restaurants, goes into effect to-day.

NAVIGATION TO OPEN EARLIER THIS YEAR

A despatch from Port Arthur says:—Ice conditions at this end of Lake Superior favor an early opening of navigation. Open water commences at Thunder Cape, 18 miles out. The weather has been cold, but high winds have kept the ice broken up.