

TURNING BACK THE HUNS

and marsh they would have had to work through a large stretch of low ground westward, which was surrounded by an amphitheater of downs, on the farther slopes of which the Germans had placed guns by the hundred. In other words, the wedge of lowish, seamed tableland extending from the southern French sector to the enemy's railhead at Péronne, was a great natural trap. Troops who stormed into it from the west would be held up by the river and exposed to a cross-fire of artillery. This was no doubt the reason why General von Einem thought that the allied bombardment on the southern side of the Somme was merely a distracting demonstration, and that General Foch and his able Staff intended to launch their real assault at Roye and Chaulnes.

MARVELOUS BRETON RESERVISTS

At half-past nine on Saturday morning the French Colonial and Breton troops advanced to the attack. The Bretons were middle-aged reservists, who had distinguished themselves in some fine defensive work at Quennevières alongside the Zouaves. Quiet, settled, steady married men, they had borne themselves calmly under bombardments and rush attacks in the sedentary life of the trenches, but only their own commander seems to have been strongly convinced that they would show great driving power in attack. Nearly all the other attacking French and Colonial regiments were led by battalions of fresh young troops, directed by old, experienced officers and supported by battalions of the finest veterans. The extraordinary reservists of Brittany, however, equaled the best