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Crisis of Great War Has Now Been Reached Says Pall Mall Gazette

Statement Said to Represent General Feeling of Well Informed Quarters in London—Admitted Germans Have Delivered Allies a Hard Blow in Capturing Some Strong Positions—The Capture of Verdun by the Germans is Now Discussed as a Possibility Which the Allies May Have to Face—Uneasiness is Felt Regarding the Outcome of the Struggle

LONDON, Feb. 29.—The momentous events at Verdun leaves little doubt that the crisis of the great war has been reached. This statement by the Pall Mall Gazette fairly reports the general feeling in well-informed quarters here in regard to the German onslaught. It is believed the world is now witnessing the final culmination of the plan which German high command decided on long before the war began, and for which preparations have been in steady progress for more than a year.

It is admitted the Germans have dealt the Allies a hard blow by gaining four or five miles on a front of nine or ten miles, and capturing some extremely strong positions, and it would not be true to say that no uneasiness is felt in regard to the outcome. Despite the glorious defence of the French soldiers, who are resisting the Germans' advance with the utmost gallantry, self-sacrifice and heroism, the capture of Verdun, which only a week ago would have been deemed absolutely impossible by military authorities, is now discussed as a possibility which the Allies may have to face.

It is not denied that the fall of the great French fortress would be a serious matter for the Allies, but on the other hand, to quote Lord Sydenham, who brings to bear on the great issues of the war one of the most acute and well-informed minds in this country: "If, when the issues become clear, it proves that the Germans have only achieved some moderate territorial gains with an extravagant expenditure of life and munitions, the effect upon the enemy must necessarily be profound. The feature of even a partial failure of a great offensive following upon the splendid successes of the Russian Army in Asia would bring about a complete change in the whole military situation and probably would be the herald of the coming victory of the Allies."

Hun Sub Policy Effects Only a Few Steamers

NEW YORK, Feb. 29.—Only a small proportion of shipping plying between American and European ports and a fleet of armed Italian merchantmen, appears to be menaced by the new "teutonic submarine policy," which went into effect at midnight.

British and French ships that have arrived here and at other Atlantic ports during the past year, carried no guns. Seven Italian ships, with naval guns mounted on their after decks and manned by trained crews from the Italian Navy, have been plying between New York and Mediterranean ports since the first of the year. One similarly armed put in at Port Arthur to-day, the steamer Giuseppe Verdi, the first Italian liner to arrive here since she was launched in the autumn of 1915, and is due to leave port to-morrow, this being her second round trip as an armed vessel. Her agents had not ascertained today the number of passengers she will carry, but it is believed the number would not be large, the majority being third class.

TWO BOATS FROM MALOJA ARE WASHED ASHORE

DOVER, Feb. 29.—Two more life-boats from the British steamer Maloja, sunk by a mine on Sunday, were washed ashore to-day at St. Margaret's Bay. The boats contained several bodies.

TOKIO HEARS OF HUN SUBMARINE ACTIVITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

TOKIO, Feb. 29.—Japanese naval authorities have received official advice that three British steamers, one French and one Swedish, were sunk by a German submarine in the Mediterranean on Feb. 23rd and 26th. The officials think this indicates an increased number of submarines operating in the Mediterranean.

There have been numerous announcements recently of the sinking of merchant vessels, presumably by submarines, but the censor's restrictions have been such that no mention has been made of the localities in which the sinkings occurred.

AS TOLD BY A SURVIVOR OF MALOJA

NEW YORK, Feb. 29.—A news agency despatch from Dover, England, today says that General McLeod, whose wife was among those who perished when the liner Maloja struck a mine and sank off Dover, testified at the inquest today into the deaths of 155 of the liner's passengers.

"My wife and I rushed for the life belts when we heard the explosion," said the General. "I then turned and helped with the launching of the boats, but by this time it was useless to try and put over any more, on account of the heavy list. I threw Mrs. McLeod into the water and then jumped in myself, swimming and supporting her for half an hour. When a trawler picked us up, Mrs. McLeod was unconscious and we could not revive her."

British View Of the Armed Merchantmen

LONDON, Feb. 29.—On the eve of the date set by Germany for beginning her new submarine campaign against armed merchant ships, Lord Robert Cecil, Minister of War Trade, issued a statement giving the British view of the status of such merchantmen.

This statement, which is in answer to queries as to whether merchantmen have been instructed to take the offensive against submarines, says that the British view always has been that defensively, armed merchantmen must not fire on submarines or any other warships except in self-defence. The Germans have twisted the passage in a document taken from a transport, which they sunk, into meaning that merchant vessels have instructions to take the offensive. This is not so. The passage of the question which lays down the maximum distance beyond which merchant ships are advised not to fire, must be read into meaning that a merchant vessel must not attack unless the submarine shows unmistakable hostile intentions.

PENSION FIGURES

LONDON, Feb. 29.—The military pensions the Government are now paying amount to £1,500,000 annually, according to an announcement made in the Lords to-day by Baron Newton, who calculated that the amount could easily rise to £7,500,000 if the war lasted until the end of March, 1917. About one-third of the men discharged were not pensioned. Baron Newton continued, but if all were pensioned the annual charge would now be £2,500,000, and probably would rise over £11,000,000 by the end of March, 1917.

BRITISH ARMEN BAGS ENEMY PLANE

LONDON, Feb. 29.—A British officer says Flight Lieut. Simms today attacked a hostile aeroplane which fell in flames a short distance in front of the Belgian lines in combat, the action being a full view of the Belgian soldiers in the trenches.

OFFICIAL

BRITISH

LONDON, March 1.—A British official dealing with the fighting along the British lines on the Continent to-day, says:

"Our artillery bombarded the enemy trenches to-day about Ouvillers, Authuille and Fromelles. There has been considerable artillery activity by both sides about Ypres this morning. A German aeroplane, of the Albatross type was brought down south of Lorraine behind our lines. Another hostile aeroplane was turned completely over and burst into flames and fell behind the German lines in the vicinity of La Bassee. This afternoon a German captive balloon broke loose and drifted northward, at a great height, passing over our lines east of Lathune."

BELGIAN

PARIS, Feb. 29.—The Belgian official statement says that greater activity has been displayed by artillery, especially in the region of Dixmude.

In the course of the afternoon two German balloons before our front broke from their moorings and fell one into the sea opposite La Pannee, and the other near Coudekerque. The aeronauts were made prisoners.

WON'T HAVE HIM

NEW YORK, Feb. 29.—A news despatch from London to-day says: "Bulgaria has informed Austria that the reported plan for the reinstatement of Prince William of Wied on the Albanian throne, is regarded as an act of hostility, according to a Rome wireless to-day."

Prince William organized bands of Albanian irregulars and co-operated with the Austrians in harassing the Serbs and Montenegrins during the recent fighting.

Greater Intensity Marks the Bombardment at the North of Verdun

Hand to Hand Encounter Near Village of Douaumont Results in Huns Being Repulsed by the French

PARIS, Feb. 29.—The bombardment to the north of Verdun is continuing with greater intensity. East of the Meuse last night there was a resumption of violent attacks. Near the village of Douaumont the fighting came to a hand to hand encounter, and the Germans were repulsed by the French troops.

After an intense artillery fire, the German forces captured the village of Manheulles, but a counter attack brought the French to the western boundary of this location and they now hold Manheulles under their fire. In Lorraine the Germans succeeded in occupying some small sections of the French trenches, but they were shortly driven out from these positions.

Big French Liner 'Province' Sunk 900 Lives Lost

PARIS, Feb. 29.—It is announced officially to-day that the auxiliary French cruiser Province was sunk in the Mediterranean on Saturday. Probably 900 lives were lost.

She was a ship of 13,750 tons, had a speed of 22.5 knots and was previously owned by the Transatlantic Co.

Germans Claim To Have Taken 16,575 Unwounded Prisoners

BERLIN, Feb. 29.—The War Office announced to-day that a small armed work north-west of Douaumont has been stormed by the Germans. The official announcement gives the total number of unwounded prisoners taken as 16,575.

ITALIANS SEIZE HUN SHIPPING

In Some Quarters This is Said to be the First of a Series of Acts Which Will Lead to War Between Italy and Germany

WASHINGTON, Feb. 29.—The announcement that Italy will secure German ships in Italian waters, attracted much attention in official and diplomatic circles. In some quarters the belief is expressed that the seizure would be the first of a series of acts which eventually might lead to war between Italy and Germany. Although diplomatic relations between the two countries have been broken off, they have not been at war. What Germany's response to Italy's action might be diplomats here to-day said they were unable to determine.

One leading explanation advanced of Italy's action was that she was prepared to answer the new German submarine campaign, which goes in to effect at midnight, by sending German-owned ships to sea to meet the Teutonic submarines.

Another one advanced was that Britain, short of ocean ships from submarine activities, wanted to use the ships in Italian ports, and was urging Italy to war on Germany. Portugal's recent action was similar to Italy's, and is recalled in connection with today's announcement in the British Commons.

Expenditure Current Year Is \$1,509,000,000 Pounds

McKenna Says Important Statement in Commons—Snowden, Socialist Member, Again Brings up Peace Talk—Was Stopped by Speaker

LONDON, Feb. 29.—In response to a question in the Commons to-day, Chancellor of the Exchequer McKenna said it would not be in the public interest to publish the amount of American securities which have been collected, in consequence of the Government's mobilization plan. McKenna estimated that the national expenditure for the current year would reach the gigantic total of £1,509,000,000 sterling. The Government, he said, was prepared to give assistance for development of foreign trade, in order to insure that rivals, who were Great Britain's bitter enemies, should not, as in the past, enjoy control of foreign trade.

Lloyd George, Minister of Munitions, said in reply to a question, said it was not desirable to publish information concerning communications which had passed between the Allies when they mutually bound themselves not to conclude a separate peace.

Philip Snowden, Socialist member for Blackburn, intervened with a question as to whether a secret treaty had not been concluded as a price of Italy's intervention in the war, offering to give Italy large tracts of Austrian territory. At this point the Speaker stopped Snowden's further progress with his question, which remained unanswered.

Recent recruiting in Britain has revealed a good deal of dissatisfaction over the failure of the Government to make adequate financial arrangements for married men in good positions, enlisting under Lord Derby's scheme, in whose behalf an agitation arose for a moratorium for tenants for their residences, and other liabilities.

Walter Hume Long, President of the Local Government Board, announced in the Commons that the Government was considering the question of establishing such moratorium, but that no detailed statement was yet possible.

Love is blind; therefore it fails to see the danger signals.

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OFFICIAL

FRENCH

PARIS, Feb. 29 (official).—Between Soissons and Rheims our artillery bombarded important points behind the enemy's front.

In Champagne our batteries shattered German organizations in the region of Hill 133. To the west of Macons de Champagne the Germans exploded a mine, the crater of which we occupied.

In the region of Verdun, bombardment continued on the north front with less intensity than on the preceding days. No infantry action was reported in the course of the day. The Germans entrenched themselves on the slopes north of Cote du Poivre, the first ridge of which is occupied by our advance elements. We carried out violent fire at Samogneux, where an enemy battalion had assembled.

At various points on our front and in Woerre our artillery fire prevented attacks, in the course of preparation, from being carried out.

In the Vosges there has been great artillery activity in the region of Senones and Ban de Sapt. To the east of Seppois a counter-attack by us drove the enemy from some section trenches which he had penetrated during the morning.

PARIS, Feb. 29.—North of Verdun the bombardment is continuing with still greater violence, east of the Meuse. Fierce local German attacks were renewed several times during the night against the region of Douaumont village, reaching even to a hand-to-hand struggle, but all these attacks were thrown back by our troops.

In Woerre, the Germans after a very fierce artillery action, captured Mannoilles village. An immediate counter-attack enabled us to reach the outskirts west of the village, which we are shelling.

In Lorraine, the Germans succeeded in gaining a footing in several elements of an advanced trench, but were dislodged immediately. Nothing elsewhere.

French Batter Hun Positions In the Champagne Region

North Verdun Fighting Continues With Lessening Activity—The French Prevent Germans From Launching Offensives in Vosges Mountains—Huns add Several Additional Points to Their Holdings Round Verdun—In Their Drive East of Verdun Enemy Have Extended Their Advance Over a Front of 12 Miles

LONDON, March 1.—Fighting continues, but with lessening activity north of Verdun. The French in the Woerre region, east of Verdun, are using their artillery to 'reak up' the German preparations for further advances towards the fortress at various points. The fire of the French guns prevented the Germans from launching offensives in the Vosges Mountains. There also has been great artillery activity by the French near Senones and Ban de Sapt, while near Seppois the Germans have been driven out of the trenches they had previously taken. In Champagne the German fortified works in the region of Hill 193 have been battered by French guns. The crater of a mine exploded by the Germans was occupied by the French. The Germans have added several additional points to their train in the fighting about Verdun, having been enabled to construct trenches on the slopes north of Cote du Poivre and have captured an armed work north-west of Douaumont and have taken the ruins of Manheulles and Champlon, thirteen miles south-east of Verdun. In this drive to the east of Verdun the advance of the Germans has extended over a front of virtually 12 miles from Dieppe to Champlon. Berlin reports that thus far they have taken as prisoners 228 officers and 16,575 men and a large number of guns, machine guns and much war material. There has been considerable artillery activity in the air between battalions of German and British aviators along the British front in France and Belgium.

Wilson Throws Down Gauntlet to Congress; Wants Vote Taken

IRELAND'S HOME RULE BILL AGAIN POSTPONED

LONDON, March 1.—The operation of Ireland's Home Rule Act which was passed shortly before the outbreak of the war has again been postponed by Order in Council for six months, unless the war is ended before that time.

The operation of this act has already been twice postponed on account of war.

ACCORDING TO PASSENGERS

NEW YORK, Feb. 29.—The Entente Allies have massed from 500,000 to 1,000,000 fresh troops at Bordeaux, to be ready for emergencies, according to passengers who arrived here to-day from France aboard the steamer Rochambeau. None of these soldiers, it was asserted, had been near the battle lines or any theatres of war. They are said to comprise part of Earl Kitchener's new army and drafts from French Colonies.

CANADIAN CITIZENS BEING HELD UP

LONDON, Feb. 29.—Citizens of Canada, born in the United Kingdom, who are visiting the Mother Country, are finding it difficult to get back if eligible for service.

One man, resident of Ottawa for fifteen years, who came home for a holiday recently, informed the Agent-General for Ontario that he had been refused a passport and had been notified to report for service.

New York Hears Hun Losses at Verdun are 45,000

NEW YORK, Feb. 29.—A news agency despatch from London, published here to-day, says:

"More than 45,000 Germans were killed in the assault on Verdun, according to a Central News despatch from Amsterdam to-day, quoting Dutch sources as authority. On one 2-mile front, the despatch stated, were found 8,000 German corpses. One regiment has been formed from the fragments of eight German regiments nearly wiped out in the fighting around Haumont. Scores of trains of wounded from the German front are reported arriving at Metz. The hospitals at Coblenz, Treves, Cologne and other German cities were said to be overflowing with wounded."

ASSISTANT TO MINISTER OF BLOCKADE

LONDON, Feb. 29.—Walter Hume Long, President of the Local Government Board, announced in the Commons to-day, on behalf of Premier Asquith, that Rear Admiral Sir Dudley De Chair had been appointed assistant to Robert Cecil, Minister of blockade.

BLOCKADE RAISED

LONDON, March 1.—It is officially announced that the blockade of the coast of Kamerun, German West Africa, was completely raised at midnight.

The completion of the conquest was announced a fortnight ago.

In the Dvinsk region of Russia the Russians have driven the Germans back and advanced their lines and have put down, under a heavy fire, an attempt at a counter-attack.

Wilson Takes this Step so as all Doubts and Conjectures Regarding America's Attitude May be Swept Aside—Big Loss of Life on French Liner "La Provence"—Russians Reply to Turk Communication Regarding Fall of Erzerum—Say Turks Losses Were Enormous

LONDON, March 1.—In a lengthy statement, in reply to an official communication issued from Constantinople, the Russian General Staff describes the powerful defenses which guarded Erzerum and declares the force of the blow dealt by the Russians can be estimated by the fact that some Turkish army corps of three divisions each, now number only a few thousand men, all the remainder having either perished or been taken prisoners.

Details are lacking concerning the disaster to the French auxiliary cruiser "La Provence," which has been lost in the Mediterranean. While the French Ministry of Marine estimates the number of survivors at 870, no estimate is made of the casualties.

On the eve of opening Germany's submarine campaign against armed merchantmen, President Wilson has thrown down the gauntlet to Congress over the resolutions which have been introduced, having as their purpose a warning to Americans not to travel on armed merchantmen. In a letter to the Acting Chairman of the House Rules Committee, the President asked the matter be brought to a vote in the House. It is his intention to ask for formal action in the Senate. The President's step is taken in order that all doubts and conjectures may be swept away and that our foreign relations may be cleared of damaging misunderstandings.

The Admiralty Publishes List of Steamers Sunk, Unwarned

LONDON, March 1.—The Admiralty to-night made public a list of unarmed British vessels torpedoed and sunk by enemy submarines, without warning, up to the end of 1915. It comprises 39 steamers and one trawler. The list also gives neutral vessels said to have been torpedoed in the same period, without warning, as 13 steamers and one sailing vessel, of which two were the Gulfight and the Nebraska, American, 4 Norwegian, 4 Swedish and 1 Dutch, 1 Danish, 1 Greek and 1 Portuguese.

In addition to the above, says the Admiralty statement, there are several cases in which there is no reason to doubt that the vessels were sunk by torpedoes fired without warning from a submarine, but in the absence of actual proof due to lack of survivors or from other causes, those cases are omitted from the lists.

Claims Hun Drive For Verdun is Progressing

BERLIN, Feb. 29.—Progress for the Germans in their drive towards Verdun and in the Woerre district, was announced by the War Office to-day. German troops have passed Dippe Abcourt and Blanc, and also have taken Manheulles and Champlon.

EXPECTS BIG GERMAN DRIVE IN SPRING AGAINST RUSSIANS

PETROGRAD, Feb. 29.—The announcement was made semi-officially to-day that tremendous activity has been observed over the whole length of the German front. In the east there are various indications that the spring will see another great effort by the Germans on the Russian front.

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