

The Mount Airy News.

VOL. XXXIX

MOUNT AIRY, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 1917.

NO. 48

BATTLE OF MESSINES RIDGE COME TO AN END.

Allies Feel That America Can Greatly Accelerate Crushing of Tonic Military Power in the World Struggle

British Headquarters in France, June 10, via London.—(By the Associated Press)—While still further German counter-attacks may be expected from time to time, the battle of Messines ridge may be said to be ended. It stood out as a definite operation designed for certain purposes, and it remains to be seen whether other offensive battles have been planned in this particular sector of the western front.

The taking of Messines ridge has robbed the Germans of the last commanding natural position they occupied for so long opposite the British lines. Bapaume and Vimy and Messines ridges, as well as Monchy plateau, five miles east of Arras, have all been captured by the British during the last three months, and this has materially changed the military situation on this front.

When the Germans chose what they were pleased to term permanent lines of defense in 1914, they occupied these vantage points with a fore-knowledge of their strategic, tactical and observation values as that possessed by any French military student. The Germans had a thorough familiarity with and detailed maps of, every square rod of French territory over which they proposed to fight, and when flung back from the Marine had already selected the lines upon which their trenches fortifications were to be built. It is natural that the German communications and wireless press reports should attempt to belittle the loss of these positions, but the British who have had to endure the handicap of lying under their direct observation and fire for so long a time make no attempt to disguise the satisfaction with which they look to the future and what it holds in store for the Germans who at last are virtually the under dog.

Of course there remains the much talked of Siegfried and Wotan lines, with their various support systems of trench defenses. The Siegfried line represents that portion of the Hindenburg line between Queant and St. Quentin. The Hindenburg line, between Queant and Arras, has virtually been all taken by the British, so the Germans now call their present line of defense north of Queant, the Wotan line, formerly known as the Dorchourt line runs to Montigny, thence west to Annay, and connects with the trench systems there. All these lines, however, lack the natural advantage which the Germans possessed when in command of the ridges.

The enemy has endeavored to offset this with artificial strength in the elaborate use of steel and concrete dugouts, machine gun emplacements and supports for the covered communication trenches. The victory of Messines ridge, however, shows that concrete and steel strong points must yield to the concentration of artillery fire which the allies now are able to bring to bear upon any given point.

The allies feel that they have shown that the German military power can be crushed, the only question remaining being the speed with which this can be approached. This is where they say America can help with her tremendous weight of men and material and they are looking forward to this help during the late autumn and in the spring of 1918, and thus go confidently on.

It would seem that a victory must be gained by a series of powerful blows such as that delivered at Arras on Easter Monday and at Messines last Thursday. There is little hope that modern warfare can ever get wholly into the open and no one is deluded by such thoughts, for the sim-

ple reason that a retreating army can dig faster than its opponents can advance. This is true certainly of armies of nearly equal numerical strength and where vast bodies of men and guns have to be moved forward as in the battle of present day magnitude.

Germany made her great sweep into France when her opponents had little with which to stop her. Those conditions are changed now and each battle is fought to gain certain definite positions. When these are taken it remains a matter for military counsel as to whether the fighting shall proceed on that front or whether new blows shall be struck elsewhere.

Minor and subsidiary operations, of course, may be in progress at several points at the same time.

Last Thursday's battle may be taken as typical of the new theory of warfare. It was complete in itself—complete in action, complete in success. General Plummes' army which planned and conducted it, has been congratulated by Field Marshal Haig, and takes a particular pride in a tribute from a very highly placed French officer, who after studying the plans and witnessing the action, said:

"This is a model of what modern attacks should be."

The correspondent saw all the battle maps and heard a detailed exposition by the army staff the day before the battle of just what would be attempted and what it was hoped to accomplish. Several new ideas were embodied both as to fighting and as to inner control of operations. Not a single hitch occurred and it can be stated that the ultimate British plans were attained at minimum cost. Not the least of these plans was to inflict great loss upon the enemy. If the usual computations as to casualties held good in this battle, the taking of more than 7,000 prisoners meant a total of killed or wounded of four or five times greater—thirty thousand or more. One of the most gratifying features of this latest victory was the secret of the vast mining operations, which had been in progress for nearly two years, some vast stores of explosives having been in a firing position for fully 12 months.

Any further counter-attacks the Germans may attempt will prove costly for them for the British in wiping out the Wyttsche salient have shortened their line by at least one-third in this sector and have therefore a still greater concentration of artillery upon the near straight line than upon the wide, sweeping curve of the old position.

Many interesting letters have been captured in the recent fighting. The following is taken from an unposted letter written by a man of the 4th German grenadier regiment from the trenches attacked on Thursday:

"Since April 29 I am in the trenches near Ypres, where an offensive is now taking place. The drumfire has shot everything to little bits; there is almost nothing more of the trenches to see. Up to now I have escaped with my life, but we have had terrible losses. Half of my company are dead or wounded. It is a terrible life; it will soon be unbearable. He is best off who gets bullet and need no longer knock about.

"The Englishman blows everything to bits he can see. He bombards everything. He bombards every district up to 15 kilometers behind the front. He has also blown our kitchen to pieces, so we don't get any warm food; only dry stuff."

THE TIME HAS COME.

The time has come—
"When reason primes the rifle,
When honor draws the sword,
And Justice breathes a blessing
On the cause that we uphold."

"We have conscripted our young men. Shall we be more tender with our dollars?"—Secretary McAdoo.

WE ARE ONLY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR

Secretary Baker Declares that "When the War is Over the Task of Healing will Begin, But the World Won't Be the Same.

Chapel Hill, June 6.—"We are still clearing new ground where men may build a new civilization and the United States is called, like Sir Galahad, to contribute to the making of these things." Thus Secretary of War Baker visualized the idea that he wished to bring to the students and alumni at the University of North Carolina, gathered for the 122nd annual commencement. He had discussed the sudden approach of America to the grand canyon when everything the nation had tied to and relied upon had been dashed down to destruction, and asked, Is it possible for any civilization to exist, and if so, under what circumstances? We had supposed, continued the secretary, that war had become civilized, that it was surrounded by certain conventions and that nations would observe certain rules. The first principle was that treaties between neutrals and nations at war would be respected; second that non-combatants would not be destroyed and that war would be conducted in accordance with certain rules agreed upon among nations.

The new doctrine subscribed to by the Germans that treaties were mere scraps of paper was a great shock to nations. Without good faith, how can there be peace and justice and accord? But America only recovered from the shock of this to discover that this was only the beginning of other encroachments. Belgium was occupied, her people, prosperous and happy, made prisoners of war and reduced to starvation and they would have starved but for the people of the United States.

But this nation had further evidences of the consequences of war. The crowning infamy of modern times was the sinking of the Lusitania with the drowning of women and children. But more than women and children sank with the Lusitania. It was carrying the war to non-combatants with not a chance for their escape and there will be no peace until the policies which are responsible for this are stamped out. Civilization lies buried in the hulk of the Lusitania, said Mr. Baker.

Following this came the slaughter of innocent people by missiles from the skies. Children going about their usual occupations are killed by bombs from the air raiders.

Referring to the extent of the devastation of the country invaded as possible a normal consequence of war, he declared, however shocking it may be, there is not a child living today under five years of age in the great kingdom of Poland.

Secretary Baker attributed the present war and condition of things to the moral quality of civilization. While not specifically placing the blame, he thought certain things should be pointed out.

The foundation of a future civilization must rest on these: First, that when nations make treaties, they must keep them. A man who gives his word must hold it inviolate. These treaties must be enforced by an international tribunal; second, a new principle must be established in regard to the foundation of the states themselves. That view or doctrine which holds for the aggrandizement of the state, the welfare of the state, the wealth and trade of the state above that of individuals composing the state; that thing which places the state above the citizen; that holds life and property must be sacrificed to make the state more powerful, must be stamped out.

The new principle must be accepted that states exist only for the benefit of

the people who erect them and who sustain the state. Any form of government which separates itself from the people is unsafe; it is on a basis or principle which is intolerate to mankind.

Returning specifically to the conflict, Mr. Baker gave some idea of the number of the people used and the vast cost and the magnitude of the task. The 110,000,000 people had to be diverted from peaceable ways and organized for war and this nation must fight as they are fighting.

"God forbid that an American soldier, even by accident, should ever take the life of a woman or child," he declared amid great applause.

"America," he continued, "must find new agencies for meeting the situation. We must learn to fly, we must get control of the air for protection of our armies and we must continue to hold it.

"But the submarine," he declared, "must be exterminated, but not intimidated," he continued in referring to fact that America, having invented it, must now undo what she had done and she is going to solve the problem. Paying more compliments to the submarine, he said it was not a weapon of defense, it was a cowardly assassin of the sea, skunking out of the darkness to perform its nefarious work.

Without attempting to re-state the reasons for America entering the war, Mr. Baker said he especially desired to emphasize that one of the aims is to suppress the intolerable philosophy of diplomacy which has existed and to substitute as a basis for future negotiations faith between nations.

In referring to Tuesday's registrations when 10,000,000 young men offered their services, he contrasted the remarkable case of the registration and the response in so hearty a manner by the young men of America, the loosest government in the world, to the difficulty that England had in establishing this principle. He construed this response of the men to registration with so little difficulty and in so short a time as a complete answer to the charge that a government, to be effective, must be imperial.

America has now prepared for her part in clearing the new ground, he continued, and the war so far has shown, and he wished to emphasize these outstanding features: First, there had been a singular absence of frivolity of our people about this war. Men were not entering from the pure joy of fighting, but with a determination to fight to the end when the cause is just. Second, however the war started, he declared, America had entered the war without hope of territory, without claiming indemnities, without selfishness and greed but with a purpose single to fight for human rights and for the establishment of a new civilization. The young men who have left Chapel Hill and all the Chapel Hills of our empire are not soldiers of fortune, but are fighting behind a great idea and the future will have greater benefits for their sacrifices.

As to the war, Mr. Baker thought we were only at the beginning of this great effort. "No man can tell how long it will last. Anyone could be blindfolded and turned loose in the vast audience in this house and touch men who will be on the battle fields within a year. Some will go, others will stay here. But there is work for all to do now and after the war is over." However strenuous the circumstances, he urged, "Don't let the lamps of learning go out." He urged that students do not bother about conclusions and arguments about classical education, but to count every moment now as a moment on guard. "Although you may not be parading with a rifle, you are on guard."

About the present struggle the speaker stated that before the end of the war 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 men would be killed and the resources of the nations are being devastated at the

rate of \$60,000,000 to \$70,000,000 per day and 10,000 men are killed every day between sunrise and sunset.

"When the war is over, the healing task will begin. But the world won't be the same."

Governments are going to be changed and modified. Even our own government is going to be changed in ways we don't now know about. "There will be calls for educated men and women when the war is over. There are still laurels enough for every hero of war or peace and plenty of gifts if we have spent our time in the preparation of our souls," he concluded.

MEN CRUCIFIED ON BARN DOORS BY THE GERMANS.

Looks for German Resistance to Be Overcome in June and Collapse to Follow.

Melborne, Australia, May 20.—Major General James Gordon Legge, chief of the Australian general staff, who left Australia in May, 1915, to command the first Australian division at the Dardanelles and subsequently served with distinction on the Gallipoli peninsula and in northern France, said on his recent return here from the western front:

"I am convinced that the German resistance will be broken by June and I hardly think that the war will last another year. The duration of the German resistance after the main line is broken can only be guessed. Once Germany is beaten on the western front Turkey and Austria will soon cry enough and collapse like a house of cards.

General Legge said that the weather and the mud had all along been a greater obstacle than the Germans on the western front and had prolonged trench fighting.

Speaking of German warfare he said that while on the western front "on undoubted evidence" he was shown barn doors which bore marks indicating that men had been crucified upon the doors with bayonets; that he saw evidences at certain places that children's brains were wantonly dashed out. "Personally," he added, "I feel as if I could never again have social intercourse with a German."

General Legge was the organizer of the Australian universal military training system. He went on active service in this war when General Bridges was killed at Anzac Cove. He had served in the South African war.

175 MINERS PERISHED IN BUTTE, MONT., DISASTER

Butte, Mont., June 9.—All hope that any of the unaccounted for miners, believed to number more than 175, had escaped from the North Butte mines in which fire broke out late last night, was abandoned tonight when the helmet men penetrated to the 7200 foot level of the Peculator mine from adjoining mines, waded through water up to their arm pits, encountered strong gas, and saw many bodies which they were unable to recover. Forty dead had been taken out up to tonight. It is believed that the mine damage will exceed \$1,000,000.

The Granite mountain shaft, 3,600 feet deep, was a roaring chimney tonight.

The fire broke out in the lower levels of the mine, starting from a broken power cable that carried electricity to the underground pumps. Lower levels of the mine quickly filled with smoke and gas.

There were 412 on the night shift. Of these 213 escaped through levels connecting with other mines. The gas spread to the Diamond mine and it is feared it took a further toll of life in that property.

"We do not intend to be drawn at the chariot wheels of any military autocracy."—Secretary McAdoo.

TRAWLERS CHASE THE GERMAN SUBMARINES.

Stories of Lively Encounters in The North Sea Are Told by British Seamen and Others.

London, May 20.—Stories not hitherto published of lively encounters between British trawlers and German submarines in the North sea were told by Robert Lowery and others at the recent meeting of the mission to national seamen. One trawler, Sir Robert said, because such a terror to U-boats that four of them lay in wait and eventually destroyed it. On one occasion, this trawler armed with two light guns was attacked by a submarine. One shot went through the deckhouse, another smashed the wheel "but the skipper went on steering with broken spokes." Another shot carried away the cook's galley but the trawler's gunner hit the submarine which then had enough of it and went under.

Another unarmed trawler saw a submarine on the North sea and made a dash for it with the result that the U-boat quickly submerged. "It went underneath," said Sir Robert, "because it could not imagine it possible that a trawler would have the courage to attack if it were not armed."

Sir Robert related how they learned of the sinking of two submarines by the bodies of the crew floating to the surface, although five or six days later a report was circulated from Germany that the boat had returned to port.

Admiral Sir Edmund Fremantle said that much criticism of the navy had not yet been discovered and one was how to catch the big submarine. But, he said, he did not hear the scientists abused because he had not discovered the secret of perpetual motion. He added:

"We will hope that the submarine is in a different category and that with the help of our great ally, America, we may perhaps discover an appropriate antidote. We shall succeed if not in finding an antidote, in finding a palliative."

Austrian Emperor Says He Favors an Early Peace.

Amsterdam, June 10, via London.—A Budapest dispatch says Emperor Charles has taken occasion to again assure the Hungarian people he is in favor of an early peace as well as wide reform of the suffrage. On Friday an enormous crowd, estimated at 100,000 persons, marched to the burgomasters office at Budapest where Deputy Vasanyi gave the burgomaster an address to be delivered to Premier Esterhazy urging the adoption of the secret vote and an enlarged franchise.

The burgomaster presented the address yesterday. The emperor replied that true to his promise he would see that the suffrage reform was carried out and would utilize the first occasion to conclude an honorable peace.

Britons Seeking Sugar Supply in own Realm.

London, May 15.—A Committee of experts in the industries connected with sugar throughout the British empire has been formed by the Society of Chemical Industries, an influential body, to inquire into the question of providing a supply which should render the empire independent of sugar from foreign sources.

Three Men Shot During Argument Over War Draft.

Detroit, Mich., June 7.—Three men were shot this afternoon in a saloon fight resulting from an argument over the selective draft. Over 100 men participated in the struggle which took place after two men had come to blows over the subject. The saloon was wrecked. All the men involved were foreigners.