

RUSSIANS DRIVE TO SQUEEZE FOE IN ILLUXT FIGHT

Try to Force Von Hindenburg's Retirement From Riga to Dvinsk

USE LIQUID FIRE AND GAS

Kuropatkin's Attacks Not Regarded by Critics as Beginnings of Great Offensive

PETROGRAD, March 24.—Savage fighting is going on at Jakobstadt, 80 miles northeast of Riga, where the Russians, using liquid fire and gas bombs, are battering in the German salient.

At the same time the Slavs are attacking vigorously at Friedriehstadt, west of Jakobstadt, and at Illuxt, to the south. General Kuropatkin's aim apparently is to squeeze von Hindenburg out of this important salient by threats of envelopment, forcing the retirement of the whole German line from Riga to Dvinsk, on a front of 140 miles.

The success of this offensive will remove the German threat against Riga and Dvinsk and handicap von Hindenburg in any aggressive campaign he may undertake on the Russian front.

Despite optimistic statements from some sources, best informed critics here do not consider Kuropatkin's attacks the beginning of a great Russian offensive. The spring thaw, due within possibly a fortnight, is expected to impede artillery movements and force a lull in the fighting on the northern front.

When the ground becomes firm again, big offensive movements by both the Germans and Russians are certain to develop. To improve his defensive positions to meet the expected German attacks, General Kuropatkin is flattening out German wedges in the Russian lines and moving to capture highway intersections and dominating positions.

RUSSIANS REPULSED, BERLIN OFFICIAL REPORT ASSERTS

Allied Aeroplanes Shot Down at Lake Doiran

BERLIN, March 24.—The attacks of the Russians have been repulsed, it is said, on the Balkan front. Allied aeroplanes were shot down into Lake Doiran, on the border of Greece and Serbia.

The official report says: Strong Russian assaults have been directed against our bridgehead position at Jakobstadt.

East of Buschhof the Russians attacked repeatedly our positions north of Mitau-Jakobstadt Railway. They also attempted to surprise us south of Dvinsk. The attacking forces gradually exhausted themselves.

North of Widay the Russians delivered an uninterrupted series of storm attacks. All the attacks of the enemy failed under our fire or broke down before our barbed-wire entanglements.

Further to the south there were no fresh assaults. During the last few days on the Balkan front there has been moderate activity by the artillery on both sides of the Vardar River in the district around Gilevgel. A squadron of enemy aeroplanes attacked Volovec. One was shot down on the west side of Lake Doiran, the machine and its occupants falling into the water.

SALANDRA E SONNINO SON PARTITI DA ROMA ALLA VOLTA DI PARIGI

Gli Austriaci Attaccano le Posizioni Italiane in Val Sugana e Perdonò Prigionieri, Armi e Munizioni

CADORNA FESTECCIATO

ROMA, 24 Marzo. Il Ministero della Guerra pubblicava ieri sera il seguente rapporto del comandante interinale delle forze italiane circa la situazione alla fronte italo-austriaca.

"Nella Val Sugana mercoledì notte il nemico, appoggiato dalla sua artiglieria, attacco ripetutamente le nostre posizioni, ma fu sempre respinto con gravi perdite e lascio nelle nostre mani alcuni prigionieri, armi e munizioni.

"Anche nelle vicinanze di Ravnica, nella conca di Pleso e sul Mtz gli austriaci fecero tentativi di avanzata. Sul Mtz, dopo che il nemico era stato respinto, le nostre truppe contrattaccarono e raggiunsero le trincee austriache nelle quali gettarono una quantita' di bombe a mano.

"In parecchi punti sulle alture a nord-ovest di Gorizia i duelli di artiglieria sono divenuti piu' intensi.

"I nostri aviatori, avendo osservato la presenza di una quantita' di materiale rotabile lungo la ferrovia Bacia-Adria, bombardarono Oppacchiasella, Constanjevica e Nabresna, e ritornarono alla loro base senza incidenti, nonostante il violento fuoco di artiglieria a cui furono fatti segno.

"Aviatori nemici hanno fatto cadere bombe su Asiago e Teive, ma senza causare alcun danno."

Il presidente del Consiglio, on. Salandra, ed il ministro degli Affari Esteri, on. Sonnino, partirono ieri alla volta di Parigi per assistere alla conferenza militare ed economica che si terra' colà. Prima di procedere alla volta di Parigi i due ministri si fermeranno alla fronte italiana per conferire con il re circa varie questioni riguardanti l'Italia, che saranno discusse alla conferenza di Parigi. Telegrammi da Londra dicono che alla conferenza militare assisteranno il primo ministro inglese, Asquith, il segretario della Guerra, lord Kitchener, ed il segretario per gli Affari Esteri, sir Edward Grey.

Ieri a Londra il generale Cadorna fu festeggiato con un banchetto all'Ambasciata italiana, offertogli dall'ambasciatore marchese Imperiali di Francavilla. Tra gli invitati erano sir Edward Grey, il marchese di Crowe, lord Kitchener, Lloyd-George, Reginald McKenna e molti diplomatici dell'Intesa.

PER GLI AMERICANI IN ITALIA.

Ieri mattina l'ambasciatore americano Page confero' con il ministro Sonnino, prima che questi partisse alla volta di Parigi, circa i casi di alcuni cittadini americani che sono stati espulsi dall'Italia, ed il ministro promise di disporre a che si facesse una inchiesta al riguardo, specialmente per due americani che furono espulsi da Como dove erano stati arrestati.

Mr. Page richiamo' specialmente l'attenzione del ministro sul caso di Harry Montagner, che fu espulso nonostante le proteste dell'Ambasciata americana. Il Montagner e' molto conosciuto in Italia come un profondo studioso di questo paese e molti conoscitissimi americani ed italiani hanno depresso in suo favore facendo rilevare i suoi sentimenti amichevoli verso l'Italia.

PRATICHE TURCHE PER LA PACE. L'Agenzia Telegrafica Nazionale dirama ieri sera il seguente comunicato che diceva ottenuto da un'autorita' diplomatica:

"Due emissari del governo ottomano incaricati ufficialmente di riacciare relazioni come preludio alle prossime trattative di pace sono giunti in Svizzera. Non si tratta piu' di scrutare soltanto, come fu il caso nel passato, i delegati,

uno del quali e' l'ex ambasciatore di Turchia a Roma, Naby bey, non ha fatto punto un segreto del fatto che le condizioni interne dell'impero ottomano sono tali che soltanto la pace a brevissima scadenza potra' salvarlo.

"Per di piu' non sono soltanto i turchi che cercano per mezzo della diplomazia di sfuggire alla pace come sola via di salvezza, ma in Svizzera si trovano in questo momento anche i rappresentanti del governo bulgaro incaricati di una missione simile a quella dei turchi. Questi due delegati bulgari hanno espresso il desiderio di recarsi a Roma per discutere proposte precise a riguardo della pace, nonostante che i bulgari insieme con i loro alleati cercano di mettere ostacoli, per quanto senza efficacia, alla nostra occupazione dell'Albania.

"Dal momento che ne' i turchi ne' i bulgari possono fare passi senza che la Germania lo sappia, e' probabile che questa cerchi nuovi mezzi per giungere alla pace."

Intanto si apprende che Enver Pasola e' tornato a Costantinopoli, ed il ritorno e' stato annunciato ufficialmente, ma ancora egli non e' comparso in pubblico.

I Giovani Turchi insistono a che Enver vada in Armenia a prendere il comando delle forze ottomane che combattono contro i russi, ma i tedeschi insistono a che egli rimanga a Costantinopoli.

Telegrammi da Atene dicono che passeggeri giunti colà da Costantinopoli affermano che i tedeschi sono quelli che dominano nella capitale ottomana. Essi hanno imprecato quattro alti ufficiali turchi che avevano espresso disapprovazione della dominazione tedesca.

ENGLAND IN DREAD OF GERMAN INVASION

London Papers Warn Public That Naval Battle May Precede Attack

LONDON, March 24.—That the German fleet, if it comes out to do battle in the North Sea, will be accompanied by scores of transports carrying troops for an invasion of England, was seriously suggested in an article appearing today in the Daily Star.

The Star, which recently gave warning that rumors of new German superdreadnaughts, equipped with 17-inch guns, may be found to be true, declared that the War Office fully realizes the dangers of such an invasion and is keeping a large force of men in England to meet the expected attack.

"There is a growing feeling that an attempted German invasion of our eastern coast during the next week or so is quite on the cards," said the Star. "There are many signs in east Anglia that the military authorities share this view, but these must not be discussed here, and it is sufficient to consider the actions of the enemy."

The Star declared that the Germans are torpedoing neutral ships in the North Sea solely to clear their coasts of neutral skippers who might report the assembling of German transports for the invasion. Persons who took stock in the Star story pointed out today that so capable a general as Sir John French would not have been placed in command of the home troops when his services were needed elsewhere were not the War Office officials considering seriously the prospects of an invasion.

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FRENCH SHELLS CHECK GERMANS AT MALANCOURT

Teutons Continue Bombardment of Damloup and Douaumont

QUIET A LONG MEUSE

PARIS, March 24.

French artillery during the night directed a terrific bombardment against the German positions in Malancourt wood. Since the Germans established themselves in this forest the well-directed fire of the French gunners have kept them from advancing on the Verdun front.

The official communique issued by the War Office this afternoon states that quiet prevailed during the night about the positions on the immediate west bank of the Meuse, but there was an intermittent cannonade on the east bank.

The text of the official communique follows:

In the Argonne our batteries during the night energetically bombarded Malancourt Wood. Near Hill No. 235 we exploded a mine, the crater of which we occupied.

West of the Meuse the night was

calm. East of the Meuse there was an intermittent bombardment in the region of Douaumont and Damloup.

In the Woivre region heavy artillery fire was executed on both sides in the sectors of Moulainville and Eparges.

No important developments occurred on the entire front.

BERLIN, March 24.—The artillery duel on the Somme-by-Souain highway, in Champagne, and in the Argonne has increased in violence, the German War Office announced today.

In the district between the Meuse and Moselle Rivers the Germans have occupied a couple of trenches. West of Haucourt, on the Verdun front, the number of prisoners in the hands of the Germans has been increased to 32 officers and 375 men.

Following is the full text of the official report:

The activity of the artillery on the high road of Somme-by and Souain, in Champagne, and in the Argonne has increased in violence.

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