FALL OF ERZERUM IS OPEN ROAD TO TURKEY

Great Russian Victory In Armenia Grows---Booty Taken Was Enormous.

From 40,000 to 60,000 Turks Captured---About 25,000 Killed.

Petrograd, Cable.——The following official communication was issued to-day:

"Caucasus front: "Our troops occupy the Erzerum fortress.

"The registration of prisoners and taking stock of booty is proceeding.

"Erzerum is on fire in many places."

It has been learned further that 25 more guns have been seized in the Erzerum first-line forts, and that 39 officers and 1,413 Askaris (Arab irregulars) were made prisoner in the region of Fort Taft, 20 versts (14 miles) from Erzerum.

London Cable.—— The Turkish losses with the fall of Erzerum are variously estimated at from 40,000 to 60,000. A Tiflis despatch places the loss at 40,000, while a semi-official Petrograd despatch places it at 60,000.

All reports agree that the booty taken was enormous — probably greater than in the capture of any other stronghold durng the present war. The number of guns taken will total close to 1,000. Large quantities of ammunition and supplies of all sorts were left behind by the Turks in their hasty flight.

To-day's despatches indicate that the victory was even more decisive than yesterday's reports stated. The Russian losses in men were insignificant in comparison with the importance of the capture. The victory was complete. What is left of the Turkish garrison is fleeing in apparent disorder, while the victorious Russians are pressing forward in fast pursuit.

The military circles of Petrograd, Paris and London all agree that the Grand Duke Nicholas has achieved one of the most important victories of the war. Erzerum was an isolated stronghold on the Russian frontier, and the only one on which the Turks could depend for protection of that frontier. As a result of its fall the military critics see an open road for the Russian troops into Turkey itself and into Mesopotamia.

A Petrograd despatch says:

More than 40,000 Turkish soldiers and 1,000 guns were taken by the Russian army of Grand Duke Nicholas when the Ottoman fortress of Erzerum was captured, according to despatches received here to-day from Tiflis. In addition, the Russians took vast quantities of military supplies. An effort was made to destroy these supplies, but the Russians moved too rapidly.

Part of the Ottoman troops defending Erzerum escaped, but fled in such utter rout that the Russians inflicted terrific losses upon the fugitives before they were rallied and strengthened by fresh forces that had marched from the west.

The Turkish losses in the conflict that raged for five days about the forts guarding Erzerum are said to have been in the neighborhood of 25,000 killed or wounded.

Tiflis reports state that the battle of Erzerum was the fiercest that has ever been fought about a fortress in modern warfare. The Turks fought desperately, but one by one the mighty forts were taken by the Russians, who charged with the bayonet through breaches made by their artillery. Turkish gun crews were bayoneted as they were still working their weapons.

Within the line of forts, the Turks, under direction of German officers, had constructed an elaborate system of trenches. There they made their last stand in defence of the city, but from the time that the forts fell the issue was never in doubt. While a curtain of fire from the Russian guns prevented reinforcementt being sent to the troops in the tranches, picked regiments of the Grand Duke's army drove forward.

Unable to retreat because of the storm of shells falling behind them, and overwhelmed by the fierceness of the Russian attack, the Turks fought on in their trenches for two days, and when their ammunition gave out great masses surrendered.

The Russians fought under the utmost difficulties, the ground being covered with deep snow, and the thermometer register below zero.

The Novoe Vremza considers the capture to have enormous importance, as it points out that Erzerum is a centre of trade and railway routes, as well as of military administration, and has immense depots for ammunition and supplies. The fall of the city opens routes north and south to the Russians and will seriously affect the activities of the Turks in Mesopotamia and Syria. The Retch says it menaces all Asia Minor, and even Constantinople. The Bourze Gazette believes the capture will have an effect upon Athens and Bucharest, as well as upon Persia and Afghanistan.

WESTERN FRONT IS UNCHANGED

Germans Sprang Two Mines, But Gained Nothing.

Great Storm Has Held Up Operations Greatly.

London Cable.—— Sir Douglas Haig reports to-night that the situation on the front between the Ypres-Comines Canal and the Ypres-Comines Railway, where the Canadians have been engaged with the Germans, is unchanged.

The Germans sprang two mines early this morning, one near Fosse 8, and the other at a point south of Loos. They attempted to occupy the crater created by the explosion south of Loos, but were driven back by the British fire, and the British occupied the lip of the excavation. British artillery bombarded the trenches of the Germans near the Hohenzollern redoubt, and at a point east of Armentieres.

The French to-day heavily shelled the German organization near Steenstraete and in front of Boesinghe, and they occupied the crater of a mine which the Germans exploded on the road to Lille, in Artois. German troops, while moving about, were shelled in the Conde-sur-Aisne region, and German works south of Soissons were also shelled.

Artillery actions were held up and the infantry pinned to the trenches in the western theatre of the war by violent storms which prevailed during the night, according to the French war office. The wind and rainstorm reached its greatest violence in Artois, where trenches were flooded, shelters blown down, and roads were converted into seas of mud that made them impassable for automobile trucks. Villages back of the front also suffered heavily in the storm.

The Germans claim that they found eight mine throwers in clearing out trenches which they took from the French at Sept le Haut.

BRITISH REPORT.

London Cable.——The British official statement on the campaign in the western zone, issued to-night, says:

"Early this morning the enemy sprang two mines, one near Fosse 8, the other south of Loos. After the explosion of the latter the enemy attempted to occupy the crater, but was driven back by our fire. We hold the near lip of the crater.

"To-day our artillery bombarded the enemy trenches near the Hohenzollern redoubt and at a point east of Armentieres. Between the Ypres-Comines Canal and the Ypres-Comines Railway the situation is unchanged.

FRENCH REPORT.

Paris Cable.——The official communique issued by the French War Office to-night follows:

"In Belgium a destructive fire was directed against the German organizations towards Steenstraete and in front of Boesinghe. In Artois, on the sides of the Lille road, the enemy exploded a mine, of which we occupied the crater. Between Soissons and Rheims our batteries fired on troops on the march in the region of Condesur-Aisne and bombarded enemy works on the north of Soissons.

"There was slight artillery activity on the rest of the front."

"There were no events of importance last night," the War Office announced in the afternon communique.

HUNS WORRIED BY CANADIANS

Their Ingenuity Gives the Enemy Lines No Rest.

Col. Bickford, Back From Front, is Confident.

Toronto Report.——"A breeze of confidence from overseas," was the way in which Brigadier-General Logie spoke of the return of Lieut.-Col. H. C. Bickford, who reported for duty at Headquarters yesterday after a six-weeks' trip to England and France on a tour of information gathering for the benefit of the future training of troops.

Lieut.-Col. Bickford is a pleasantly taciturn military tactician, and always keeps a great fund of interesting information in reserve. He knew more than he told the reporter who interviewed him yesterday on the subject of his visit to the firing line in Flanders.

"The Germans are worried to death with the little exploits of the Canadians," said the Colonel. "Our men have shown wonderful ingenuity in conceiving and carrying out new schemes for annoying the Germans in front of their part of the line. They are continually getting up new enterprises which keep the enemy in a state of suspense as to what they are going to do next. So successful have the Canadians been in this connection that a full account of the exploits of the Canadians has been published for the benefit of the Imperial army."

"This is not much like Cedarvale," said one Toronto soldier in the trenches who had taken part in the sham fight around Toronto last winter. Col. Bickford stated that the tactical exercises at present carried out were nothing like the warfare in France, where they have to hold on to one line month in and month out.

At one point, called the "bull ring" the Canadian and German lines are only fifteen yards apart, but this point is too warm for either side to live in, and so it is called the "bull ring."

Lieut.-Col. Bickford crossed to France in company with Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Frederick Smith, ond also met with Sir Douglas Haig and his staff. Of what he saw and heard on that occasion the Colonel smilingly declined to talk, but whatever it was it has made him very confident of the ultimate success of the allies on the western front.

7 CANADIANS WERE KILLED

In the Recent German Attacks Around Ypres.

Bomb-Proofs Saved Them — Enemy Losses Heavy.

Ottawa Report.—Gen. Sir Sam Hughes stated in the House to-day in reply to a question, that his department had received official information that there had been a German attack on the British and Canadian lines south-east of Ypres along a front of some miles. It had been preceded by a heavy bombardment, lasting some two or three days. The Canadian troops, however, had evidently taken to the dugouts, since they did not seem to have suffered in anything like the proportion which would otherwise be expected, the record being one killed yesterday and five or six the day before. "The Germans, following the bombardment, got into our trenches at many points," continued the Minister "My information is that the Germans are still there—but they are dead."

No news of the part played by the Canadian troops in recent fighting near Ypres has been received as yet by the Militia Department other that given to the House to-day by Gen. Sir Sam Hughes. However, to-day's list of casualtes shows only one man klled and ten wounded. The Minister of Militia, commenting on this fact, said the troops had evidently demonstrated the efficiency of the bomb-proofs and other defences which they have been building and strengthening during the winter months. It would appear, he said, that the officers had managed to bring their men through the bombardment which preceded the attack with a minimum loss by ordering them to take shelter, and had then brought them out to meet the German onslaught at full strength. The Germans, judging from the reports received, had met a different fate, and it would appear that their losses had been very heavy. The department is awaiting further information.

QUITE HUNLIKE

Was This German Plot of Slaughter in Madagascar.

Paris Cable.——The Paris Journal's correspondent at Tananarivo says that German agents financed and otherwise encouraged a native plot to overthrow the Government at Madagascar on December 31 last. The seat of the conspiracy was at Fianarantsoa, and it was planned to poison the French officers and soldiers on New Year's eve, and either gain the native troops to the cause of the conspirators or obtain from them their military weapons. The white officials and colonists were then to have been massacred. The plot was revealed to the authorities and already over 200 persons have been arrested, and other arrests are expected, as the investigation is still proceeding. The great bulk of the population remains loyal to France, and has not been affected by seditious propaganda.

The correspondent adds that documents discovered at the German Consulate show that plans were made for fomenting an insurrection even before the war broke out.

SLAP AT RUSSIA

Sweden Trying to Hinder Her Transport of Supplies.

London Cable.——A Copenhagen despatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company says that, according to the Snaeli Posten, the Swedish Minister of Justice has appointed a royal commission for the purpose of prohibiting the transportation along Swedish territorial waters of all such goods as are forbidden to be exported from Sweden. The prohibition is said to be directed against Danish merchants, who are largely interested in transporting merchandise to Russia through Swedish waters. This step, the newspaper points out, will make the Baltic a still more closed inland sea, the conditions being especially aggravated by the new mine field which the Germans have laid at the entrance into the Baltic. The Swedish Social Demokraten asks whether German line laying is being carried out so as to permit small ships at least to go around the southernmost point of Sweden. This newspaper adds that it expects Sweden to protest if any intention is shown of placing the entire Baltic traffic under German control.

SHORT ITEMS OF THE NEWS OF THE DAY

Copper Roof of Historic Vienna Rathhaus Will be Used to Make Shells.

FIRE VICTIM

$51,460,000 in Gold Reaches Victoria, B.C., to Buy War Supplies for Russia.

A victory in the Aden region was claimed by the Turks.

It is reported that an anti-British campaign was thriving in Ireland.

The British Admiralty is vigorously searching for the German raider Meowe.

It was announced that one million policies had been taken out in Britain against damages from Zeppelin raids.

It was suggested at the Land Surveyors' Convention at Toronto that land surveyors would make the best assessors.

Peel nominations were held at Brampton, J. R. Fallis being put forward by the Conservatives and W. J. Lowe by the Liberals.

The architects asked to examine the Parliament buildings after the fire report that it will cost about $1,500,000 to repair them, and the work will take perhaps two years.

Repeal of the free sugar clause of the Underwood tariff was approved as a party measure by the United States House Democratic caucus. The vote was 84 to 20.

In the death of Mr. A. H. Howard, R. C. A., in his office a the Temple building, Toronto, at noon Thursday, one of the foremost designers in Canada has been removed.

The Canadian Northern Railway has raised the embargo on grain shipments to Port Arthur in that it will not accept shipments to Canadian Northern elevators at Port Arthur.

The Vienna City Council has voted to remove the copper roof of the historic Rathhaus and give the metal to the military authorities. The roof will be replaced by one of galvanized iron.

Simcoe Town Council has complied with the request of the Board of Education to provide $40,000 for the building of two four-room ward schools, one in the north and one in the south of the town.

Monsignor Alyward, of Sarnia, is seriously ill as the result of eating poisoned soup at the Mundelheim banquet, Chicago. He was the sole Canadian representative of the Catholic Church at the affair.

Edward Johnston, nightwatchman of the Merchants Bank, Toronto, died in St. Michael's Hospital Thursday afternoon. He succumbed to injuries sustained during the fire at the American Club early Wednesday morning.

Winnipeg officials of the Canadian Government Railway announced on Thursday afternoon that Engineer Fairbairn was killed in a collision that morning on the line from Lake Superior Junction to Fort William.

Pte. Stewart Perry, said to be the youngest soldier in the 99th Battalion, is dead at the Hotel Dieu, Windsor, following a two weeks' illness from pneumonia. Pedry was 16 years old. His home was in Kingston.

The Japanese cruiser Chitose and Tokiwa, on board which is said to be $51,460,000 in gold specie for the purchase of war supplies for Russia, arrived from Japan at Victoria, B. C., according to a telegram received at San Francisco by a Japanese newspaper.

HOUSE WALLS ARE INTACT

Parliament Buildings Exterior Can be Re-used.

Asset, as They Stand, of $2,000,000—West Wing Unhurt.

Ottawa Report. That the walls of the Parliament Buildings are intact, that the whole west wing is practically undamaged by fire and only slightly by water, and that the "building as it stands to-day represents an asset in labor and material in position of fully $2,000,000 that can be reused," is the report of Architects John A. Pearson, of Toronto, and J. O. Marchand, of Montreal, after an examination of the burned structure.

The report of the architects, which was read to the House to-day by Hon. Robert Rogers, is that the major portion of the building at present left standing, more particularly as regards the internal and external walls, has suffered no material damage. The west wing, which was recently built, on modern fireproof methods, is uninjured by fire and but slightly damaged by water. The floors have not burned through; they have remained in position, and very materially stiffened the building and retarded the fire, but it will be necessary to take out the floors, remove iron beams and replace them with steel beams and fireproof material. The walls of the main tower are backed up solidly with limestone rubble, exposed on the internal face. It will be necessary to take down the Spandrel walls between the four corner piers to the level of the sills of the large windows and rebuild. The area in the heart of the building formerly occupied by the Commons chamber and the Senate chamber, from the north wall of the main corridor, with the exception of the basement and foundation walls, is a total loss.

"The building as it stands to-day," says the report, "represents an asset in labor and material in position of fully $2,000,000 that can be reused. The external walls require but few repairs, and when these are made all evidence of fire will be obliterated. If more accommodation is required in the Commons chamber and in the Senate chamber, these rooms could be placed on the east and west sides of the main building, carried out in the same style of architecture, and the space they formerly occupied could be utilized in providing increased office accommodation and stock room for the library. The library building is a most dangerous fire hazard. The floor, shelving and roof should be replaced with fireproof material."

Messages of sympathy in the burning of the Parliament Buildings from the United States and Japanese Governments were conveyed to the House at its opening to-day by Sir Robert Borden.

RUSS WIN MAY TURN ROUMANIA

London Cable—"Despatches from Bucharest state that the capture of Erzerum by the Russians is crystalizing the decision of Roumania to intervene at an early date," says the Rome correspondent of the Exchange Telegraph Company.

"In Roumanian official circles in sympathy with the Entente it is stated that in March there will be a concentration of Russian troops in Bessarabia, for the purpose of permitting Roumania to transfer troops to the Bulgarian frontier. This transfer already is in progress.

"In the meantime the Allies are hastening the transportation to Saloniki of the Serbian, Albanian and Montenegrin armies, which, with the French and British troops, will make possible an offensive movement simultaneously with the intervention of Roumania."

FRIENDS EVER.

Aberdeen Says British-U. S. Break is Impossible.

Philadelphia Report—The Marquis of Aberdeen and Temair, in an address at the annual banquet of the Trant-Atlantic Society here last night, expressed confidence in the permanent friendship of the United States and Great Britain. He said that England has an intense feeling of gratitude for the practical sympathy this country has shown the war sufferers.

"There is a fundamental feeling that, come what will, Great Britain and the United States must remain friendly," declared the Marquis. "It takes two to make a quarrel, and we are not going to be one of the two."

Lady Aberdeen, who was also a guest at the banquet, reviewed the activities of the National and International Council of Women, of which she is the president.

BAD FOR HER.

Girl Suspected in Montreal Murder is in Awkward Plight.

Montreal Report—The autopsy on the body of Mrs. Matthews, murdered in her home on Shuter street, revealed the fact that the woman was strangled. This will be established to-morrow morning by Doctors Mac Taggart and De Roma, the coroner's physicians, at the inquest to be held into her death at the morgue. It will be further established by Eugene Laflamme, the finger print expert at police headquarters, that the finger marks on the throat of the dead woman correspond with the finger prints on Isabella Domicon, the colored girl, who was taken into custody by Captain Gorman, and who is being held for the coroner.

The police further contend that they found in Domicon's possession a ring and a trunk which belonged to Mrs. Matthews, while a broken string of beads belonging, it is believed, to the colored girl, were found near Mrs. Matthew's body.

CHANGE FRONT.

Bedouins Who Fought British Now Turn to Them.

London Cable — Reuter's Cairo correspondent says that many eastern tribes of Bedouins are seeking protection of the British authorities owing to a violent dispute between the western and eastern tribes, which are hereditary enemies

Both joined in the recent fighting against the British, in which the eastern tribes suffered severe losses. Subsequently the conflict among the tribes arose, and the easterners are now flocking to the Egyptian refugee camps.

A SPY IN TORONTO?

Belleville, Ill., Report—Emil Koehler, jr., an American, and former resident of this city, is under arrest in Toronto, Canada, suspected of being a German spy, according to information received here by Emil Koehler, the boy's father.

Mr. Koehler has written to Secretary of State Lansing asking for the Government's assistance in obtaining the release of the younger Koehler. The boy, until recently, was a printer in Toronto, his father said.

COL. ROSS HEADS ONT. HOSPITAL

All-Canadian Staff for Institution at Orpington.

Bonar Law Will Open It On Saturday.

London Cable.——Ontario's Hospital at Orpington, Kent, the gift of the Province to the Imperial authorities, will be opened on Saturday by Bonar Law, Colonial Secretary. Col. A. E. Ross, M. P. P., C. M. G., Kingston, who has been on the western front, will be officer commanding. Lieut.-Col. Irving H. Cameron, the well-known surgeon of Toronto, recently taking duty at Cliveden, will be chief of the surgical staff. Lieut.-Col. Graham Chambers, of Toronto, from the University Base Hospital, Saloniki, will be chief of the medical staff, Sir William Osler will be consulting physician, and Lieut.-Col. Donald Armour, son of the late Chief Justice Armour, of Toronto, is the consulting surgeon. Major Badgerow will be consulting specialist, and Captain Meadows surgeon-dentist.

Thus it will be seen that all the chief officers are sons of Ontario, although several of them, even before the war, were following their profession in England.

Thirty other medical men will come from Ontario, and eighty nurses, all Canadians.

The hospital will accommodate 1,040 patients, and has been built on the hut system. The site is an ideal one, near London, with good railway accommodation from the principal ports where the wounded are customarily landed.

A large company is expected at Saturday's ceremony. Col. Pyne and Major Clarkson James, who have been working on the arrangements since June, are deserving of hearty thanks from Ontario for the excellent use they have made of the province's support of the medical forces of the Empire. They return to Canada shortly.

500,000 HORSES

Worth $125,000,000, Bought in U. S. Since War Opened.

New York Report—Records of the exports of horses to Europe show that more than 500,000 horses, valued at $125,000,000, have been shipped there from this country since the beginning of the war. A compilation, made by the foreign trade department of the National City Bank discloses that about 440,000 horses were shipped last year.

The prices show a declining tendency. The average price in 1914 was $240, but the horses were selling at an average of $207 in November, the last month for which complete reports were received.

American horses for use of the British forces will be purchased for some time, at least, according to Major-General F. W. Benson, of the general staff of the British army, who is in charge of the purchase of horses.

General Benson, who to-day went to Lathrop, Mo., to inspect a band of horses purchased some time ago, said the affairs of the remount service in this country would be closed within a short time.

LIPTON COMING.

Yachtsman to Visit America—His Evin Now a Warship.

New York Report—Sir Thos. Lipton's steam yacht, the Erin, which has often been seen in American waters as a tender to Sir Thomas' challengers for the America's Cup, is now an auxiliary cruiser in the British navy, attached to the fleet that is guarding the North Sea against submarines. This information was contained in a letter received here from Sir Thomas, in which the yachtsman stated that he is recovering from a long illness, and intends soon to leave England for the United States and Canada. Sir Thomas was taken ill after returning from Serbia, where he took part in the organization of relief work during the typhus epidemic.

LONG PLANNED.

Germans Schemed for Months for Recent Offensive.

London Cable.—The correspondent of the Daily Mail at British headquarters in France writing under date of Feb. 14, gives his reasons for believing that the cumulative German activity in the west is not the result of a new plan, but of long preparations.

The number of mines exploded—and bailed—alone is a sufficient proof, he says. "Some of the mines have been in course of construction for three months. There also is proof that artillery recently has been brought from the east.

"The unprecedented increased inaccuracy of recent aerographic reports evidently is intentional."

$83,116.

Big Sum Paid for R. L. Stevenson's Relics.

New York Report—If Robert Louis Stevenson could have sold his letters in his lifetime at such prices as they brought at their sale here, he could have spent his later years in comfort, without having to depend upon his literary efforts. The total sum derived from the sale of Stevenson's letters, books, manuscripts and paintings was $83,116. They were the property of Mrs. Salisbury Field, of Santa Barbara, California. The sale was concluded yesterday.

One letter, describing Stevenson's visit to the Shetland Islands, written when he was 19 years old, brought $232.