

FRENCH WITHIN TWO MILES OF ST. MIHIEL FORT

Occupied Quarry and Trenches Northwest of Tip of German Wedge.

BELGIANS MAKE BIG GAIN IN FLANDERS

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun. PARIS, Jan. 5.—The French troops in the Argonne, which have been trying for weeks to oust the Germans from St. Mihiel, made notable progress to-day by capturing a quarry and trenches scarcely two miles northwest of the stronghold.

The successful operation makes probable the early withdrawal of the German wedge which has hitherto resisted all attacks and is believed to predominate a general retirement of the enemy's line in that region. The quarry is now held by a large force and the work of organizing it against attacks at recapture is being put through with great haste.

No other action of importance is reported to-day. The afternoon commanding general of a French advance toward Commercy, in Alsace. The night commanding general follows:

During the night our troops took possession of a quarry situated at the foot of the road from Rouvres to St. Mihiel, and that from Maizey to St. Mihiel, as well as the neighboring trenches.

No other operation has been reported. The weather continues to be very bad, with incessant rains. The communiqué referred also to the Russian victory in the Caucasus.

A despatch from Thann tells how French troops succeeded in occupying the town of Steinbach after a race toward the summit of a mountain with the Germans. A German battery was observed by the French going up a road toward the mountain top. A battalion of French light infantry with mountain guns was ordered to intercept the Germans and succeeded in accomplishing what seemed to be an impossible task.

German Ammunition. The French took a short cut and arrived about five minutes before the Germans appeared in an open space and got their battery in position. The Germans attempted to retire but were annihilated by the French guns.

This movement allowed the French to cross the river Thur, above the town of Thann, and to reinforce the troops operating around Steinbach. The latter troops at first captured a farm commanding a road to the town. They then progressed road by road until the village was reached.

The Germans made a stubborn defence at the outskirts of Steinbach and the chasseurs were met with a murderous fire from a church steeple. One company asked permission to charge. Many fell before they reached the German line, but the rest continued and the Germans were compelled to retire. Then the French took possession of Steinbach. The German battalion got around the German right along the Steinbach brook. A fierce fight for the possession of Steinbach itself followed, and this continued until the night when the last resistance of the Germans was worn out by the charges of the French and the whole town was occupied. The fighting lasted six days.

Steinbach is the gateway to Cernay (Senheim) which commands important routes to the south, north and east. Cernay is no longer tenable for the Germans.

Belgians Gain Ground. Belgian troops made a successful advance from St. Georges yesterday, progressing at one point to the extent of 500 metres. Between the Ley and the Oise a determined effort to stop the operations of German sappers was made with the aid of hand grenades and mortars.

The Germans were finally compelled to cease their efforts and withdraw. The afternoon statement also indicated that the Allies are drawing closer to Lille, the statement being made that the Germans captured and were then, by counter attack, driven from trenches on the highroad to that city. The afternoon statement follows:

In Belgium, in spite of the condition of the ground, our infantry made progress in the sand dunes in front of Nieuport. In the region of St. Georges our men advanced at different places 200, 300 and 400 yards, occupying houses and some trenches. At several points the Belgian artillery silenced the artillery of the Germans.

From the Ley to the Oise, in the region of Notre Dame de Lorette, to the west of Lens, we were successful, thanks to our mortars and our hand grenades, in completely stopping the sapping labors of the enemy. In the vicinity of the Lille highway the Germans took possession of it, but an immediate counter attack again put us in possession of it.

From the Oise to the Vosges no infantry activity has been reported. In the region of Cronome and in the vicinity of Riems there have been very few engagements. Our batteries effectively bombarded the positions of the enemy in the town of La Sappe, as well as in the region of Perthes and in the vicinity of Bousseloire. There was similar activity in the Argonne and on the heights of the Meuse.

In Alsace, to the southeast of Bonhomme Pass, we have entered the hamlet of Craux d'Argent, two kilometers west of Orbey, where we are organizing our position. The gains realized by us on the road from Thann to Cernay have been maintained at a distance of one kilometer to the east of old Thann. Furthermore, the fire of our heavy artillery at a point ten kilometers east of Purnhaute-le-Haut silenced the artillery of the enemy.

5 GERMAN SHIPS FOR \$653,625.

Captured Steamers Sold at Auction in London.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun. LONDON, Jan. 5.—Five German prize steamers seized since the outbreak of the war were sold at auction on the Baltic Exchange to-day for £139,795 (\$653,625).

This money and the proceeds of other sales will be divided among the officers and crews of the warships which made the captures.

What do you pay for Commercial Stationery? Send us your schedule and let us quote you the lowest price. Charles E. Matthews "The Desk Man" Stationery, Desks and Furniture, 31-33 E. 28th Street, N. Y.

Report Cardinal Mercier Arrested by Germans

Moved by Prelate's Plea to Belgians to Remain Loyal to King.

By Central News.

AMSTERDAM, Jan. 5.—The *Tijd* states that Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, has been arrested by the Germans at his own palace owing to a pastoral letter which he sent to the priests of his archdiocese in which he pleaded with the people to remain loyal to the Belgian King and Government. Numerous priests who read the letter to their flocks also were arrested, but were released. The Cardinal remains a prisoner.

London Has No Confirmation of Cardinal's Arrest.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun. LONDON, Jan. 5.—There is no official confirmation of the arrest of Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, but it seems to be a fact that he was apprehended at the archiepiscopal palace because of a pastoral letter which he sent out. The event is regarded as of great importance.

The *Times* thinks the arrest will cause a sensation. The whole Catholic world will be seized by the news of the arrest of the Cardinal at the Vatican. The *Times* expresses doubt of the expediency of the Cardinal's arrest, even from the narrowest standpoint of German military administration. The *Times* prints some salient passages from Cardinal Mercier's pastoral letter, which begins with an eloquent description of the sorrows of Belgium, the devastation of churches, schools, hospitals, convents, institutions and dwellings. The letter exhorts patriotism and says:

"The religion of Christ exalts patriotism into law. There is no perfect Christian who is not a complete patriot." Cardinal Mercier assures the people that God is on their side, and they ought to regard proudly the glory which their murdered country has won. Other Powers were bound to respect and protect Belgian neutrality. Germany has broken her oath. Great Britain was faithful to hers.

In defining the attitude of Belgians remaining in the country the letter says: "Germany has no legitimate authority, and consequently in the secrecy of your hearts you owe it neither esteem, affection nor obedience. The sole legitimate power in Belgium is that of our King, our Government and the representatives of the nation. These alone have the right to our affection and submission."

"Nevertheless the occupied part of our country has been placed in a position to which it should loyally submit. Most of our towns have been surrendered to the enemy and they are bound to respect the conditions of that surrender. Our army, alone, fighting beside its valiant allies, has our honor. Its protection is charged to our national defence. Let us know how to wait for final deliverance at its hands. Let us have toward those who rule the country by military force as public interest demands. Let us respect the rules which they impose so long as they do not transgress the liberty of our consciences and the national dignity."

CARDINAL ASKS MORE AID

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun. LONDON, Jan. 5.—The American Commission for Relief in Belgium has received



Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines.

the following appeal from Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines: "Words fail me to express my deep appreciation of the bountiful generosity of the American people. After all that has been said and is being done by them to help us it might appear to be unbecomingly on my part to ask more, but our distress is so real and the misery caused by the war is so great that we cannot but look to the future with anxiety.

"As your delegate, whose broad mind and noble heart we have learned to know, has been able to see for himself, our factories are at a standstill. Exports have been stopped. Whole villages and towns have been laid low and others plundered. The standing crops have been spoiled and the raised land is lying waste. Supplies are scant and are rapidly dwindling to nothing. Some parts of the country, indeed whole districts, have been deprived even of bread and salt for days.

"The whole population is so dense here now that it has to be entirely dependent on outside aid for its very daily bread. Indeed, were it not for the timely aid of the American people many of our would be starving now.

"To this I ought to add that the general and necessary exodus of the population has produced added hardships and misery and the savings of many people have melted away. The outlook for the coming year is far from hopeful. The shortage of horses, cattle and labor will leave large tracts of land uncultivated. The output of agriculture will be reduced to a very low ebb; indeed, notwithstanding the valiant efforts which our men and women are making to try to get at work, their efforts are puny compared with the task before them. If left unaided we are bound to suffer endless hardship.

"The thought that all of this may not be known alone prompts me to make an urgent appeal to the American people to keep their hearts open to us, my only fear being that it might be interpreted as insufficient recognition of what has already been done on such a munificent scale. I therefore conclude by expressing again my heartfelt gratitude, a gratitude too great to find adequate expression.

"Yours truly and cordially in Christ, Cardinal Mercier."

SHIP LOADING PLAN PLEASES BRITAIN

London Thinks Certification of Cargoes Is Evidence of Friendly Spirit.

"GLOBE" ATTACKS U. S.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun. LONDON, Jan. 5.—I am officially informed that the reply to President Wilson's note on contraband will be forwarded to Washington within a very few days, although no date has actually been fixed.

I am given to understand that the notifications forwarded to Washington during the past few days by the British Government relative to various articles of trade are in no way due to the presentation of the Wilson note, though they may be connected with the subject matter of that document.

Members of the Government held a conference to-day regarding the American protest. The discussion, which lasted for more than an hour, is said to be the last to be held before the formulation of the reply.

Ambassador Page received to-day the circular from Secretary of State Bryan announcing that the United States has decided to certify the exact contents of American cargoes as they leave port, provided, however, that the owners thereof need not accept certification unless they wish. It is believed here that this move will simplify the solution of the problem presented in the Wilson note.

It is felt that so long as Great Britain is friendly and conciliatory and that Washington is willing to make every effort to protect Great Britain from any injury which might result if this nation relaxed the vigor of her searching.

The anti-American *Globe*, whose attacks upon the United States have been especially vigorous since the delivery of the protest, made another editorial attack to-day. It said, in part:

"We are fighting for many things, including the sanctity of one of those scraps of paper, of the value of which the United States officially so far has shown no appreciation. We do not ask America's aid in this war, but if we do not expect her to take part in weakening the military arm of Germany by strengthening the forces arrayed against Germany, we do demand that we shall be required to take no course that shall weaken our own naval power.

"We do not appeal to America on moral grounds to cease from making money out of the necessities of our predicament. We leave her merchant vessels with their thirty days start to run the gantlet and trade where and with whom they will, but we must see to it that our navy is stiffened to the task of preventing these cargoes from reaching the enemy, to whom ammunition means further ability to murder and power of oppression."

The *Evening Standard* says that while Great Britain has no desire to interfere with the rights of neutral, it is clear that these, in their turn, must recognize that war is war, and cannot be waged on the lines of a friendly tournament."

ADVICE TO SHIPPERS.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—Preparations for governmental supervision of loading cargoes so that official certificates may be

given as to the completeness and accuracy of the manifests of vessels which clear for European ports were made by the Treasury Department to-day. Assistant Secretary Peters in a statement made with the approval of Secretary Bryan and Secretary of Commerce Redfield appealed to the business public to cooperate with the Government in seeking to prevent the embarrassments to the shipping of the country which might be occasioned by isolated cases of false estimates.

Mr. Peters informed exporters that upon application to the Collector of Customs at any port an officer would supervise the loading of a cargo. As a further precaution it was suggested that the ship's manifest be accompanied by an affidavit from the shippers as to its correctness.

The publication of this notice to shippers, which was communicated to the British Government yesterday, was hastened by officials here in the hope of having it made part of the record in the American side of the shipping controversy before Great Britain makes answer to President Wilson's note transmitted more than a week ago. No widespread frauds in manifests were reported.

NOTE PLEASES VIENNA.

One Paper Believes U. S. Will Prohibit Exports to England.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun. LONDON, Jan. 5.—A despatch from Venice to the *Daily Mail* says Vienna newspapers are exulting over the American note to Great Britain in reference to the seizure of American ships with cargoes for neutral ports.

The *Vienna Neue Presse* says it cannot understand why President Wilson waited so long before making his protest. England refuses to yield to the demands made in the note. American American goods which are necessary to England. It says it does not hope that it will lead to a tangible result like war. It complains that corn has risen more than 100 per cent. in Austria and Hungary. American would be able to supply this commodity but for England's policy.

The *Reichspost* says Austria-Hungary's food and raw material, especially cotton, depends on the success of President Wilson's note.

NINE SHIPS FROM THE U. S. DETAINED

Were Bound for Scandinavian Ports—Cargoes Were Held Up.

LONDON, Jan. 5.—Among the steamers whose cargoes or part of them have been detained in British ports, according to an official announcement in the *London Gazette*, are the following, which were bound from the United States to Scandinavian ports: (Danish), from New York for Copenhagen, December 11. Arrived at Shields, January 2. (Swedish), from New York, December 5, for Gothenburg and Malmö. Arrived at Shields, January 4. (Danish), from Baltimore and New York, late in November, bound for Copenhagen. Went ashore at Fraserburg, Scotland, December 22, and floated December 26. Arrived at Leith, December 29. (Norwegian), from New York, November 24, for Copenhagen. Arrived at Leith, December 24. (Swedish), from New York, November 27, for Gothenburg. Arrived at Leith, December 28. (Danish), from Philadelphia, December 3, for Copenhagen. Arrived at Shields December 30. (Swedish), from New York, December 8, for Copenhagen. Arrived at Kirkwall December 29.

House of Lords Convenes To-day.

LONDON, Jan. 5.—The House of Lords will be convened to-morrow. It is thought that some interesting statements regarding the war will be made.

SAYS U. S. ERRS IN BARRING JAPANESE

Ex-Manila Editor Tells Senate Committee He Would Only Exclude Chinese.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—The opinion that this country is making a mistake in barring Japanese immigrants was expressed before the Senate Philippine committee to-day by Martin Egan, former editor of an American daily newspaper in Manila, in testifying in regard to the Philippines bill now pending before the committee. Mr. Egan said he would exclude Chinese immigration from the islands, but would not exclude Japanese immigrants, though the island is capable of supporting millions and the Japanese Government has made strong efforts to induce its people to leave the congested sections of Japan for this more promising land. The movement of Japanese is not to the southward despite the efforts of the government.

"The Japanese Government does not want Japanese to emigrate to California. It does not want them to become citizens of this country. It does object, however, to its people being singled out and told they cannot become citizens of this country. That is a question of pride.

"I place little weight on the opinion so many people here seem to hold that a conflict with Japan is inevitable. It is true it might revolve around the Philippines once it was started, but it would never start over the Philippines for the reason that Japan does not want the islands.

"I see no need, therefore, for any necessity of a conflict for the mastery of the Pacific. Japan has nothing in the East that we want and we have nothing in the East that Japan wants, so there is really nothing to fight over, except this misunderstanding about Japanese immigration."

Macy's advertisement featuring 'First Sale of the New Year—High Quality ORIENTAL RUGS' and 'January Sale of AUTOMOBILE FUR COATS At Substantial Savings'. Includes prices for various rug types and fur coats.

Franklin Simon & Co. advertisement for 'Men's Shop' featuring an 'Annual Clearance Sale (To-day) WEDNESDAY' with 'Men's Sack Suits' and 'Men's Custom Tailored Suits'.