

BRITISH ADMIT DEFEAT BY TURKS

Official Statement Puts Loss in Mesopotamia at Nearly 5,000.

FORCED TO RETREAT

LONDON, Dec. 4.—An official statement issued in London to-day admitted the report of the defeat of the British in Mesopotamia, with the loss of nearly 5,000 men. It declared that Gen. Townsend had been forced to retire to within a few miles of Kut-el-Amara before "greatly superior enemy forces."

The text of the official statement is: Gen. Townsend remained in occupation of the battlefield at Ctesiphon, beating off all counter attacks, till he had completed the removal of his wounded and of 1,700 prisoners. But in view of our heavy losses and the arrival of Turkish reinforcements he then withdrew.

It is reported that our total casualties in these actions amounted to 4,567. No report is made of any political officer being wounded, as was alleged in the Turkish official statement.

On the night of November 30, December 1 Gen. Townsend fought a rear guard action against greatly superior Turkish forces. Our casualties in the action are estimated to have been 150 of all ranks.

Two river boats were disabled by shell fire and had to be abandoned. Their guns and engines were rendered useless. Gen. Townsend remarks of the readiness of the troops and states the retirement was carried out in perfect order. By the latest reports Gen. Townsend was within a few miles of Kut-el-Amara, upon which position he is retiring.

With reference to the Turkish official statement and the German wireless reports it may be stated British troops never take their colors into the field.

BRITISH STILL FLEE.

Retiring Towards Basorah—Turks Capture Munitions.

CONSTANTINOPLE, via Berlin and London, Dec. 4.—The British forces retreating in Mesopotamia have fled toward Basorah, according to the official War Office report issued here to-day.

Turkish captures now include several hundred prisoners, two transports and two gunboats, besides much war material.

The War Office statement follows: The enemy is attempting to escape pursuit, aided by gunboats. Attempts to make a stand were in vain. We inflicted heavy losses on the enemy Thursday, capturing many hundreds of prisoners, two vessels loaded with food, two gunboats and another vessel two months' stores and a large quantity of material. The prisoners were mostly British, and include a major, a captain and a flight lieutenant. Four troops from Kut-el-Amara attacked the retreating enemy in the flank, inflicting heavy losses. The British troops fled toward Basorah.

LAY DEFEAT TO ARABS.

British Loss Is Blamed on Treachery of the Natives.

AMSTERDAM, Dec. 4.—Treachery on the part of Arab tribes when Bagdad was almost within their grasp caused the rout of the British forces in Mesopotamia, according to Berlin advice to-night. Stories of Arabs made their way up to the Turks with the British under Gen. Townsend almost to the gates of Bagdad. Professedly intense hatred for the British, the Arabs led the British into a trap.

Arab scouts sent ahead of the British forces reported only comparatively small bodies of Turkish troops defending Bagdad. At the crucial moment in the battle near Ctesiphon the Arabs suddenly turned fiercely upon the British, according to despatches received by the Berlin Vossische Zeitung, attacked both Gen. Townsend's flanks and slaughtered several hundred British troops before British artillery forced them to flee to the Turkish lines.

The belief prevails in Constantinople that the British will not make a second serious attempt to capture Bagdad.

TURKS FLEE NEAR VAN.

Russian Vanguard Parties Harassing Fleeing Turks, Petrograd Says.

PETROGRAD, Dec. 4.—The following official report was issued here to-night regarding the Russian operation on the Caucasian front:

Along the southern shore of Lake Van our vanguard parties harassing the retreating Turks made progress in the direction of Bielik.

Heavy snowstorms have prevailed along the entire front for several days and the mountains are being covered.

RAINS CHECK ACTIVITY.

French Destroy Big German Gun—Mine Fighting Continues.

PARIS, Dec. 4.—Heavy rains held up the activity on both sides of the line last night and to-day, interfering with active artillery fire.

In one instance, east of St. Mihiel, the French artillery, having been apprised by an observer of the location of a well concealed heavy German artillery, demolished it. Mine fighting is reported from different points in the Argonne and there were minor encounters between patrols in Artois.

The official French communiqué issued to-night says:

Continued bad weather is interfering with the operations. There was an intermittent cannonade at various points of the front. Some patrol encounters are reported in Artois.

There was somewhat lively fighting with mines in the Argonne, at La Houle, Chevauchee and at Les Eparges. In the Woivre our artillery by a well directed heavy German artillery demolished the position of which an observer had signalled near Wainville, east of St. Mihiel.

The afternoon communiqué was as follows: The night was relatively calm. Some shells of large calibre were discharged from the east of Germany and in the rear of our positions. We avoided successfully a mine near Vauquois.

Potential rains interfered with the artillery firing.

PROBABLY EDITOR ARRESTED.

Polish Journalist Accused of Endangering Neutrality.

AMSTERDAM, via London, Dec. 4.—Mieczyslaw Schroeder, editor of the Telegraf, has been arrested on a charge of endangering Dutch neutrality. The Telegraf has been openly pro-Ally. Its famous cartoonist, Raemackers, is now in London.

The Week in the War

SUNDAY, November 28.—French forces in southeastern Serbia abandon the left bank of the Cerna River. Italians have possession of entire Monte Nero zone. French troops repulse three German attacks in the Argonne. British recapture Ctesiphon, near Bagdad.

MONDAY, November 29.—Berlin announces the end of Austro-German-Bulgarian operations against Serbia, their objective, the establishment of communications with Bulgaria and Turkey, having been attained; troops are now being rushed to the Rumanian frontier. Greek Cabinet has all day session, considering the Allies' latest terms. Bedouins attack British in Egypt. Italians win strong intrenchments near Goritz. French sink German motor boat off Westende.

TUESDAY, November 30.—Bulgarian troops mass near Rumanian line to assist Teutons in opposing expected Russian blow. Austria is reported to be seeking separate peace with Allies. French capture mine crater north of the Labyrinth.

WEDNESDAY, December 1.—Fifty thousand Teuton troops rush to Rastchuk, on the Danube, to oppose Russian advance. German Reichstag's President assures legislators that Germany is not near the end of her resources. Lord Haldane in London speech says time is not ripe for peace. French destroy German trawler near Muehlbach.

THURSDAY, December 2.—Three Austrian Ministers resign; clashes are attributed to German influence and concessions to Rumania. Lord Lansdowne tells Lords that sea rights of United States must be respected. Austrian forces advance from Bosnia in new enveloping movement in Montenegro. Italian Foreign Minister declares Italy will stand by Allies to end of war. Rumanian Deputies fight as King addresses Parliament.

FRIDAY, December 3.—Monastir surrenders to the Bulgarians. Turks report advance on Gallipoli peninsula. Foreign Minister Sonnino gives Italy's pledge to send aid to the Balkans. M. Cochlin, French Minister, asserts Greece has agreed on terms with Allies. Twenty British airmen raid German supply depot at Miraumont, Belgium.

SATURDAY, December 4.—Italian attacks on the Isonzo fail. French airmen sink German aeroplane off coast of Belgium. British declare intention to take the American Transatlantic Steamship Company's steamer Hocking to England.

ITALIANS HURL BACK JOFFRE NOW LEADER ATTACKS IN TYROL IN EAST AND WEST

Teutons Leave 500 Dead on Field Near Pre—Take and Lose Trenches. New Post Makes Him Head of Army in Balkans as Well as in France.

ROME, Dec. 4.—Perhaps in the hope of creating a diversion and thereby relieving the pressure on Goritz and the Isonzo lines, perhaps believing that the Italians had weakened their lines in other districts to strengthen their attacks along the Isonzo, the Austrians delivered two attacks, the second of great violence, against the Italian positions in the Ponale zone, west of Lake Garda, last night.

An intense artillery fire preceded the infantry attack. Masses of infantry then hurried against the Italian positions and, though thrown back time and again, the assaults were repeated until the Austrian troops succeeded in getting a foothold in some parts of the Italian trenches. A hand to hand fight followed and the Austrians were driven back and routed. Five hundred Austrian dead were left on the field.

News from the Isonzo front is meagre. The only mention made of the operations in this zone in the official statement issued by the Italian War Office to-day is the announcement that an Austrian attack was repulsed yesterday near Monte San Michele.

The official statement issued by the War Office to-day is as follows: In the Ponale zone an enemy contingent was repulsed near San Bartolomeo. In the Ledro Valley an attack north of the field on the night of December 3. After an intense artillery fire strong masses of infantry were repeatedly hurled against our intrenchments. Despite the exterminating efforts of our fire the enemy penetrated parts of our positions, but soon were expelled in a hand to hand fight and after a bitter struggle were routed, leaving 500 dead on the field and leaving 131 prisoners, including three officers, in our hands.

In the Monte San Michele zone an attack was repulsed. The situation is unchanged on the rest of the front.

TRIES TO SWING GERMAN VOTE

Election Official Urges Defeat of "Foe's" Business Associate.

BOSTON, Dec. 4.—A sensation was created to-day when it became known that Election Commissioner Frank Seiberlich has sent to the German voters of Boston a circular letter written in German urging them to support Mayor Curley's City Council slate because one of the Good Government Association candidates, Councilman James J. Starrow, is in business with Major Henry L. Higginson, "the most prominent enemy in America of the Germans to-day."

"Unfortunately," Seiberlich complains in his letter, "we are able to do very little for the land of our fathers, now fighting for its existence on the other side. All the more, then, it is our duty as men so to act that it will not be possible for declared enemies of the German people and of the German nation to hold office here."

REPORT HOSPITAL FLAG ON BRITISH TRANSPORT

Turks Say Red Cross Banner Is Thus Used—Claim Gallipoli Success.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun.

CONSTANTINOPLE, via Amsterdam, Dec. 4.—British forces at the Dardanelles have resorted to the use of the Red Cross flag to protect their transports during the night. It was officially stated here to-day.

"Two ships are known to have been used this way," it was stated, "which proves the impudence of our enemies and their lack of respect for the simplest laws of humanity."

The official statement issued to-day regarding the operations on the Dardanelles front says:

Our positions at Anafarta, Ari Burnu and Sedd-el-Bahr were shelled from the sea. Our artillery dispersed two companies of infantry near Kulchuk Kemikli and caused an explosion in a camp at Hayak Kemikli.

SAYS RUSSIANS TOOK 12 MILES OF TRENCHES

News Agency Reports Victory East of Riga—Official Statement Silent.

FRENCH SUGAR PROFITS BIG.

Refiners' Gains Treble, but Consumers Must Pay Double.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun.

PARIS, Dec. 4.—It is announced that the net profits of the French sugar refiners for the fiscal year 1914-15 were nearly 6,500,000 francs (\$1,300,000), as compared with slightly over 2,000,000 francs (\$400,000) for the preceding fiscal year.

The announcement is amusing comment, and is pointed out that while the consumer is now paying double the price prevailing before the war the producers' profits have been trebled.

TAKE GERMAN GENERAL.

Berlin Admits Capture of Division Commander.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun.

LONDON, Dec. 4.—The Russians have taken twelve miles of trenches, 700 prisoners and a large quantity of munitions and food supplies on the Tukum road, east of Riga, according to an exchange telegraph despatch from Geneva.

The official Russian statement received from Petrograd to-night says nothing of this reported success. It is as follows: The situation between Riga Bay and the Pripiat district is unchanged. The enemy attacked the station at Bidchertvitch, on the left bank of the Sty, on Thursday night. We withdrew at first, but at 7 P. M. we recaptured the station. By concentrating our infantry fire against Semka, above Charterysk, on the left bank of the Sty, we put the enemy to flight.

In Galiela, south of Novolekskietz, our artillery dispersed the Austrians. We stopped the enemy, who were assuming the offensive against Birkoet, west of Tremhoolja, Thursday. We also repulsed the enemy's offensive movements against Janovka, northeast of Banchasch.

It was officially denied that the Austro-German forces have retired near Kosline and Charterysk, as asserted by the Russians.



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