

by the fire of a mitrailleuse two German aeroplanes today. This brings the number of enemy machines brought down by this method to five. The two machines fell within our lines. Two of the aviators were killed and two were taken prisoners. One of our air squadrons, comprising nine bombing aeroplanes, threw 144 bombs on the Metz-Les Sablons railway station today. Another squadron bombarded the enemy establishments at Chamblay, northwest of Pont-a-Mousson.

VERDUN ONE OF FRANCE'S FOUR EASTERN BULWARKS

Opposite Metz, It Is Called "Gateway to Paris"—Old Vauban Defences, Strengthened Years Ago, Revised in Light of War's Artillery Lessons.

The battle is continuous in the region to the north of Verdun, where the enemy continues to direct his efforts against the front to the east of the Meuse. According to reports our troops are resisting in their same positions the repeated assaults of the enemy, who no longer counts his sacrifices.

Verdun is one of the great fortresses intended to protect France against attack from the east. The line of fortresses on the eastern gateway of the country comprises Belfort, Toul, Epinal and Verdun.

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Verdun lies directly opposite the German entrenched camp of Metz and the frontier of German Lorraine. A Vauban fortress at the time of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, it was made the centre of an entrenched camp when the Meuse line barrier was formed in 1875. The city of Verdun, which was used as an emplacement for their batteries were utilized in the new series of fortifications, and the eastern defences were extended to the left, the Meuse being at a point overlooking the Woëvre plain.

There is nothing to report on the rest of the front. The news of the successful counter attack by the French was greeted by Paris with relief and reassurance of confidence in the fortress and the troops defending it.

Called "Gateway to Paris." The city possesses two railways, one having a general direction of northwest and another of northeast, the latter following the valley of the Meuse, and the other, with a general direction of southwest and northeast, following the valley of the Orne.

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DURAZZO IN HANDS OF AUSTRIAN ARMY

Vanguard Enters Albanian Port Evacuated by Italian Garrison.

ONLY AVLONA NOW HELD

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun. LONDON, Feb. 26.—The vanguard of the Austrian Balkan army entered Durazzo this evening, according to an announcement made in Vienna. The Italian Government admitted today that the city had been evacuated by the garrison and that the Albanian provisional Government had embarked on Italian vessels.

This victory for the Teutonic forces leaves the Italian flag flying at only one point—Avlona—on the eastern shore of the Adriatic. It is apparently the intention of Italy to abandon all attempts to prevent the Austrians from occupying the entire principality of Albania.

After surrounding the town on three sides the Austrians attacked from the southeast, encountering little opposition. They reached the Bay of Durazzo and were but five miles from the city itself.

Durazzo, a town with about 5,000 inhabitants, was occupied by Italian troops soon after the opening of the great war and before Italy had joined the Allies.

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NO BREAK WITH GERMANY NOW, ASSERTS LANSGING

Continued from First Page. taking the submarine issue with Germany out of the hands of the President by a resolution to keep Americans out of the war.

Not since the revolt broke among the Democrats at the Capitol have the President's friends manifested more confidence in their predictions that legislation of this kind never would be passed.

Despite the political activity of the revolutionists against the President's foreign policy Administration leaders are leaving no stone unturned to prevent a recurrence of the trouble.

Mr. Adams is perfectly confident that no such resolution would receive a majority of Democratic votes, and I am not disposed to believe that the Republican members are one whit less disposed to leave this grave problem of international adjustment to the orderly processes of diplomacy.

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The Week in the War

SUNDAY, February 26.—Russian transports in Black Sea land army to drive on Trebizond. Austrian Government is formally notified of United States' stand on warning armed merchant ships before attack.

MONDAY, February 21.—German aeroplanes raid Kent and kill three persons. German attempt to cross Yser Canal fails. Russian army forces Turks back toward Trebizond.

TUESDAY, February 22.—French in six air battles wreck a Zeppelin and four German aeroplanes. President Wilson holds conference with Congress leaders on submarine issue. House of Commons votes \$2,100,000,000 for war. Turks abandon Bitlis as Russians move onward.

WEDNESDAY, February 23.—Wilson rejects proposal of Congressmen to prohibit Americans from travelling on armed merchant vessels. Czar visits Duma for first time in its history. Count von Bernstorff demands release of Appam.

THURSDAY, February 24.—German prize crew brings British steamer Westburn and crews of seven vessels to Santa Cruz de Tenerife. Crown Prince's army at Verdun advances two miles on a six mile front and takes 3,000 prisoners. Great Britain and Sweden reach agreement concerning imports.

FRIDAY, February 25.—In fierce battle since 1914 Germans force back French line to within five miles of Verdun fortress. Portugal sends thirty-six interned Teuton vessels.

SATURDAY, February 26.—With enormous losses on both sides the German offensive at Verdun continues. Essad Pasha, the Albanian leader, flees to Italy after the defeat of his army by the Austrians near Durazzo.

CAUTION IS URGED. "Frankfurter Zeitung" Says Situation is Most Difficult.

AMSTERDAM, Feb. 26.—The Frankfurter Zeitung warns the German Government to take no hasty action in the present controversy with America over armed merchantmen, according to despatches received here to-night.

There is no evidence that the controversy with America is nearing the stage of a settlement. The present situation is the most difficult since the beginning.

The newspaper then warns the Government not to display pan-German tendencies which may provoke ill feeling in America, and further urges the annulment of all aspects of the controversy before the government commits itself to an irrevocable decision.

The Herltz newspapers are displaying prominently a despatch from Lugano, Switzerland, stating that American naval authorities are urging President Wilson to acquiesce in the German programme, arguing that in case of war with Japan the submarine would be America's best weapon.

TO DEMAND APOLOGY. Note on Petrolite Sinking Goes to Austria This Week.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26.—Formal demand on Austria for apologies for the submarine attack on the American oil tanker Petrolite probably will be sent to Vienna next week, as the result of additional information being gathered by the State Department.

Following receipt of a communication from the American government questioning the original facts presented by the State Department in its request for an explanation, Counselor Poik of the State Department had a long conference this afternoon with Capt. Thompson, commander of the Petrolite.

It is said that Capt. Thompson stood by his original version of the attack and agreed to get affidavits from members of the crew. The Petrolite now at Newport News.

The oil tanker, which is the property of the Standard Oil Company, was attacked in the Mediterranean last November. The Austrian submarine, which fired at the ship, Capt. Thompson said, after he had ordered warning to stop, ordered the vessel to be sunk, wounding one of his crew and claiming that he was forced to fire provisions to the Austrians.

In her reply Austria contended on the basis of a report made to the Austrian Admiralty by the submarine commander the submarine continued to fire because the Petrolite gave the appearance of trying to ram the submarine, which Thompson voluntarily gave up provisions. The Austrian commander further reported that despite the American flag on the tanker a thoughtless crew was an enemy ship sailing under false colors.

Berlin's Stand on U Boat Controversy Told by News Agency. BERN, via wireless to St. Louis, Feb. 26.—In a statement dealing with the German-American controversy over armed merchantmen the news agency to-day declared:

"Let it be distinctly understood that we shall not limit our action to special measures.

"The armament of merchantmen introduced into international law during the time when the high seas were treated with privateers and when in war time ships were furnished with letters of marque in order to attack the merchantmen of the enemy."

The news agency at the same time made public what purported to be an extract from the London Telegraph, February 22 stating that England had not the slightest intention of continuing to Secretary Lansing's suggestion that merchantmen should be armed for defensive purposes.

Advertisement for Biltmore Ice Gardens, featuring an illustration of a man and a woman in a social setting, and text promoting open air skating and glass enclosed tea rooms.

Advertisement for New York Telephone Company, featuring the text "It's a Pleasure To Deal With That House by Telephone" and "I HAVE never met that young man face to face..."