

New York Tribune

First to Last—The Truth—News—Editorials—Advertisements.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1915.

Owned and published daily by The Tribune Association, a New York corporation. Office: 125 West 46th Street, New York.

Subscription rates: By Mail, Postage Paid, outside New York City: Daily, 10c per month, \$3.00 per quarter, \$10.00 per year. Daily and Sunday, 15c per month, \$4.50 per quarter, \$15.00 per year.

Foreign rates: Daily, 15c per month, \$4.50 per quarter, \$15.00 per year. Daily and Sunday, 20c per month, \$6.00 per quarter, \$20.00 per year.

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The Battle for Lens.

Several days ago there was printed in the news columns of this Tribune a discussion of the Allied offensive in its wider aspect. It is now possible to examine more in detail one of the two great divisions of operations, that in Artois, which has resolved itself into a battle for the possession of Lens, a town with a population—prior to the war—of 27,000, the center of the coal region of France and one of the most important railway junctions along the whole front.

Look at any topographical map of Northern France and it will be seen that the range of hills which stretches inland from the Channel breaks rather abruptly into the plain just west of Lens. The streams rising on the east side of the range flow first east and then north into the Scheldt River system. As you go east, then, you go down hill, the slope favoring the army moving east.

When the western campaign fell to the level of a deadlock the Germans occupied the eastern extremity of the range of hills, which terminates in the relatively high ridge known to the official statements as Notre Dame de Lorette, Loretoberg in the German. They also held a number of small villages about this ridge—notably Grenay, Aix-Neulette, Ablain-St. Nazaire, Carency, Neuville-St. Vaast and the works east of Ecurie, known as the "Labyrinth."

In May the French, commanded by Foch, pushed suddenly east, took the Loreto heights and the villages to the left of the left hand black line on the map. This indicates approximately the Allied position at the opening of the present drive. In the first operation the French carried Souchez village, but subsequently lost most of it. The May operation yielded only local advantages, because the British to the north were unable to prevent the Germans from sending reserves south.

The immediate purpose of the new drive in the sector under discussion is to obtain possession of Lens. To possess this town is to hold the highways and railroads centering there and compel the Germans to draw back from their last foothold on the Artois hills, already mentioned, into the plain and toward the city of Douai, some twenty miles east.

Such a withdrawal, aside from immediate advantages, would bring the Allies close to the north and south trunk lines, essential to the Germans holding the Aisne from Noyon to the Rheims front. It would also carry the Allies east of Lille, transform La Bassée into a dangerous salient and make the German position in Lille uncertain, if not precarious.

from Vimy to Hill No 70, curving outward toward Lens. The Germans are fighting desperately to hold back the French who are pushing up and over the Vimy ridge and to expel the British, who by occupying Hill No. 70 have for the moment won the key to Lens.

This particular operation is interesting because it discloses a perfect illustration of the nature of the struggle in the west. Co-ordination of British and French attacks has resulted in two advances which have created a rather deep and narrow salient about the city of Lens.

Reduced, as it has been, to the terms of an advantageous business enterprise, the loan has ceased to encounter sentimental opposition. Those who still oppose it manifestly put other interests above the interests of the United States. They have therefore no ground left to stand on.

The thing to keep in mind is that the Allies in Artois are slowly and surely pushing the Germans back. They drove them off the Loreto Hill in May. They seem at the point of expelling them from Lens now. Precisely in this fashion Grant moved west around Petersburg and Richmond until Lee was compelled to leave the Confederate capital, because his remaining line of communication was imperilled.

The Allied movement is not by the flank. It is rather a wedge slowly driven eastward across the German line of communication. If Lens should fall, the net advance for six months would hardly exceed ten miles at the most. But if the war were maintained, and the country favors the Allies as they advance, the Germans would have to leave France within the next twelve months.

It is impossible to down the advocates of compulsory service in Britain. Though the leading statesmen are afraid to put it to an immediate test and have apparently agreed to let the matter rest for the present, agitation cannot be suppressed for long; the most that can be hoped is to avoid a division in the Cabinet.

The movement for national service is well organized already, and a recent manifesto calling for the compulsory enlistment of "every fit man, whatever his position in life," was subscribed to by twenty-two peers and thirty members of the House of Commons, all serving in the army or navy. It is clear that many influential men support the proposal. Lord Kitchener himself, though for the present disinclined to advocate general service, is obviously convinced that the purely voluntary system is almost played out.

In all likelihood opposition will be overcome gradually, and the evident intention of the War Office is to follow the old plan of conscription at first, to call upon the several districts to provide a specified number of men, and if that fails to use some form of compulsion on a limited scale. In this way the country may be degrees reconciled to a system which has hitherto been regarded as distasteful and wholly superfluous in respect of the presumed invincibility of the British fleet.

Comments in the English press on the terms of the Anglo-French loan all strike the same note. From the point of view of the powers seeking a credit here the cost of the loan is high. Yet it is recognized that the bargain was one dictated by necessity and therefore not without its decided advantages to the borrowers as well as to the lenders.

Great Britain has never in modern times sought to float a loan abroad. Yet no other country has ever placed a loan approaching \$500,000,000 in Britain, hitherto the undisputed banking centre of the world. The people of the United States and the bankers of the United States have seldom interested themselves in foreign underwritings. It is an unprecedented thing for us to lend \$500,000,000 abroad as it is for Great Britain and France to borrow that amount from a single foreign nation.

In "The Times's" view there is consolation in the tribute which the placing of the loan offers to Anglo-Brit-

ish prestige, since "It is safe to say that none of our enemies could borrow such a sum in the United States at any price." This country is making the \$500,000,000 loan on a purely business basis. The extension of credit will help us to maintain our foreign commerce through a very critical period in its history.

The loan has succeeded because primarily it is a good venture for the United States. Its success fortifies our economic position and must help to open the eyes of those who still doubt our capacity to become one of the great banking powers of the world.

The announcement that Arturo Toscanini will not return to the Metropolitan Opera House this season exceeds in public interest anything yet disclosed regarding the year's plans. Maestro Toscanini has become a prime favorite in the conductor's chair, and his decision not to quit Italy during the war will be regretted by opera-goers here, whether or not they have agreed with his handling of some of the German works which have fallen to his baton.

Signor Toscanini, during his stay here, has come to be regarded as more than an eminent artist and a splendid musician—he has become a "star conductor" like Nisch and Weingartner, with an attraction for the public similar to that of singer stars and actor stars. His habit of conducting without scores, his pleasing personality, contributed to build up this reputation as well as his brilliant performances as director. At any rate, the fact that Toscanini was to direct an opera was reflected at the boxoffice, just as the fact that Caruso or Farrar was to sing. And that fact, in turn, was reflected in the \$40,000 salary he drew, for the emoluments of the operatic world are not based entirely on abstract artistic merit.

The Health Department has discovered a fish dealer who painted her wares to give them a semblance of freshness. It remains to discover a florist gilding the lily.

"Banks Put Check on 'War Babies.'"—Headline. A new brand of morality.

Uncle Sam in His Rocking Chair. To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: It seems to me that a triumph by the Kaiser, resulting in a larger Germany, immense indemnities and a continuance of his rule, would be such a menace to Uncle Sam that even a schoolboy would be quick to realize it, especially as their plan of world domination is now known and their absolute savagery exposed to the world.

Let us have one term only, and that, say, for six years, and then a President can snap his fingers at the politicians and do his duty, his whole duty, by the country. M. T. R. Newark, N. J., Sept. 23, 1915.

An Un-American View? To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: "In an article headed 'Intimidated,' written by George Andrews, in your issue of September 24, is the following statement: 'It is with deep mortification that I say that I am now ashamed of my American nationality.'" The writer is referring to the possibility of a fellow in the plans for the negotiation of the so-called "Allies' loan," which alone, he says, could be due to fear on the part of bank officers of German depositors.

To the mind of Mr. George Andrews a bit of a loan like the one in question, it would seem, presents no question but the simple one of overcoming fear on our part. Even the slightest study on the questions involved in this loan, which has absorbed so much of the finances, would tend to show how superficial is every view expressed by this un-American writer. American nationality demands loyalty of all its worthy adherents. D. G. SHERWIN. Brooklyn, Sept. 24, 1915.

THE DIPLOMACY OF BLUFF

One More Discussion of Mr Wilson's Policy.

To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: I have been a very much interested observer of the course of The Tribune and also its correspondents in the matter of the German-American difficulty. I believe the situation is gradually working itself out right and that eventually the truth will dawn on Americans that the root of the whole trouble is that Germany was forced to the conviction that the United States was virtually aiding England by her complacent attitude in the face of Britain's violations of international law.

Therefore, I believe the truth is that when the "strict accountability" note was sent the Germans had made up their minds that America must be ignored, or perhaps included with their enemies. And as The Tribune says in its editorial, "Mr. Wilson's German Policy," she (Germany) had punctured the bluff of the "strict accountability" note. The crux of the whole matter is that Mr. Wilson did not take as energetic an attitude against England as he did against Germany; and the latter refused to be bluff. This administration could have emerged with dignity and honor from the European crisis if it had the spinal column of Grover Cleveland.

Another point I have noticed very many of The Tribune correspondents write that the United States should have protested against the "invasion of Belgium." The Tribune has never taken this stand if I have read it right. There are many instances in history, some of recent date, where countries have been crossed to get at the enemy.

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Hampered by Fear. To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: The administration at Washington seems to be inoculated with fear. It is all the time afraid of something—that Germany will not accept the demands made in its notes, or that it will still continue to torpedo passenger ships, or will refuse reparation in the Lusitania case, etc.

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"I'M GLAD I'M FATHER'S SON!"



BULGARIAN "PERFIDY"

Selfishness and Treachery the Characteristics of an Ungrateful and Obstinate Race, According to a Greek Critic.

To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: In to-day's Tribune I read with much interest your editorial article on Bulgaria, which dwelt at considerable length and evinced much insight on the Balkan situation in general, as it is affected by the present puzzling attitude of the overambitious and intractable Bulgarian Czar.

However, it seems to me that the manifest promptness with which you absolve the Bulgars for their present disposition to get advantage of the exhausted and depleted condition of the brave Serbian army, and attack it on the rear while its gait is broken and its regiments are fighting desperately against tremendous odds in defence of their country from invasion by the legions of the two Kaisers, is not only unjustified, but wholly unfair and revolting in the mind of every chivalrous person.

That treaty was not drawn with any regard to the principle of nationality or with due respect for the wishes of the peoples affected by its arbitrary provisions. But it was dictated by Russia at the conclusion of her successful campaign against the Osmanlis, and was drawn mainly with the view of enhancing the Muscovite designs on Byzantium and on the now historic Dardanelles, while Bulgaria proper and the adjacent non-Bulgarian provinces were in the process of time become a Muscovite satellite.

But ingratitude and obstinacy are the two characteristics for which the Bulgarian temperament stands so conspicuously distinguished. It was but natural that this Asiatic race, which had done so much to undermine and weaken the Byzantine Empire, and thus paved the way for the incursion in Europe of Osman's hordes, should once again turn about face and make common cause with their cousins, the Turks, and so perpetuate their abominable presence on the shores of the Golden Horn.

At that time, while Bulgaria was being pampered and lionized, the just claims and interests of her allies were wholly disregarded and the seeds of dissension were sown, bringing forth an abundant harvest to all concerned. The great powers will not recognize such annoying "trifles" as the conflicting interests and rival aspirations among the lesser nations. They arrogate such royal prerogatives only to themselves, in pursuance of which they are now on the warpath, and as it now happens that the united Balkan power is highly precious to either side, they deem it worthy of their effort to try and patch up a hasty and temporary rapprochement among the small states in order to align them on their particular side, thus acquiring an additional formidable weapon which might be trained effectively on the opposite camp.

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OUR ARMY OFFICERS

Congress Should Live Up to All the Promises Which It Makes to Them.

To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: You surely lack efficient commanders of all grades, from lieutenants to majors; and to obtain this material and to hold it in time of need, the government must regard sacredly any promises it makes to the men who offer their lives for their country.

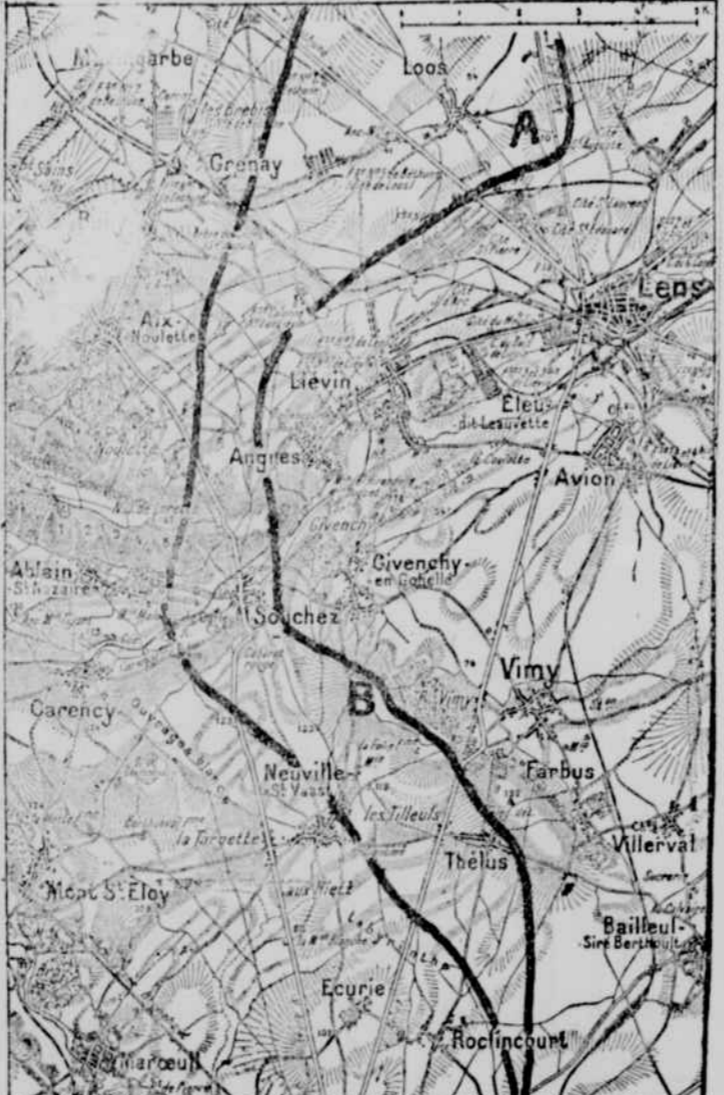
In the Civil War officers were promised payment in gold, and then in currency equal to gold. Congress made the promise. It could have been kept, but it was not kept. Officers' pay was worth about 40 per cent of its face value during the war, and the government has never made the difference good, nor offered to do so.

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A—Hill No. 70. B—Hill No. 140.