

movements of troops would not have been practicable without absolute control of the sea.

At the end of the year, Germany had signally failed in her main purpose of destroying the French and British armies, and afterwards in a very desperate effort to reach the Channel ports. She had, however, overrun Belgium and remained in possession of a tenth of the soil of France containing its most valuable mines of coal and iron, and several of its greatest industrial towns. Austrian armies had been soundly beaten by the Russians and Serbians, and the province of Galicia had been lost.

#### OPERATIONS ON THE WESTERN FRONT, 1915.

In January the Allies made three determined efforts to pierce the German lines in Alsace, in Champagne, and at Souchez, north of Arras. A French force crossed the Aisne near Soissons and gained a precarious foothold north of the river. The stream rose in flood during the night and carried away most of the bridges, thus isolating the force on the north side. It was attacked by greatly superior numbers on the 13th and driven across the river with heavy loss. On the morning of March 13, a formidable offensive began on the British front at Neuve Chapelle, ten miles west of Lille. The German entrenchments were levelled by a well directed artillery fire and carried by the infantry without much difficulty. The advance was continued as far as the second line, where the assaulting troops were compelled to halt through disorganization. The artillery was unable to continue its barrage from want of ammunition and the expected reinforcements did not come up. The position won was maintained and German counter-attacks were repelled with great loss. Neuve Chapelle has been aptly described as a victory that "halted half way through lack of prompt support and co-ordination." On March 14, the Germans commenced a terrific bombardment of the British lines at St. Eloi. Shortly after, they sprang an immense mine and blew up part of the British entrenchments which were then carried by assault. Next day the British counter-attacked and retook most of the lost ground. On April 17, the British sprang a mine under Hill 60, three miles south-east of Ypres, and carried the German works by assault. Fierce fighting followed during the next five days. On the evening of the 22nd the Germans discharged a great volume of poisonous gas against the French trenches north of Ypres, which was carried toward them by a favourable wind. The French African troops holding this line were surprised and became panic-stricken. A whole division was nearly destroyed in consequence. The Germans poured into the gap and began to cross the canal. At the same time, they attempted to use gas against the Third Canadian Infantry Brigade, on the French right. Here the direction of the wind was not so propitious and the Canadians firmly held their lines and repelled the attack which was renewed against the Second Canadian Brigade on the following afternoon with no better success. These assaults with gas continued intermittently until the middle of May. Within two weeks, the allied troops were supplied with gas helmets and respirators and the temporary advantage of the Germans was at an end. They had forced