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* Maritime—Moderate winds, *
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VOL. XXII., No. 38

FREDERICTON, N. B., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1916

ONE CENT PER COPY

French Win Back Position On the Western Battlefront

Russian Offensive in South Russia and Galicia are Assuming Large Proportions---Allies Strengthening Positions at Saloniki.

LONDON, Feb. 12.—The latest reports from the western battle front indicate successes for the French in winning back some of the positions they lost in the recent nibbling of the Germans at their lines in the Artois and south of the Somme.

From southern Russia and Galicia come announcements that the Russian offensive there is assuming considerable proportions, but without any striking results having been so far achieved. Otherwise comparative calm prevails in the widespread war area.

In preparation for eventualities around Saloniki, the Allies are strengthening their positions and extending their lines.

The French have advanced across the Vardar River northwest of the city, encamping on the right bank of the river.

MEMBER OF THE PRUSSIAN DIET HINTS

HINTS AT POSSIBILITY OF PEACE IN NEAR FUTURE

AMSTERDAM, Feb. 12 (via London).—A suggestion of the possibility of the conclusion of peace in the near future is made by Baron Von Zedlitz, of the Prussian diet, according to the Vossische Zeitung. The newspaper quotes him as saying:

"As regards the discussion of Germany's aims in the war, in view of the whole present war situation, the conclusion of peace in the near future is not impossible, and therefore the announcement of fundamental aims in the war appears to be necessary if the voice of the people is to be heard at the right time."

Baron Von Zedlitz and Neukirch is the leader of the Free Conservatives in the Prussian diet. Wide circulation was given to an article published by him on September 27, 1914, in the Berliner Tageblatt, entitled "Our Goal for Peace," in which he urged the desirability of the war being pushed "strongly and with reckless energy" by the German military forces in the field and by the administration of territories under German control in Belgium.

GERMAN NAVAL OFFICERS MISTOOK

BRITISH MINE SWEEPERS FOR CRUISERS

LONDON, Feb. 12.—The question as to how German naval officers came to mistake mine sweepers for cruisers, is discussed this morning by the British newspapers in connection with the German official account of the latest fight at the Dogger Bank. The naval expert of the Daily Chronicle thinks that "the answer is to be found in the fact that the British warship Arabis is an unusual type of vessel, which might easily be mistaken for something else. She is an oil-driven vessel. A number of ships of this class began to appear on the high seas. They have no funnels and present a strange appearance to the seaman's eye."

FRENCH TROOPS ARE NOW ENCAMPED ON

THE RIGHT BANK OF THE VARDAR RIVER

PARIS, Feb. 12.—The Saloniki correspondent of the Petit Parisien telegraphs that French troops crossed the Vardar river on February 10 and are now encamped on the right bank of the river and in the region of Janitza and Veria. The town of Veria is an important railroad station on the line between Saloniki and Monastir.

The region alluded to in the above despatch is to the northwest of Topsis, on the Vardar river, fifteen miles northwest of Saloniki, at which point the line of defenses of the camp of the Allies at Saloniki begins. The line ascends the Vardar to Karasuli, from which point it sweeps in a semi-circle to the southeast, enclosing Saloniki.

MONTENEGRINS STILL RESISTING.

PARIS, Feb. 12.—A despatch from Rome says that according to the Durazzo correspondent of the Idea Nazionale, the strength of the Austrian forces now marching on Durazzo is estimated at 30,000 men. The rest of the invading army, the correspondent says, is engaged in guarding the country behind the advancing troops.

He adds that the disarmament of Montenegro is not yet completed and parts of the little kingdom have not been occupied, as a result of the vigorous resistance of the followers of General Martinovitch.

Advocate An Ad

Valorem Tariff

London, Feb. 12.—The principal editorial in the Spectator today is headed: "Why not a general tariff?" It seems to owe its origin to the forthcoming restrictions on imports, which

the Spectator holds to be a poor method of increasing revenue and relieving shipping. The solution suggested in the editorial is a general ad valorem tariff of ten per cent, with a rebate of five per cent, on bona fide imperial products.

The local branches of the various banks were busier than usual this morning on account of it being pay day for the 36th Battery.

GERMAN

OFFICIAL WAR REPORT

Berlin, Feb. 12 (via London).—After a violent artillery bombardment on the greater part of the Champagne front, French infantry made an attack yesterday afternoon. The German war office announce today that the French penetrated the German position near Massige over a front of about 200 yards.

On Combres Hill we occupied the edges of a crater made by the explosion of a French mine in front of our trenches.

At several points on the eastern front we repulsed advances by Russian patrols and other small detachments.

On the Balkan front the situation is unchanged.

French Official Report.

Paris, Feb. 12 (via London).—Further reports on the fighting in Champagne, the French War Office announces this afternoon, has resulted in French forces securing possession of certain trenches occupied by the Germans.

EARTHQUAKE SHOCK AT MARTINIQUE

Fort de France, Martinique, Feb. 12.—A light earthquake occurred here at 11.13 o'clock last night. There was no damage.

BERLIN STATEMENT ON CARDINAL MERCIER'S WORK

Huns Claim That Heroic Belgian Primate is a Political Agitator---Denies story of Atrocities on Nuns.

Berlin, Feb. 12 (wireless to Sayville).—The following statement regarding the activities of Cardinal Mercier, primate of Belgium, who is now on a visit to Rome, was made public today by the Overseas News Agency:

"The letter which Cardinal Mercier and the Belgian Bishops addressed to the German clergy on November 14, 1915, regarding an investigation of allegations that atrocities had been committed in Belgium by Germans, did not reach Cardinal Von Hartmann, the Archbishop of Cologne, until January 7, which explains why it has been unanswered. The general impression prevailing in Germany, however, is that the letter was inspired entirely by Cardinal Mercier, whose intransigent attitude toward the German authorities became manifest on various occasions.

Called a Politician.

"Before the war Cardinal Mercier was an influential Belgian politician. For example, at the time of King Leopold's death he sided publicly with the party in favor of colonial expansion in the notorious Congo affair, demanding an increase in the Belgian army. After the occupation of Belgium by the German forces, the Cardinal preserved a similitude, using the influence of the clergy for agitation of a purely political nature.

"At the time of the great Anglo-French offensive, the Cardinal ordered that in all Belgian churches in the occupied territory, prayers be said for the victory of the Entente forces. At the same time, on St. Michael's Day, he published a pastoral letter comparing the present war with the struggle between St. Michael, the patron saint of Brussels, and Lucifer, suggesting

in transparent fashion that he did not compare Germany with the angel.

No Claim on the Belgians.

"In another pastoral letter the Cardinal said the Germans possessed no legitimate authority and had no claim to the esteem of the Belgians, who owed affection and obedience only to their king.

"During religious ceremonies in the fall, Cardinal Mercier declared to Belgian priests assembled in the Malines seminary that they were all obliged to offer the greatest possible resistance to the Germans.

"In competent German circles, it is pointed out that in the appendix to the letter of the Belgian clergy, inspired by Cardinal Mercier, it is stated that an Austrian priest made investigations in Belgium which had a disastrous result for Germany. However, Cardinal Piffle, Archbishop of Vienna, declares publicly and formally that he never authorized any priests to make such investigations.

"The letter of the Belgian bishops also discusses the allegation that German soldiers attacked Belgian nuns. When urged to investigate this charge, Cardinal Mercier declined, on the ground that he did not wish to hurt any one's feelings; but the Bishops of Liege, Namur, Bruges and Ghent declared that no such misdeeds had come to their knowledge.

"All this corroborates the German impression that the liberties granted freely to Cardinal Mercier in the interest of his exalted priestly vocation are being used by him merely for purposes of political agitation, which places the German authorities in an awkward position."

Mysterious Fire In Canada Car Shops

Montreal, Feb. 12.—The building which houses the forging department of the Canadian Car and Foundry Co. at Turcot, on the outskirts of Montreal, was badly damaged by fire at an early hour this morning. The cause of the blaze is unknown, but in view of the recent activity of German agents in Canada, and considering that the company was engaged in manufacturing munitions and was working 24 hours a day to fill rush orders, it is generally believed that an incendiary origin could be discovered.

Officials of the company were not inclined to discuss the matter this morning, but one official said that while it may have been due to accident, an investigation would be instituted at once.

The monetary loss is said to be small, and it was thought the work on munitions would not be seriously interfered with.

JOHNNY O'LEARY WINS IN A TEN-ROUND BOUT

Minneapolis, Feb. 12.—Johnny O'Leary, Canadian lightweight champion, defeated Johnny Lustig, of New York, in a ten-round bout here last night.

Breach Of Neutrality Is Alleged

Chicago, Feb. 12.—Investigation of alleged activity on the part of British agents in recruiting soldiers within the borders of the United States will be started today by local officials of the Justice Department, according to Hinton C. Clabough, division chief of the bureau of investigation. Mr. Clabough said two letters purporting to be written by Major G. A. Stohen, of the 141st overseas battalion, to David Quail, British vice consul at Duluth, Minn., have been placed in his hands and form the basis for the inquiry.

The letters are said to give information regarding alleged recruiting at Duluth and Minneapolis.

Named Delegates To Peace Conference

Stockholm, Feb. 12.—A meeting of 45 Danish men and women was held in Copenhagen on Thursday for the purpose of choosing delegates to the neutral peace conference to be held in this city.

Twelve delegates were named, including M. Kalusen, first vice-president of the Danish parliament.

GERMANS HOPEFUL THAT NEW SUBMARINE POLICY WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO U.S.

Berlin Newspapers Expect Washington Government to Warn Americans Not To Travel on Armed Merchantmen.

BERLIN, Feb. 11, via London, Feb. 12.—The Berlin newspapers publish despatches from the United States announcing that it is expected that the Washington administration will soon issue a warning to Americans not to travel on merchantmen which are armed. The newspapers say that this announcement comes at a timely moment to confirm the hopes entertained in Germany that the new policy enunciated in the German memorandum, which declares that armed merchantmen will be treated by Germany after February 29 as warships, would be found to conform to the revised ideas of the American State Department on the conduct of submarine warfare, and hence tend to simplify in the future the situation between Germany and America on this issue.

Official circles felt but little apprehension regarding the reception of the memorandum by the American Government, or the possibility that it would complicate the settlement of the Lusitania issue.

It is stated that a report from Baron Zweidenek Von Sudenhorst, the Austro-Hungarian charge d'affaires at Washington, describing a conversation with Secretary Lansing regarding the disarmament proposals, has given the German and Austro-Hungarian governments a definite idea of the American position. The main anxiety felt by the German authorities has been with regard to the reception which would be accorded to the memorandum by the press and public opinion in the United States.

The German press is unanimous in expressing commendation of the memorandum, which, however, does not go far enough to satisfy some of the writers. Count Reventlow, for instance, says the insistence should be made on "the inherent right of the German nation to make use of any weapon which it needs in the struggle for existence."

He adds that the disarmament of Montenegro is not yet and its people that unrestricted use be made of the submarine weapon on Great Britain's commerce than that good relations should be conserved with the United States.

SURE GUARANTEE OF VICTORY IN CLOSER UNION OF THE ALLIES, SAYS PREMIER BRIAND OF FRANCE

PARIS, Feb. 12.—A Havas despatch dated February 11 says that at the official dinner given in the French Embassy, the addresses delivered by French Premier Briand and Italian Premier Salandra, dealt chiefly with the closer future relations of the Allies in the conduct of the war.

"It is in this union," said M. Briand, which each day is becoming close both in our military enterprises and in all the phases of our economic struggle against our enemies, that a sure guarantee of victory lies."

In reply Signor Salandra expressed the assurance that the exchanges of views, which they had had with the French visitors, would bring about that unity which was indispensable to the action of the governments of the Allies.

Speaking at a reception given by the Italian journalists, M. Briand said that he and his colleagues were well aware of the fact that the Italian press had done invaluable service by hastening Italy's decision to range herself on the side of the Allies. He further said: "Our enemies are favored by their central position, but this advantage will be counteracted if for the Allies there are no longer many battle fronts, but one and one only."

COMMUNICATION INTERRUPTED.

LONDON, Feb. 12.—A Reuter despatch from Amsterdam says: "Budapest advices received here are to the effect that Russian railway communication with Roumania is interrupted owing to the movements of troops in Bessarabia. Only military trains are moving in Bessarabia."

GERMANY'S ANNOUNCEMENT IS SAID TO HAVE EMBARRASSED THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

New York, Feb. 12.—The predictions from Washington that the United States would probably warn its subjects not to take passage on armed merchantmen, in line with the German memorandum that armed liners would be treated as warships, has aroused no general comment in the principal newspapers here. Notwithstanding Mr. Lansing's recent outline of the American position in regard to armed merchantmen, Germany's announcement, according to special Washington despatches, is said to have embarrassed the administration.

The New York World, which has been favorable to Mr. Wilson's policies, does not find it all clear from the German memorandum that armed merchantmen are vessels of war.

"The U. S. government," it counsels, "may well await further information before taking final action on the German threat to treat armed merchantmen as vessels of war. If such ships are actually vessels of war, we are as much interested in knowing the fact as anybody else."

The Tribune sees in Germany's announcement a pretext for sinking ships without warning. Pointing out that the practice of arming merchantmen is an established one and has even been conceded by Germany in the past, the Tribune says:

There is nothing in the whole German argument to show that new conditions justify the threat now made. The conditions set forth in the note are simply re-stated in a new and more elaborate form to establish a precedent for further frightfulness."