

BOLSHEVIKI ARE STEADILY LOSING GROUND IN RUSSIA

A Serious Defection From the Workmens' and Soldiers' Organization---Lack of Authority and Drunkenness the Cause ---Leaders are Conscious of Failure.

(Canadian Press direct wire.)

LONDON, Dec. 26.—There have been occasional assertions in recent Petrograd despatches that the influence and power of the Bolsheviks was waning, but never with such unanimity as in special despatches dated from the Russian capital Sunday and printed today. Nearly all make the point in one form or other that the defection from the Workmen's and Soldiers' organization is occurring constantly. Among the causes alleged are general lack of authority, the increase in drunkenness, the unwillingness of the population to work, and the scarcity of foodstuffs. The main desire of the soldiers is said to be for peace. The correspondents cite instances of Bolshevik troops refusing to march, declining to attack the Ukrainians and permitting the Cossacks to disarm them without resistance.

Fighting, it is said, is the last thing they are willing or intend to do. A hostile attitude is reported to survive among the Baltic sailors and the Red Guard, but the former are not numerous enough to conquer the Ukrainians, and the Red Guard is largely untrained.

It is reported, therefore, that war against the Ukraine probably will not materialize on any serious scale.

A TREMENDOUS AND GROWING OPPOSITION TO THE BOLSHEVIKI AMONG ALL CLASSES

The Bolshevik leaders, the Petrograd correspondent of the Morning Post says, appear to be becoming conscious of hopeless failure, while the correspondent of the Daily News writes: "There is a tremendous and growing opposition to the Bolsheviks among all classes. Men who formerly supported them are turning against them, and 'German hirelings' is a common term for them. There is much talk of meeting the present reign of terror with counter measures and to bomb the Bolsheviks is suggested as the only method of exerting pressure on them. This is not merely idle talk say those who have already thrown bombs."

BOLSHEVIKI COMMISSIONERS TRYING TO SHIFT DISCONTENTED SOLDIERS FROM THE CAPITAL

Reports of civil war activity, however, continue to be received. The Bolshevik government declares definitely that its troops have captured Kharkov, Nicolaiev, and are threatening the Ukrainian hold on Odessa. The Cossacks report the strengthening of their hold on the Donetz basin.

None of the reports, however, are more pressing than recent reports of a similar nature. In the meantime nothing more is heard of the efforts at negotiations between the Bolsheviks and the Ukrainians.

Interest in the convening of the constituent assembly is said to have re-awakened remarkably, and demands for its convocation are being made. It appears that the Bolshevik commissioners are trying, though vainly, to shift some of the discontented military units from the capital.

THE BOLSHEVIKI WILL CONTROL ADMISSION TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY BY ISSUING TICKETS

A Reuter despatch from Petrograd says that the Praobrashensky regiment has declared its disbelief in the intention of the Bolshevik government to open the constituent assembly, and refuse to relinquish their guard of the Tauride palace until the assembly meets. It is reported, however, that the Bolsheviks intend to control admission to the assembly by issuing tickets. This is sharply opposed by the social revolutionists, who are credited with the determination to convene the assembly in any case.

WOUNDED HERO GOOD SWIMMER

(Canadian Press direct wire.)
 Paris, Dec. 26.—Gerard Meister, five times wounded in the battle of the Marne, won the annual Christmas swimming contest across the river Seine, a distance of 350 yards. The temperature stood at about the freezing point, and the bridges and banks of the river were crowded with spectators who cheered the swimmers as they plunged through the icy water. Meister won this event in 1913.

BEST ESSAY ON PRAYER

(Canadian Press direct wire.)
 Edinburgh, Dec. 26.—St. Andrew's University has awarded the first prize of £100 to the Rev. Samuel McComb, of Baltimore, in the first competition under a trust established last year for essays on "Prayer." The competitions are open to the world, with essays in any language. There were 1,700 competitors. The other prizes were awarded as follows: Two to England, one to Switzerland and one to India.

FOUR CASES RESULT FROM RECENT RAIDS

Hayes Case Contested and Adjourned to Secure Witness —Other Cases Now Being Heard.

The first of four cases of violation of the Intoxicating Liquors Act 1916, was before the police court this morning. The cases arise out of the raids made a few nights ago by Chief Inspector Wilson and Inspector Finley. One is against Hayes' Hotel in Devon, one against Pine Grove Hotel in Nashwaakiss and two against the Springhill Hotel.

The Hayes case was contested, Mr. F. H. Peters appearing as counsel for the defense and Mr. P. J. Hughes appearing to prosecute. Chief Inspector Wilson was present in court. The case for the prosecution was completed and two witnesses were called by the defense. A third witness also is to be heard and adjournment was made until January 2nd.

The case against Pine Grove Hotel was taken up this afternoon.

MESSAGE TO SIR ROBT. FROM THE TROOPS

(Canadian Press direct wire.)

Ottawa, Dec. 26.—Sir Robert Borden has received the following from the overseas forces of the Dominion:

"This message from the Canadian corps, from every division, brigade, battalion and man, is a deeply sincere wish for your future happiness and our early reunion, coupled with the warmest feelings of gratitude and appreciation for the strong and splendid verdict of support recently expressed throughout almost every part of Canada. We feel today that the force behind us is of such strength and magnitude that it will inspire each one of us to greater deeds and nobler actions and will surely lead us to the goal of victory, peace and home."

Two Below Zero.

The thermometer registered two degrees below zero early this morning and the same yesterday morning, seasonable Christmas weather being in order.

EXPLORER STEFANSSON AND PARTY HEARD FROM

Naval Department at Ottawa Has Word That all are Safe---Have Been in the Far North Since 1913.

(By Canadian Press direct wire.)

OTTAWA, Dec. 26.—Vilhjalmar Stefansson, the Canadian explorer, and his party, are safe. A message received by Mr. G. J. Desbarats, Deputy Minister of Naval Affairs, today, announces that Mr. Stefansson and party have arrived safely at Fort Yukon, Alaska, from the far north. This means that the explorer, about whose safety there had been considerable doubt for several months past, is coming back to civilization after his long sojourn in the Arctic regions.

May Go to Nome.

It is presumed that the party will now make their way to Nome, and wait for the first steamer that will bring them back to Canada. It is possible, however, that Stefansson may decide to go overland to Dawson. It is understood here that Stefansson, who was in charge of the northern division of the Canadian Arctic expedition, spent last winter on Melville Island. It was thought that he would come out either via Lancaster Sound and Labrador or the Behring Sea. Apparently he has not chosen either of these routes, but chose to come over the ice to Herschel Island, and from there to Alaska, probably by way of Fort MacPherson. His party consists of about twenty-four men.

Started Out in 1913.

The Canadian Arctic expedition set out for the north in 1913. It was divided into the northern and southern divisions. The northern division proposed to explore unknown parts of the Beaufort Sea, carry on investigations in the northern islands, and search for new land. The members of this division set out in the government steamer Karluk. They proposed to establish a base on the banks of Prince Patrick Island. Shortly afterwards the Karluk was crushed by the ice and sank. In endeavoring to reach Herald Island eight members of the party lost their lives. The remainder, numbering nine men, including Captain R. A. Bartlett, succeeded in reaching Wrangel Island. Bartlett journeyed on foot to the Siberian coast and thence to Alaska in the Herman.

A Fierce Battle Between The Italians and Austrians

TO CONTINUE RUSSO-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS

(Canadian Press direct wire.)

London, Dec. 26.—The social revolutionary majority in the constituent assembly has decided to convoke that body on January 2, according to a Petrograd despatch to the Times, although the Bolshevik government has said that it was determined to prevent the meeting of the assembly independent of its sanction.

M. Borovsky, the Bolshevik representative in Stockholm, a despatch to the Morning Post from the Swedish capital says, confirms reports that Stockholm will be the scene of the continuation of the Russo-German peace negotiations. He says that the session in Stockholm will begin early in January when all the delegates now at Brest-Litovsk are expected in the Swedish capital.

TOBACCO A NECESSITY

(Canadian Press direct wire.)

London, Dec. 26.—Tobacco is a necessity, not a luxury, declares Lord Rhonda, the food controller, in a statement published this week. "We must have tobacco," he says. "I believe that its loss would be a national misfortune. It means much both to the manual laborer and to him who works with his brain. Men would eat a great deal more if they did not have tobacco. I hold that the deprivation of it would work great discomfort." Some system of "rationing" tobacco, however, is forecasted by the newspapers.

Whistle Out of Order.

Many thought that some startling piece of war news had come in on account of the continued blowing of the fire alarm whistle on the City Light-station, Carleton street, a little after eight o'clock this morning. The long blast was the result of a defect in the apparatus of the whistle. When an alarm of fire was rung in part of the apparatus became caught on an old chimney which is near the whistle and failed to close it as it should.

Italians After a Desperate Encounter With the Enemy Recover Some Ground ---Heavy Fall of Snow a Barrier to The Enemy's Progress.

(Canadian Press direct wire.)

ROME, Dec. 26.—In a desperate battle which last all day, the Italians fought their way back to the positions from which they were forced the previous day on the Asiago plateau under Austro-German attacks, according to today's War Office statement. Some guns and numerous machine guns which had been abandoned by the Italians in their retirement were recaptured when the old positions were re-occupied.

The entire mountain region, where heavy fight has been going on in recent days, is having the unusual experience of a holiday season with green slopes and summits. One of the generals on the front said that every foot of snow was worth divisions in obstructing the enemy.

"This is one of the mildest winters we have ever had," said the major in charge of a branch of high command, "and from a military standpoint the weather conditions are of the highest importance both for our troops and for the effect on the enemy transportation of supplies and troops."

AUSTRIANS ARE MAKING LAVISH PROMISES TO THEIR TROOPS TO KEEP THEIR COURAGE UP

Prisoners captured by the Italians on the Asiago plateau say that the men's hearts are sick of the cruel fighting among the rocks where the days are filled with bloody fighting and the nights with aching bodies. A surcease from their sufferings is what the Austrian officers promise their troops as soon as the plain is reached.

Warmth, good wine, food, plunder and the surrender of the Italians are prizes which they hold before their eyes to arouse them to fresh efforts, but the Italian resistance is tough and when pressed backwards returns continually to counter attack and yields each position only after extracting from the enemy the maximum price.

AMERICAN TROOPS IN FRANCE FURNISHED WITH PROOF OF BARBAROUS ACTS OF THE HUNS

With the American Army in France, Dec. 25.—Information concerning German savagery has reached the American troops in one of a series of bulletins read to them by the united commanders and posted on the bulletin boards. Here is what they heard:

"After a raid by the Germans on trenches held by American troops, a lone sentry of — infantry was found with his throat cut from ear to ear. He had been surprised by an overwhelming force of Germans and must have been so killed after capture. Such brutality is familiar to old soldiers who served against savages in the Philippine campaign."

Another bulletin tells the men how the Germans in occupied sections of France and Belgium are turning women and children out of their homes into the snow, the buildings being used by the soldiers for horses and material.

SIR F. E. SMITH HAS ARRIVED

(Canadian Press direct wire.)

An Atlantic liner arrived here today with Sir Frederick Smith, attorney general of Great Britain, as a passenger. Sir Frederick said he had come over here to spend one month in connection with legal matter in which the United States and British governments are interested, and primarily to settle the details for the conscription of British subjects living in the United States. The attorney general has been invited to deliver two or three addresses before the legal societies in New York and other citizens before he leaves.

HAIG'S XMAS MESSAGES

(Canadian Press direct wire.)

London, Dec. 26.—Field Marshal Haig, according to the official announcement, sent Christmas messages to the various allied commanders. The following message went to general Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force: "From Headquarters of the British Armies in France, I send our best wishes for Christmas and the new year to our comrades of the American Expeditionary forces. We are proud to think that the New Year will see Americans and British fighting in France for the defence of civilization."

SERIOUS FIRE AT DULUTH

(Canadian Press direct wire.)

Duluth, Minn., Dec. 26.—Fire yesterday destroyed the Rice Point saw mill and lumber yards of the Alger Smith Lumber Co., causing a loss of \$500,000 in buildings and lumber, and cut off street railway communication between Duluth and Superior through the burning of the Duluth end of the inter-state bridge.

Fire at Long Beach.

Long Beach, N. Y., Dec. 26.—Fire today destroyed four frame buildings fronting the board walk, which parallels the bathing beach, and burned away a section of the walk.

The property loss was estimated at \$200,000. Two of the structures were apartment houses and twenty-two families were made homeless.

A NEW TRIAL REFUSED.

Concord, N. H., Dec. 26.—The Supreme Court today refused a new trial to Frederick L. Small, formerly a Boston broker, awaiting execution on Jan. 15 for the murder of his wife, Mrs. Florence A. Small, at their home near Lake Ossipee, September 28, 1916.