



THE STRIKE SPREADS.

RUSSIA'S FATE IN DOUBT.

Fighting in Moscow—Government Controls Capital.

The cause of the Russian workmen, according to dispatches from St. Petersburg, is gaining ground, but there are no indications of submission on the part of the government.

Conditions in the provinces continue to grow worse. Martial law has been proclaimed in all the governments of Poland.

The Cabinet, which met under the presidency of the Emperor at Tsarsko-Selo, refused to grant free suffrage to the people.

TRAINS STILL MOVING.

No Signs of Yielding on the Part of the Autocracy.

St. Petersburg, Dec. 22.—It is difficult to judge whether the general political strike will succeed or fail. The authorities are bewildered by the strength of the strikers, and the movement has reached formidable proportions in St. Petersburg.

In Moscow the striking railroad men and the lower classes, like the cab drivers, who see the bread taken from their mouths by the strike, are already at each other's throats.

The 12,000 persons who were besieged in the Aquarium at Moscow since last night forced the iron railings surrounding the building at 9 o'clock this morning and effected their escape through an adjacent schoolhouse.

Seventy of those attending the meeting were arrested, but they were subsequently liberated. A few revolvers were seized, and many daggers and revolvers were left behind in the garden surrounding the schoolhouse.

A message by telephone from Moscow says persistent rumors are in circulation there that all the artillerymen, with the exception of those of one battery, have refused to go on duty.

The same message says that a plot has been discovered to seize Governor General Doubassoff.

Demonstrations of the strikers at Moscow continued all day, but in every case they were dispersed by Cossacks and dragoons. Several persons were injured, but no one was killed.

The scanty dispatches received from the interior do not indicate whether the order to strike is meeting a general response.

The government has entered on a vigorous offensive against the revolutionary leaders and is making arrests by the wholesale.

The prevailing impression is that with the limited funds at the disposition of the unions, either the strike must spread rapidly and enter a new and more violent phase or the game will be lost by the revolutionary elements.

A strike of 3,000 tunnel workers is likely to occur to-day or next Tuesday to enforce demands for \$3 a day and recognition of the union.

Several attempts at red flag demonstrations in the Vassili Ostrow and other industrial districts to-day were dispersed by Cossacks.

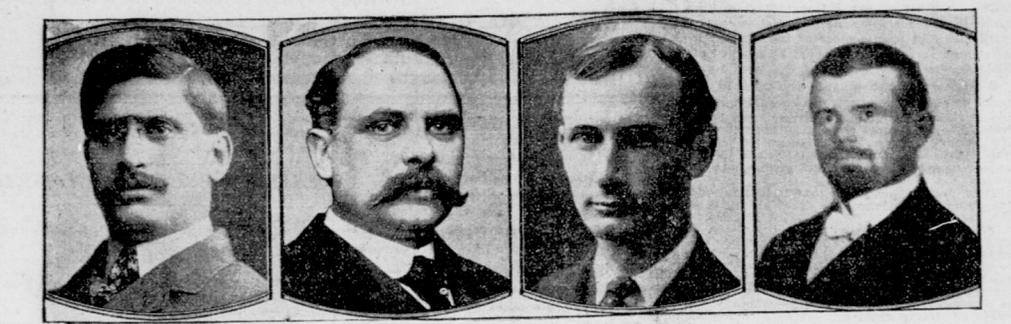
The success of the strike, generally speaking, depends on its development at Moscow and other places in the interior.

Some was, with a longing for a something to break the monotony of Yuletide tales, told a story to a friend in an uptown furniture store.

It was only a doll, but it created some excitement.

Continued on second page.

NEW OFFICERS OF THE REPUBLICAN COUNTY COMMITTEE.



JULIAN S. KREMER, Second vice-president. ALFRED R. PAGE, First vice-president. HERBERT PARSONS, Chairman. THOMAS W. WHITTELE, Secretary.

NO COREY DIVORCE?

Steel Man Gives Wife \$1,000,000, It Is Said.

Pittsburg, Dec. 22.—Mrs. Laura Corey, it is said here, has accepted an offer of \$1,000,000 made by her husband, W. E. Corey, and will not sue for divorce.

GEN. CHAFFEE DECLINES.

Will Not Accept Proffered Police Commissionerhip of This City.

Washington, Dec. 22.—Lieutenant General Chaffee to-day received a letter from Mayor McClellan of New-York, tendering him an appointment as Police Commissioner of New-York.

As already told in The Tribune, Mayor McClellan has been trying to secure a man of military experience for the Police Commissionerhip.

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CHRISTMAS GIFTS BURN.

Brooklyn Fire Destroys Sixty Wagon Loads of Cheer.

Sixty wagon loads of Christmas packages were burned in a fierce fire that swept through the three story building of the New-York Transfer Company, Nos. 185 and 190 Adams-st., Brooklyn, early this morning.

The fire broke out on the top floor, cause unknown, and before the firemen got there had eaten its way to the second and lower floors.

Two hundred horses, stabled on the lower floor, were gotten out with great difficulty. Some of them broke loose, and tore down the street at a wild pace.

The family living at No. 192 Adams-st., was ordered out, as it was feared that building might take fire also.

TUNNEL STRIKE LIKELY.

May Be Called To-day to Get Recognition of Union.

A strike of 3,000 tunnel workers is likely to occur to-day or next Tuesday to enforce demands for \$3 a day and recognition of the union.

BABY CARRIAGE FOR MISS GOULD.

It Was Only a Doll, but It Created Some Excitement.

Some was, with a longing for a something to break the monotony of Yuletide tales, told a story to a friend in an uptown furniture store.

Continued on second page.

ODELL STILL IN FIGHT.

SAYS HE ONLY TRIPPED.

Asserts He Will Not Resign as State Chairman.

State Chairman Odell, before starting yesterday afternoon for his home in Newburg to spend Christmas, said that the fight for the Speakership would go on and that it was a fight to the finish.

"Mr. Merritt will stay in the fight, which will be fought to a finish," said Mr. Odell. "Mr. Merritt thinks about it as I do. I'm going home to Newburg to spend the merry Yuletide."

"Yes, that's well enough as a general rule," said Mr. Odell, "but in the Speakership fight it will be a time for armed neutrality until after Christmas. A new combination to reform the Republican party seems to have been formed by Roosevelt, Parsons and Quigg; or perhaps I should reverse the order, for it seems to be Quigg, Roosevelt and Parsons. I'm a little older than I was in the old fighting days, but now that the battle is on, it seems kind of natural."

"Do you intend to resign as chairman of the State committee?" "I do not; and you cannot make that too strong," said Mr. Odell.

"When you be a candidate for re-election?" "In the language of Governor Higgins, which, by the way, is oftentimes employed, I will cross that bridge when I come to it."

Referring to the fight for the control of the Republican County Committee of the night before, Mr. Odell said:

"I do not; and you cannot make that too strong," said Mr. Odell. "When you be a candidate for re-election?"

GOV. HIGGINS SATISFIED.

Regards Fight Over Speakership as Won for Wadsworth.

Albany, Dec. 22.—Governor Higgins left Albany to-night to spend Christmas with his family at Olean. He did not attempt to conceal the fact that the outcome of the last week's political fight was eminently satisfactory to him and fulfilled his expectations in almost every particular.

"I regard the contest as practically over," said the Governor, "providing always, of course, that the Assembly must first act for themselves. But in view of the positive pledges which have been given for the support of Mr. Wadsworth I regard that matter as settled."

"Have the developments of the last twenty-four hours been to your satisfaction?" he was asked.

"I regard them as helpful and healthy," replied the Governor.

"It was never your intention, then, that this matter should assume the aspect of a personal conflict?" "Assuredly not."

The Governor said that he had personal advice as to the outcome of the conference of Assemblymen held to-day in New-York City.

"Do you still hope for unanimous action in that caucus?" he was asked.

"I have not."

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JOHN A. NICHOLS DEAD.

Lawyer Was Recently a Witness Before Insurance Committee.

John A. Nichols, the lawyer, who was recently a witness before the legislative insurance investigating committee and testified to writing letters to Senator Depew, one of which referred to "our rantakerous friend up the river," died at his home, No. 437 Clinton-ave., Brooklyn, yesterday.

Mr. Nichols was in his seventy-fifth year. He had been in poor health for some time, and his feeble condition was apparent when he was on the witness stand at the insurance inquiry.

Mr. Nichols' death was due to heart dilation. He was considerably wrought up by the notoriety attendant on his being called on the insurance witness, and was greatly excited for a day or two after he had testified.

John A. Nichols' appearance at the insurance investigation was due to his two letters to Senator Chauncey M. Depew. One of these described W. S. Manning, of Albany, as "my friend who usually gets around at this time of the year," and the more celebrated epistle under date of December 19, 1896, relating to "our rantakerous friend up the river."

Mr. Nichols was called before the committee to explain these letters. He appeared very feeble at the time, and his memory was not good. He testified that he had received \$1,000 apiece annually from the Equitable, Mutual and New-York Life for a number of years to pay Manning "to keep him from being inimical to insurance."

This practice began when the late Henry B. Hyde called Mr. Nichols into his office and asked him to "get rid of the annoyance." Mr. Manning subsequently testified to partial receipts of these sums.

Mr. Nichols was born at New-Dorp, Staten Island, seventy-five years ago. He was the son of John and Eliza Nichols, who were neighbors and friends of the late Commodore Vanderbilt.

After completing his education at the Newark Academy he went to Chicago and entered the law office of Norman B. Judd. Mr. Nichols was admitted to the bar in 1856.

He was a member of the Kings County Republican General Committee.

For twenty-three years Mr. Nichols was a vestman of the Church of the Messiah, Brooklyn, and last spring the members of the congregation gave him a silver loving cup as a token of their esteem.

He leaves three sons, the Rev. John F. Nichols, Lyman Nichols, Herbert Nichols and one daughter, Mrs. Frances C. Roles.

ARRESTS IN BOGOTA.

Plot to Overturn Government Checked Just in Time.

Bogota, Thursday, Dec. 21.—The authorities here to-day discovered just in time a conspiracy to overthrow the government. It was headed by Felipe Angelo, Moya Vasquez and Luis Martinez, who with all the others compromised have been arrested and will be tried by court martial.

The government officials belittled the affair, and say that peace is assured. President Reyes and the government being most popular. The whole country, it is added, condemns the plot. The rate of exchange is going down.

PLOT AGAINST KATSURA.

Reported Conspiracy to Kill the Japanese Premier.

London, Dec. 23.—The correspondent of "The Daily Telegraph" at Tokio reports the arrest of a former soldier named Higurashi on the charge of being concerned in a plot to assassinate the Premier, Count Katsura, because he consented to a "disgraceful peace."

MANY SEE EXPLOSION.

One Dead and Four Fatally Hurt on Lehigh Road.

Elmira, N. Y., Dec. 22.—The boiler of a locomotive drawing a southbound Lehigh Valley freight train exploded at Swamp Side, one-half mile east of Van Etten, to-night, killing Frank Morse, the fireman, and fatally injuring Fred Swarthout, the engineer; Henry McMan, the brakeman; Martin Gallagher, the conductor, and Leon Dennison, a freight handler, all of Sayre, Penn.

BELMONT IS TRACTION KING.

Interborough Head Acquires Ryan's Interests in Metropolitan and Has City at Mercy.

BOTH SIDES REFUSE TO CONFIRM DEAL.

Brooklyn Rapid Transit Not in Merger—All the Traction Stocks Rise Violently—May Be One Big Holding Company.

August Belmont has acquired control of the Metropolitan Street Railway system by purchase of the holdings of Thomas F. Ryan. The purchase was arranged at conference held early this week. Details of the transaction have yet to be worked out by the two interests, and both the Belmont and the Ryan people refuse to comment on the situation.

The price paid, the details of the merger of the Interborough and the Metropolitan systems, the practical features of the operation of the lines, all were subjects of speculation in Wall Street and railroad circles yesterday. No official enlightenment came.

Of one feature alone was everybody sure—that this deal placed August Belmont at the head of the greatest street railway combination which the history of city traction records. Manhattan and the greater part of The Bronx and Westchester will now be absolutely at the mercy of Mr. Belmont, who controls the surface roads, the elevated system and the present subways.

Even Brooklyn eventually will fall into Mr. Belmont's hands. It is predicted, with all the vast territory of Queens and Long Island which is tributary to the borough across the river. For the present, it is officially declared, the Brooklyn Rapid Transit system does not figure in the merger.

This acquisition of the control of the Metropolitan system places Mr. Belmont at the head of city traction lines whose tracks approximate six hundred miles in length. In a year, it is estimated, these lines will carry one billion passengers, whose fares will amount to \$50,000,000.

This centralization of all traction interests in one company—practically in one man—will lay the city at his feet, helpless. In case of a strike, like the recent Interborough affair, it was pointed out last night, the people of this city will be entirely without transit facilities.

Just how this tremendous traction combination will be effected was not made known officially. Authoritatively it was declared that Mr. Belmont had purchased Mr. Ryan's holdings of the Metropolitan stocks. With that statement came the report—semi-officially—that a holding company would be formed which would take over the Metropolitan securities. Hints were heard that the Metropolitan Securities Company itself would be used in the merger, but interests allied with Mr. Belmont denied this.

It is considered extremely likely that new Interborough stock will be issued in exchange for stock in the Metropolitan Securities Company, thus taking over the much complicated list of Metropolitan stocks, and putting the Belmont-Interborough credit behind the Metropolitan Securities Company's guarantee of 7 per cent on the stock of the Metropolitan Street Railway.

TRACTION STOCKS RISE ON NEWS.

In the last two or three days Wall Street has heard again the oft-repeated story of the merger of the two competing interests. Because of these reports, the traction stocks have been active, Interborough selling up to 230, a high record, on Thursday. Early yesterday the stories came in such definite shape that all the traction stocks, even the shares of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit, rose mightily.

Interborough, on the curb, soared to 240 1/2. Metropolitan Street Railway opened at 125 and rose to 130 1/2. It closed at 127 1/2 on sales of 132,500 shares. The reaction was attributed to the supposed official announcement of the merger. Metropolitan Securities, which closed at 75 1/2 on Thursday, rose to 80 1/2 yesterday. Manhattan Elevated stock sold at 163 1/2, a rise of 1 1/2 points over Thursday.

The transfer of the Ryan stock was said yesterday. Various conferences between the two interests had been held previous to that and conferences between Mr. Belmont and Mr. Ryan and counsel have been the order ever since. Mr. Belmont was closeted with various directors of the Interborough all the afternoon. Mr. Ryan consulted with Paul D. Cravath, his lawyer, all day. Late last evening a conference was held in Mr. Ryan's office, at which were Mr. Belmont, Andrew Freedman, a director of the Interborough, who also is interested in gas properties with Mr. Ryan, and Mr. Cravath. Nobody would say a word in confirmation or explanation of the purchase.

Whether Mr. Belmont or Mr. Ryan made the first proposal as to the purchase of the Ryan holdings is a point enshrouded in mystery. For years the report that one side had purchased the other's interest has appeared periodically in financial circles, only to be denied with emphasis and gravity by each interest.

The Interborough, of course, is a profitable property, while the Metropolitan has not earned its dividends for several years, and in the last year was gravely hurt by the opening of the subway.

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BELMONT NOW IN POSITION TO SANDBAG CITY.

WITH NO RIVAL BIDDERS, TRACTION CZAR CAN DICTATE TERMS OR REFUSE TO BUILD NEW SUBWAYS.

The consolidation of the surface and elevated traction interests in this city will have a far-reaching effect on future subway development here. For the present it looks as if the city will be the sufferer on account of the merger.

The Rapid Transit Commission, on March 30 last, laid out nineteen new subway routes, covering the city in a comprehensive manner and designed to provide transit facilities for the next ten or fifteen years. It is estimated that to build the lines thus laid down will cost from \$150,000,000 to \$175,000,000.

These routes, as laid down by the commission, contained so-called alternative features, making it possible for the Belmont interests to bid for them in connection with the present subway system, or for the Metropolitan people to build them and have an independent system with prospectively great earning powers.

The aim of President Orr and his colleagues was to formulate a proposition that would be attractive to both the Belmont and Ryan interests and set them to bidding each against the other. They certainly succeeded in part, and doubtless did all that men on that end of the

subway belonging to its rival. Mr. Belmont, it is known, for a long time has been willing, even eager, to purchase the Metropolitan, but has refused to purchase at the prices demanded by those in control of that property.

At that time interests allied to the Belmonts said that if the Metropolitan obtained subway contracts it would experience great difficulty in obtaining the money necessary to carry them through.

Mr. Belmont would make no statement whatever regarding the purchase of the Ryan stock. Later, it was said, an official statement regarding the transaction would be made from his office.

Three distinct hours were set for the issuing of this statement, but last evening, after conferences with directors of the Interborough and the Ryan people, Mr. Belmont still refused to say anything.

BOTH SIDES REFUSE CONFIRMATION.

At Mr. Ryan's office every eye was non-communicative and inclined to treat the story of the sale lightly. Mr. Ryan himself, seen with Paul D. Cravath, his counsel, was asked if he would say anything about the sale of his stock to Mr. Belmont.

"I will not," he declared promptly, though he smiled. Mr. Cravath also declined to say anything.

Herbert H. Vreeland, president of the Metropolitan, also declined to talk about the situation. "You will have to see Mr. Ryan," was his comment.

Wall Street, in speculating on the details of the consolidation of the two systems which will follow Mr. Belmont's purchase, commented much on the opinion expressed by a well known banker that a holding company, controlled by the Interborough, would pay 5 per cent on Metropolitan Street Railway stock.

This stock now has a guarantee of 7 per cent from the Metropolitan Securities Company, holder of the stock of the New-York City Railway Company, which controls the leases of the Metropolitan Street Railway. Many argued that there was no way to avoid the payment of this 7 per cent without subjecting the management to suits by minority stockholders.

It was considered possible that a test case might be made on this point, the new owners of the control defaulting in this payment as a means toward doing away with the various leases controlled by the Metropolitan Securities Company.

A report was heard that Kuhn, Loeb & Co. would fight the consolidation, and another that stockholders of the Third Avenue road were likely to raise objections.

The Metropolitan system is a complicated organization. The Metropolitan Street Railway holds leases, in most cases for 999 years, on various electric and horse lines which it operates. The New-York City Railway Company, organized as the Interurban on November 25, 1901, with a capital of \$500,000, leases the Metropolitan Street Railway system.

The entire stock of the Metropolitan Street Railway Company is held by the Metropolitan Securities Company, incorporated on February 14, 1902. The capital of that concern is nominally \$30,000,000, but the actual amount is \$5,000,000.

Beside the New-York City Railway system, which it leases, the Metropolitan Securities Company owns all the stock of the People's Traction Company and the New-York, Westchester and Connecticut Company and \$3,379,200 of the stock of the Third Avenue Railroad. Through the New-York City Railway Company lease the Metropolitan Street Railway Company the Union Railway Company in The Bronx.

METROPOLITAN SYSTEM LOSING MONEY.

The Metropolitan system at present is not considered a paying property. In 1902 the 7 per cent guaranteed dividend was not earned by \$272,138. By 1904 the annual deficit was \$1,306,711, and for the twelve months ended June 30 last it was \$2,796,942. In the mean time some \$30,000,000 floating indebtedness has been created by the New-York City Railway Company.

On June 30, 1905, the deficit of the New-York City Railway Company for the quarter ended September 30 showed that, while the company had carried 3,000,000 more passengers than during the corresponding period of the preceding year, a deficit of \$246,282 was reported. On June 30 the profit and loss deficit amounted to \$752,645. On September 30 last the deficit of the New-York City Railway Company had been increased from \$752,585 to \$5,005,825.

The Interborough Rapid Transit Company is a much simpler organization. It was formed in 1902 for building and operating the subway. On June 1, 1903, it leased the elevated system for 999 years, guaranteeing 8 per cent dividends, and an additional 1 per cent, if earned, until January 1, 1906, and after that date a straight 7 per cent dividend on the outstanding Manhattan Railway stock. A year ago the Manhattan stock was placed on a guaranteed 7 per cent basis, thus forestalling the provision of the lease.

By some of the finest political-financial strategy of modern times, has compelled Belmont to take over the Metropolitan interests, containing considerable "moisture," as every one knows, and Mr. Belmont has had to pay well for those interests. He cannot "get back" at the Ryan interests, but he can, now that he is relieved of the necessity of outbidding a strong rival, make the city come to his terms with reference to future subways. Summed up, it is about this way:

Ryan held Belmont up and now Belmont will hold up the city. I do not mean this in its most offensive sense. I mean that Belmont, relieved of the necessity of making the city the most advantageous and liberal offer to protect his subway interests, now will make the city yield him an advantageous contract for future subways, or he will not build them at all. He is the only one who can build them, as no others

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