MAR 15 1921
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WEATHER FORECAST.
Unsettled to-day; to-morrow rain; fresh east winds.
Highest temperature yesterday, 62; lowest, 47.
Detailed weather report will be found on Editorial page.

THE NEW YORK HERALD

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THE BEST IN ITS HISTORY.
The New York Herald, with all that was best of The Sun intertwined with it, and the whole revitalized, is a bigger and better and sounder newspaper than ever before.

VOL. LXXXV.—NO. 196—DAILY. ++++ NEW YORK, MONDAY, MARCH 14, 1921.—ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, POST OFFICE, NEW YORK, N. Y. PRICE TWO CENTS IN NEW YORK CITY. THREE CENTS WITHIN 200 MILES, FOUR CENTS ELSEWHERE.

DECLINE IN WAGES MARKS SLUMP IN EVERY INDUSTRY

Progressive Falling Off in Pay Beginning in September Shown to Be Nationwide.

MAXIMUM 33 1-3 PER CT.

Slashes in Some Cases in Excess of Drop in Cost of Living or Prices in General.

LABOR SURPLUS A FACTOR

Wage Decrease and Per Capita Earnings in Score of Leading Industries Listed by Labor Department.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.
New York Herald Bureau, Washington, D. C., March 13.

Wages are on a decline throughout the United States in practically every industry. Reports to the Department of Labor show a progressive decline which, beginning in September, has followed business depression and price recessions.

The full scope and extent of the reductions so far made are not known. The Department of Labor has been getting isolated reports for many months, but these have not been correlated, as general wages reduction surveys are outside of the usual line of statistical tabulation by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Reports received show wage reductions running as high as 33 1-3 per cent. in the hosiery and underwear industries in February. Ethelbert Stewart, chief of the Bureau of Statistics, stated that wages practically throughout the country would be moved down in the general business and industrial readjustment. He declared, however, that the slashes so far made were far in excess of the drop in the cost of living or in prices in general. "This should not be the case," Mr. Stewart declared. "Wages should follow prices and cost of living in the down hill slide, as they did in the upward climb, instead of being precipitated at this time."

Conditions of employment have had much to do with wage reductions. Three million men or more are idle in the United States. That 3,000,000 represents wage earners, willing workers who are out of a job, and the labor surplus has figured largely in the wage reductions.

Lack of Orders a Cause.

In the period from October 15 to November 15 last estimates in ten of the fourteen industries classified by the Labor Department showed reductions in wages, due to general lack of orders.

Iron and steel wages increased during the period. Those in the automobile industry struck a balance, both slight increases and decreases being reported. The car building industry was likewise on the turn at that time. In the cotton industry a small number of mills reported 10 per cent. increases, but the majority reduced wages 20 per cent. Slight decreases were made in hosiery and underwear. Wages in the woollen industry were decreased. The silk industry was on the turn.

Since that time large corporations like the General Electric have reduced wages. The United States Steel Corporation, however, has stood on the existing wage scales and has reduced neither wages nor prices, but many of the independents have cut wages.

Latest reports to the Department of Labor, covering conditions in January, show that during the period December 15, 1920, to January 15, 1921, there were wage changes made by establishments in thirteen of the fourteen industries. In each of these industries one establishment granted an increase to employees.

Iron and Steel: Wage rate decreases ranging from 20 to 25 per cent. were made to all employees in one establishment. Three plants reported a decrease of 20 per cent., affecting all employees in the first plant and 90 per cent. in the second. The number affected in the third plant was not stated. A reduction of 15 per cent. was made to the entire force in three mills, while another mill reduced the wages of all employees 12 per cent. In two plants time and one-half was eliminated, resulting in a decrease in earnings of 13.7 per cent. in one plant, while the approximate decrease was not reported by the other plant.

Plants Partly Closed.

Due to lack of orders, many establishments were partially closed and the per capita earnings reports for this month show a decrease of 6.4 per cent. when compared with last month.

Automobiles: In one shop a 12 per cent. decrease was made to 95 per cent. of the force. A decrease of 10 per cent. was reported by three establishments, affecting 80 per cent. of the men in two establishments and 75 per cent. in the third. Thirty per cent. of the employees in one concern received a decrease of about 9 per cent. General business depression was reported throughout the industry and several factories were closed due to strikes. The per capita earnings are reported as being 4.6 per cent. less for the payroll period in January than for the corresponding period in December.

Car Building and Repairing: This industry reports that in order to reduce expenses and on account of general business conditions the number of employees was reduced. The per capita earnings for the period in January are 8.9 per cent. lower than for the December payroll period.

Cotton Manufacturing: In a large percentage of the concerns reporting wage rate reductions ranging from 5 to

Continued on Fifteenth Page.

Massachusetts Towns Offer Bonus for Doctors

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.

BOSTON, March 13.—Innumerable small towns of Massachusetts are offering special inducements in the way of "cash bonus" in their efforts to attract young physicians to settle in their midst. More than seventy towns are without doctors and these are "borrowing" doctors from adjoining communities.

Many of these towns are in the Berkshires. One, the town of Otis, offers to give $500 annually out of the town cash box to the physician who will come there to practise. The various town authorities are getting in touch with the medical faculties of Harvard and other schools in the hope that graduates will be drawn. It is estimated that the average country doctor in this State earns about $2,000.

EACH SIDE TO BACK UP IN RAIL FIGHT

Both Ready for Concessions, Is Belief—Labor Leaders Don't Fear General Strike.

GOMPERS IS BRACING MEN

Meeting of Workers Called—Neither Roads Nor Men in Financial Shape for Fight.

The American Federation of Labor, on behalf of its affiliations that will be affected by the pruning of wages by the railroads, purposes opening a counter barage of statistical and moral propaganda in which will be seen the arguments the employee will make to the United States Railroad Labor Board when the problem is put before that tribunal.

The labor side of the controversy is scheduled to appear this week. Just what the programme of the A. F. of L. consists of is problematical, but it is not unlikely that mass meetings and a series of revivals will be held in New York and elsewhere to educate the public and brace up flagging spirits within the ranks of the affected workers.

Samuel Gompers, president of the federation, has been in New York for several days and, with the exception of one day and a night when he spoke at Harvard, has devoted the bulk of his waking hours to conferences with local leaders of railroad unions. He has found some demoralization within union circles, not because the men are any less loyal to their leaders, nor less zealous in their opposition to wage cutting and the open shop, but because so many men have been out of work for such a protracted period that many of these are reaching the stage where work of some sort at whatever wage is imperative.

Unless sentiment within labor ranks changes considerably the likelihood of anything approximating a general railroad strike is most remote, according to local leaders. First of all, the men appear to have wholehearted faith in the predictions of Glenn Plumb and others that the labor board will not permit the railroads to revert their various wage scales to those that obtained immediately preceeding the rise granted by the board on July 20, 1920.

Marine Workers Are Doubtful.

The marine workers employed by the railroads declare that the railroads cannot prove to them that business is so bad that either wages or payrolls must be curtailed. In the Park place headquarters of the Allied Marine Workers they say that Henry Ford's pronouncement that conditions are picking up is the whole truth and that facts fail to back the statement by the Erie Railroad that the refusal of the labor board to countenance the wage cut it proposed must be equalized by a 30 per cent. decrease in working personnel.

After listening to random observations by both labor leaders and railroad executives it appears that some such situation as this exists:

Both sides are willing to go far and make some concessions to avoid an impasse that makes a strike an alternative to complete surrender. The labor men say that if the financial condition of the railroads is so bad as the managers say the men will, if actuated by no other motive than that of self-preservation, concede certain figures to the railroads and possibly agree to a small cut in pay (a cut not so large, however, as the railroads seek to impose). But, they add, the railroads will have a lot of proving to do.

On the other hand, the railroad officials fear doing that which will make a strike a certainty because the already embarrassing condition of railroad treasuries cannot stand the enormous losses a strike entails. There are railroad managements (particularly the smaller fellows) who fear that bankruptcy hints will mean added strength to the continuous agitation for Government ownership of roads, and these men realize that should the Government be compelled to take over the roads they will never hand them back, or, putting it another way, will have nobody to hand them back to.

Some See Plumb Plan Era Near.

Then, too, there appears to be that type of labor leader who looks forward with some satisfaction to a possible situation where the Government will have to take a hand in the management and financing of the roads. He, of course, is of the Plumb plan element. There are any number of labor leaders who assure one that the present situation is the dawn of a Plumb plan era.

And along the same line of reasoning

Continued on Fifteenth Page.

FURNISHED Room advertisers find that The Herald Want Ads. get them a most desirable type of roomers. See Classified Section to-day.

KANSANS TAR TWO NON-PARTISAN MEN, EXPEL EX-SENATOR

Townley's State Organizers Forced to Roll in Grass in Absence of Feathers.

LEGION MEN IN LEAD

Bugle Calls Crowd of 200 to Action; Whereabouts of Victims Unknown.

OUTRAGE, SAYS BURTON

Former Member of U. S. Senate Captured on Way to Make Public Address.

GREAT BEND, Kan., March 13.—Details of the Anti-Non-Partisan League demonstration in Butler county yesterday and last night, which reached a climax in the escorting from Great Bend of J. Ralph Burton, former United States Senator from Kansas, and the tarring of J. O. Stevic and A. A. Parsons, officers of the league, revealed to-day that Stevic and Parsons were compelled to apply a coating of tar to themselves after their clothing had been removed. After they had been forced by the crowd of several hundred men to roll on the ground their clothing was returned and they were told to leave the county.

The whereabouts of Stevic and Parsons, who are respectively State organizer and State secretary of the league, were not known to-night. Neither had word been received here as to the whereabouts of Burton or of a Prof. Wilson, another organizer for the league, who was with Burton when he was forced to leave Great Bend.

Burton and Wilson were on their way to Ellinwood, a small town in this county, where they were to address a meeting yesterday afternoon. When they did not appear Stevic and Parsons came here to learn what had become of them. The latter two were then taken out of the city and told not to return. Later when they appeared again in Ellinwood they were tarred.

Had Everything But Feathers.

When it became known at Lyons, a small town near by, that Stevic and Parsons had returned to Ellinwood again, American Legion men are reported to have gathered for the purpose of going there after them. Bugle calls were used to rally a crowd to make the trip and the gathering departed at 6 o'clock. They interrupted a Non-Partisan League meeting and brought Stevic and Parsons to Great Bend, arriving about 9:30 P. M.

The party, numbering about 200 men, took Stevic and Parsons out on a road leading north from here. No opposition was encountered. A few miles from town a halt was called and the men were ordered to remove their clothes. Protesting they obeyed, and a supply of tar was brought forth.

"Smear that on," was the command, and the two, trembling from the cold night air, began the application of the substance to their naked bodies. When they had finished they were ordered to lie down and roll in the grass. A lack of feathers made this imperative, members of the crowd said.

Their clothes were then returned to them and the mob turned back to town, warning Stevic and Parsons never to return. To Stevic it was explained that this treatment was given to him because he had violated promises to remain out of the county and that the purpose was to keep him out through fear.

Following the meeting of the league here and at Ellinwood last summer, feeling has been against it. The meeting here was marked by the egging of a Mr. Mills, a national organizer for the league. At Ellinwood a meeting was broken up, and Stevic at that time went to Gov. Allen with a protest demanding that Sheriff Yancy be taken from office. Yancy is now deputy sheriff.

Has No Evidence, Says Sheriff.

No effort, it is said, had been made by the league to enter Barton county after these disturbances, but after A. C. Townley, head of the league, came to Salina recently and launched a membership campaign it was indicated that the league intended to enter Barton county again.

Preparations were made by American Legion men and other opponents of the league to oppose their entrance. The Legion men made it plain that they were not acting as members of the veterans' organizations, but as individuals.

Stevic's home is in Topeka. He has been active in Non-Partisan League circles more than a year.

Former Senator Burton announced at Hutchinson just after the Ellinwood disturbance that he would make a formal statement relative to what he termed "this outrage" when he returned to Salina, where he owns a newspaper.

Sheriff Sam Hill of Great Bend said to-night that he had been unable to get any evidence that there had been a tarring party. Stevic and Parsons were in town yesterday, he said, and after there had been several near fights he accompanied them out of town for seven miles, following behind in a second automobile as a matter of protection. He saw no other machines or any evidence of a demonstration, he said. He also said that he had not seen former Senator Burton.

DR. BAUER HURT IN RIOT OF VIENNA STUDENTS

Social Democrats Start Trouble in University.

By the Associated Press.

VIENNA, March 13.—Dr. Otto Bauer, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Austrian Republic, and two professors of the University of Vienna were badly injured during a student riot here yesterday. The disorder arose from an attempt on the part of the Social Democratic members of the student body to celebrate the anniversary of the 1848 revolution.

Budenny's 100,000 Army Helped Reds Take Orel

STOCKHOLM, March 13.—The *Nya Daglight Allehanda* to-day prints from an alleged usually well informed source a report that Gen. Budenny, who was marching by order of the Soviet Government from southern Russia to Moscow, on reaching Orel joined the Revolutionaries with his entire army of 120,000 men and assisted in the capture of Orel. The report has not been confirmed.

40 BUILDINGS BURN AT CAMP MERRITT

Six Structures Blaze Up Simultaneously and Others Soon Catch.

LACK OF WATER SERIOUS

Whole Plant Endangered—Riverside Drive Turns Out for Sight at Tenafly.

Fire started simultaneously last night in six buildings in the southwest section of Camp Merritt, at Tenafly, N. J., and by midnight had spread to thirty-four other structures, all of which were of wooden construction and had been in use as barracks or hospital wards. The entire forty were destroyed with a loss of between $30,000 and $40,000.

At two o'clock this morning the fire was under control, but owing to the lack of water there was still danger that the flames would spread and destroy the entire camp. The burned area was from Hickory avenue north to Madison avenue and from Chestnut street to Knickerbocker avenue.

The fire was unusually spectacular, the flames and smoke mounting high and lighting up New Jersey for several miles around. The heavy glare of the fire was seen from New York by hundreds of persons, who lined Riverside Drive to watch the towering, wavering columns of smoke and flame.

Several thousand persons living in the vicinity of Tenafly and other New Jersey towns went to the camp by foot, trolley car and automobile, and the crowd became so great after a half hour or so that it threatened to hinder the work of the firemen.

According to reports reaching the police of Tenafly and other New Jersey cities, Camp Merritt, which was a principal demobilization point for American troops returning from Europe, is now deserted save for a few watchmen left to look after Government property. These men turned out to fight the flames as soon as the fire was discovered, and apparatus was sent from several New Jersey cities, but the firemen were able to do nothing because of lack of high water pressure. The nearest hydrant is in Knickerbocker avenue, almost a quarter of a mile from where the flames were raging, and although a line of hose was attached to this, the small single stream of water had little effect. The only fire apparatus able to do anything against the flames were several chemical engines, but their work was of little avail.

Many of the buildings that were on fire, as well as many others in various parts of the camp, had been sold to contractors and were being demolished for the lumber. All the burned buildings were two stories, each able to accommodate about a hundred men.

More than twenty families living about a hundred yards behind the burning buildings were ordered by the firemen to leave their homes, which they did, carrying with them most of their belongings, the firemen helping to remove furniture from the houses. At that time the dwellings were in little or no danger, the order being a precautionary measure.

It was feared that the wind might change and the fire spread to the houses, in which case it would have been impossible for the firemen to save them. Many of the families returned to their homes after the fire had been put under control or had entirely destroyed the barracks near their houses.

The forty buildings destroyed were owned by the Harris Bros. Company of Englewood, which had bought them from the Government for the lumber. Many were being demolished, and in many cases the boards and lumber piled in front of them could not be carried away in time to prevent its destruction. Watchmen and the police from nearby towns after investigating were not able to learn the origin of the fire. According to the police there was no heat or light in any of the buildings when the fires started. Fire departments from all the surrounding New Jersey towns answered the alarm.

WOMAN, 70, KILLED BY PLANE AT PABLO BEACH

Victim, Gathering Shells, Isn't Seen by Flier in Landing.

JACKSONVILLE, Flat., March 13.—Mrs. A. Woltenkoff, aged 70, of Van Wert, Ohio, was killed to-day at Pablo Beach by an airplane driven by Monte Rolfe of Augusta, Ga. Rolfe was attempting to make a landing and apparently did not see Mrs. Woltenkoff, who was stooping to gather seashells.

The plane struck her in the side. A Deputy Sheriff took charge of Rolfe pending an investigation.

U. S. COWBOYS LEAVE BERLIN.

BERLIN, March 13.—The American cowboys who came to Germany with a shipload of cattle recently left here to-day for Bremen, from which port they will return to America on board the steamship New Rochelle.

WOMAN ORGANIST KILLED NEAR HOME, RESISTING 'RIPPER'

Mrs. Edith M. Wilson Loses Life in Struggle With Pursuer, Who Escapes.

POCKETBOOK IS FOUND

Church Musician, Called a 'Perfect Gibson Girl,' Was Popular in Perth Amboy.

ASSAILED IN RAINSTORM

Woman Who Saw Victim Returning From Movies Gives a Man's Description.

On her way home from the "movies," and less than one hundred feet from her doorstep, Mrs. Edith Marshall Wilson, pretty young organist of the Simpson Methodist Episcopal Church in Perth Amboy, N. J., was murdered during the rainstorm Saturday night. Prosecutor Joseph E. Stricker of Middlesex county said last night he believes the crime to have been the work of a "Jack the Ripper."

The best theory the authorities have evolved indicates that the murderer—supposed to have been one of a group of four intoxicated men seen in the vicinity—followed Mrs. Wilson when he saw her heading up dark Center street toward her home at No. 78. He seized her. The struggle that followed, the authorities believe, frightened her to death, for an autopsy by Coroner Hansen showed she died from hemorrhages, and it was known that her heart action was weakened by a growth she had several years ago.

Her assailant dragged her into the shadow of a board fence that separates the lawn of the house next door to her own from the back yards of the houses in High street around the corner. Careful that her white face should not be visible against the dark background of shrubbery, he placed over her the umbrella she had been carrying and stole away.

Laborer Follows Victim.

The last person who saw Mrs. Wilson alive, so far as is known, is a woman whose name Prosecutor Stricker refused to disclose. She told him of seeing four men, presumably laborers, arguing vigorously at the corner of High and Fayette streets and apparently intoxicated. The group broke up just as Mrs. Wilson passed, and one of the men continued along High street, seeming to follow the young woman. The woman furnished the Prosecutor with a description of the man, and Mr. Stricker intimated confidence in locating him or others of the group speedily.

The autopsy substantiated the laborer assailant theory. It indicated from marks on the body that her assailant wore rough clothing or boots. Other marks on the body indicated clearly, the police said, that the murder was of the ripper type.

Robbery was advanced as a motive when Mrs. Wilson's widowed mother said a platinum wrist watch and two diamond rings had been taken, but inasmuch as one of the supposedly missing rings was found later in the victim's room the Prosecutor was inclined to believe the other pieces would be found also in her home. Her pocketbook was found near her body, its contents untouched.

Tracing back Mrs. Wilson's movements during the evening, the authorities found she went to the "movies" at the local Strand Theatre in company with Miss Sue Franke of 61 Jefferson street, a girl friend of long standing. After the performance she stopped to buy a loaf of bread, which was found near her body. They parted at Jefferson and High streets, in front of the church where Mrs. Wilson was organist. They looked at an electrically illuminated clock through the mist. It read 9:20.

Lateness Worries Her Mother.

At half-past ten Mrs. Elizabeth Marshall, Mrs. Wilson's mother, grew worried over her failure to return home. She telephone to the Rev. Dr. Wilbert Westcott to inquire if by any chance she had stopped in at his residence, next door to the church, to discuss the Sunday musical programme. She had not, the minister said.

Mrs. Marshall told her fears to Alderman John W. Kelley, in whose house she and her daughter lived. Kelley and his brother, James, started out to search. They inquired among Mrs. Wilson's acquaintances to see if she had gone calling, and learned of Miss Franke leaving her at the corner a few blocks from Centre street. They confined their search then to the route over which she would have passed, and after more than an hour of examination of shadows and alleys, found her body.

There was no sign of a blow on the head. Fragments of bead trimming from her dress were scattered about in the mud. Her clothes were torn and plastered with stained mud. The heavy downpour had washed off fingermarks from the umbrella and her clothing and obliterated distinct footprints, Prosecutor Stricker said.

Citizens of Perth Amboy were aroused by the crime, the first "ripper murder" in their town in thirty years. Mrs. Wilson was known well by hundreds of them. Though she had been with the Methodist church less than a year, she had built up one of the finest choirs in

Continued on Fifth Page.

What Is It You Want?
Better Help? A new position? Sell or exchange your automobile? More capital for your business? A furnished room? Country Board? No matter what your WANT is a Want Ad in The Herald is most likely to gratify it. Telephone Fitz Roy 6000.
THE NEW YORK HERALD

DEFENCE BILLS TO GET QUICK PASSAGE IN EXTRA SESSION

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.
New York Herald Bureau, Washington, D. C., March 13.

THERE will be little delay in the extra session of Congress in providing appropriations for the army and navy, the two great supply bills which failed last session.

According to Congress leaders, it will not be necessary to submit new estimates for either of these measures, nor will additional hearings be required except for possible changes involving questions of policy that may be suggested later by President Harding or his Cabinet officers at the head of the War and Navy departments.

Secretary of War Weeks has announced that he favors an army of 175,000 and Secretary of the Navy Denby has urged "a fighting navy adequate for defensive purposes." Undoubtedly they had the approval of the President before making these recommendations. This clears the way for Congress.

One large factor of delay on the naval bill in the Senate, that of international discussion of naval disarmament, seems to have been removed. By unanimous vote the Senate adopted a resolution authorizing the President to call a conference with the leading naval Powers. It is not opposed by President Harding.

Senator Poindexter (Wash.), acting chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, looks for speedy action on the naval bill next session, believes it will include the same disarmament provision practically that the Senate approved earlier this month, that no additional estimates will be required and that few hearings will be necessary.

In response to a request for his views on our naval policy Senator Poindexter said: "An adequate navy means one able to protect our foreign trade and our posesssions against possible aggression and to protect the essential rights of American citizens, without which the nation would immediately sink into an inferior position. We can do without a large army and concentrate our miltiary resources very largely on the navy.

"The present cost of the navy is due largely to the doubling of pay of sailors and of cost of materials and supplies. As normal conditions are restored these items will no doubt return to the normal status."

DR. SIMONS SEES ALLIED VIEWPOINT

Says Opinion Is Germany Is in the Wrong and Has Not Requited.

CALLS LEVY A BLUNDER

Declares 'Tactics Politico-Financial Utopia and Economic Nonsense.'

By the Associated Press.

BERLIN, March 13.—Dr. Walter Simons, the Foreign Minister, in his ninety minute speech in the Reichstag Saturday appeared to question whether the allied demands had been rightly estimated in Germany.

"I must say," Dr. Simons declared, "that when one comes face to face with our opponents in London, when one hears what the situation is in their countries and under what distress and cares they themselves are laboring, it becomes clear that their demands are not inspired merely by the intoxication of victory or lust for power, but that on the contrary they are the result of extraordinarily heavy troubles and distress in their own countries."

While stoutly maintaining the alleged illegality of the penalties, he declared he was strongly opposed to rupturing relations with the Allies because "our position in the world is not such that it could be improved by a breach." Dr. Simons admitted that it was possible to get a better world perspective from London than from Berlin, and thereby realize how general the opinion is that Germany is in the wrong and has not done enough to requite that wrong.

"If we now resorted to severe measures," said Dr. Simons, "this would only be regarded as confirmation of that opinion, and we should lose all that good will we so sorely need to extricate us from our great difficulties."

Dr. Simons described the proposed levy on German goods as "a gross blunder for the Allies themselves," because, he declared, "it would drive trade with Germany into the hands of speculators and hopelessly impede the formidable task of restoring international exchange, which it would be impossible to do until the question of stabilizing German exchange was solved.

"In my opinion," said the Foreign Secretary, "the allied tactics will soon show themselves to be what they are—a politico-financial Utopia and economic nonsense."

Major-Gen. von Seecht, one of the German reparations delegation, in giving his impressions of the London conference expressed the opinion that had Premier Lloyd George of Great Britain contemplated a breakdown in the negotiations he would not have held the conference in London, but would have selected some place "with the necessary atmosphere," like Paris or Brussels.

Gen. von Seecht said that at Spa and Versailles the French and Belgians had treated the German delegates like Kaffirs, but that in London the English attitude toward them had been in every way correct and polite. That King George even had inquired whether the delegation was being properly accommodated.

The breaking up of the conference was attributed by Gen. von Seecht entirely to Premier Briand and M. Loucheur of the French delegation.

FIVE VIRGINIANS LOST IN FIRE AT RICHMOND

Two Furniture Stores Burn With $500,000 Damage

RICHMOND, Va., March 13.—Five men were burned to death, others still were missing and more than fifteen were injured to-day in a fire that destroyed two furniture stores on Broad street. Four of the men whose bodies had been recovered to-night were firemen and the fifth had not been identified. The property loss was estimated at half a million dollars.

THREAT TO CLOSE PLANTS ON RHINE

Manufacturers Purpose to Shut Down if Allies Erect Customs Barrier.

ALARM AMONG WORKERS

Possible Labor Trouble May Require More Allied Troops in Occupied Zone.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK HERALD.
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DUSSELDORF, March 13.—Manufacturers in the newly occupied zone purpose to close their factories if the Allies persist in their intention to impose a customs barrier in the Rhineland and collect a high percentage on all exportations to allied countries, according to information obtained to-day by THE NEW YORK HERALD correspondent from reliable sources.

Already the rumor that some of the biggest industrial plants are preparing to shut down is causing lively agitation in labor circles. There is a growing possibility of trouble with workers which will require the despatching of further allied troops across the Rhine and even the occupation of other industrial centres such as Dortmund and Essen, although the civic officials at Ruhrort, Duisburg and Dusseldorf are advising the population to keep calm and let the situation find its own solution.

It is reported that the chambers of commerce throughout Wurtemberg have issued a general appeal to all classes of the population urging a boycott against English, French and Belgian goods until the Entente revokes "the coercive penalties against the Germans along the Rhine."

It is significant, however, that despite the threats of a shutdown of industries the workers resumed the usual Sunday shifts to-day. There is a growing tendency absolutely to ignore the military measures. The fact is that few soldiers are seen in the streets unless on sentry duty, although the officers are allowed the liberty of visiting the wine rooms and restaurants, which flourish as before the war, the population generally thronging these places and spending money as if nothing had happened since 1914.

The attitude of the German industrial magnates is considered now as revealing Germany's game as an invitation to let the Allies enter and take whatever they want in the way of compensation, but the population generally show an inclination to refuse to accede to any demands.

"The Allies' plan will cause the ruin of Germany commercially and industrially and will even prevent her from paying a low percentage of the reparations figures demanded by the Allies," said Dr. Petersen, prominent as a director in several big enterprises here, and a member of the Dusseldorf Chamber of Commerce. "Within a month after the establishment of the proposed regime there will be no employment for German workmen throughout the region. German industry is unable to withstand such paralyzing pressure."

Dr. Petersen insists that the trade of the Rhineland is not with the Allies and neutral countries, but chiefly with the remainder of Germany. "Prussia and Bavaria are our great markets," he said. "The customs barrier would shut out the reception of raw materials and raise the prices of manufactured goods to such an extent that it would be useless to try longer to keep our workers busy."

It was confirmed here by Chamber of Commerce officials that the steel mills are considering blowing out their furnaces. Although production has been maintained to a point as high as 60 per cent. of the normal capacity, contracts are being cancelled as the prices arranged for many months ago do not allow for the allied levy.

"The Allies are trying to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs," said another official, unconsciously repeating the theme of the propaganda which has been

Continued on Second Page.

EUROPE'S IMPASSE LEADS TO AMERICA AS LIKELY ARBITER

Senate Leaders of Both Parties See United States Drawn to Act as Neutral Mediator.

RELIEF POSSIBLE HERE

Arbitration by This Government Not Inconsistent With Harding's Stand, Belief in Capitol.

PRESENT PLAN COSTLY

Need of Rehabilitating Germany Economically Recognized as Occupation Tends to Paralysis.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.
New York Herald Bureau, Washington, D. C., March 13.

There is an increasing feeling among Republican and Democratic Senate leaders that the United States, regardless of its own volition, is being manœuvred into a position where it will exert an indirect influence at least which will serve as a solvent of the situation precipitated in Europe by the allied plan of forcibly collecting reparations from Germany.

The development of this influence, Senate leaders believe, will be part of the reorientation of America's relations with Europe and the rest of the world in line with the vigorous self-respecting foreign policy which it was made clear yesterday the Administration will adopt.

The position of determining influence which the American Government is acquiring in this respect is in line with the editorial suggestion made in THE NEW YORK HERALD a short time ago—that the United States arbitrate the question presented by the inability of the Germans and the allied representatives to agree. The suggestion was regarded as a logical one by diplomats, but the questions at issue had not been sufficiently clarified to bring about allied acceptance of the idea.

Task of Allies Difficult.

Since then the issues between the allied Powers and the Germans have developed logically, with the result that the Allies have undertaken a contract of which they would probably like to be relieved, while the German acceptance of the situation renders it more complicated.

The inexorable progress of events, it is realized here, has brought about a posture of affairs which gives to the United States a place of increasing power, which may impress on the Allies and upon Germany the necessity of relying upon the New World once more to balance the affairs of the Old.

The part which the United States will play in the drama of international politics in no way will complicate the statement of position made by President Harding in his inaugural address. President Harding then said that America sought no part in the direction of the affairs of Europe. Any part which this Government may play in bringing Germany and the Allies to an understanding will be merely part of the necessary American programme of reestablishing peace for itself.

As international authorities see the situation here, the Allies have asked more than Germany can pay, while Germany has responded by offering a ridiculously small sum in reparations. The Allies have advanced into Germany, and the Germans are saying, "Do your worst."

The situation offers no immediate solution without outside influence of a character the Allies may rely upon to be friendly, and the United States, directly interested in a settlement, well informed Senators think, is the only governmental authority which can exert such influence.

France in Uncertain Position.

No corroboration has been obtained here concerning the instructions reported in press despatches to have been given by the French Government to Ambassador Jusserand to open negotiations with the Government at Washington with a view of reestablishing Franco-American relations. In French official quarters, however, there is no disposition to question the authenticity of the report.

Ambassador Jusserand has already conferred with Secretary of State Hughes, while Ambassador Geddes is expected to initiate negotiations with the State Department.

It is realized that the logic of events necessitates a prompt understanding on the part of France with this country. Refusal in the Senate to ratify the treaty, with the failure of the Senate and the public to react favorably to the proposed Anglo-French-American alliance, has left the French Government without guarantees for the future. It must decide on its future course, with the possible absorption by France of the Rhine provinces as an alternative. It is this necessity which is assumed to be back of the French effort, reported in the press despatches of this morning, to revive the idea of the French-Anglo-American alliance.

It is also realized that in advancing into Germany the Allies have undertaken something the logical conclusion of which may not be forecast.

But the chief difficulty of the European impasse and one in which the United States more directly enters is the necessity of rehabilitating Europe economically, and this will be difficult if not impossible of accomplishment without American participation.

While the State Department is main-