

FORTRESSES AT ERZERUM FALL TO RUSS ARMY

Nine Important Defenses of Turk Stronghold in East Reported Captured

ACTION BECOMING ONE OF IMPORTANCE

Germans in the West Begin Assault on Britons and Win Long Trench

London, Feb. 16.—Reuter's Petrograd correspondent telegraphs that Erzerum has been captured by the Russians. The capture of Erzerum has been the objective of the recent campaign of the Russians in the Caucasus. Its position is of considerable strategic importance, as it is the chief city of Turkish Armenia and the center of a system of roads. It has been understood that the Turks had concentrated at Erzerum an army of considerable size. Erzerum is about sixty miles west of the Russian border. It has belonged to Turkey for four centuries and has played a prominent part in previous wars. Its capture, if accomplished as reported, represents one of the few definite accomplishments of the Caucasian campaign.

London, Feb. 16.—While France and Flanders are the fields of military activity that just now command chief attention, the operations of the Russians in their Caucasus campaign are developing notable points of interest. The newest development comes with Petrograd's announcement of the capture of nine of the forts of the Turkish stronghold of Erzerum, the chief city of Turkish Armenia.

Late last month the Turks were driven back to the Erzerum defenses and there have been reports that 80,000 men were locked up in the city with not more than two weeks' provisions. Reinforcements, however, were said to be on the way, and may have arrived. Military critics link the operations of the Russians in this campaign and that in Persia with the British struggle in Mesopotamia, pointing to possible convergence of the allied forces. The British armies for their part appear to be making little progress.

Battle is important. Not much attention was paid for many months to the Caucasus campaign, the Russians apparently having small forces there. With the appointment of Grand Duke Nicholas to the chief command, however, it was hinted that important developments might be looked for. A dispatch from Amsterdam on February 3 said that Turkish reinforcements, sent to the relief of Erzerum, had been beaten off by the Russians and that eighty wounded Turkish officers and 5,000 wounded men had arrived at Trebizond. An Athens dispatch stated that the Turkish first army corps had been sent to the relief of Erzerum, but could not reach that city before the middle of February.

The latest German note on the Lusitania is before Secretary Lansing today. All the changes suggested by the American government, except one, have been adopted in the new draft and Teutonic officials here believe that it will be entirely satisfactory to the United States. The Germans have shifted their offensive from the Artois and Champagne regions in France to Belgium in the neighborhood of Ypres where the British are entrenched. By a continuous bombardment for two days with artillery and by infantry attacks the Germans drove the British out of their trenches over a distance of 800 yards. Berlin claims that a majority of the defenders of the trenches were killed and that several dozens of soldiers were taken prisoner. In the Artois, Lille and Vosges regions, the French and Germans are still fighting artillery engagements, but no notable gains have been reported by either side. Berlin claims that two British warships were sunk off the Dogger bank on February 10 and that they were of a new type, built for mine and anti-aircraft service. The British admiralty, however, reiterates its previous statement that only one vessel was sunk.

ALLIES ARE REPULSED.

Berlin, Feb. 16.—Three attacks by the British in efforts to recover the trenches south of Ypres, in Belgium, which they lost to the Germans, are announced today by army headquarters. All the attacks are declared to have been fruitless, as were those of the French in attempts to regain ground lost northwest of Tathure in the Champagne.

BRITONS LAYING PLAN TO BUILD UP THE EMPIRE

EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO KEEP DISCHARGED SOLDIERS FROM COMING TO U. S.

London, Feb. 4.—(Correspondence of The Associated Press)—Sir Rider Haggard has left England on a trip around the world, with a mission from the Royal Colonial Institute to investigate the chances for empire building after the war. His plan, backed by the institute and its important officials, including Lord Curzon, is to prevent the emigration to foreign countries of soldiers and their families after the war, and to direct steady streams of these war veterans to the British colonies—South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the many insular colonies—thus recruiting the population with a sturdy and intelligent class, and holding them within the British empire.

It is the latest phase of the imperial movement which seeks to bind together the mother country and the overseas dominions into a vast confederacy. The effect of the movement would be of course to keep war emigrants from going to the United States or South American countries, where their status as imperial citizens would eventually be lost. Sir Rider talked with The Associated Press just before starting on his trip. While he is one of the interesting literary figures of England, he is, besides, a justice of the peace of his home town in Norfolk and a student on land settlement, unemployment and agriculture, and this qualification led to his choice as commissioner for the royal institute to investigate the outlook for retaining war veterans within the empire after the war. He goes first to South Africa, then eastward to the straits settlements, Australia, New Zealand, and will be in America next summer or fall, going from the Pacific to the Atlantic, most of the time in Canada, arranging for the influx of war veterans and their families.

It is going to inquire, said Sir Rider, "into the possibilities of the British empire, or at any time of a large portion of it, with reference to land settlement and the employment of ex-service men after the war. It is obvious that, during the turmoil and change of conditions resulting from so great a struggle, a large number of men will become dissatisfied with their former employment, especially at the desk or counter, and in such circumstances often overseas. Moreover, there will be many which this climate will no longer suit after long service and illness in the trenches or being 'gassed' to whom sunshine and clear air will be a necessity. Experience shows that after every great war there is a rush of emigration. It happened, to take the last instance, after the Boer war. Men will go, and therefore, it seems wise and statesmanlike to try to retain them within the bounds of the empire."

GERMAN ANGRY AT U. S. CENSORS

EXPLANATION IS ASKED AS TO WHY NEWS SENT BY WIRELESS WAS WITHHELD.

Washington, D. C., Feb. 16.—The German government, through Count von Bernstorff, its ambassador here, today formally asked the United States to explain why the American wireless censors at Sayville suppressed the official announcement of the German admiralty of the reported sinking in the North sea of the British cruiser Arabis on February 11.

News reporting the loss of the Arabis reached the United States from Berlin via London passing through the British censorship. On February 12, however, a Berlin wireless direct via Sayville was passed, saying that another ship in addition to the Arabis had been sunk in the same engagement. At the navy department it is admitted that Berlin official dispatches have been suppressed by the Sayville censors because they considered them coming under the inhibition of Secretary Daniels' orders permitting passage of war dispatches "provided no reference is made to movements or location of war or other vessels of belligerents."

THINK BODY M'NEELY'S.

Washington, D. C., Feb. 16.—A body, believed to be that of Robert P. McNeely, the young American consul who lost his life when the British steamship Persia was sunk by a submarine in the Mediterranean, has been washed ashore near Alexandria, Egypt. Consul Garret, at Alexandria, cabled this information to the state department. The case of an Elgin watch, found on the body, bore the number 2,197,360.

GERMANS MAKE CHANGE IN NOTE

High Officials Confident That Lusitania Matter Will Be Settled

LATEST DRAFT IS HANDED LANSING

Decision Up to President; Demands of the U. S. A. Apparently Met

Washington, D. C., Feb. 16.—Count von Bernstorff today presented to Secretary Lansing the latest draft of the Lusitania agreement, embodying the changes suggested by the American government and also one change suggested by Berlin. The indications were that the agreement in its present form probably would be acceptable to the United States.

As now drawn and formally signed by the German ambassador, the agreement is in reply to the last American note. It begins with reference to the formal assurances given by Germany last September that submarines would not sink unresisting liners without warning and regard for the safety of life aboard and that the instructions to submarine commanders were so definite as to allow no misunderstanding. It then states that the submarine warfare around the British Isles was a reprisal for what is characterized as the "inhumane" blockade of Great Britain to starve the central powers, and that the promises indemnity for Americans lost on the Lusitania and expresses "profound regret for their deaths."

It goes on to say that the German government, "recognizing liability" for their loss, makes the proposals contained in the draft submitted today and then goes on to deal with the question of reprisals against others than enemy subjects. The change which the Berlin foreign office has made in the wording of the latter proposal has not been publicly disclosed, but from the air of optimism which prevailed today there was a general impression that the chances of its delaying the negotiations were slight.

GRAIN FARMERS ARE DEFENDED

Des Moines, Feb. 16.—Defense of the grain farmer against the charge that he is a "soil robber" was made here today before the Farmers Grain Dealers' association of Iowa by Cyril G. Hopkins of the department of the agronomy of the University of Illinois. "The decision between grain farming and live stock farming should be based upon preferences and profit," said Professor Hopkins. "The world does not live upon milk and meat. There is need for bread and instead of calling the grain farmer a 'soil robber,' we should be just as ready to encourage soil enrichment in grain farming as in live stock farming."

"The common teaching that live stock on the farm is essential for the maintenance of soil fertility is entirely erroneous. It is also an erroneous assumption that the manure produced by live stock farming is sufficient for the permanent maintenance of fertility on such farms. "Animals and animal products are not made out of nothing. Bone meal is worth \$25 or \$30 a ton because of the fertility it contains, and this fertility was taken from the soil by the crops and removed from the crops by the animals, not all of the fertility in the crops fed being recovered in the manurial excrements. "A ton of clover may be harvested, hauled to the barn, and fed to cattle to produce 150 pounds increase in the live weight of cattle, worth perhaps \$12; or it may be plowed under without harvesting and thus fed to a succeeding crop of wheat, perhaps increasing the yield by 15 bushels, which at 80 cents a bushel is also worth \$12. "Both the science of soil fertility and the results of long continued farm trials fully establish the fact that the productive power of normal soil can be maintained on grain farms as well as on live stock farms, by means of ground limestone, finely pulverized natural phosphate rock and home grown organic matter, which may be farm manure or it may be legume crops and crop residues plowed under."

DELEGATES IN DEADLOCK

Sub-committee of Miners and Coal Operators Unable to Agree on Demand for Wage Increase

Mobile, Ala., Feb. 16.—Another effort was made today by the operators and miners of the central competitive bituminous coal fields to reach an agreement on the demand of the United Mine Workers asking pay on the mine run basis. The sub-committee to which all miners' demands were referred is deadlocked over that proposition.

SUSPICIOUS FIRE DESTROYS GREAT BROOKLYN DOCK

STEAMERS LYING ALONGSIDE OF PIER TAKING ON MUNITIONS OF WAR, ALSO BURN.

New York, Feb. 16.—The British steamships Bolton Castle and Pacific, and a 900-foot pier belonging to the New York Dock Co., at the foot of Pioneer street, Brooklyn, were destroyed early today by the most disastrous fire on the Brooklyn waterfront in years. Another steamer, the Palladia was damaged and about twenty-five scows and lighters were partly or wholly burned. Six hours after the fire started, the police said they had accounted for all but two scows, and it was believed the death list would be limited to that number. The property loss is estimated at considerably more than \$3,000,000.

The origin of the fire is unknown but suspicions that it was incendiary were aroused because of the fact that some of the steamers were loading with war munitions, some of which were intended for shipment to the Russian government and were to be delivered at Vladivostok. A watchman aboard the Bolton Castle discovered that the buildings on the pier were on fire soon after 1 o'clock this morning. The blaze spread so rapidly that the officers and crews of the steamers and lighters lying at the pier, after a vain effort to prevent the spread of the flames to their vessels, were compelled either to leap overboard or to seek safety aboard lighters or tugs which hastened to the rescue.

The three steamers lying at the pier were surrounded by a fleet of about fifty lighters and barges on each of which was one man or more. On some of the barges were the wives and families of the captains. Some of them were compelled to jump overboard to escape the swift rush of the flames. Firemen and policemen dragged many of them out of the water to adjoining piers and others were rescued by tug boats or fireboats.

Capt. Benjamin Smith of the Bolton Castle and six of his crew escaped by crawling hand over hand on a rope to a barge. Mrs. Smith fell into the water but was rescued by sailors. All the rescued persons were given shelter on a nearby pier.

U. S. CLUB BURNED.

Toronto, Ont., Feb. 16.—The \$300,000 home of the American club, a social organization of American residents in Toronto, was destroyed by fire today. The fire followed explosions, the cause of which has not been determined, but the fact that the members of the club have shown strong pro-ally sympathies and that the ninety-seventh overseas regiment, popularly known as the American legion, had its birth there, caused the police and military authorities to suspect that the fire was the result of a plot of alien enemies.

INVESTIGATING FIRE.

Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 16.—Investigation is being made today by city authorities, officials of the Earn Line Steamship Co., and the British consulate to determine whether the fire which damaged the sugar cargo of the British steamship Dalton at a wharf here last night was of incendiary origin. The loss is placed at \$100,000. The fire was the sixth to occur on British steamers loaded with sugar within the last month.

Big Fire Down East.

Fall River, Mass., Feb. 16.—Estimates made by owners of property and proprietors of stores in a section of the business district swept by fire early today around Main and Spring streets indicated that the total loss would be approximately \$2,000,000. A score of buildings, including the Lenox apartment hotel, and several of the largest retail stores in the city, including the Steiger department store, were destroyed and many others badly damaged. There was no loss of life and no one was injured. The heaviest loss, \$500,000, was suffered by the Steiger Dry Goods Co.

MURDER CAMPAIGN IS ON

Chicago Police Believe That Latest Crime at "Death Corner" Is Beginning of Series of Crimes.

Chicago, Feb. 16.—The murder late last night of Gennaro Scrimmento, a jeweler, is believed by the police to be the first step in what they style a "murder campaign," which officers believe is to be inaugurated by a newly organized band of gangsters and gunmen in Chicago's Italian district. Scrimmento was shot near "death corner," which because of the many avenues of escape available, has been a favorite spot for murders which in the past have been committed by the so-called Camorristas. According to the police, it has been learned that hundreds of wealthy Italians have been served with demands for money under threats of death. In five years 179 murders have been committed near "death corner."

DELEGATES TO TALK OF SCHOOL

Future of Iowa Wesleyan to Be Considered at Session Held Here

TWO HUNDRED WILL BE IN CITY FOR WORK

Conference Delegates to Remain Over for Big Meeting Friday

Today the board of trustees of Iowa Wesleyan college is meeting in regular session at Mt. Pleasant to consider the school, its standing and equipment. Thursday a special called meeting of the Iowa conference will be held in the First Methodist church of this city to ratify or reject any action which may be taken by the trustees today.

There will be about 200 pastors and laymen, representing churches all over southern Iowa here and Bishop Frank Bristol of Omaha, the resident bishop, will probably preside. Iowa Wesleyan has just completed a campaign in which \$100,000 was raised by Mt. Pleasant and Henry county. This was necessary to keep it in class A of the North American colleges. It is planning now to start the conference of twenty counties. This will be used to enlarge the equipment, build new buildings and add to the faculty.

Might Ask Parsons.

The possibility of the Mt. Pleasant school extending an invitation to Parsons college at Fairfield to combine with Wesleyan has been hinted at strongly as the keynote of the meeting at Mt. Pleasant today, but members of the board have not been inclined to say just what would be discussed during the session which is lasting all day. Any action on a combination taken there, would have to be ratified by the entire conference to become a reality.

Bishops Will Be Here.

The conference delegates will remain in Ottumwa over Friday for the big Methodist forward movement when three of the prominent churchmen of the country will be here to present the proposition to them. Bishop Theodore S. Henderson of Chattanooga, Tenn., is the head of the movement which has as its aim the acquisition of 250,000 new members of the church by May 1, 1916, and he will deliver the principal address.

The session Friday will begin in the morning at 10 o'clock followed by an afternoon meeting at 2:30. The banquet for all the visitors will be held in the First Methodist church at 6:30 in the evening. This will precede the evening lecture when Bishop Henderson will give the principal address. The public is urged to hear the man who is one of the controlling spirits in Methodism.

LAYMEN OF IOWA TO MEET IN FORCE

Des Moines, Feb. 16.—Close to 1,000 delegates are expected to attend the Iowa Laymen's Missionary convention to be held in Des Moines February 20 to 23. Already more than 400 delegates have registered. Among the speakers at this meeting which is to be one of a series of seventy-five in the United States are Bishop Joseph Hartzell, W. E. Doughty, S. H. Little, Frank W. Padelford and W. S. Marquis, all of Iowa.

In preparation for the convention, teams of men to address mass meetings and church delegations have been sent over the state the last few Sundays. Twenty teams were out last Sunday and thirty the Sunday before.

EXPLOSION KILLS CENTERVILLE MAN

Centerville, Feb. 16.—(Special): Roy Brough was killed this morning when an acetylene tank at the home of Bart Everman exploded. Brough was repairing the case as it burst. He was 23 years old and leaves a widow and one child.

SMALL BOYS FIRE BUGS

Authorities at Creston Puzzled as to Proper Punishment for Youngsters Who Wanted to See Blaze.

Creston, Feb. 16.—Authorities here were puzzled today as to what action should be taken with John Malone, 15, and Fred Alley, 8, who were arrested late last night while attempting to set fire to St. Malachy's parochial school. The boys confessed to having started the fire which destroyed the \$24,000 public school building on the night of February 8. The only reason given by the youngsters was that they "wanted to see the fire burn."

ON TRAIL OF MAN WHO PUT POISON IN BANQUET SOUP

POLICE OF CHICAGO GET VALUABLE CLUE TO WHEREABOUTS OF JEAN CRONES.

Chicago, Feb. 16.—What is believed to be the first direct clue to the whereabouts of Jean Crones, former assistant chef of the Chicago university club, is being investigated by the police on information furnished by G. L. Abel of Waukegan, Ill., a suburb. Crones is charged with putting poison in the soup served at the recent banquet given Archbishop Mundelein.

Mr. Abel told the police that a man answering the description of Crones boarded a Chicago and Eastern Illinois train on February 10 and sat in the seat in front of him. He appeared nervous, Mr. Abel said, and had his baggage transferred to the parlor car from the day coach by a porter. He later was joined by a woman with whom he made an appointment to meet in Nashville, Tenn. Abel said the woman got off at Waukegan. Police investigation developed that she spent the night at a hotel there and left next morning.

Reports from Nashville were that Crones' whereabouts had been learned and that police had left that city to arrest him at some suburban rendezvous, but Deputy Chief of Police Schuetzler believes Crones is hiding in Chicago.

WOMAN IS FOUND GUILTY

Aged Defendant in Winterset Murder Trial Will Continue Fight to Establish Her Innocence.

Winterset, Feb. 16.—Proceedings for a new trial or an appeal to the supreme court will be taken at once by counsel for Mrs. Ida Meyer, aged 60, who late yesterday was convicted of second degree murder on a charge of complicity in the murder of her daughter-in-law last July.

Mrs. Meyer's attorneys said this morning they were undecided as to which action they would take, but that they will either ask a new trial or appeal the verdict.

District Judge Applegate is expected to pass sentence on Mrs. Meyer late this or the first of next week. Mrs. Meyer, said to be the oldest woman ever convicted on a murder charge in Iowa, is at liberty on \$30,000 bond.

FARMING TOOLS TO COST MORE MONEY

Des Moines, Feb. 16.—Most of the Iowa farm implement dealers who have headquarters in Des Moines today announced an advance of from 5 to 10 per cent in the price of farm implements and machinery. The rising price of steel was given as the cause.

Plows, harrows, planters and other articles in which steel is the chief material were advanced 10 per cent by most of the dealers.

PROTECTION NEED OF THE COUNTRY

REPUBLICAN CONVENTION OF NEW YORK STATE NAMES NATIONAL DELEGATES.

New York, Feb. 16.—The republican state convention today unanimously adopted a platform intended for the keynote of the republican national campaign, endorsed the Whitman state administration and named U. S. Senator J. W. Wadsworth, Jr., Gov. C. S. Whitman, Frederick Tamm, chairman of the state committee, and State Senator T. R. Brown, republican leader in the senate, as the "big four" to represent New York state in the national convention.

Selection of Senator Brown as one of the "big four" and the adoption of the platform so as to segregate national and state issues, is regarded as a victory by William Barnes and his followers. The Whitman forces, however, contend that the resolution endorsing the governor and his administration, nevertheless is a partial victory for them.

Prior to the opening of the convention a proposal to submit to the delegates the name of Elihu Root as the republican presidential candidate was defeated in the committee on resolutions. Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, chairman, explained that it was not thought wise to propose any resolution of that character at this time.

Senator Wadsworth began his opening address shortly after 1 o'clock. His declaration that the nation must prepare industrially for peace, and that the only thing that will save it from utter destruction commercially is a protective tariff, caused an outburst of applause.

MERCHANTS AND FARMERS JOIN IN BIG BANQUET AT THE ARMORY

Hundreds Attend Gathering and Hear Splendid Talks During Evening

GOV. CLARKE URGES MORE COOPERATION

Pleased With Sprit Showed Edstrom Tells of People of Foreign Lands

Business men and farmers to the number of 200 listened to good talks and excellent music both vocal and instrumental and partook of a delightful spread in the armory Tuesday night, the occasion being the annual banquet of the farmers of the county and the Ottumwa Retail Merchants' association. A most successful banquet has not been held by these two bodies which join together each year in one big gathering where over the festive board they renewed acquaintance and discussed questions and topics of interest to the community. This was particularly true Tuesday evening when a happy company gathered and after doing full justice to one of the most pleasing menus ever served on such an occasion, heard with rapt attention, a program that was unusual in its character and excellence. The service of the banquet by the women of the First Methodist church was all that could be desired. The decorations of the armory in which numerous baskets of flowers hanging above the beautifully spread tables were a feature, were very attractive. A party of silver service and candelabra containing colored candles added much to the beauty of the scene. Mothers, wives, sisters and friends of the banqueters who served the repast completed the charm of the evening.

The excellence of the talks and the happy manner in which Toastmaster J. B. McCarroll introduced each speaker, made the event one of unusual pleasure and delight. The high character of the most grandiose program as well as its variety was far to make the banquet one of the best ever attempted in these parts. The program was world wide in its scope for the people and countries of Europe was the subject of one speaker, the community the theme of another, and the farm was discussed by still another. The music numbers were excellent and deserving of the hearty appreciation accorded them.

Speaks on Community.

Seldom have the men present Tuesday evening heard the scope of discussion and community improvement preached so ably as was done by Gov. George W. Clarke at the banquet. At the outset of his remarks the well known Iowan complimented the Retail Merchants' association for getting together on such an occasion so many of the residents of the country to join with them.

So impressed was Governor Clarke with the idea of rural and urban residents mingling so harmoniously, that it served to give the theme for discussion. He said that was only speaking at random, but his random shots struck home and the longer he spoke the more interested his audience became. His talk might easily be compiled into a column of short snappy paragraphs, each of which contains a thought worth remembering.

"It is truly a fine thing to bring so many farmers here," said Gov. Clarke, and I am led to believe that in order to do the most for the community the farmer should be asked to become a member of your commercial associations and take part in all the affairs for the community's advancement. The farmers should be in these associations for their interest is the same as the city resident. We are all dependent upon each other and this thing makes for the better public spirit.

"If Ottumwa grows, it does to improve nearby grows, for what is done to improve one part of the county contributes to the betterment of the whole community. No one can escape responsibility of citizenship if he is a good citizen and he will strive to do his part to make the community better. The good roads and well kept farms help Ottumwa too, for these improvements increase the value of property as do the things done in the city to improve it. Remember we go up or we go down together.

Plea For the Women.

"Another thing I would suggest and that is that the women of the city and country be given membership in the commercial club. Consult the women in civic affairs and the things for the community welfare or improvement. The schools, parks, beauty of the community and an endless number of every day things can be improved with

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