

## FRENCH RETAIN GAINS DESPITE COUNTER MOVES

### About Twelve Thousand Men and Many Guns Taken in Drive From Verdun

## NIVELLE'S FORCES REPULSE ATTACKS

London, Dec. 18.—The Teutonic offensive in Rumania has been arrested by the Russian fire, the Russian war office announces. The statement was intercepted by the British admiralty and collected by the Wireless Press.

Paris, Dec. 18.—French forces have taken a total of 11,387 German prisoners on the Verdun front since the fifteenth of December, according to the announcement made by the French war office this afternoon.

A violent German counter attack on the Meuse has resulted in German forces securing a footing at the Chambrettes farm.

The text follows: "South of the River Somme a detachment of the enemy which was endeavoring to occupy our lines south-east of Bony, has been repulsed with hand grenades. On the right bank of the River Meuse, after the bombardment reported in the communication of yesterday, German forces delivered a violent counter attack yesterday evening upon our new positions. They succeeded however, only in securing a footing at a point on the Chambrettes farm. We continue to hold the immediate surroundings of this location. Elsewhere the night passed in quiet."

"The number of prisoners taken by us since the fifteenth of December on the Verdun front is at present, according to the latest counting, 11,387 including 284 officers. The war material captured or destroyed includes 115 cannon; 44 bomb throwers and 700 machine guns."

## RUMANIANS UNDER COVER

Paris, Dec. 18.—The Rumanian army is now safe, according to news received in Paris last night, says the Petit Parisien. The paper says that the survivors are now beyond the Serech river at Jassy and in Besarabia where they are being regrouped and refitted in view of further operations. The entire Rumanian front is now stated to be held by the Russians alone.

After the Bucharest-Ploesti line was lost, the story says, the Russians sent divisions and forces of cavalry to support the retreat of the Rumanian army. King Ferdinand fell back as rapidly as possible, assured of the possibility of reforming behind the shelter of the Russians, and continued the withdrawal without halting until the Serech was crossed. The Russians offered strong resistance to the Germans in the region of Buzou so as to permit engineers to construct a defensive front between Rimnik Sarat and the Danube marshes on which front, it is stated, the Russians intend to stop the advance of the invaders."

## BULGARS REJOICE

Berlin, Dec. 18.—By wireless to Sayville.—In a special order the commander in chief of the Bulgarian army expresses thanks to the officers and soldiers of that army for their recent victories in which more than 120,000 Rumanians, the order states, have been taken prisoner and 3,000 cannon captured. The order follows:

"The almost complete wiping out of the Rumanian army and the virtual extinction of Rumania, which now seems probable and through which Bulgaria is now given satisfaction for her sufferings of three years ago, have caused this victory to occasion unusual rejoicing. Everywhere in our country divine services were held and demonstrations of joy by the populace occurred in the streets in celebration of our triumph in this notable victory."

## SOCIALISTS WANT PEACE DISCUSSED

Paris, Dec. 18.—The socialist federation of the Paris district has passed a resolution, almost unanimously giving favorable consideration to the possible resumption of international socialist relations. The resolution emphasizes the possibility of these relations with special reference to peace negotiations on the condition that clear proposals on an exactly defined basis be submitted by Germany and her allies.

The entente governments are invited in the resolution not to reject any peace proposals without serious consideration and to submit such proposals to the respective parliaments. It is argued that summary refusal would be probably counted upon by the entente's enemies as a serious blow to the allies cause and might diminish its moral force while increasing that of its opponents. It is further urged that the more the proposals of the Central powers are unacceptable the greater is the duty of the allies to denounce them to the world and to show by immediate counter proposals what they regard as indispensable objects of the war.

## PEACE NOTE NOW IN ALLIES' HANDS

### GERMAN PROPOSAL TRANSMITTED TO GREAT BRITAIN BY U. S. AMBASSADOR.

London, Dec. 18.—The peace note of the central powers was handed to the British government today by Walter H. Page, the American ambassador.

Mr. Page called at the foreign office early in the day. In the absence of A. J. Balfour, the foreign secretary, he presented the note to Lord Robert Cecil, under secretary of foreign affairs.

There were no formalities in connection with the presentation of the peace proposals by Mr. Page. The ambassador went in an automobile from the embassy and was received in the foreign secretary's room by Lord Robert Cecil, who was acting for the foreign minister, Mr. Balfour having just started on a three weeks' vacation.

The two diplomats spent a short time in conversation, but as one said: "We talked about everything but the contents of the envelope."

The note will be considered by the British cabinet tomorrow, it being received too late today to enable the council to be called. The next step after the meeting of the cabinet will be to get into communication with the allies of Great Britain so that joint action may be taken. This is expected to take at least a week.

The presentation of the German note to the entente allied governments has now practically been accomplished. While the British foreign office was receiving the document from Ambassador Page shortly after noon it is believed that a similar delivery was taking place in Paris.

Prior to receipt of the note by the British foreign office the deliveries to Italy, Belgium and other countries had permitted exchanges concerning the exact official contents which proved to be substantially the same as given in the speech made in the reichstag by Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg.

Premier Lloyd George's speech in the house of commons Tuesday is expected to show the general attitude of the British government. Thereafter exchanges between the entente allies will determine the nature of the joint reply.

It is understood the assertion made in the German note that the war was forced upon Germany will not be permitted to go unchallenged and that as a matter of historical record Germany's part in the events leading to the war will be clearly shown.

While the note as presented makes no reference to a conference there are indications that Germany is seeking a conference.

## LITTLE CHANCE FOR PEACE

London, Dec. 18.—The Westminster Gazette, which all along has held strongly to the opinion that the German peace proposal should receive a serious reply, commenting today on the statement that the note contains no terms, says: "If the German note contains no details and is merely a repetition of Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg's speech in the reichstag the prospect of any immediate result is exceedingly slight."

## GERMANS EXPECT PEACE VERY SOON

New York, Dec. 18.—Action taken by German shipping interests in evident anticipation of peace was revealed here today when announcements came from the local offices of the two big German trans-Atlantic lines that instructions had been received to make freight contracts for shipments from New York to Germany after resumption of our regular service.

"We take pleasure in announcing," said a statement issued by the Hamburg-American line, "that we are now open to make freight engagements from the United States to Hamburg for shipment upon the resumption of our regular service after the conclusion of peace or such earlier time as the obstacles to such resumption may be removed."

In a notice sent out to freight agents and brokers by general agents for the North German Lloyd steamship company, a similar announcement was made for freight contracts between this port and Bremen.

## POPE WILL NOT TRY TO MEDIATE

Rome, Dec. 17 (Via Paris) Dec. 18.—Pope Benedict has no intention of attempting to mediate among the belligerents at present, according to a statement issued today by the Vatican. The statement says that neither the pope nor the Holy See have made or wish to make any comment regarding Germany's peace proposals and that therefore any announcements attributed to them are absolutely unfounded. It is added that the pope naturally has an ardent desire for peace but that he does not believe that any intervention at the present moment would hasten its conclusion.

The net result of several resolutions introduced in the chamber of deputies regarding the German peace offer and a prolonged discussion among the senators and deputies was the decision by the legislators that no peace would be accepted unless in accordance with national aspirations and the rights of peoples based on the principle of nationality.

## STRIKE IN SPAIN

Madrid, Dec. 17, via Paris.—A twenty-four hour general strike called by the labor organizations as a protest against the increased price of food takes place tomorrow throughout Spain. Factories, stores and many offices will be closed and no newspapers published.

## VOLUNTEER PLAN IS HELD FAILURE

### Gen. Scott Says Compulsory Military Training Has Become a Necessity

Washington, D. C., Dec. 18.—Major General Scott, chief of staff of the army, told the senate military committee today that the army general staff, recommended without apology, that the volunteer system be discarded because "the time has come when this country, unless it intends to avoid war at any cost must resort to universal liability to military training and service."

"Arraigning the volunteer system as extravagant, inefficient and dangerous, the chief of staff told the committee that the universal training would be democratic, reliable, efficient and economical and within a few years practically render the United States immune from attack."

"It would be democratic," he said, "because the burden of national defense would fall equally upon all citizens. It would make it impossible for any man or group of men to trade upon the nation's necessities in time of war. The system would be reliable because it would produce each year the number of men necessary to be trained. It would be economical because it would be based upon recognition of the people, of the duty of the individual to render personal service and in carrying it into effect the government would not have to compete in the labor market. It would be efficient because it would enable us to prepare adequately for war before war comes."

## No Men in Crisis

At the outset General Scott pointed out that the Mexican crisis had failed to recruit many national guard organizations even to their minimum peace strength.

"The failure should make the whole people realize that the volunteer system does not and probably will not give us either the men we need in peace or for service in war," said he. Reviewing the intensive training which European and other nations require he declared that if American troops ever were to compete with highly trained and splendidly disciplined forces they would require training and discipline at least equal to that of their opponents.

The lessons of the European war, the general said, had demonstrated that a higher standard of training and discipline were required than was popularly considered necessary before, and that most of the European nations for that reason found they could not develop them in less than two years with the colors.

## Wants Big Army

General Scott, disclosing much of the army war college material, hitherto regarded as confidential, showed that the army general staff believes that instead of 500,000 available men which is considered sufficient, as a start to defend the country against invasion, the country should have 1,500,000 fully trained men at the beginning of a war with a like number ready to follow in ninety days. The change is based on the development of the British army, the organization of great Canadian forces and the British alliance with Japan.

With such a force available the army general staff, General Scott said, considers the United States practically immune from such attack as military strategists believe might be expected from the victorious set of powers in the European war.

## Protests Are Heard

Walter N. Fisher, former secretary of the Interior, declared himself in favor of adequate preparedness, but opposed to the compulsory service idea.

"I believe," he said, "there is no higher duty than to provide for adequate military preparedness. But there is a radical difference between a military policy for defense and an aggressive policy. If we are going to defend the Monroe doctrine in its broadest sense, we are embarking on a military impossibility."

To provide a first line of defense, Mr. Fisher suggested that the pay of the army be doubled, that civic training which would fit the men for civilian life be made compulsory and that as rapidly as they could be trained men be discharged into a citizen reserve, liable for duty in war.

## LIVE WIRE FALLS ON TROLLEY CAR

Minneapolis, Minn., Dec. 18.—A score of street car passengers were slightly injured and many others were bruised when a trolley wire snapped and fell with a blinding flash on a loaded street car here today. The car caught fire.

## WAGE INCREASE PROMISED

Gary, W. V., Dec. 18.—The United States Coal and Coke company, a subsidiary of the United States Steel company announced today that it would give its 4,000 employes a Christmas present in the form of a ten per cent increase in wages. The increase will become effective at once.

## FOOD RESTRICTION RULES IN ENGLAND

### TWO COURSE BREAKFASTS AND THREE COURSE DINNERS MUST SATISFY.

London, Dec. 18.—The first food restriction went into force in England today. Hotels and restaurants are now forbidden to serve more than two courses for breakfast or luncheon and three courses for dinner.

Little inconvenience was experienced in connection with the two first meals. The Englishman's breakfast consists of a cereal and bacon, eggs or fish, and except in the more expensive places a luncheon of two courses is the rule. It was in arranging for a dinner of three courses that the caterers experienced the greatest difficulties, but even in this case few are likely to go hungry, as hors d'oeuvres and soup count only half a course and for the two other courses diners have the choice of fish, entrees or roasts, with vegetables and desserts. Cheese with bread and butter or crackers is not counted as a course.

The meatless day which is expected to follow shortly will prove a more difficult problem for restaurants which make a specialty of roasts.

## BIG POCKETS O. K.

### New Styles For Military Provides For Carrying Of Live Chickens, If Necessity Arises.

Chicago, Dec. 18.—Chicken pockets are to be the notable novelty in spring fashions. The decree was announced today at the closing session of the Chicago designers' annual convention and the name of the new style is given because the pockets will be large enough to carry a live chicken if desired.

"Pockets will be the distinguishing feature of the suits," said I. A. McKim, vice president. "They will range through every shape and size. Here is another that might be called the bird's nest model because it stands out from the skirts like a garment."

Soft clinging materials, Shantung or Rajah silks, satins or stockinet serge are the proper thing. Seams are to be eliminated wherever possible in both skirts and coats. Collars are to vie with pockets in size and shape.

## NO WARSHIP "IOWA"

### Secretary of the Navy Decides Against Honoring the Hawkeye State With New Battleship

Washington, Dec. 18. (Special correspondence)—Secretary of the Navy Daniels has notified Senator Kenyon that he cannot name one of the new super dreadnoughts of the navy the "Iowa," because the old battleship Iowa, on which Fighting Bob Evans served during the Spanish-American war, is still in commission. While the secretary would be glad to oblige the senator and the state, he feels that he would not be justified even by Iowans in creating a confusion of names on the register.

The senator has duly considered the situation and has about decided to suggest to the secretary that the old battleship bearing the name of the state has served under that title long enough. He will propose that her name be cancelled or changed, and that the name Iowa be then given to one of the big modern vessels that are about to be constructed. In his somewhat prejudiced opinion, nothing can be too good or too up to date for the Hawkeye commonwealth and it is time that the old battleship be superseded and a successor take up the family name in the active world.

## ENGINEMEN KILLED

Hoguliam, Wash., Dec. 18.—Two enginemen were killed and a Northern Pacific local passenger train wrecked near here late last night when a tree fell across the track just as the engine approached. The locomotive, tender and baggage car passed over the trunk but immediately afterward the tender telescoped the engine cab, crushing the engineer and fireman.

## RIVER PILOT DIES

Davenport, Dec. 18.—Capt. D. F. Dorrance of LeClaire, one of the best known of the old time pilots on the Upper Mississippi, died at a hospital here Sunday. He was 73 years old. When rafting was at its height, Captain Dorrance made a specialty of piloting the huge rafts of logs over the LeClaire rapids, the most hazardous stretch of water on the Mississippi. He was noted for his skill and daring.

## LOST MEN RESCUED

New York, Dec. 18.—The twelve men thought to have been lost on the bark Netah, separated from the tug Galahad during a storm off the New Jersey coast on a voyage north from Brazil, were rescued yesterday by the Italian ship Sardegna which brought them to this port today.

## MILL HEAD DIES

Muscating, Dec. 18.—William Leroy Roach, head of the Roach and Musser Sash and Door company here, and one of the most important figures in mill work circles in the Mississippi valley passed away at Chicago today. His death was due to pneumonia.

## WILSONS CELEBRATE

Washington, D. C., Dec. 18.—President and Mrs. Wilson today celebrated the first anniversary of their marriage. A family party will be entertained at dinner at the white house tonight.

## SNOW IN TENNESSEE

Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 18.—Middle Tennessee was under a driving snow today. Six inches of snow had fallen here by 8 a. m.

## SUNNYSLOPE IS GIVEN MUCH AID

### Sale of Red Cross Seals Shows Good Returns in Letters Sent Out

Returns from letters sent out last week containing Red Cross seals to be sold for the equipping of Sunnyslope tuberculosis sanitarium, have been checked up at the Social Service bureau's office and show that 43 per cent have been sent back with sums amounting to \$800.

The democracy of the appeal is the question which is being brought out most prominently in this work. The returns ranged from six cents to \$10.

## Does Work of Many

The committee figures that ten persons soliciting the greater part of a day for two months would be required to make the personal appeal the letters made in one delivery from the postoffice.

One or two have asked, when they returned the money, how to use the seals. They are a season's greeting and are to be pasted on the back of letters and packages.

A booth is being opened in one of the postoffice corridors for the advancement of the cause by the hospitals, the Y. W. C. A. and the Y. M. C. A. will help in selling the stickers there.

## Interesting Comments

"I am more than pleased to contribute my little mite for the advancement of the cause you are promoting, which truly is worthy and much needed," says one answer to the appeal.

"One hundred seals received this morning. It is such appeals as yours that makes me wish I were a bloated bond holder. I wish I could make it \$100 instead of \$1. If I can later on I will add to my contribution," says another.

"Thank you kindly for calling my attention and giving me the opportunity to assist the much needed sanitarium," is the answer in many letters; also the greeting, "Glad you did not forget us."

"While the high cost of living prevents me from cooperating I wish you much success in equipping the sanitarium," was sent by a man without work and a large family to provide for during the cold weather.

## CARRANZA STILL WILLING TO TALK

Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 18.—Indications at the close of the morning session of the Mexican-American commission were that General Carranza was not disposed to close the door against an agreement with the American representatives who have been trying for more than three months to solve questions at issue between Mexico and the United States.

When the commission reconvened today after a three week recess, Alberto J. Pani reported the results of his visit to Queretaro. The report was made verbally and was received by the Americans without comment.

An adjournment until later in the day was taken when it is expected the details of his written message from Mexico will be discussed. It was learned that while Carranza had not signed the protocol drafted at Atlantic City, this was not necessarily to be taken as an indication that it would not be ratified later.

To the terms of the protocol providing for the withdrawal of the American troops within forty days and on condition that no new raids occur in that part of the country about the region now occupied by General Pershing's column, it is believed Carranza had offered no insuperable objection. Evidently a friendlier feeling appeared at the forenoon session. An incident of the preliminary session was the appearance in the hotel of J. J. Haves who represented himself as Villa's publicity agent. He made an unsuccessful effort to secure an audience with the American members of the commission.

## NO CLUE TO SLAYERS OF ILLINOIS COUPLE

Mason City, Ill., Dec. 18.—Authorities of Mason county today were without a clue to the identity of the slayer or slayers of Mr. and Mrs. John B. Brecker, found shot to death in their farm home near here yesterday. Organization of posse to further search for the murderers continued today. Officials were baffled in their efforts to find a motive for the crime. Reports that large sums of money were hidden in the house were declared today to be untrue and it was said that a theory of vengeance as the motive was unsubstantiated.

Coroner Niederer of Havana decided today to postpone holding an inquest until Saturday.

## SUGAR YIELD IN TEXAS A RECORD

New York, Dec. 18.—Cuba's sugar yield for 1916-17 will be record breaking, according to cable advices. It will amount to 3,446,000 tons as compared with 3,006,000 tons last year and 2,582,245 in the previous season, according to messages.

## TO CEDE ISLAND TO U. S.

Copenhagen, Dec. 18. (Via London)—The foreign office today presented to parliament the draft of a resolution for the cession of the Danish West Indies to the United States.

## FAMILY WIPED OUT IN A HOTEL FIRE

### CALIFORNIANS, RETURNING AFTER TRIP TO IOWA, MEET DEATH AT CHEYENNE.

Cheyenne, Wyo., Dec. 18.—Roy A. White of Bayles, Cal., his wife and four children lost their lives today when fire destroyed the Inter-Ocean hotel, where the Whites were guests. The bodies of Mrs. White and two sons were found in the ruins today, while a 9-months-old baby, rescued by firemen, died from burns. One child still is in the smoldering wreckage.

White was killed when he leaped from the third story of the hotel and fell among electric wires. Fifteen guests were rescued by firemen.

White's father recently died and the family accompanied the body to Charleston, Iowa. The Whites reached Cheyenne Sunday on their return trip to California. They stopped here to visit Miss Fern Patterson, a sister of Mrs. White. As there were not sufficient accommodations at the home of Miss Patterson, the family went to the hotel, engaging a room about an hour before the outbreak of the fire.

## TO BE BURIED AT CHARITON

Chariton, Dec. 18.—Chariton friends were shocked today by a message announcing the death of Mr. and Mrs. Roy White and three little sons Sunday night at Cheyenne, Wyo., by fire. No particulars were given of the accidental tragedy, which affects two well known Chariton families. The group was called here a few weeks ago by the death of J. A. White of English township, the father of Mr. White.

They were en route home to Bayles, Cal., and stopped at Cheyenne to visit Mrs. White's sister, Miss Fern Patterson. Another sister, Mrs. Charles Essex, and a brother, Guy Patterson, with Mr. White's brother, Guy White, left at once for Cheyenne and the remains will be brought to Chariton for interment.

The children who were included in the tragedy were Francis, 8 years old; Donald, 6 years, and little Guy, 4 years old. The baby, Hubert, who is 9 months old, is the only surviving member of the little family.

## STORM LESSENS THE SISAL YIELD

New York, Dec. 18.—One of the worst storms in the history of Yucatan, Mexico, cut down the production of sisal so that receipts of the product at Progreso during November were 45.7 per cent below normal, according to information here.

The property damage was extensive and numbers of American vessels were among the thirty-one sisal carrying ships destroyed or damaged, the statement said. The services of 30,000 laborers are urgently needed to repair injury to crops.

## GERMANY'S BONDS ARE CONTRABAND

London, Dec. 18.—Sir Samuel Evans, president of the British prize court, ruled today that German bonds come under the reprisals order and that German securities to the value of 30,000 marks which were seized while on their way in a letter to the State Commercial and Savings bank of Chicago should remain in court as property of enemy origin until the declaration of peace or until dealt with as the court might direct subsequently. The securities were seized on board the Danish steamship Frederik VIII.

## BRITISH MERCHANT VESSELS ARMED?

Willemstad, Island of Curacao, Dec. 18.—A British merchant steamer (name withheld) which was due to arrive at this port appeared outside the harbor yesterday morning, but being defensively armed passed by after getting into communication by wireless telegraphy with the agency here of her owners. The Dutch government considers armed steamers as war vessels.

## PARCEL POST TO EXTEND TO RUSSIA

New York, Dec. 18.—Inauguration of a movement to have the parcel post system established between the United States and Russia was announced today by the Merchants' association here. At the request of business interests in Russia, it was stated, such a postal convention was urged in a letter sent to William C. Redfield, secretary of commerce.

## STANDARD OIL HAS MELON TO SPLIT

Pittsburgh, Pa., Dec. 18.—Stockholders of the Standard Oil Co. of Kentucky located here today received official information that they would be asked to vote on a proposition of the directors to increase the capital of the company from \$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000. A cash dividend of 100 per cent is to be paid out of the company's \$4,000,000 surplus.

## FIRE DESTROYS HOME

Blakesburg, Dec. 18.—The home of R. H. Sellers, three and a half miles southwest of here, was destroyed by fire Saturday night at 8 o'clock with most of the contents. The fire started in the second floor and Mr. Sellers was the only person at home at the time. There was but a small insurance carried on the property.

## SMOTHERED IN COTTON

Waxahatchie, Tex., Dec. 18.—Harvey Green, 55 years old, was smothered to death here yesterday when he fell into a bin of cotton seed in a cotton mill.

## SUPERVISORS AND ENGINEER ATTEND MEET

### Members of the Board Will Go to Mt. Pleasant for Discussion of Roads

## FEDERAL AID FOR HIGHWAYS SOUGHT

J. W. Hall, J. F. Knox and J. E. Stodghill, members of the Wapello county board of supervisors, Henry Cook, county engineer and possibly others will attend a meeting to be held in Mt. Pleasant on Friday of this week in the interests of securing federal aid for highways in this locality. The principal pressure will be put on the improvement of the Blue Grass road. Representatives from Monroe, Appanoose, Van Buren, Davis, Jefferson, Des Moines and Henry counties will be present.

Discussions of the proposition from all angles will precede any definite action. The latter is expected to take the form of an inquiry to the government, through the representatives of the different districts, about the amount which the federal funds can contribute toward the work. The state will then add a similar sum.

Most of the money is expected to be used to cut down the hills, straighten dangerous corners and eliminate sharp turns and narrow passages along the Blue Grass route as it lies through the counties in this vicinity.

## CAR SHORTAGE PROBE GOES ON

Chicago, Dec. 18.—Investigation of coal and coal car shortages by U. S. District Attorney Clyne added by representatives of the interstate commerce commission will begin here today. Findings of the public utility commission which has just concluded an investigation into the coal car situation will be utilized for the benefit of the federal investigators. George W. Anderson, special assistant attorney general and Myron H. Walker, trustee attorney of Grand Rapids, Mich., will participate in the probe.

One of the first actions to be taken was said to be directed at the situation in Michigan. It is from that district that complaints have been received of the ill effects of cooperation between coal brokers and railroads. Charges that there is an agreement between coal brokers of Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky and West Virginia will be gone into thoroughly.

## GUARDSMEN TO GET CHRISTMAS CHEER

Des Moines, Dec. 18.—Responses began coming in today to the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce to an open letter published in the local papers, asking residents of Des Moines to invite members of the first infantry, Iowa national guard, to their homes to spend Christmas day. The regiment is the first Iowa infantry unit to be returned from the Mexican border. It was believed that virtually every member of the regiment would spend Christmas in some private home.

In the letter each Des Moines resident was requested to invite two enlisted men to share his Christmas cheer. Officers of the regiment probably will be Christmas guests of staff officials.

## DEAD FISH STREW BANKS OF RIVER

Springfield, Ill., Dec. 18.—Three state commissions today are investigating the cause of the deaths of thousands of fish in the Sangamon river near here. The banks for many miles are strewn with dead fish. It is believed they have been poisoned by pollution of the water.

Many persons residing near the river are ill from eating fish which they caught alive with their hands and with harpoons. Yesterday dozens of laborers were carrying them away in gunny sacks to keep down the winter's meat bill. Many thousands of fish, apparently attempting to make their way up the river to escape something unpleasant below, were stopped by a dam at the Springfield water works. Here fishermen caught them with harpoons, buckets and their hands.

## ACREAGE OF WINTER WHEAT IS INCREASED

Washington, D. C., Dec. 18.—Winter wheat was down this fall on an estimated area of 40,090,000 acres, an increase of 887,000 acres over the revised estimate of the area sown in the fall of 1915, the department of agriculture today announced. Condition on December 1 was 85 per cent of the normal compared with 87.7 last year; 88.3 in 1914 and 90.5 the ten year average. Rye sown this fall is estimated at 2,214,000 acres, an increase of 740,000 acres over the revised estimate of the area sown in the fall of 1915. Condition of rye on December 1 was 80 per cent of a normal, compared with 91.5 last year; 93.6 in 1914 and 92.9 the ten year average.