

MESAPOTAMIAN CITY, SCENE OF BIG BATTLE, ARISES FROM ITS RUINS

(By Associated Press.)
 KUT, Mesopotamia, Feb. 15.—This city, the scene of the British Mesopotamian army's greatest reverse, after lying for many months a city of the dead, abandoned by even its native population, has gradually been rebuilt in the past six months, and is now a thriving town of nearly as great population as in days of peace.

It was too important a center to be neglected. It was a link between the Euphrates and Persia, and accordingly, after it had been deserted for more than two months, a British officer arrived here to take charge of the work of reconstructing it.

The first thing to do was to clean the place. The debris was dumped out of the houses into the streets; the accumulated filth was buried or burned, the barricades were pulled down, the dugouts and trenches were filled up.

An imposing colonnade bazaar was built along the river bank. A beginning was made with a coffee room and some retail shops for the builders, who for a long time were the sole population. Skilled masons, natives who had been employed by the Germans in connection with the Baghdad railway, were collected and set to work. They rebuilt and re-roofed the old bazaars, widened the old streets and built new ones, repaired the mosques, the

baths and the ice factory, put new engines into the flour mill, and converted the flats and shoals in the middle of the Tigris into vegetable gardens.

Though still partly in ruins, Kut today is a cleaner and better town than ever before in its history. Most of the people are back again behind their old doors. The bazaars are thronged. And the people are more prosperous than ever, for there is abundant labor for everybody in the neighborhood. Some of the prominent people of the town will never come back. Eight of them, including the sheikh and his sons, were hanged by the Turks, and forty others were shot.

The house which Gen. Townshend occupied during the siege has been repaired, but the roof and balcony are still pitted with shrapnel. Seven shell holes have been filled with plaster. The memory of the general and of his principal officers survives in the names of the new streets. There is Townshend road, Dolmain road, Melliss road, and the names of brave regiments are recorded in Dorset road, Norfolk road and Mahatta row. Every association in the nomenclature of the Kut is reminiscent of the memory of its former defenders.

Especially the cemetery. The long drawn agony of the garrison which fought and endured here so staunchly to the edge of starvation makes

one of the most tragic stories in British military history. Nearly 1,800 soldiers of the British army died of wounds and disease during the siege, and are buried together in a bare mud field enclosed by a mud wall, with a few starved palms in it, and hueless desolation all around—but that is Mesopotamia. The Turks dug trenches all around the cemetery, but they respected the graves.

Volunteer parties of bluejackets from passing gunboats have landed and trimmed these mounds of earth, which are as clean-cut and neat now as in an English churchyard. A brick wall is being built around the enclosure. The place is grassless, it is true, but the sombre aspect will disappear when water is brought to the land and the scrub palms are fertilized and cared for.

Three miles below Kut is the only enemy relic in the neighborhood, an obelisk put up by the Turks in commemoration of the fall of Kut. It is a kind of Cleopatra's needle on a square plinth, all of kiln-dried brick plastered over. An old converted British "cow-gun" stands as a trophy on each side. One of the guns has tumbled forward and the plaster and brick are already crumbling. The monument was never unveiled and is still half-covered with a canvas sheeting, most of which, however, has been carried away by the wind.

ITEMIZATION OF LARGEST BILL IN ALL HISTORY IS MADE PUBLIC

(By Associated Press.)
 WASHINGTON, Feb. 15.—Principal items for the army in the billion dollar urgent efficiency appropriation bill favorably reported to the house yesterday include \$277,732,000 for bombs for airplanes, \$100,000,000 for quartermaster storage plants on the seacoast and at interior points, and \$81,000,000 for mountain, field, siege and other artillery, in addition to the billion dollars already spent for ordnance and contract authorizations of \$579,000,000 additional.

In asking for an appropriation of \$100,000,000 for storage and shipping facilities with an authorization of \$50,000,000 more, Major General Goethals, acting quartermaster general, disclosed that it is proposed to spend from \$20,000,000 to \$25,000,000 enlarging the Bush terminals at Brooklyn. New storage plants at Atlantic coast joints will cost \$69,700,000 and interior plants, the locations of which were not given, will cost \$50,000,000.

The bill also reveals that the army medical corps contemplates an aggregate of 1,000,000 square feet for its storehouses at New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, San Francisco, Louisville, Washington, Watertown, San Antonio and Atlanta.

The ordnance department contemplates storage at Newport News, Charleston, Baltimore, Chicago, Philadelphia, Peterson, Watertown, Springfield, Ill., Cleveland, Springfield, Mass., Rock Island, San Francisco and Boston, with storage for explosives on Raritan river, New Jersey. The signal corps wants storage at Dayton, Cincinnati, Buffalo and Mineola.

The report of the appropriations committee discloses an agreement between the United States and French governments for France to take over after the war the railroad system which the United States army is constructing in France. The war department has expended \$150,000,000 for materials for this system.

Discussing before the committee the work of the engineer corps, Major General Black, chief of engineers, said construction of the ports of debarkation in France is going forward as rapidly as the trans-shipment will permit, but "not as rapidly as he would like."

In asking \$5,500,000 for the food administration, Food Administrator Hoover told the committee that his administration is directing the purchase of \$160,000,000 worth of food-stuffs a month for the allies alone, besides its work for home conservation and holding down domestic prices.

Although the navy department asked for \$3,140,000 for improvement and equipment of navy yards for ship construction, the bill allows only \$1,570,000 in addition to \$18,000,000 heretofore appropriated for that purpose. A total of half a billion was eliminated from the recommendations of the various departments so as to confine the appropriations to immediate needs.

SOLDIERS' LIVES BRIGHTENED BY SMILEAGE BOOKS FROM HOME FOLK

(By Associated Press.)
 CAMP LEWIS, Tacoma, Wash., Feb. 15.—With the opening of the Liberty theater in this army cantonment, and the receipt of several thousand smileage books by enlisted men from relatives and friends, the soldier's life at Camp Lewis has been brightened by innumerable smiles which otherwise never would have been registered. Heretofore the men have depended entirely on their own informal smokers and vaudeville acts for entertainment in camp, but the same talent for five months begins to lag.

The Liberty theater at Camp Lewis was erected under the supervision of the commission on training camp activities in national army cantonments and is similar to those built in the other military centers of the country. The seating capacity of 2,500 is taxed every night. Two performances are usually given to accommodate the soldiers.

Immediately after mess each eve

ning hundreds of men can be seen bound for the Liberty. The several ticket offices cannot handle the crowds rapidly enough to prevent lines forming and sometimes there are several of these, each radiating in a different direction like the spokes of a huge wheel. The uniformed men pour into the building by the hundreds, yet the lines do not seem to diminish. The first performance starts at 6 p. m.

The interior of the theater is similar to a big auditorium, with raised floor, and solid pine benches. There is a spacious orchestra pit, a large stage and a moving picture screen. The orchestra consists of twenty-two pieces. The musicians are all soldiers. The programs vary from classical concerts to moving pictures depicting the antics of the favorite screen comedians.

CONCESSIONS GIVEN IN SOLDIER CAMP

(By Associated Press.)
 CAMP LEWIS, Tacoma, Wash., Feb. 15.—Approximately \$100,000 has been paid to date for concession privileges in the Loy zone now in course of construction at Greene park in the army cantonment here. Over forty buildings are being erected and when completed the zone will contain seventy-five structures prepared to handle the thousands of soldiers from the camp.

It has been announced that all utilities will be complete within a short time. The zone will have its own steam heating, water, sewage and light and power systems. The main street will be 3,000 feet long. The thoroughfares are now being graded.

Persons and firms securing concessions must bid for the privileges and make payments in cash immediately to insure good faith. When the places of business are opened a percentage of the gross receipts ranging from 5 to 35 per cent must be paid to the camp. Included in the concessions already granted are a large hotel, two 50-chair barber shops, a 50-table pool and billiard hall, amusements and refreshments privileges. None but wholesome and clean amusements will be permitted.

INVESTIGATION ORDERED BY PRESIDENT

(By Associated Press.)
 WASHINGTON, Feb. 15.—Investigation by the department of justice of the American International corporation's construction of the government's big fabricating steel shipyard at Hog Island, Pa., has been ordered by President Wilson with a view to criminal prosecution if the facts develop more than reckless expenditure of government money.

At the same time Chairman Hurley of the shipping board indicated that corporation's contracts for building the yard ships might be cancelled, which was taken to mean that the government might take over the yard. This step has been urged by members of the senate committee investigating shipbuilding.

Charges of mismanagement and a reckless spending of government funds at Hog Island have been made freely before the senate committee. Witnesses have testified that the yard, for which the shipping board is putting up all the money, may cost twice the sum of \$21,000,000 carried in original estimates. The slow progress made in construction of the yards and reports of loose management prompted Chairman Hurley three weeks ago to put in full charge of the work former Rear

Admiral F. A. Bowles, assistant general manager of the emergency fleet corporation.

Mr. Hurley's threat to cancel the corporation's contracts was contained in a letter to Admiral Bowles directing him to uncover any irregularities and notifying him that Attorney General Gregory had been requested to designate a special assistant to assist him. Admiral Bowles was directed to effect a more economical management, but was asked to await the senate committee's report before announcing any program of action.

NEW TODAY

ANNUAL STATEMENT.
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(By Associated Press.)
 KANSAS CITY, Mo., Feb. 15.—Shooting in a wind that varied from 35 to 40 miles an hour, Harry E. Snyder of this city won the 125-target event at the annual mid-winter shoot here yesterday afternoon by breaking 118, a score considered remarkable in view of the conditions under which it was made. High professional in the event was Fred Gilbert, Spirit Lake, Ia.

The interstate amateur team cup race went to the all-Missouri team by a score of 87. The Pennsylvania team was second, with 86.

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SOLICITOR GENERAL DIES.

(By Associated Press.)
 CHICAGO, Feb. 15.—Carl C. Wright, solicitor general of the Chicago & Northwestern railway, died at his home in Evanston yesterday. Mr. Wright was 59 years old and came here from Iowa.

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