

THE DESOTO COUNTY NEWS.

NUMBER XXIX.

ARCADIA, FLORIDA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 1915.

NUMBER 11.

News is the Official Paper of the Board of Public Instruction of DeSoto County, also Publishes All the County Commissioners Reports and Proceedings

WINNERS OF THE THREE PRIZES IN THE DESOTO COUNTY NEWS' SHORT STORY CONTEST JUST CLOSED

Young Folk of DeSoto Write Many Fine Stories of the County's Advantages, Products and Resources, and Give Much Valuable Information.—The Three Winners.

A contest that has been running in the paper for the first, second and third prizes on some subject appertaining to DeSoto county was closed according to the requirements of the 15th day of December, and since that time the judges that have been selected to determine the winners of the prizes have made the awards, and the three prize winners are as follows:

The first prize the award is made to Miss Annie Laur's Etheridge, of Sebring.

The second prize has been awarded to Miss Gussie L. Fussell, of Arcadia, and the third prize has been awarded to Miss Jennings, of Kuhlman.

The judges selected for the determination of this contest are highly respected, well educated citizens of this county and are known to be men well qualified to make wise and just decisions. The judges have graded the essays by numbers, and have made awards without the slightest idea of the identity of the authors of the articles submitted. The contest is conducted in a fair and impartial manner, and that there is no consideration of minutes deliberation in the selection of the essay of the contestant.

The News takes advantage of this opportunity to congratulate the winners of the prizes in this contest. Aside from the prizes in cash that are awarded, it is a matter of no little distinction from a literary standpoint to be selected such honor on a competitive literary achievement. The contest has been purely a meritorious one, and may be prized by the winners as a measure of purely meritorious achievement.

The following are the three essays that won the three prizes:

WINNER OF FIRST PRIZE.

Laurie Etheridge, Sebring, Fla. DeSoto county was established in 1887. It is located almost in the center of the southern half of Florida, having access to the Gulf through Tampa Harbor on the west, and to Okeechobee on the southeast.

DeSoto can boast of its nearly 20,000 square miles, which was 5,000 in 1887. Its resources and natural advantages are its greatest assets.

DeSoto has many beautiful lakes and rivers, where the choicest of fish and game are to be found.

DeSoto is a favorite hunting ground a few days ago was in DeSoto, but these and hammocks are now being used for truck farms and orange groves.

Raising is extensive and profitable. Thousands of cattle fatten on grass of plain and marsh the year around.

There are springing up in almost every section of the county. Substantial churches are being erected about the county. Much interest is manifested in schools. More than \$100,000 will be invested in school buildings this year.

Each school building just erected in DeSoto is a credit to DeSoto county. No less measure is the county also in Arcadia.

The climate is ideal, being almost on the frost line. The nights during summer are cool and refreshing, and cannot be excelled in northern Mexico or Texas. Thus we have that it will be only a few years that the summer nights of DeSoto will be sought by the tourists more than the winters of today.

The sandy soil is dotted here and there with hammocks of black muck. The high sandy lands, with yellow soil, are best adapted to truck farming.

With its health second to no other ideal climate, where the weather is warm in winter and cool in summer, its churches, its villages, its rivers and its rivers and its rivers together, make DeSoto the richest and most beautiful county in Florida. Surely, Fonce de Leon do not look here for the "Fountain of Youth."

WINNER OF SECOND PRIZE.

Gussie L. Fussell, Arcadia, Fla. DeSoto is a happy and busy. Every day from which we get the fresh vegetables, while in the winter months there are flowers of many colors that the imagination can wish. The stores are filled with beautiful goods, and the surrounding industry and thrift.

DeSoto is a satisfied state obtaining millions of dollars go into the hands of our turpentine operators while there remains idle acres to which the axe has not been laid.

The kings are here, and are applying our homes, but is shipped to the packers of Omaha and other western

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GERMANS CLAIM TO HAVE MADE DECIDED GAINS

SAY THAT THE TRENCHES CAPTURED BY THE FRENCH WERE SUBSEQUENTLY RECAPTURED. SITUATION IN EAST SAID TO BE UNCHANGED.

Berlin, Jan. 11.—It is officially announced this afternoon the French captured part of the German trenches near Soissons, but held only a small portion of them. The enemy took German trenches at East Perthes, but they were subsequently recaptured with French losses. The French attack at La Boishelle completely failed. The Germans made further gains at Argonne. At the east the situation is unchanged. German attacks in Poland west of the Vistula are making slow progress on account of the weather.

The war office last night gave out the following statement: "The bad weather lasted through yesterday in the western theatre of war. The Lys has, in certain places, flooded the country to a depth of 100 metres.

"The enemy's attempts to eject us from our places on the dunes at Neuport have failed.

"Northwest of Soissons, the French repulsed yesterday, with great losses to the enemy. We captured many prisoners.

"Battles at Soissons itself recommenced today.

"Near Perthes, northwest of Camp Chalmers, the French have again fiercely attacked. Their attacks broke down with very heavy losses to them. We took about fourteen prisoners.

"In the Argonne, we have gained further ground. In this district and also in the neighborhood of Apremont, north of Toul, the battle continues.

"On the evening of January 8th, the French again tried to take the village of Burnhaupt by a night attack, but failed completely. Our troops took 230 more French prisoners and one machine gun, so that the war booty taken at Burnhaupt is increased to 3 officers, 340 men and one machine gun. The French apparently suffered heavy losses on this occasion also, as numbers of killed and wounded are lying along the front and in the neighboring wood.

"Only trivial engagements took place in upper Alsace. At about midnight our troops repulsed a French attack in lower Alsace.

"The weather in the eastern theatre of war has not yet improved. The situation remains unchanged on the eastern front.

"Important Russian advances south of Miawa were repulsed.

"During the first week of the year the Germans took about 5,700 prisoners and some 25 machine guns.

"The Morgen Post prints details of a recent British attack on Tanga, German East Africa. The first landing of 8,000 British and Hindus was repulsed by a force numbering about 2,000, with many killed or wounded. They returned with reinforcements, but again were defeated with a loss of 3,000. Then they reembarked and sailed for Mombassa.

"Among the German workmen on November 8th only 8 per cent. were unemployed.

"Examination shows of the untrained landstrum troops in the Ninth army corps, in districts of Hamburg and Holstein, there are 200,000 men fit for service. As Germany has twenty-four army corps districts, the landstrum, therefore, would yield about five million more men fit for field service.

The following official statement from the commander in chief was made public last night:

"On the left bank of the Vistula nothing but desultory engagements have been had with the Russians. On January 9 and throughout the following day the Russians directed four successive attacks against us without success.

"On the Austrian front no important event has occurred.

"Our attacks there, however, have succeeded, and the Austrians are in a good position."

AUSTRIAN OFFICIAL STATEMENT.

Vienna, Jan. 12.—The following official communication was issued yesterday:

"The situation in Russian Poland is unchanged. On the lower Nida yesterday there was obstinate fighting. The Russians opened the attack and attempted to cross the river, with considerable forces at several points, but everywhere were repulsed with severe losses.

"While these infantry attacks were proceeding, a violent infantry battle took place in the adjoining district and lasted for several hours. Elsewhere on the front nothing of importance occurred."

The communication closed with the charge that the Russian army is using Austrian uniforms to surprise patrols, and a warning that offenders in this respect, if caught, will not be treated as belligerents.

CARRANZA'S TROOPS GET TO MONTEREY FIRST

SALTILLO VICTORY WAS DUE TO RUDE, FIRST CHIEF SUPPORTER FACES DEATH. ITURBIDE SEEKING NEWS OF HIS FAMILY.

Laredo, Texas, Jan. 12.—Monterey is held by Carranza troops, according to a report received here, which said that General Monclovia Herrera arrived there yesterday with a large force.

When Herrera's troops approached Monterey the citizens took them for Villa troops, and for a while pandemonium reigned. Business establishments generally were closed; telegraph operators deserted their offices; and there was a general flight from the city.

General Herrera hurriedly sent out scouts, who informed the populace that no Villa troops were in sight, and last night conditions were approaching normal again.

Villa's capture of Victoria, capital of Tamaulipas, has been semi-officially confirmed in Nuevo Laredo, the Mexican town opposite here, and it was stated positively that Tampico is still held by Carranza forces.

Details of the battle of Atlixco, which ended in the defeat of 15,000 Carranza troops who were attacking about 10,000 Villa troops, indicate the rise of one man was largely responsible for the Carranza retreat. He was a bugler who, by prearranged plan, deserted the Villa forces, joining the Carranza faction. At a given signal, after he had joined the buglers, this bugler sounded calls indicating that the enemy was on all sides of the Carranza troops. Other buglers took up his call, believing it had been ordered from headquarters. Villa forces attacked and the Carranza forces retreated in disorder. The losses are reported heavy.

Iturbide Reaches Washington.

Washington, Jan. 12.—General Eduardo Iturbide, formerly commander of the Mexican federal district, who recently escaped from his native land after representations by the United States had rescued him from imprisonment at the capital, appeared in Washington yesterday. He called at the British embassy for news of his wife and children, who took refuge in the British legation at Mexico City.

Iturbide commanded the federal district under Provisional President Carbajal, and remained in Mexico City when Carranza took charge. When Carranza retired at the approach of the Villa-Zapata forces, Iturbide remained and maintained order until Zapata arrived. He earned the gratitude of the diplomatic corps, and strong representations were made in his behalf when it appeared he was about to suffer the fate of many other former federal officers at the hands of the new regime.

Carranza Governor Facing Death.

San Diego, Cal., Jan. 12.—General Juan Delgado, Carranza's governor for the state of Tepic, was overhauled at sea while fleeing to San Diego last Saturday, and was taken back to Mazatlan and court-martialed.

Wireless reports yesterday carrying this news to Rear Admiral Howard, commanding the Pacific fleet, said the sentence of the court had not been made public.

Safety Pact Is Signed.

Naco, Arizona, Jan. 12.—Brigadier General Hugh L. Scott, commander in chief of the United States army, last night successfully arranged for the safety of Americans along the international line. Governor Maytorena, General P. Elias Gales, commanding the Carranza troops, and the governor, have signed agreements whereby the belligerents will keep away from the Sonora border.

"GENTLEMAN BURGLARS"

Robbing Homes of Wealthy in New Jersey.

New York, Jan. 7.—A fourth arrest was made yesterday by detectives who have been on the trail of a group of so-called "gentleman burglars," conducting widespread robberies in homes of wealthy residents of New Jersey. One prisoner, John Gloscow, aged eighteen, is charged with having robbed the home of Benjamin Douglas, a neighbor of Thomas A. Edison, in West Orange.

Gloscow's activities, the police charge, were connected with the robberies of William Evans, a musician of this city, who was arrested after a fight last week on charge of burglary. The police assert Evans admitted having robbed the homes of two New York bankers who lived in New Jersey, generally conducting his operations while dressed in evening clothes.

INTERESTING ITEMS CULLED FROM DESOTO'S SEMI-ANNUAL STATEMENT AS TO IT'S FINANCIAL CONDITION

County Commissioners Make Many Errors and Issue Warrants That May Be Declared Void Under the Law—Extracts From the Report.

The clerk's reports to the state comptroller of the handling of the county finances by the board of county commissioners for the year ending December 31, 1914, contain the following items of general interest:

General Revenue.
Total warrants issued to June 30th \$19,865.60
Total warrants issued to December 31 22,344.30
Grand total for year \$42,209.90
1913 tax levy 25,659.38

Approximate issue in excess of that authorized by law \$16,550.61
Chapter 6157, laws of 1911, re-enacted in chapter 6474, laws of 1913, limits the expenditures from the general fund to the amount levied for that fund, and makes all indebtedness contracted over and above such levy void.

Items paid from general revenue that should have been paid from other funds are as follows:

Care of convicts \$ 2,409.43
Road inspection 60.00
Salary and expense highway engineer 2,426.16
Convict hire 610.50
Punta Gorda road 77.85
Road tools 6.20
Transfer to road fund 300.00
Total \$ 5,881.14

The above amount should have been paid from the road funds.

Care of prisoners \$ 207.24
Should have been paid from fine and forfeiture fund.

General revenue warrants outstanding December 31, 1914 \$28,701.47
Cash in hand of treasurer 530.61
Net overdraft \$28,230.86

Fine and Forfeiture Fund.

Attorney to county commissioners \$ 25.00
Furniture for jail 32.10
Total \$ 57.10

SECRETARY GARRISON SAYS MATTER EXAGGERATED.

Washington, Jan. 11.—A "petty disturbance" in the Philippine Islands has been "exaggerated," Secretary of War Garrison told the committee on the Philippines here today.

He made this remark in the course of his comments on the proposed measure creating two Filipino legislative houses, all the members of which will be elected by the people with the exception of those from the non-Christian districts. This legislation, he said, he approved.

Of the recent disorders he said: "It is particularly interesting in view of the recent exaggerated accounts of a petty disturbance in the islands, to read what Mr. Taft said concerning such occurrences in his time."

"The attitude of the American press and of the American merchant in his hostility to the Filipino, and in the consequent hostility to the civil government, was led into the error at one time of emphasizing in every possible way, by letters and representations of all sorts, that the condition of the country as to tranquility was so bad that the whole of the islands was still in a state of war. Every small laboring fight, every discomfiture which the constabulary suffered, was exaggerated and made the basis for inference that the conditions in the country were retrograding rather than improving. Such incidents were seized upon and made as much of as headlines and general statements could make them."

For the United States to withdraw from the islands now would be a betrayal of the young Filipinos in whom the American government has aroused high hopes, he asserted, without corresponding advantage to anyone.

The proposed bill, he said, is logically the next and proper step in the experiment of allowing the Filipinos gradually to secure a larger and larger measure of self government.

He said the American people are densely ignorant on the Filipino problem. If they were well informed, "it would require great effrontery to attempt to divert them from its proper settlement by paltry lies and shameful misrepresentation."

"The war should not affect our policy."

"It is not too strong a statement to say that were every nation on earth, including our own, at war, there is nothing in this bill which would make its consideration inappropriate on that account."

"If the people really knew the pro-

Should have been paid from general revenue.
Convict guards \$ 21.17
Feed for teams 14.09
Total \$ 37.84
Should have been paid from road fund.

Condition of fund Dec. 31st:
Cash in treasury \$ 1,550.04
Warrants outstanding 112.75
Net balance \$ 1,437.29

Road Fund.

The following amounts were paid as designated, as the pro-rata of road tax due incorporated towns, out of district fund No. 6, which is a special bridge and machinery fund, contributed to by the entire county. These amounts should have been paid from the district fund, in which the town receiving the amount is situated:

Arcadia \$ 1,206.00
Bowling Green 211.25
Zolfo 119.83
Wauchula 500.00
Avon Park 90.00
Total \$ 2,127.08

The standing of No. 6 fund is reported as follows on December 31st:
Warrants outstanding \$ 6,985.82
Cash in treasury 1,650.11

Net overdraft \$ 5,335.71
Other road districts are reported as follows on December 31st:

No. 1:—
Warrants outstanding \$ 1,630.43
Cash in treasury 473.17
Net overdraft \$ 1,217.26

No. 2:—
Warrants outstanding \$ 1,140.68
Cash in treasury 245.81
Net overdraft \$ 894.87

No. 3:—
Cash in treasury \$ 811.56
Warrants outstanding 328.60
Net balance \$ 482.96

No. 4:—
Cash in treasury \$ 809.82
Warrants outstanding 29.35
Net balance \$ 849.48

No. 5:—
Warrants outstanding \$ 913.42
Cash in treasury 315.64
Net overdraft \$ 597.78

visions of this bill, they would dissent with scorn those newspapers which term it the "Philippine independence bill," and dismiss further consideration of it by the statement that it is premature to give independence to the Philippines.

The present bill, Secretary Garrison said, would produce the following results:

"A legislature elected by the people, composed of two houses, the lower one composed of 81 members elected for three years, each from a separate district, and nine appointed by the governor general representing the territory of non-Christian tribes, or the territory not now represented in the legislature; and the upper house, a senate, of 24 members, all of whom save two are elected from twelve districts, the two being for the non-Christian districts, and they are for the time being to be appointed by the governor general.

"The governor general, the justices of the supreme court and, if an amendment which I have to propose is adopted, the auditor and the director of civil service, to be appointed by the president of the United States.

"Full legislative power would be vested in the legislature, save in certain matters, and the governor general would have veto power. If a bill were passed over his veto, the president of the United States would have the power to permit or forbid the same to become law, as he saw fit.

"Trade relations between the United States and the islands are subject to the final decision of our congress. Certain matters, such as legislation affecting lands, mining rights, forests, etc., are subject to similar supervision by the president of the United States.

"The executive heads of the departments, analogous to our cabinet, would be selected by the governor general and confirmed by the Philippine senate.

"A bill of rights and certain other constitutional restrictions such as appear in the best models of our own constitutions, are inserted in the bill with a view of keeping legislation and executive action within thoroughly approved and ascertained bounds."

BATTLE FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE BEING FOUGHT TODAY.

Washington, Jan. 12.—The battle for nation wide woman suffrage as formulated by a proposed constitutional amendment, is being fought out in the house today. Fair supporters and anti supporters filled the galleries. Six hours debate allowed after the preliminary skirmish. Vote is expected tonight.

ALABAMA TOWN BURNED LAST NIGHT.

Dothan, Ala., Jan. 12.—Over half of the business portion of the town of Cottonwood was burned last night.