

RATE RULING KNOWN BY THE RAILROADS

Commissioner Johnson Admits Conference With Representative of Carriers Prior to Hearing.

Public Service Commissioner Emory R. Johnson, in a formal statement issued this afternoon in Harrisburg, admitted that the Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia and Reading and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Companies were informed in substance that the decision of the Commission would be in the passenger rate increase case on Friday night nearly 24 hours before the Commission announced publicly its decision in the case.

MR. JOHNSON'S STATEMENT

In part Mr. Johnson's statement follows: "The numerous complaints received by the Public Service Commission during the latter half of November as to the proposed increase in passenger fares were classified and carefully studied by the commission and a preliminary hearing was held the latter part of November, at which all complaints relating to the proposed increase in passenger fares were considered in several particulars.

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STABBED IN A QUARREL OVER CLAIM FOR MONEY

Man Dying in Hospital and His Assailant Arrested.

After a chase in which several shots were fired, Sabatini Pagnutelli, accused of having fatally stabbed Elmer Appello, of 629 Morton avenue, was caught this afternoon and held without bail. The stabbing, which grew out of an argument over a \$10 debt, Appello is said to have owed Pagnutelli, took place early this afternoon, the police say, at Appello's home. Pagnutelli, who lives in the house, returned at noon and demanded \$10. Appello said he had not promised to pay today and called Pagnutelli a liar, according to Maria DeVito, a liar, as was present.

JUDGE SULZBERGER CALLS PORTER 'IGNORANT BABY'

"Mere Child," Jurist Continues, in Reply to Criticism of Court.

A curt fling at Director Porter and his plan for a curfew law was Judge Sulzberger's reply to the Director's denunciation of Magistrate and his criticism of Quarter Sessions Courts, as contained in a statement issued at police headquarters yesterday. "Too many discharges from the Quarter Sessions Court when the prisoners deserved punishment, Director Porter had said, was one of the reasons why it was hard to enforce the laws.

WOMAN CRUSHED ON CAR TRACKS; FOUL PLAY THEORY

Police Conducting Investigation Into Early Morning Tragedy.

Mrs. Virginia Oberdorfer, 67 years old, 2061 North 8th street, was found dead on the trolley tracks at 8th and Clearfield streets this morning. The circumstances are such that the possibility of foul play is being entertained by the police. The woman's body was lying across the tracks. The skull was crushed and the limbs mutilated. A handbag, containing four smaller bags, holding in all \$108, was found in the room. From the body were the woman's shoes, which were of the elastic side type. Further along the tracks was a dentured ash barrel, its contents strewn along the road.

COLLAPSES IN COURT WHILE TELLING OF SON'S DEATH

Murder Trial Halted Until Witness Recovers Composure.

The father of Herman Fisher, the boy murdered at Taylor Lane, Mount Holly, July 11, whose alleged slayer is on trial at that town today, collapsed while testifying how he found the body of his son, and proceedings were halted for nearly half an hour until he recovered. The father is Charles Fisher, Augustus Fisher, a brother of the murdered lad, also was called to the stand to testify, and Frank Cole, Harry Frank, Anna Enakat and Henrietta Enakat, all living in the vicinity of the murder, gave testimony. Florence Wilhelm said that after she had heard some one cry out, "Oh Lord, help me." Later on she learned that Herman had done the calling. Anna Wilhelm heard the appeals after the shooting.

TURKISH CRUISER BRESLAU BOMBARDS SEBASTOPOL

Goeben Also Reported in Raid on Batum Port.

BERLIN, Dec. 15.—The official press bureau today gave out the following: "The Turkish cruiser Midiri (formerly the Breslau) has bombarded Sebastopol. The Turkish official bulletin says the large cruiser Sultan Selim has also bombarded Batum, December 10, setting fire to the city. The Russian land batteries returned the fire without success. Constantinople leaves authorities report that a Mohammedan uprising has occurred in the Caucasus, and that 50,000 armed Russian Moslems went over to fight against the Russians."

"YES, SUH; A FIRE SHO' FEELS GOOD ON ER DAY LAK DIS"



White-wing street cleaners and other public servants whose work kept them out in the open found it hard to keep warm today, with the thermometer ranging between 13 and 26 degrees. The weather man held out no hope of more pleasing temperatures before Thursday. The city, however, was more fortunate than some of the suburbs, where the mercury fell to zero.

COLD WAVE BRINGS DEATH AND INTENSE SUFFERING TO POOR

Mercury Falls to 13 Degrees on Coldest December 15 in Ten Years and Second Coldest on Record.

The coldest December 15 in ten years and the second coldest on record brought death to two men, injuries to several, and intense suffering to the poor of the city today. The mercury registered 13 degrees above zero, 3 degrees lower than the mark predicted by the official weather forecaster. One of the dead men is unidentified as yet, and the other is believed to have been Edward McGovern, of 325 Winter street. He was found dying at Allegheny avenue and 7th street, and taken to the home of Benjamin Herwig, 238 Welkie street, where he died before a physician could arrive from the North-eastern Hospital.

TODAY'S HOURLY TEMPERATURE RECORD

Table with 2 columns: Time and Temperature. Rows include Midnight, 1 a.m., 2 a.m., 3 a.m., 4 a.m., 5 a.m., 6 a.m., 7 a.m., 8 a.m., 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m., 4 p.m., 5 p.m., 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m., 9 p.m., 10 p.m., 11 p.m., and Midnight.

HOUSE WRECKED BY 2-TON ROCK HURLED BY DYNAMITE

A shower of rocks hurled through the air for nearly a hundred feet by a heavy charge of dynamite wrecked the home of Patrick Maxwell, 187 Roxborough street, Manayunk, this morning and slightly injured one of the occupants of the house, while two other persons had narrow escapes from serious injury.

FIRE HOSE TEST FAVORED

Orders for an immediate test of the hose used by the Fire Department will be issued by Director Porter. The Director and Mayor Hanksburg today agreed to permit the test following the request of J. J. Howland, engineer of the National Board of Fire Underwriters.

R. R. MERGER APPROVED

New York Commission Sanctions \$30,000,000 Sale of Stock. ALBANY, N. Y., Dec. 15.—Final approval was granted today by the United Public Service Commission for the purchase by the New York Central of the Lake Shore stock.

N. Y. EXCHANGE DISCHARGES COMMITTEE OF FIVE

Governors Took Action at Meeting This Afternoon.

NEW YORK, Dec. 15.—Declaring that the crisis which existed July 21 when it was created—has passed, the committee of five that has governed the Stock Exchange since that time today asked to be discharged. The board of governors granted the request, placing the exchange back on the footing that existed prior to the war.

THREE PERSONS HAD NARROW ESCAPES IN EXPLOSION—CONTRACTOR Arrested

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READING TERMINAL CAFE MAN ENDS LIFE IN BROAD ST. STATION

E. R. Knoblauch Shoots Himself—Deranged by Father's Death—Brother Collapses in Hospital.

Eugene R. Knoblauch, one of the proprietors of the restaurant on the train floor of the Reading Terminal, shot himself through the right temple at 1:30 o'clock this afternoon, in a retiring room of Broad Street Station. He died later at the Hahnemann Hospital. Gustave Knoblauch, Jr., a brother of the dying man, collapsed twice at the hospital. He arrived there a few minutes after Eugene Knoblauch had been taken there. He also is under the care of physicians, who say that his condition is serious.

RECOVERED AMONG POOR

The cold was especially severe on the poor. This was evidenced by the flood of requests for aid received by virtually every charitable organization in the city. Coal dealers found the weather to their liking because of hurry-up orders for coal and today their teams are working at top speed trying to catch up with orders.

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OFFICIAL WAR REPORTS

AUSTRIAN.

The pursuit of the Russians in West Galicia continues. As a result of encounters of a more or less serious nature we have won ground in a northern direction. Dukla (in Galicia) is again in our possession. Our columns, advancing through the Carpathians, captured on Saturday 9000 prisoners and 19 machine guns.

SERVIAN.

The battle south of Belgrade, in which three Austrian army corps were engaged, ended in a complete victory for the Serbians. The enemy fled in great disorder across the Danube and Save, evacuating Belgrade.

RUSSIAN.

There has been no engagement of importance on any of the fronts. In the region of Miawa we continue to force back the German troops, who are in retreat.

FRENCH.

Between the sea and the Lys the English have captured a small forest to the west of Wytchachte. The ground gained yesterday by our troops along the Yser Canal and to the west of Hallebeke has been held despite a vigorous counter attack by the enemy.

BRITISH.

Fighting has recommenced in northern France. A combined attack by the Allies was made yesterday on the Hollebeke-Wytchachte line. Several German trenches and a number of prisoners were captured. Substantial progress has been made.

GERMAN.

The French yesterday made fruitless attacks at various points. Their attack on our position southeast of Ypres failed, and the enemy suffered heavy losses. Two hostile attacks northward of Sulphreux were also repulsed by us.

MORE U. S. TROOPS GOVERNMENT REPLY TO GEN. CARRANZA

Defiant Note Brings Order for Infantry and Artillery to Reinforce Bliss.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.—Three regiments of United States infantry and three batteries of artillery were ordered to Naco, Arizona, late today by Secretary of War Garrison to reinforce General Bliss. The orders were issued after the Secretary had discussed in the Cabinet meeting the situation existing in the frontier town.

TURKEY WILL APOLOGIZE, ENVOY ASSURES ITALY

ROME, Dec. 15.—The Turkish charge d'affaires assured the Italian Foreign Office today that his Government would make a satisfactory explanation of the recent attack on the Italian Consulate at Hodeida. Calling in the Foreign Office for the second time in 14 hours, he said that he expected the Porte's reply to Italy's representations within a short time.

LOST AND FOUND

ALL "LOST AND FOUND" ARTICLES added to the "Lost and Found" column in the "City and County" edition of the Philadelphia Record. If you have any articles to report, please send them to the "Lost and Found" column, Philadelphia Record, 10th and Market streets, Philadelphia, Pa.

CZAR RENDS GERMANS IN NORTH; LOSES AT CRACOW

Wrests Ground Gained in Upper Poland From Teutons and Puts foe to Precipitate Flight Across East Prussian Frontier, Relieving Warsaw From Threatened Drive on North.

Serbs Dash to Belgrade and Thrust Austrian Garrison From Capital—Austrians, However, Score Victory in Galicia, Driving Czar's Column Fifty Miles From Cracow.

In the East victory attends the Allies' campaigns. The Serbs have swept victoriously forward to Belgrade, which they have taken from the Austrians, whose forces have been put to flight across the Drina and Save Rivers. The Russians, too, have expelled the invader from their soil, the northern drive on Warsaw under General Francoise having been effectually frustrated and Upper Poland cleared of the foe.

Austrian reverses in Serbia, which are for the first time frankly admitted by Vienna, are compensated by successful continuation of the drive against the Russians in western Galicia. The Czar's forces southeast of Cracow have been driven back 50 miles to the Plain of Allentau.

The downward stroke on Warsaw from East Prussia has failed completely, according to Petrograd reports, and the threatening German advance north of the Vistula has been effectually disposed of. This leaves Grand Duke Nicholas free to devote attention to the main German movement on Warsaw from the west. The campaign there seems to be at a standstill on a stationary line from Lodz to Lowicz.

The German position in Poland is favorable, Berlin states, and the Russians have been obliged to assume the defensive between the Warthe and Vistula Rivers.

The fiercest fighting on the Franco-Belgian front now centres in the region south of Ypres, where both the British and French have made advances that seriously threaten the German lines. The British have succeeded in driving the Kaiser's artillery from a forest west of Wytchachte (five miles south of Ypres), while the French have maintained the ground they won yesterday at Hollebeke.

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