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FORTY-SEVENTH YEAR | THE COURIER, BRANTFORD, CANADA, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1917. | TWO CENTS

TURKISH FORCES IN MESOPOTAMIA HEMMED IN BY BRITISH

Limit of Safety Set By Germany For Neutral Shipping Has Expired

Germany in Her Attempt to Negotiate With the United States Used Wrong Methods Says Gerard

By Courier Leased Wire.

Copenhagen via London, Feb. 13.—The attempt of the German government to negotiate through James W. Gerard, who had returned as ambassador to Germany, desired concessions and pledges, was of a nature to lead Mr. Gerard to characterize it in conversation with a foreign office representative, as "sandbagging." He refused even to transmit the text of the concession desired unless he was allowed to report in code—a privilege of which he had been deprived since the rupture of relations.

Embargo Was Extended

Incidentally the same embargo on embassy communications was extended afterwards to telegraphing in open language within the empire, in an attempt to convey instructions to American consuls; then to long distance telephones used for the same purpose, and finally to letters to the embassy; to the local Berlin telephone service, and even to the use by the personnel of local telephones at nearby hotels.

Goes to Paris

Berne, Feb. 12, via Paris, Feb. 13.—Ambassador Gerard announced today that he probably would leave for Paris on Tuesday evening with the immediate embassy staff. He informed other Americans desirous of returning to the United States, that they were welcome to accompany him, but must make their passport and other arrangements through the legation here, which now has sole jurisdiction.

Says Nothing

Mr. Gerard maintained his reticence to-day, and merely shrugged his shoulders when shown an alleged semi-official announcement in the Cologne Gazette declaring that Germany expects war with America. On hearing that the British would be glad to have him return to the United States by way of England, in order to give an opportunity for thanking him for his efforts on behalf of British prisoners of war, he expressed his appreciation, but declared that it was impossible for him to change his Spanish route.

Piraeus in Flames; Loss of Life Very Heavy

Sea Port of Athens is Fire Swept; Greek, French, British and Italians Fight the Blaze

By Courier Leased Wire.

London, Feb. 13.—Fire is sweeping through a large section of Piraeus and has caused a heavy loss of life, according to a Reuter despatch sent from the Greek port last night. At the time the despatch was filed, the fire had been raging for four hours and was uncontrolled in spite of the combined efforts of all the available Greek firemen and soldiers aided by French, British and Italian sailors. The conflagration started in a munition factory late Monday afternoon and spread rapidly over a considerable area.

NEUTRALS TAKE RELIEF WORK

Withdrawal of American Commission Will Cause No Immediate Hardship

DUTCH AND SPANISH

Board to Assume Work in Belgium and Northern France

By Courier Leased Wire.

New York, Feb. 13.—More than 10,000,000 persons, who have been fed through the efforts of the American commission for relief in Belgium will suffer no immediate hardship from the withdrawal of the American commission from participation in this work in Belgium and northern France caused by the German authorities. Upon his return from Boston to-day, Herbert C. Hoover, chairman of the commission, took up plans already under way for transferring control of this relief to another neutral organization.

Mr. Hoover said that six weeks' supply of food valued at $25,000,000 had been stored in warehouses in the various districts where the relief commission had been active. Belgian officials, who have been in charge of this food, will be authorized to administer its distribution until plans for the reorganization of the work can be put into effect. There is no doubt in the minds of Mr. Hoover and his assistants that such plans can be worked out successfully and the relief continued without interruption, provided the Germans do not interfere.

The American government, barred from Belgium and northern France, will continue its activities toward obtaining funds and will co-operate with the new organization formed to distribute supplies. It is hoped that the work will be taken up by a joint board of Dutch and Spanish.

STEAMER AFRIC SUNK

By Courier Leased Wire.

London, Feb. 13.—Lloyds shipping agency this afternoon announced that the White Star Line Steamship Afric, of 11,999 tons gross, had been sunk. Part of the crew of the liner was landed.

YOUR FOOT COMFORT depends on the make and quality of your hose, CROMPTON'S HOSE WEEK gives you a great chance.

Period of Grace Set by Germany Has Expired, and All Neutral Ships are the Prey of Submarines

By Courier Leased Wire.

Amsterdam, Feb 13.--via London.—All periods of grace for neutral ships entering the zones announced as prohibited by Germany have now expired, according to a Berlin official statement received here. The statement says that immunity ceased in respect to the Atlantic and English channel zones on the night of February 12, for the North Sea zone on February 6 and for the Mediterranean zone on February 10. It continues:

"From now on, therefore, in all prohibited zones the warning, which has been issued, is in full force and shipping can no longer expect individual warning. Vessels which enter the prohibited areas do so with a full knowledge of the dangers threatening them and their crews. It is expressly stated that all news spread from enemy sources about any torpedoing of neutral ships without previous warning, before the dates mentioned for the various prohibited areas, is incorrect.

"The periods of grace mentioned were also in force for enemy passenger vessels because it was possible that they were carrying neutral passengers, who were perhaps ignorant of the new blockade rule."

"Wilson Seeks to Break the German Blockade"

And American Government Must be Responsible, Says Berlin; U. S. Ships in Restricted Zone

By Courier Leased Wire.

London, Feb. 13.—"President Wilson wishes to make an attempt to break the German blockade; the American Government must be responsible for what happens," says The Berlin Vossische Zeitung in commenting on the report that two American merchant vessels had left for the blockaded zone, according to the Exchange Telegraph Company's Copenhagen correspondent.

The correspondent reports that the announcement of the vessels' departure had caused a pronounced sensation in Berlin.

MANY SHIPS IN NEW YORK

Twelve Large Steamers Arrived Yesterday, Five From Danger Zone

SCANDINAVIAN LINER

On Which Bernstorff Will Sail Carries Many Passengers

By Courier Leased Wire.

New York, Feb. 13—According to the Associated Press the port of New York to-day is crowded with shipping and the officers of the various transatlantic lines are busy settling questions raised by the German blockade declaration. Twelve large steamships came in yesterday and last night, five of them from the danger zone.

Departure of Bernstorff

The busiest place in shipping district to-day is the office of the Scandinavian-American Line, where final arrangements are being made for the departure of the Frederick VIII, upon which the German ambassador and his staff will return to Europe. The assurance of safety from German submarines has crowded the liner with passengers. It is estimated that she will carry 1,200 persons in addition to her crew when she leaves port to-morrow.

Precautions Taken.

Extraordinary precautions have been taken by the police of Hoboken, where the Frederick VIII is docked, and by the federal officials here to guard the pier and the steamship. Ambassador von Bernstorff will be carried from the railroad terminal upon his arrival from Washington to the Scandinavian-American pier on a navy cutter. The river in the neighborhood of the liner will be patrolled by New York police tugs.

PIPES FROEN.

During the present cold snap, and especially in the last two days, secretary F. W. Frank of the waterworks department has been kept busy answering the telephone, concerning complaints from citizens that the water had been turned off without warning, when in reality the pipes had frozen. The records of the waterworks department in this city for the number of frozen pipes have been shattered yesterday and today, the lack of coal evidently also causing some trouble. A number of men are out working under the direction of the waterworks department, thawing out the pipes.

Release of American Seamen Held in Germany Will be Demanded by the U.S. After Refusing Negotiations

By Courier Leased Wire.

Washington, Feb. 13.—A flat rejection by the United States of Germany's proposal to discuss international differences without first halting the illegal submarine campaign, left one other suggestion of the Berlin government still pending at the State department to-day. That was to reaffirm the Prussian-American treaties of 1799 and 1828, relating mainly to treatment of enemy residents in war times, with a number of new provisions which apparently would constitute almost a new treaty.

It seemed quite probable that this proposal will be frowned upon also. Both offers were submitted to the State department through the Swiss minister, acting on behalf of Germany.

A report probably will be made soon through the same channel that no German merchant ships have been seized in American ports and no German sailors have been imprisoned. The government then will look for immediate release of the 72 American sailors captured from British ships in the Atlantic by a German raider and now held prisoners in Germany. The state department was notified yesterday that htey were still held, pending receipt of information on the German crews in this country.

President Wilson had under consideration today the question whether the Navy department shall furnish guns to arm American merchant ships, as it is understood the state department has recommended.

Exit the Villain.

Washington, Feb. 13.—This was Count Bernstorff's last day in Washington. The former ambassador and Countess von Bernstorff and the embassy staff leave here late tonight for New York, where they take passage tomorrow on the Danish Liner Frederick VIII for home.

Final arrangements had been made for turning over the embassy to Dr. Paul Ritter, Swiss minister, who will look after German interests in the United States.

TURKISH FORCES ON THE TIGRIS FRONT ARE COMPLETELY HEMMED IN BY THE BRITISH

Advance by the British Drives the Enemy to His Last Line of Trenches: and Line Across Tigris Bend is Established on Three Mile Front

By Courier Leased Wire

London, Feb. 13.—1:55 p.m.—Official announcement was made to-day that the British forces on the Tigris front have established a line across the Tigris bend, west of Kut-el-Amara, completely hemming in the Turks.

The announcement follows:

"On Saturday the enemy's bridge at Shumran was shelled. A direct hit was scored and some enemy shipping was sunk.

"On Sunday the advance on the right bank of the Tigris was resumed and the enemy was driven back to his last line of trenches in the Dahra bend west of Kut-el-Amara. By evening our line was established across the bend from bank to bank, on a frontage of 5,500 yards, and the enemy was completely hemmed in. The distance covered in the advance varied from 800 yards on our right to 2,000 yards on our left."

STARVATION THREATENS POPULACE OF GERMANY

Americans in Gerard's Party Who Have Reached Switzerland, Tell of the Many Privations Endured in Berlin—Food Problem is one of Growing Difficulty

By Courier Leased Wire.

Verne, via Paris, Feb. 13.—Americans, who arrived here from Germany with Ambassador Gerard, are congratulating themselves on having escaped further wrestling with Germany's food problem. Butcher's windows, well stocked with assorted meats, such as are seen here, are an unwonted sight in Berlin. Meat is now so scarce in the German capital that it is never hung in windows to attract buyers, but is speedily distributed without advertising. Customers keep in close touch with the butcher so as to know when the next meagre supply will be on sale.

High Prices

Practically all meat is sold on a card entitling each person to half a pound weekly, but dishes made of kidneys, lungs and other scraps can be bought in restaurants without a card. Game and poultry are exempt from the card system and command extraordinary prices. The maximum prices of pork and mutton range from fifty to seventy cents, but a dollar more is paid at back doors, for, despite Germany's genius for organization, much surreptitious dealing prevails.

The rich, of course, suffer comparatively little. They are still able to buy high priced poultry or fish. Turkeys, geese and chickens are still displayed in poulterers windows and bear labels announcing that they can be purchased at from $1.30 to $1.60 a pound. Cases have even been reported where a fat goose brought more than $30. The poorer people, especially in Berlin, are undoubtedly suffering from hunger, as their food is confined mainly to bread, potatoes, turnips and low grade marmalade.

Weight Lost

Some persons looked emaciated and reduced weight is quite general. A common question asked when friends meet is;

"How many pounds have you lost?" Physicians are writing in the medical journals that children are now evidently under nourished, particularly lacking fats.

Problem Growing

Men in authority recognize that Germany is confronted with a problem of growing difficulty. The next four months are regarded as especially critical, because the supply of vegetables, except potatoes and turnips, is practically exhausted. Even sauerkraut cannot be bought in the shops, but is only dolled out by the authorities at intervals. The Berlin Government posted placards last week announcing that half a pound of sauerkraut was assignable for the week on the section of the food card, calling for general provisions.

The difficulties of the situation, however, have not altered the confidence of the authorities that the existing supplies will suffice until the next crop by careful handling. They admit that the situation must then be restudied on the basis of new facts.

Weather Bulletin

Toronto, Feb. 13. Pressure is high near the Atlantic coast and over the northwest states and Manitoba, while a trough of low extends from northern Ontario to the southwest states. The weather has been fair and very cold from the great lakes eastward, while in Manitoba and Saskatchewan the temperature has been somewhat higher.

Forecasts.

Fresh southerly winds, some light local snow but mostly fair with higher temperature today and on Wednesday.

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT OPENS; SPEECH FROM THRONE IS READ

By Courier Leased Wire.

Toronto, Feb. 13.—The third session of the 14th legislature of Ontario was opened to-day. While shorn of much of the usual pageantry, the public were more largely admitted than last year. There were seats on the floor of the House for invited guests and the galleries were full. The speech from the Throne shows that the most important legislation proposed this year is for the placing of the returned soldiers on the land and the development of the hydro electric enterprises. On Wednesday, the house will adjourn out of respect to the memory of the late Hon. J. S. Duff, Hon. J. J. Foy and Mr. Sam Armstrong.

The speech from the Throne, after making fit reference to the departure of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught and the arrival of another distinguished representative of our sovereign in the person of the Duke of Devonshire as Governor-General, who is cordially welcomed, makes extended reference to the war as follows;—

The Speech

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

In the face of the sacrifices and dangers entailed by the struggle, the confidence of our people remains undaunted and the credit of our country unimpaired. As Canadians we glory in the achievements, the valor and the patriotism of the men who have gone and are still going from this country to fight the battles of the Empire, while we recognize that we are under a heavy and lasting obligation alike to them and to their dependents. In this connection, I desire to specially emphasize the fact that those of us who cannot give military service, have a solemn duty to assist our fighting men by the practice of the utmost thrift and economy, individually, and as a people, to the end that the full strength of the nation may be exerted to bring the war to a speedy and victorious conclusion.

I am glad to observe the splendid response the people of Ontario have made to the various appeals directed to them for war funds. Their contributions to the Red Cross and to the Patriotic funds indicate a widespread desire to assist in a special manner these admirable undertakings. Believing that we should help as a province in the beneficent work carried on by the Canadian Patriotic Fund my advisors have made a grant of one million dollars to this organization. They have given an immediate and favourable response to the request of the military authorities for the doubling of the capacity of the Ontario military hospital at Orpington.

Other proposals looking towards the needs of the wounded soldiers have received sympathetic consideration.

Schools' Good Work.

I have observed with great satisfaction the part taken by the schools of the province in the patriotic efforts entailed by the war both by the enlistment of teachers and pupils, and also by raising sums of money to aid worthy objects. The measures taken by the department of education, through exemption from examinations, to promote enlistment and to provide labor for the farms have met with good results.

My government participated in the conference recently called by the Dominion authorities to prepare plans for the settlement and employment of returned soldiers. On behalf of the province the heartiest co-operation in these proposals was undertaken.

Semi-Centenial

During the present year the Dominion of Canada will complete half a century of confederation. We have every reason for gratitude to Providence for the blessings and the prosperity we have enjoyeyd during this period, and we also have undoubted reason for confidence in the future. I observe that it is proposed by the Dominion Government to fittingly commemorate this great occasion and as a province we shall be glad to assist in such an effort.

Crops Satisfactory.

Although climatic conditions were not favourable last year to a full agricultural yield, yet in certain branches a satisfactory crop was obtained, so that on the whole the busbandman enjoyed a fair return for his labours. It is intended that a special effort shall be made this year to increase production of food stuffs and to secure the additional labour so necessary to the prosperity of our farmers.

Continued on page four

HUNS PLAN TO STRIKE AT AMERICA FROM CUBA

Since Severance of Relations With Germany, Many Germans Have Migrated From U. S. to Cuba—Revolt There May be Ominous of Further Trouble

By Courier Leased Wire.

New York, Feb. 13.—The Tribune this morning says:

Coincident with the revolt in Cuba has come an unusaul emigration of Germans to that republic from this city.

The Tribune learned yesterday that since the situation between the United States and Germany became critical from eighty to one hundred Germans have left this port bound for Cuba.

Mysterious Exodus

What makes this exodus the more mysterious is that many of those who left here first took out their first papers as prospective American citizens. They were among the many aliens who visited the naturalization offices last week.

Why these men went to that trouble was due probably to the fact that they could not obtain passports as German subjects and used instead the papers showing that they had declared their intention to become American citizens.

Investigations.

Officials at Washington have been apprised of the situation and agents in New York are investigating the antecedents of the legion already gone. An extensive revolt in Cuba would cause the use of American troops to restore order under the terms of the Platt amendment.

Washington, Feb. 13.—The government was keeping a watchful eye on Cuban political conditions to-day following the reports to the State department of a threatened revolution over election troubles and the department's warning to Cubans not to throw their republic into civil war. A communication containing the admonition was sent to the American minister at Havana and will be published over the Island.

Election Question.

The statement that was sent to Minister Gonzales to be issued to the Cuban peoples, says in part:

"The government of the United States, in view of its relations with the republic of Cuba, and on account of the duties which are imposed upon it by the agreement between the two countries, is regarding with no small concern the question of the new elections in Santa Clara province.

U. S. Has Confidence

"The government of the United States, better than any other nation, knows the patriotism of the Cuban people, and, mindful of the patriotic deeds done by the Cuban heroes in their struggles for liberty, is confident that the same patriotic spirit will prevail in the settlement of the present electoral difficulty, and that it will be shown by implicit faith in the legal means which have been established for the settlement of such questions."

It had been reported that the opposition party had appealed to the United States to supervise the special election that had been called for February 14, but at the State department it was denied that such request had been received.

BILL AGAINST SUB WARFARE

By Courier Leased Wire.

Washington, Feb. 13.—A bill directed against ruthless submarine warfare and proposing to open the ports, harbors and waters of the United States in time of war to warships or vessels of belligerents against whom such warfare is waged, was introduced today by Senator Saulsbury of Delaware.

Richard Bell, for many years head of the Sarnia waterworks system, was seriously injured at the pumping station when his overcoat became caught in the revolving shaft of the big pumping engine.