

FRENCH GOV'T TO BUY MERCHANT FLEET OF 50 SHIPS

Will Include Tank Steamers and Cold Storage Ships—Increasing Cost of Foods and Rise in Freight Rates Led to Government's Proposed Action.

Paris, Dec. 2.—The French cabinet this morning authorized the Ministers of Finance and Marine to introduce in the Chamber of Deputies in the name of the government a measure authorizing the purchase by the state of a merchant fleet of fifty ships. These vessels are to include tank steamers for the transportation of petroleum and cold storage vessels for the transportation of frozen meat to provision the population of France.

AMATEURS SCORE SUCCESS IN "THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR"

Excellent production by Loyalist Dramatic Club for Red Cross Fund.

The Opera House last night was crowded to capacity by an audience that showed in an unmistakable way its appreciation of the excellent presentation of the comedy-drama "The House Next Door," by the Loyalist Dramatic Club, a company of amateurs of unusual talent.

Among those present last night were His Honor Lieut.-Governor Wood, Mayor Frink and members of the city council. The band of the 89th Battalion played patriotic selections from the King street to the Opera House and was followed by a large crowd, many of whom took seats to witness the presentation of a play that for some time past has been keenly anticipated.

FIRE IN MILITARY HOSPITAL PATIENTS REMOVED SAFELY

Bellefleur, Ont., Dec. 2.—Fire broke out this evening in the military headquarters of the Forty-ninth Regiment and the Thirty-fourth Battery on Church street, now used as a hospital for the 80th Overseas Battalion. There were six or seven patients, but they were got out safely. Some fifteen thousand rounds of ammunition were stored in the building, but were carried out. The damage was considerable.

GOV.-GENERAL IN TORONTO

Toronto, Dec. 2.—H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught arrived in Toronto this afternoon and made an inspection of the convalescent home for soldiers on College street. He also inspected the camp of the overseas forces at the

STR. HOCKING TAKEN OVER BY BRITISH GOV'T

U. S. Will Demand Ship Be Retained in Prize Court.

WAS SEIZED ON WAY TO NORFOLK FROM NEW YORK

State Department at Washington Unwilling to Accept Order-in-Council Under which Seizure was Made.

Washington, Dec. 2.—Official announcement that the American steamship Hocking had been requisitioned by the British government without the formality of prize court proceedings was received by the State Department late today in a despatch from Consul General Young at Halifax, where the ship has been detained since she was seized by a British warship while on the way from New York to Norfolk.

This procedure will be vigorously contested by the United States government as being illegal and in violation of recognized rights under international law. The United States, it was said, will demand that the ship be retained in prize court, on the charge that she is partly German owned, and that the prize court will act promptly in the case.

Confirmation of unofficial reports regarding the action in the Hocking case led officials here to believe that Great Britain intends to take over for its own use other vessels of the fleet owned by the American trans-Atlantic Company, if it had not done so already. The company's ship Genesee at St. Lucia, West Indies, has been requisitioned and that the Kankakee, now at sea bound for Port Stanley, Falkland Islands, is in charge of a prize crew from the British cruiser Macdonald, will be requisitioned upon her arrival at port. Representations regarding the Hocking probably will include also the case of the Genesee and the Kankakee.

Ford's Expedition Has No Credentials From the U.S. Gov't

Washington, Dec. 2.—Several European nations, neutrals as well as belligerents, have inquired of the United States concerning the status of the peace party which is to sail in vessels chartered by Henry Ford. To each, Secretary of State Lansing has replied that the American government not only has no connection with the expedition, but assumes no responsibility for any activities or negotiations on the part of those engaged in the movement.

The fact that Mr. Ford had conferred with President Wilson before launching his movement to end the European war gave some of the ambassadors and ministers here the impression that the Washington government might have some connection with it. It became known tonight that since publication of the plans of the party the State Department has been receiving inquiries, most of them of an informal nature, through the embassies and legations here of the European powers.

NEXT MOVEMENT OF THE RUSSIANS WILL BE A NUMBER OF MILLIONS NOT ARMY CORPS

A Contented Army, Well Equipped and in Comfortable Quarters is Ready at an Hour's Notice to March—New Campaign on Broader Scale than Any Yet Undertaken.

At the Russian front, via Petrograd, Dec. 2. (London, Dec. 3, 1:15 p. m.)—The next forward movement of the Russian armies will be in a number of millions, not army corps, according to the statement of high army officials. The armies are in better shape than for many months, said this official, and quite capable of moving forward at any point. But the new broad plan of campaign contemplates much more than the taking of towns and territory by drives at this point and that.

The Russian staff is well satisfied with the net result of the strategy during the past summer, and it is asserted, is willing to bide its time for the inception of the new campaign. A contented army, well fed, clothed and housed and weekly steam-cleaned is the first Russian army, as seen by the Associated Press correspondent during a ten days visit to the positions along the eastern front.

BLACK DYE TO CHANGE SPOTS ON HORSE

Witness Before Sir Chas. Davidson Gives Interesting Side-lights on Purchase of War Horses in Peel County, Ont.

Brampton, Ont., Dec. 2.—Some rather startling testimony was given today regarding the purchase of horses before the Sir Charles Davidson commission by Mr. Jas. R. Falls, member of the executive for Peel county. He stated that 363 horses were purchased in Peel county, and every one was bought from him or his firm. He testified that he had visited Ottawa and had a letter from the militia department recommending him to the government inspectors, and authorizing the purchase of horses in the county. When he returned he formed a partnership with E. J. Jones, a horse dealer of Brampton. The horses purchased under this partnership were sold to the government at an advance on the price paid to the vendor. The total profits he placed at less than \$3,000. He admitted that he had been playing safe, buying only after the horses had passed inspection. He claimed he had a right to do so.

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Mothers Know That Genuine Castoria Always Bears the Signature of *Chas. H. Watson* In Use For Over Thirty Years **CASTORIA**

Surrender of Monastir Reported From Athens

London, Dec. 2.—An Athens despatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company dated Thursday night, says it is reported in Athens, but not officially confirmed that Monastir surrendered Wednesday to a joint mission of Germans, Austrians and Bulgarians.

London, Dec. 2.—Monastir has fallen, according to an Athens despatch to the Times.

London, Dec. 2.—The casualty list of the 25th Battalion, which was reported yesterday, happened unfortunately on the eve of his wedding, which was fixed for December 5th. His fiancée, Miss Parmelee, niece of the Deputy Minister of Education for Quebec, leaves for France tomorrow. Captain Tremaine is at Le Touquet suffering from a gunshot wound in the head. Lieut. A. J. L. Evans of the 3rd Battalion, was wounded at the same time.

RUSSIAN REPORT

Petrograd, via London, Dec. 2.—The following official communication from general headquarters was issued today:

"An enemy bivouac reported yesterday on the left bank of Drina, near Somanhoff Arm, between Friedrichstadt and Jacobstadt, was subjected to a heavy fire by our artillery. The Germans, completely surprised, fled, leaving behind a hundred killed or wounded."

APPRISERS APPOINTED.

Halifax, Dec. 2.—Marshal James Hall today appointed S. M. Brookfield and Captain Neil Hall, as appraisers of the American steamer Hocking, and the Dutch steamer Hamburg, which on Wednesday were ordered requisitioned by the judge of the Admiralty Court of Nova Scotia. The steamers will be handed over to the British government.

DIED.

BETTS.—At Fairville, N. B., on December 1st, Mrs. Phoebe Elizabeth Betts, in the 64th year of her age. Funeral today (the 3rd). Service at the home at 2:30 p. m., then at the Church of the Good Shepherd. Interment at Cedar Hill Cemetery. Friends invited to attend.

O'LEARY.—At the Mater Misericordiae Home, Sydney street, on the 2nd inst., Helen, widow of Jeremiah O'Leary, leaving three sons to mourn. Funeral on Sunday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock from the residence of her son, John, 111 British street. Friends invited to attend.

OPERA HOUSE

TONIGHT and Saturday Matinee
"THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR" FOR THE RED CROSS FUND
STARTING MON. DEC. 6
ANNETTE KELLERMAN in "NEPTUNE'S DAUGHTER"

THE CELEBRATED COMEDIAN, JOHN BARRYMORE GETS INTO AN AWFUL MIX-UP AT THE IMPERIAL THEATRE

In the South American Extravaganza
"THE DICTATOR"
By Richard Harding Davis
THIS CAST SUGGESTS THE STORY: JOHN BARRYMORE PLAYS the role of Brooke Travers, escaping for an imaginary crime and forced into Dictatorship of a troubled republic. CHARLOTTE IVES PLAYS as Lucy Sheridan, a charming little misadventurer with whom Travers falls in love. RUBY HOFFMAN PLAYS Juanita, a disappointed senorita who has a knife ready for the real Dictator—(look out, John Barrymore!) WALTER CRAVEN PLAYS the part of General Campos, temporary President of this disrupted republic. ROBERT BRODERICK PLAYS the agitated character Col. Bowie—a sort of revolution specialist, the storm-centre of it all. HARRY WEST PLAYS the innocent and subdued Rev. Bostick, who gets in an awful mix-up of marriage and sweethearts. THOMAS McGRATH PLAYS Duffy, the Irishman, who lends assistance at the psychological moment.
Whole Play Produced in Cuba by The Famous Players Co.
GERTRUDE LEROY—Concert Contralto Imperial's Festival Orchestra
"THE BROKEN COIN"—No. 14
Kitty Leads An Army to Battle
Mon. 6th Hazel Dawn in "Clarissa"

A CANADIAN EXPORTERS CLUB IN LONDON

Over score of resident and visiting Canadians get together to discuss improving Dominion's Export Trade.

London, Dec. 2. (Gazette Cable).—The Inaugural lunch of the Canadian Exporters' Lunch Club was held today, when over a score of resident and visiting Canadians assembled, with Harrison Watson, Canadian trade commissioner, in the chair. Mr. Watson expressed his belief that the enterprise would be of great practical value to Canadian trade. In a short review of Canadian export trade conditions before the war, he pointed out that with the exception of produce and lumber, exports were purely casual, and Canadian manufacturers had neither the knowledge nor the organization to take prompt advantage of the unique opportunity suddenly created by the war. These manufacturers who sent representatives with samples to Britain had been rewarded, but the Americans, pl

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