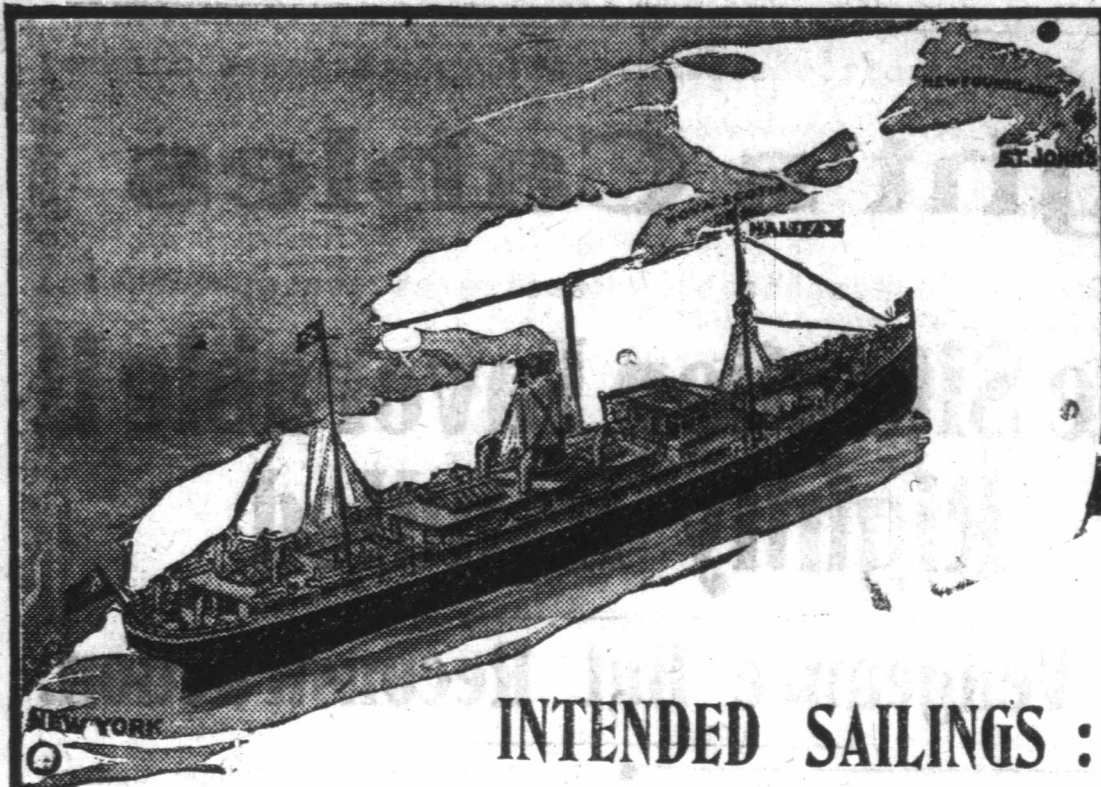


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HOW THE BRITANNIC WENT DOWN.

A Brilliant Vision of White With Conspicuous Red Crosses—Boy Scout Heroes

The 48,000-ton White Star Liner Britannic, the largest British liner ever built, which was in use as a hospital ship and conveying nurses and an Army Medical Corps detachment to Salonica, was sunk shortly after eight o'clock this morning off the Isle of Zee. She went down in fifty-five minutes. Either a German mine or, more probably, a torpedo from a submarine was the cause.

It was the Britannic's sixth voyage as a hospital ship, and it is important to notice that before leaving Southampton on this voyage she had been newly painted, so that she was a brilliant vision of white with a great fresh band of the regulation green all round her, and also conspicuous red crosses. Furthermore, sunrise this morning was at 6.55, so that when she was struck, exactly at 8.12, daylight was well advanced.

Nearly all on board were breakfasting, when suddenly an explosion shook the ship, but not apparently violently. The nurses, of whom there were seventy-six Army nurses and thirty-eight of the Voluntary Aid Detachment on board, tell me that everybody rose from their seats, but most of them sat down again.

An officer who spoke with the captain after the disaster says that the captain stated that he had little doubt that it was a torpedo. One of the ship's officers is stated to have seen two torpedoes coming towards her bows, but here again direct evidence is lacking.

At no time was there any trace of panic. The nurses were sitting or standing in groups in the saloons when a medical officer came in and said simply: "Ladies, you had better hurry up." The matron refused to enter a boat till she had counted all her nurses.

The women safe, the men turned to effect their own escape. Accounts vary somewhat, but there seem to have been some 700 on board, all told. At the officers' orders the men of the R.A.M.C. fell in on deck in absolute order. "Alas! all could not fall in, for the explosion seems to have made too many victims forward. Officers told me that not only were the men there killed by the explosion itself, but also the emergency staircase appears to have been blown off and the docks of the bulkheads jammed, isolating the men in the bows, and it was by the bows that the Britannic went down.

Meanwhile, after the men had fallen in to the sound of the emergency siren the boats were, with perfect order, filled with each its right complement. "The calmness and discipline of the men were superb," said an officer to me who had himself waited so long to see his men in the boats that he had had to dive from the ship and was injured a hand. At about a quarter of nine it became evident that the ship was soon going, and the list was preventing the proper launching of the

boats, of which about 30 were now afloat. Those remaining on the decks—there would have been about 200—were ordered to break ranks and were advised to dive in. But they went instead to the upper decks and threw the rafts there overboard.

And here comes the moment of tragedy. The Britannic's propellers were now on the water level, and several boats and rafts and some swimming men were drawn along into the whirlpool horror of their blades. The suction of the ship going down forward pulled at the men and the boats.

Slaughter by Propellers.
An officer showed me his hand all bound up, he having torn it against the Britannic's side in pushing off and sending his boat from it. "It was an awful sight," he told me, "to see poor fellows struggling against the inevitable. When the boats were finally doomed to encounter the great whirlpool of the propeller blades most of them tried to escape by jumping in. The screws caught the boats with a rapping, smashing sound, caught the occupants, and flung them into the air cut, mutilated, and sundered. I saw one body or man, I hardly know which cut in half, and I saw limbs and heads in the air. It was frightful beyond speech."

A most remarkable story, for the truth of which several officers vouch, is that one of the vessels coming to succour the Britannic, a British destroyer of which the name was given me, while on her way received by wireless a countermanding signal. Later the Britannic renewed her appeals and the destroyer, again receiving them, came on. Who sent the countermanding signals? is the question one asks.

Boy Scout Heroes.
Conspicuous courage was exhibited by a party of Boy Scouts from Southampton, Liverpool, and Gravesend, who had been shipped to make them generally useful. After the explosion each lad went calmly to an allotted post to assist a ship's officer.

A thirteen-year-old lad named Pope not only remained in the ship for half an hour after she had been struck but also collected many small articles belonging to passengers. Scout Perman of Southampton, worked the ship's lift bringing many passengers to the upper decks. Another Southampton boy, Victor Mackenzie, when ordered to sound certain steam whistles, knew exactly which handles to pull. Scout Percy Dickson remained so long at his post that he had to let himself down from the ship, which then had a heavy list, hand-over-hand, on a rope to the lifeboat.

The boys, whose ages vary from twelve to sixteen years, have since visited Athens, where they were warmly praised by the British Minister and entertained by some Greek Scouts.

Taxation of Land.

A powerful arraignment of the prevailing system by which wealthy individuals and corporations hold land out of use and thus deprive needy thousands of a means of livelihood has just been published by the California State Commission of Immigration and Housing.

On the Commission are a capitalist, a Roman Catholic bishop, a wealthy woman social worker, a wealthy retired physician, and a labor leader. It is because they base their conclusions on facts, not on theories, that what they have to say is of particular importance.

Taxation of unused land at the same rate as for land that has been made highly productive by the enterprise of its owners is discussed by the commission as a remedy. While they are not prepared to endorse this method, they announce that the Commission has begun a thorough investigation.

The Commission's findings, as set forth in the second annual report, just published, may be summarized as follows:

California should comfortably support many times her present population, yet there have been times recently when it seemed as if California was unable to support even her present limited population.

The explanation lies in the fact that land is obtainable only at excessive prices, or is withheld altogether from the market by those who refuse to sell in the hope that the future will bring a much higher price. To this higher price the owners will contribute nothing in enterprise, industry or investment. This forces up land prices artificially and unnaturally.

"By this means," says the Commission, "we foster unemployment, yet it is considered legitimate business to purchase land for the avowed purpose of preventing capital and labor from being employed upon it until enormous sums can be extracted for this privilege."

"The evidence seems to show that the men and women of California are tolerating a system that encourages rather than prevents holding and speculating in idle land."

The report shows that the Southern Pacific Railroad, owns in one country, 664,830 acres, and in another 142,246 acres, few of which are profitably used. Taxes on these and many other huge idle tracts are as low in many instances as 6 and 8 cents an acre.

The report is of particular value because it is written from the standpoint of the labor problem—of improving the condition of unskilled workmen and reducing unemployment. One member of the Commission and its secretary is Paul Scharenberg, secretary-treasurer of the California Federation of Labor and a member of the Seamen's Union at San Francisco. He is the only Single Taxer on the Commission.

"The Windows of the Soul."

"The eyes are not only the window of the soul—as the poets fondly declare—but they are a clear indication of character and of health—both important," says Prof. Arthur B. Farmer, in a most illuminating article. He continues: "When the doctor asks to see your tongue, he gives a keen, sharp look at your eyes also, and reads as much from the one as from the other. Most people know that the white of the eye shows health or the reverse, but very few know that the iris—the coloured part—clearly and surely indicates the condition of the whole body.

"Health is shown by a clear, unmarked white, which in inflammatory conditions becomes reddened; in liver trouble takes on a yellowish hue; and in anaemia will be quite blue. The coloured part should be a perfect mother-of-pearl blue or a clear brown, according to race. Inflammation is indicated in the iris by white lines or clouds; inactive catarrhal, or tubercular conditions by dark patches; and loss of tissue by black marks. These marks are definitely located to correspond with the part of the body affected.

"Persons of the greatest physical and mental energy are invariably described as having bright, clear, blue eyes. In public speakers a dilation of the pupil often takes place as a result of intense excitement, causing the eyes to appear to be black for the time.

"Eyes differ in prominence, form, position, slope, slant and expression, and each difference and variation has a distinctive meaning, which may be read by any one who is willing to give a little time and thought to the study.

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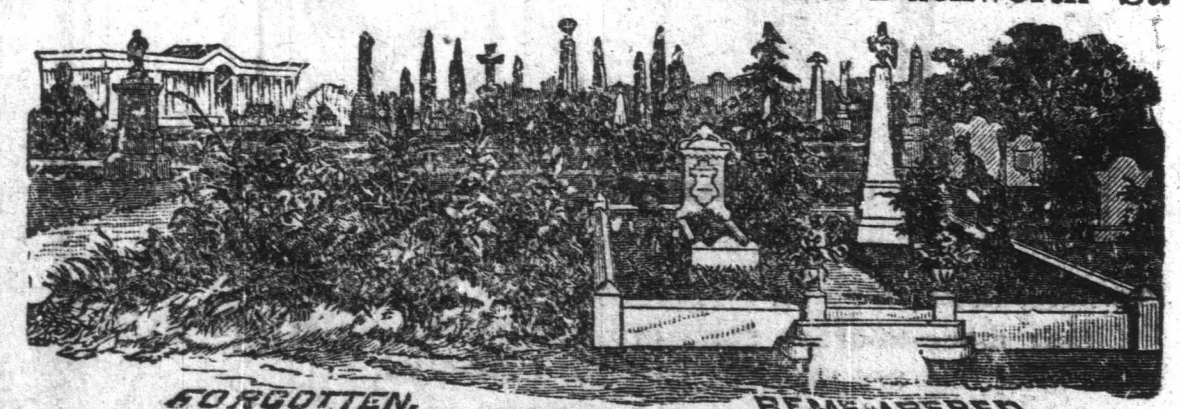
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Turkey Breaks Promise to U. S.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 29.—Word the Turkish Government has rescinded its previous agreement to allow several hundred Americans to leave the Turkish Empire via Jaffe reached the State Department yesterday from Ambassador Elkus at Constantinople. The Ambassador was informed that the Americans cannot be permitted to depart because of military necessity, and that the official who made the previous agreement spoke without authority.

Diplomacy seems to have been exhausted in the situation, and it is not known what action may be taken in an effort to bring Turkey to terms. The practical interment of the Americans is a source of anxiety to their friends and indignation to the Government. It is said to be an unprecedented situation which will require most delicate handling.

The exact number of persons affected cannot be learned, owing to the fact that direct communication with shore is not permitted. Many are said to be naturalized Syrians and Armenians, though a number of native American missionaries are known to be included.

The American cruiser Des Moines, now at Alexandria, is due shortly at Jaffa, where she had been expected to take on the refugees. It is understood, now, however, that officers from the vessel will not even be allowed to land to investigate conditions.

Misery loves company—and she usually has plenty of it. sermons.