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THE PARLIAMENTARY SITUATION CONTINUES TO BE UNEASY--SOME CHANGES RUMOURED

Grey's Health May Compel Him to Leave Cabinet--Winston Churchill's Hurried Return to England Causes Much Conjecture--Lloyd George Receives Great Oration From London Populace

INDIAN TROOPS LEAVE FRANCE

German Submarine Warfare again Active--No Important Developments on Major War Fronts--British and Turks Have Severe Fighting in South Persia--Russians Gain a Little

LONDON, Dec. 28.—The departure of the Indian army from France for another field of action was the most important feature of to-day's news, so far as the British public was concerned. Whether the new field of action is Egypt or Mesopotamia was not announced. In both these theatres there are, presumably, already considerable bodies of Indian troops. It is assumed that the places of the Indians in France has been filled by drafts from the new armies raised on the soil of the United Kingdom.

In connection with to-night's announcement, it is worth noting the larger and more important share the youthful Prince of Wales is taking in the business of the Empire and the British public, both home and colonial, will read with a peculiar sense of national pride the King's words to his Indian veterans: "Before you leave France I send my dear and gallant son, the Prince of Wales, who was shared with my armies the dangers and hardships of the campaign, to thank you in my name."

News from other war fronts continues to show no important developments. The Russians are winning successes against weaker enemy forces in Persia. The British in south Persia have had severe fighting with the Turks without materially altering the situation.

The Allies at Salonika are contemplating their nearly completed fortifications with the utmost satisfaction. On the Western front there is little to record except minor artillery bombing operations.

The resumption of German submarine activity was evidenced by the sinking of half a dozen ships the past 24 hours with the loss of eighty lives in the case of the French steamer Ville de la Ciotat, while two boatloads are missing in the case of the Belgian steamer Ministre Bernart.

Although to-day was a holiday in England members of the British Cabinet returned hastily from the scenes of their Christmas festivities for an important meeting, at which was discussed Derby's scheme and other matters, which must be threshed out when Parliament re-convenes.

The Parliamentary situation continues to be uneasy, and rumours of some changes in the Cabinet are being widely talked of. There is a possibility that Sir Edward Grey's health may compel him to leave the Cabinet although he attended to-day's meeting.

SITUATION AT SALONIKI EXCELLENT

ATHENS, Dec. 27.—With our batteries of heavy artillery and the men behind them, it is impossible to oust the Allied forces from Salonika," said General Castelnau, Chief of the French General Staff, in a statement to-day, to the Associated Press. General Castelnau gave an interview after being received this morning by King Constantine, and attending luncheon at the French Legation. The situation at Salonika today is most excellent, he continued. "I must say I have rarely seen an emplacement which lends itself better to defence. I may also say that the position provides most favorable conditions, for offensive, as well as defensive operations."

The General was asked if the Allies contemplate an offensive movement from Salonika in the spring. The spring will tell, he replied. It is impossible to discount the exigencies of the military situation so far ahead.

AGREED ON PARTITION OF SERBIA

LONDON, Dec. 28.—The Daily News has the following from its Rome correspondent: "According to Bucharest advices, the partition of Serbia is already agreed upon between the Austrians and Bulgarians. The former have assumed administration of Northern Serbia, and the latter of Macedonia, where they are destroying every trace of Serbian history, burning archives and other records, including registers of births and deaths, seizing deposits in banks, expropriating property, levying contributions on landed property, cattle and crops."

"Many persons have been summarily tried and shot, and others have been interned in towns and villages and the people are starving. Typhus and smallpox are claiming numerous victims and the mortality is appalling, especially among children. On pretext of disloyalty, hundreds of inhabitants were arrested convicted and hanged, hundreds were shot en masse in Nish and Belgrade, because they participated in anti-Austrian demonstrations."

"The cold is severe and many Austrian soldiers are dying of exposure. Starving inhabitants, wandering about the country side, attacked a supply train, but were shot down by its escort."

NO WARNING GIVEN

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27.—American Consul Bristol at Port Said cabled today that no warning was given the Japanese liner Yasaka Mura before she was torpedoed and sunk in the Mediterranean last week, by a submarine of unestablished nationality. The liner, he said, made no attempt to escape.

UNUSUALLY QUIET

LONDON, Dec. 28.—It has been unusually quiet here. There were no papers on Saturday. The chief activity to-day, which is also one of the public holidays were the big crowds waiting for the first pantomimes. There has been a marked decrease in drunkenness this holiday season.

TURKS DRIVEN OUT

LONDON, Dec. 28.—The Turks in their attack on the British forces in Mesopotamia, succeeded in entering the northern bastion of one of the forts at Kutelamara, but were driven out, so an official statement issued this evening says.

THEY STAYED AT HOME

LONDON, Dec. 28.—The only feature that marked Xmas this year was the fact that people stayed at home. The absence of cheap fares on the railroad and the restricted train service had this effect.

OFFICIAL BRITISH

To Governor, Newfoundland. LONDON, Dec. 27.—Headquarters in France report normal artillery activity and some mining activity south of Labassee Canal. Elsewhere the French artillery blew up an enemy ammunition train in Vosges. There is no change at Salonika.

It is reported that the Germans have established a provisional government at Nish. At Kutelamara the enemy, after heavy shelling, breaching the northern part of our position called Fort 24th, and effected an entrance. They were ejected, leaving 200 dead. On the night of the 24th there was fierce fighting from the Fort. The enemy entered the northern bastion, but was ejected. Again they attacked and occupied the bastion. The enemy evacuated the bastion on the morning of the 25th, and retired about half a mile. We reoccupied the bastion. Our casualties were 190 killed and wounded. The enemy casualties are estimated at about 700. The attacking force numbered a division.

BONAR LAW. LONDON, Dec. 27.—The main Arab force which had been operating near Materuh was attacked on Christmas Day and dispersed by the British who suffered small losses, is officially announced to-night:—"With reference to the Turkish official communication of the 27th the War Office states that from 14th to 24th there was no fighting between our troops and Arabs on the western frontier of Egypt. On the 25th the principal Arab force, which was located some eight miles from Materuh, was attacked and dispersed with trifling losses of troops."

The foregoing is evidently the Allies answer to the Turkish official received to-day from Constantinople by way of Berlin, which was sent by way of wireless through Constantinople on date of Dec. 26th.

FRENCH

PARIS, Dec. 27.—The following statement was issued this afternoon: "No events of importance last night, except in Lorraine, our artillery bombardment of position of the enemy in the vicinity of Biencourt and Gremecy, south west of Chateau salients."

STORY OF KING PETER'S FLIGHT

BERLIN, Dec. 28.—The Tageblatt's Sofia correspondent dramatically describes the flight of King Peter of Serbia through Albania as told by an Albanian physician in a letter to a friend in Uskub. The physician reached a miserable little Albanian village during a furious snow storm, but could find no sleeping quarters anything better than a stall barn. At the very height of the storm four cavalry-men appeared and demanded admission to the cottage. Two riders almost tenderly lifted a third man from his horse and bore him into the house, while a fourth brought up the rear-guard with boxes of provisions. The third man, seemingly a wounded Serb officer was laid on a couch. He wearily closed his eyes, and turned his head as lights were brought. The first time the physician, who had come to the house from the stable, watched the operations of the stranger, he recognized the apparently sick man as King Peter of Serbia, as his companions prepared a semblance of a bed for him.

The King, between groans, thanked them but declined food. One of his companions, probably a physician, forced the King to take a little liquid nourishment, after which the whole party sat for a time in gloomy, and then made pretense of sleeping. They resumed their journey before daylight.

TURKISH

BERLIN, Dec. 27.—Senussi Tribes men are advancing along the Egyptian coast near the Tripolitan border, and have driven the British out of Materuh, on which they retired late in November, after a strong Arab force had compelled their retreat from Solum, according to a Turkish official report received here to-day from Constantinople. The statement is dated Dec. 26th as follows: "Several detachments of Senussi continued successfully attacks against the British in Egypt. They have cleared the Siwah district completely. The British Siwah district is an oasis in Libya."

KING GEORGE SENDS GREETING TO BRITISH INDIAN ARMY CORPS

At a Parade of the Indian Army Corps, Before it Left France, the Following Message Was Delivered to the Men by the Prince of Wales:

LONDON, Dec. 27.—The British Indian Army Corps have left France for another field of operations is officially announced to-night. At a parade of the Indian Army Corps, before it left France, the following message from their King-Emperor was delivered to the men by the Prince of Wales:—"More than a year ago I summoned you from India to fight for the safety of my empire and the honour of my pledged word on the battlefields of Belgium and France. The confidence which I then expressed in your sense of duty, your courage and your chivalry, you since have nobly justified. I now require your services in another field, but before you leave France I send my dear and gallant son, the Prince of Wales, who has shared with my army the dangers and hardships of the campaign, to thank you in my name for your services and to express to you my satisfaction. British Indian comrades in arms, yours has been fellowship in toils, hardships, courage and endurance, often against great odds; deeds nobly done daily, in ever memorable conflict, in warfare waged under new conditions, and amid trying circumstances. You have worthily upheld the honour of the Empire and the great traditions of my army in India. I have followed your fortunes with deepest interest and watched your gallant actions with pride and satisfaction, and I mourn with you the loss of many gallant officers and men. Let it be your consolation as their pride that they freely gave their lives in

a just cause for the honour of their sovereign and the safety of my Empire. They died as gallant soldiers. I shall ever hold their sacrifices in grateful remembrance. You leave France with just pride in honorable deeds already done, and with my assured confidence that your proved valor and experience will contribute further to victories in the new fields of action to which you go. I pray God to bless, and guard you, and to bring you back safely, when final victory is won, each to his own home there to be welcomed with honour among his own people.

CABINET MUST SOON DECIDE

LONDON, Dec. 28.—The Times asserts that the differences on the question of untested single men point to the existence of fundamental divergences regarding the method of prosecuting the war. "There are certain elements," the Times says, "which cannot work together indefinitely, and the Cabinet seems to have reached the point when it must make a vital decision between one set of opinions and the other."

WITHIN FOUR MILES

LONDON, Dec. 28.—A despatch to the Times from Salonika says:—"The Bulgars have withdrawn four miles from the Greek frontier, between Gievgeji and Doiran, and are busy fortifying a strong line of natural positions. On our side work of fortification is being facilitated by fine weather and energetically advanced."

REJOINED REGIMENT

LONDON, Dec. 28.—Winston Churchill returned to France yesterday to rejoin his regiment.

PRESENT POLITICAL CRISIS MAY RESULT IN A GENERAL ELECTION

Times Parliamentary Correspondent Asserts the Position is Undeniably Delicate—A General Election Expected in Many Quarters—Lloyd George States His Position

BALFOUR IS OPOSED TO CONSCRIPTION

The Chronicle Protests Against Wire Pullers Who Contemplate the Desperate and Mad Expedient of a General Election—Comparison Drawn Between Civil War and Present Conflict

LONDON, Dec. 28.—That proceedings in the British Cabinet have not been going smoothly is seen from the fact that after a two hours sitting yesterday (Monday) the Council was obliged to adjourn till to-day, no decision having been reached, the discussion having revealed grave differences of opinion. The Times Parliamentary correspondent asserts the position is undeniably delicate and may become critical to-day unless handled with firmness and decision. The Daily Mail asserts that Andrew Bonar Law, Secretary for the Colonies and Lord Kitchener, War Minister, have not yet made their position clear, while Balfour, First Lord of the Admiralty, resolutely opposes compulsion in which he is supported by a majority of the Minister. But Lloyd George, Marquis Lansdowne, Earl Curzon, Sir Frederick Smith, J. Austin Chamberlain, Walter Hume Long and Earl Selborne advance immediate compulsion. Lloyd George, the Mail adds, before the sitting of the Council made his position clear to Premier Asquith in a message intimating that unless Asquith's pledge to married men be kept in the strictest sense, he could not continue as a member of the Government.

The Morning Post equally with the Times and Mail, all Conscriptors papers, see the possibility of several Cabinet resignations, the only other alternative being a general election. The Morning Telegraph and Chronicle, anti-compulsion organs, are also apprehensive of a crisis and a general election. The Chronicle editorially protests against the intrigues of wire pullers who contemplate the desperate and mad expedient of a general election, "a gambler's plunge which might entail disastrous consequences," and points out how, by merely withholding their assent from the Parliament Registration Bill, the Lords can make elections unavoidable next month, since the absence of a Parliament Bill, which prolongs its life for eight months, the present Parliament would expire by effluxion sometime in the end of January. Concerning people who made comparison with America during the Civil War, the Chronicle argues that Lincoln's action is not a precedent because conditions are different. Lincoln was distracted by wholesale desertion, while recruiting was stimulated by extravagant bounties. The Chronicle adds:—"Our voluntary army in one year exceeded in number all the men recruited by the Federal Government in a four years' war, and that without drafts to force them or bounties and bribes."

RODENTS IN THE TRENCHES WORRY THE SOLDIERS

LONDON, Dec. 28.—Soldiers on leave from the front report a plague of rats in the trenches is becoming serious. Those rodents eat clothes as well as food that may be left about. Medical authorities are doing their utmost to stamp them out, recognizing the peril which may arise through their conveyance of disease. A ferret dealer in Kent recently sent five hundred ferrets to Flanders to help to rid the trenches of this pest. The fact of hunting the rats becomes a daily sport with the troops.

PEACE PARTY WELL RECEIVED

STOCKHOLM, Dec. 28.—The peace meeting held last night under the auspices of the Ford-Peace Expedition is characterized here as a most enthusiastic demonstration for peace, that Europe has seen since the war began. Nearly a thousand citizens attended and every mention of an early end to the war, provided prolonged applause.

PEOPLE GROW ANGRY

LONDON, Dec. 28.—An Amsterdam despatch says that according to reports in Vienna, the Palace of Archduke Stephen of Austria, was attacked on Christmas night by a mob, armed with pitchforks and axes, as a protest against the squandering of food on an elaborate entertainment.

HON. WILLIAM WILL STAY AT HOME

NEW YORK, Dec. 27.—Reports that William Jennings Bryan had contemplated joining Henry Ford in Europe were confirmed to-day, but because Ford himself is returning to this country, Bryan will not go to Europe.

AT THEIR OLD GAME

LONDON, Dec. 28.—The Bucharest correspondent of the Daily Mail reports that several arrests have been made in connection with an unsuccessful plot, instigated by Germans, to blow up residences of prominent men, including Cabinet Ministers, known to be favourable to the Allies.

AT THEIR OLD GAME

LONDON, Dec. 28.—The Daily Mail understands that Lloyd George threatens to resign from the Cabinet unless Premier Asquith strictly adheres to his pledge to apply compulsion to unmarried slackers if they fail to present themselves for attestation under Earl Derby's recruiting scheme.

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LADIES, ATTENTION! A GIFT TO YOUR GENTLEMAN FRIENDS A GREAT BIG XMAS OFFER. FOR the next Ten Days we will give to every Purchaser of a tin V.C. Smoking Mixture, price \$1.25, a handsome covered Tobacco Pouch, price 50c. The regular price of these two articles being \$1.75. Our price for Ten Days only, \$1.50. To be had only at the ROYAL CIGAR STORE, Bank Square Water Street.