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WEATHER—FAIR

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LITTLE FIGHTING IN EUROPE DURING CHRISTMAS SEASON

ROUMANIANS YIELD IN HUN DRIVE

Heavy Fighting in Dobrudja—Russians Obligated to Fall Back Under Heavy Pressure -- Austro-Germans Making Last Stand--Heavy Casualties Suffered by Turks.

MACEDONIA EXCEPT FOR AN ARTILLERY ENGAGEMENT DEVOID OF MOMENTOUS ACTIVITY—TWO BRITISH DESTROYERS SUNK IN NORTH SEA.

The third Christmas of the European war passed without much fighting on the British and French fronts, where virtually only the artillery was active and the men were feasted and entertained as far as was compatible with the sterner business of war.

Roumania's first Christmas as a participant in the war witnessed heavy fighting on the Roumanian front. Ground was yielded by the Roumanians at some points under the pressure of the Germans, and north of the Buzeu-Rimnik road a height was lost by the Russians.

Von Mackensen's Attack. In the northwest corner of Dobrudja province, the sector to which the Russo-Roumanian retreat has taken them, the army of Field Marshal Von Mackensen has begun to attack the bridgehead of Matchin, after Iakshie on the eastern bank of the Danube was captured. In addition to announcing the evacuation of Iakshie, the Roumanians admit the occupation of Tultcha.

British mounted troops, with the cooperation of aircraft, carried a strong position at Matchin, 29 miles distant from El Arish, which was captured on Thursday. Incomplete reports, says the statement from London, show

BUSINESS WAS BETTER THAN FOR MANY YEARS

City Merchants Say Christmas Trade Was Far in Excess of Previous Records.

If the Christmas business this year is any criterion there is plenty of money in St. John despite the cry of hard times and the increasing cost of living. The principal merchants report more business than last year and say that the shoppers all seemed to have plenty of money to spend.

F. W. Daniel said that they were well satisfied with the business done this year.

Macaulay Bros. were able to report a considerably better business than last year and were well pleased with the showings made.

Manchester Robertson and Allison reported bigger business than last year and were more than satisfied with the volume done.

John Vanwart said that he had been doing business for 36 years and this Christmas eve was the best he had ever had. The volume of business done was greater and the amount of cash taken in was away ahead.

F. B. Williams estimated that the Christmas business this year was at least 50 per cent. better than last year and the cash business was greater.

GABINET OF PORTUGAL TO CREATE WAR COUNCIL

Lisbon, via Paris, Dec. 24.—The cabinet has decided to create a war committee and a public economic committee. Both bodies will have extensive powers.

London, Dec. 25.—Except in the camps and hospitals, this Christmas was the quietest Great Britain has ever known. Economy was the watchword among the upper classes generally. Travel was unprecedentedly small, because the newspapers and the government appealed to civilians to stay home and give up the trains for the soldiers on leave. The majority of the civilian travellers appeared to be emigrant workers and their families.

BITTER ATTACK MADE ON PRES. WILSON

Dean of Westminster Says Wilson in Fit of Mental Aberration Sent Wrong Note or Has Entirely Misapprehended European Situation.

London, Dec. 25.—The Dean of Westminster, the Right Rev. Herbert Edward Ryle, preaching in the Abbey today, said:

"It is our resolve, God helping us, to overthrow every overture to prevent Europe to rescue the liberties and homes of the desolated countries, to obtain for these people reparation for their wrongs, and for humanity lasting securities against a recurrence of aggressive violence and crime."

"It is true that the president of the United States after two years of study of the question and innumerable notes, seems to believe that the object of the two groups of belligerents is the same."

Germany Refused Arbitration.

"He knows that Germany refused arbitration, declined a conference and rejected every overture to prevent war. He knows that his own countrymen have poured money like water to assist the destitute and outraged remnants of the little Belgian people, whose treaty rights were violated and whose frontiers were invaded before war was declared. He knows that the nations who are invited to the Hague conference, which the American people have studied and promoted. He knows all the details of the organized atrocities reported on in strict inquiries. He knows of the sinking of unarmed passenger ships like the Lusitania, and he knows of the murder of Captain Fryatt, of the nocturnal deportations of Belgians and French into slavery. He knows of German connivance at Armenian massacres. And yet he is of the opinion that the nations who are invited to disarm this evil demagogue of national militarism have the same aim in view as the perpetrators of these historic crimes."

"President Wilson has either, in a fit of mental aberration sent the wrong note, or he has entirely misapprehended the European situation. These things are black and vile. The very thought of them on Christmas Day makes one shudder. Does anyone suppose that peace would be honorable which regarded the assassinations and the defenders of humanity as having in view the same ends? What kind of unity of aim do you expect between wolves and sheep dogs over the fleeces of torn lambs?"

"Peace on the basis of such a hypothesis would be only an armistice, giving an exhausted foe a much-needed interval for reparation before renewing his insatiable passion for the hegemony of the world and the destruction of his rivals with a savage war."

Capt. J. D. Black, quartermaster of the 23rd Essex Battalion, had an excellent feast prepared for the Kilties, and the soldiers remembered this popular officer by presenting him with a handsome cane.

The soldiers at the hospital were looked after by the Daughters of the Empire.

Despite the unfavorable conditions that existed here for several days previous to Christmas, the local merchants declare their business this year was the best in many years. On Saturday the stores did a wonderful business, there being large crowds in

"MAY GOD BLESS AND PROTECT YOU" MESSAGE OF KING GEORGE

His Majesty Addresses Two Messages, One to Soldiers and Another to Sick and Wounded in Hospitals—Queen Mary Shares in Greetings.

Ottawa, Dec. 25.—The following messages have been received from His Majesty the King by the governor-general, to be communicated to soldiers and sailors:

"London, Dec. 24.—I send you, my soldiers and sailors, hearty good wishes, for Christmas and the New Year. My grateful thoughts are ever with you for victories gained, for hardships endured, and for your unflinching cheerfulness. Another Christmas has come round and we are still at war. But the Empire, confident in you, remains determined to win. May God bless and protect you."

GEORGE R. I."

Also the following cable to the sick and wounded: "At this Christmas-tide the Queen and I are thinking, more than ever, of the sick and wounded among my sailors and soldiers. From our hearts we wish them strength to bear their sufferings, speedy restoration to health, a peaceful Christmas and many happy years to come."

GEORGE R. I."

What the Kaiser Said. "Honor to God above, peace on earth, and to man, happiness. God bless the third Christmas of all those away in the field and of those at home in our dear fatherland."

(Signed) WILLIAM."

GERMANY BETTING HEAVILY THAT PEACE IS IN SIGHT

French Senate Declares by Unanimous Vote that France Will Not Submit—Russia Will Not Submit to Barbarities Practised on Serbia and Roumania.

London, Dec. 24.—A Frankfurt despatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company, via Rotterdam, says there was heavy betting on the Berlin exchange yesterday that peace would be signed before August. The same despatch says that the German emperor will return to Berlin for conferences with the American and Spanish ambassadors.

France Opposed. Paris, Dec. 24.—The unanimous vote of the senate affirming that France cannot conclude peace with an enemy who occupies French territory, coming at the same time as the peace note of the Swiss government, has stirred anew the French press and public.

The action of the senate gave further indication of the attitude of the Allies towards President Wilson's proposal, while confidence voted in the Briand ministry was regarded most favorably.

Wilson's Note. The foreign affairs committee of the chamber devoted a large part of the session yesterday to an examination of President Wilson's note.

The Petit Journal suggests that President Wilson, in sending the note, knew he would have the support of Switzerland, and says: "France pities its neighbor, menaced like Belgium, perhaps, but France, which did not want war, knows that as to the war, the Entente Allies cannot be placed on the same footing as the Central Powers."

How Petrograd Regards It. Petrograd, Dec. 24, via London, Dec. 25.—President Wilson's note has called forth from the Russian press and from the nation itself, as far as can be judged from its effect in official and political circles in Petrograd, a torrent of criticism, partly tolerant and partly sharply adverse, but, for the most part, maintaining a tone of polite, amiable rejection.

The Associated Press has been informed that the Russian government received the note in the spirit of friendliness in which it was offered, but while appreciating the humanitarian motive, which prompted it, it will find it impossible, at present, to suggest any terms which could guarantee

a durable peace. All the newspapers comment on what is termed the inopportune moment chosen for peace mediation, and express regret that the favorable impression caused by the American government's refusal to make recommendations in connection with Germany's proposal should now be faced by proposals of this kind.

The Reich says President Wilson would better have been guided by the negative attitude which he observed in transmitting the offer. "It is too early to give such counsel," says the Reich. "At such a time counsel can be more harmful than useful. He supposes both sides are following more or less the same objects. What can the people and governments of the Allies reply, after having definitely refused Germany's offer? Does President Wilson think the offer has been refused simply on account of a lack of concrete terms, and that if he fills this lack we can consider peace negotiations? There is no necessity to await terms, which we know beforehand to be unacceptable. If President Wilson does not understand that no offers can be mutually acceptable to the Allies and their enemies, we at least understand it."

Prominent members of the Duma, and all the political leaders from whom an expression of opinion could be obtained concerning the note, were united in the conviction that American peace suggestions were ill-timed and impracticable. M. Rodzianko, president of the Duma, said: "My attitude toward the note is negative. It is not time for us or our allies to conclude peace. There would not be peace for any length of time, and then the war would have been fought in vain. The reply to President Wilson's note must be the same as that to the proposal of the Central Powers."

Berlin, Dec. 25, via Sayville.—The Austro-Hungarian minister of war, General Ritter Von Krobatin, is to be replaced by Field Marshal Von Schellay, according to a Vienna report published in the Vossische Zeitung and given out by the Overseas News Agency.

CANADIANS MIKE WAR MARK IN TRENCH WARFARE

Storm Trenches North of Arras, North France, and Put Out of Action Entire Battalion of German Infantry.

GERMAN PRISONERS ADMIT THEY WERE TAKEN COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE — OFFICER CAPTURED ADMITS SOMETHING WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN, BUT DID NOT EXPECT IT ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

With the British Armies in France, but threw up their hands with cries Dec. 24, via London, Dec. 25.—(From of "Kamarad." Others were taken a staff correspondent of the Association Press)—North of Arras certain lines, for the Canadians pushed on Canadian troops have just accomplished quickly to the second trenches. About what the British officers declare twenty dugouts were destroyed by the Canadians, several with bombs captured from the Germans. One of the officers engaged said: "As we entered the trenches many Germans broke for the dugouts. All who did were subsequently well cared for. Each of our men was given definite instructions for his precise task, and a map of the enemy's trenches which proved absolutely correct. Each man knew every detail of the proposed operation. They were delighted at this and entered the fight with great cheer."

Always Happy. "When they came out two hours later, they were singing and as happy as school boys on a holiday. The neatness and despatch with which the raid was carried out were unique. The artillery's co-operation of the British guns was perfection. Beautifully placed curtains of fire prepared our advance, and, creeping forward, protected us as they proceeded to absolutely demolish the enemy trenches and dugouts. The programme had given the men an hour and a half for their work, but the clean-up was accomplished in an hour and ten minutes, and the raiders signalled they were ready to return to their own trenches."

No attempt was made at a counter-attack until the following night, when the Germans bombarded and raided their own first line, or what was left of it, thinking that the raiders were still there. As a matter of fact the Canadians who carried out the operations were miles away. They were not part of the fighting line, but on rest, and had gone forward for this particular piece of work, which was planned weeks ago.

Canadians Use Grenades. Concomitant rejoicing among the Germans, who scrambled for the saps and dugouts leading to the rear trenches, while the Canadians pelted them with hard grenades. Caught absolutely unprepared many Germans in the front line offered no resistance.

Premier Lloyd George in Plan for Controlling Shipping Will Probably Transfer the Lines to Halifax.

New York, Dec. 25.—The New York Times this morning says: "It is understood that under the new Lloyd George plan for controlling British shipping the White Star and Cunard liners will operate between Liverpool and Halifax, instead of coming on to New York, and will be armed with six-inch guns fore and aft. In addition to the protection afforded by the guns there will be fast cruisers in certain positions which will be known to the commanders of the liners, who will be provided with special signals to enable them to call for assistance if they are attacked."

Transship Freight. "The cargoes will be taken from New York and Boston in small steamers to Halifax, where the freight will be transhipped on board the big steamships waiting to convey it to Liverpool or London. Passengers will travel by train. The expense of transshipping the freight and conveying it to Halifax will be very heavy, but it will have to be done in order to make certain that the government will get sufficient provisions for the people of Great Britain and for the army of 2,000,000 men in France and Flanders."

Charlie White Outpoints Harry Pierce. New York, Dec. 25.—Charlie White, of Chicago, outboxed Harry Pierce, of Brooklyn, in each round of a ten-round bout here today. Pierce weighed 132 pounds, and White 137.

PREMIER'S GREETINGS TO SOLDIERS

Ottawa, Dec. 25.—Christmas greetings to Canadian soldiers at the front and training in England, or at convalescent homes or hospitals there, were conveyed by Sir Robert Borden in cables to General Turner, General D'Byng and Sir George Perley.

The prime minister cabled General Turner, commanding the Canadian forces in England: "On behalf of the Canadian people I send Christmas greetings to the Canadian expeditionary force in England, and earnestly wish that their efforts during the coming year may be crowned with the highest success. Those who are now completing their training in England may soon be called to the front, where their record will be as splendid and inspiring as that of the Canadians now in the battle line. The Canadian people are resolved to spare no effort and shrink from no sacrifice to support the cause for which you have taken up arms on behalf of your country."

Austrian War Minister to Be Replaced. Berlin, Dec. 25, via Sayville.—The Austro-Hungarian minister of war, General Ritter Von Krobatin, is to be replaced by Field Marshal Von Schellay, according to a Vienna report published in the Vossische Zeitung and given out by the Overseas News Agency.

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