

WILL LEAVES TO THE MEXICAN REFUGEES

Rebel Leader Collected from \$1,000 to \$500 Each from Wealthy Men.

YANKEE AND MEXICAN SOLDIERS SWAP SHOTS

Washington Inclines to Opinion Situation Has Somewhat "Improved"—Land Owners May Now Support Huerta.

Paso, Mexico, Dec. 18.—More refugees who arrived at the border today reported that before General Francisco Villa, the rebel leader, left their trail to start from Chihuahua City he exacted from the Mexican families sums ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The refugees were mostly Americans and wealthy Mexican families who had closed their places of business since the rebel occupation of the city.

They said General Villa permitted those who had passed to board the train, but as it was about to leave he personally appeared and ordered his assistants. One American merchant had to get off the train to avoid paying \$5,000 but later decided to pay the demands rather than remain in Chihuahua. The American said they had been permitted to go unmolested. The only business transacted in Chihuahua at present is that pertaining to the confiscation of property by the rebels, according to the refugees.

Exchange of Shots

Presidio, Texas, Dec. 18.—An exchange of shots between Mexican and American soldiers on the American line, two miles west of Presidio, resulted in the death of Luis Orozco today, a federal soldier. The federalist shot the first shot. Orozco, who lived several hours, admitted after being shot that he and his companions had crossed to the American side with a note and that when they were halted by the American sentries they fired. As soon as the shooting across the border became known at United States army headquarters, a warning was sent to the federal commander that the shooting must not be repeated.

According to eye witnesses, the American soldiers on duty near where the shooting took place were informed the federal soldiers were hiding in a hut on the American side. The Americans went toward the hut to investigate. Two Mexicans rushed from the hut and started running toward the river.

The patrol called to them to halt. The only answer was a shot from a rifle of one of the fleeing Mexicans and one of the Americans returned the fire and the other continued firing as he ran.

Washington Sees Improvement.

Washington, Dec. 18.—State Department officials expressed the opinion today that conditions in Mexico were "more favorable." No intimation was given as to the nature of changes in the situation regarded as indicating improvement. Much interest is manifested here in the cyclonic disturbances in the finances of Mexico involving the failure of banks and the issue of currency without security regarded as substantial. The opinion was expressed in some quarters that the Huerta government might receive support from the large land and mine owners in Northern Mexico, who have heretofore been supposed to occupy an attitude of neutrality as between the contending factions, but who may now adopt allegiance to the Huerta cause as a result of the confiscation of their properties by General Villa, the rebel leader.

NO BRITISH EXHIBIT AT PANAMA SHOW.

London, Dec. 18.—The cabinet today decided against official representation of Great Britain at the Panama-Pacific exhibition.

HOW THE GOVERNMENT IS DEVELOPING PORTS

Millions Have Been Expended During Past Year to Equip Canada's Seaports to Cope With the Growing Volume of Trade—Over \$17,000,000 on Public Works.

Special to The Standard.

Ottawa, Dec. 18.—Improvements to the harbors of Canada have been the main feature of the public works carried out during the past season according to information available today. The year was one of marked activity in public works of all kinds, but there were especially large expenditures on the improvement of seaport facilities in various parts of the country. The total appropriation for this purpose amounted to \$28,514,000, this amount covering harbor dredging and river work. Of this \$17,000,000 was spent by the government at the end of the present fiscal year.

The British government's policy of assisting the growth of national ports

COMMISSION OF EXPERTS NAMED TO INQUIRE INTO HIGH COST OF LIVING

Government Orders Departmental Investigation For Whole Dominion.

MEMBERS ALL WELL QUALIFIED FOR TASK.

Former Minister of Labor Refused to Deal With Situation—Commissioner Will Begin Work at Once.

Special to The Standard.

Ottawa, Dec. 18.—A departmental inquiry to ascertain the causes of the increased cost of living was ordered by the government today after a lengthy conference in council. This investigation will be conducted by Mr. John McDougall, commissioner of customs; Mr. C. C. G. James, agricultural commissioner and former deputy minister of agriculture for Ontario, and Mr. Robert H. Coats, editor of the Labor Gazette and statistician of the department of labor. The representations made to the government by a number of representative bodies in different parts of Canada have been under consideration for some weeks. Government officials had already given considerable attention to the rising prices of food stuffs and it has been decided now to extend this investigation by the creation of a board of inquiry inside the service.

All Capable Men.

The three men chosen to do the work are specially well qualified for the conducting of an investigation of this character. The commissioner of customs, Mr. McDougall, has been in the service for a greater number of years and is one of its most valuable officials. His work in the department has been of great benefit to the public as well as with the source from which supplies of the imported food stuffs are drawn. Mr. C. C. G. James since giving up his position as deputy minister of agriculture in Toronto, has acted for the Dominion government in arranging with the provinces for an extensive exchange of conditions of production. His work has also made him familiar with the facts in regard to the depopulation of rural Canada and its bearing upon the present situation in regard to high living cost.

Conversant with Subject.

Mr. Coats, for a number of years editor of the Labor Gazette, for some time past, has been conducting a departmental investigation into various aspects of the cost of living. In 1910 he published a report on wholesale prices in Canada from the year 1899 bringing the information down to date; the index number of wholesale prices which has been the object lately of much interest of the public and reports. American investigators are known to regard this work as an important contribution to the world-wide movement in progress to understand that Mr. Coats has in progress an investigation into allied subjects, such as the course of wages since 1890.

A curious feature of the situation as far as the Department of Labor is concerned is that fully three years before the change of government the statistical office of the Department of Labor had drawn up a comprehensive investigation of the cost of living which has been increasing since 1897. This plan embraced investigations which would include wages, costs, prices, and in general would have surveyed the problem of living in Canada from the standpoint of the producer and the consumer. The then Minister of Labor, Hon. MacKenzie King, declined to take any interest in the project, which remained buried except for the partial investigation into wholesale prices until the advent to the department of Hon. T. W. Crothers, who took prompt advantage of the plans long previously laid by the statistical branch.

The mass of information which the department has obtained since the removal of the restrictions imposed by Hon. MacKenzie King's lack of interest, will be available as a ground work for the inquiry ordered today by the government.

The official statement given out by the government today was as follows: "Representations have been made to the government by the councils of several Canadian cities and by other representative bodies and persons urging that an inquiry be made into the increased cost of living in Canada and into the causes which have occasioned or contributed to such result. The government considers that any important information on this subject may be obtained speedily and effectively by utilizing the permanent officials of the government, whose special experience and knowledge are familiar with the matters in question. Accordingly they have directed that an effective inquiry shall be immediately made by John McDougall, commissioner of customs; C. C. G. James, agricultural commissioner, and Robert H. Coats, statistician of the Department of Labor. These gentlemen have been instructed accordingly and will enter upon their investigation with the least possible delay."

MILITANTS ATTEMPT TO BLOW UP JAIL

Bombs Placed Under Walls Near Cells in Which Suffragettes are Imprisoned—Explosion Shatters Wall.

London, Dec. 18.—An attempt, attributed to suffragettes, was made tonight to blow up part of the southeast wall of Holloway jail by the explosion of two bombs. These are believed to have been secreted in the garden of a house adjoining the jail. The part of the wall attacked was near the cells in which suffragettes are usually confined.

Miss Rachel Peace, who is undergoing a term of eighteen months imprisonment for arson, is the only suffragette at present in the jail. It is alleged she has been subjected to forcible feeding, and at present militant meetings and references were made to her treatment, coupled with threats of revenge.

The explosion did no damage to the jail, but the surrounding high wall, where it abuts on the garden at No. 12 Dalmeijer avenue was so badly damaged that it will need re-building. No arrests have been made, and apparently there are no clues to the culprits, but it is said that the house has been occupied recently by a Mrs. Patey, an ardent militant, and has been utilized as a meeting place for suffragettes to signal to the inmates of the prison.

The force of the explosions shattered some of the windows in the neighborhood.

EXPECT EIGHT GUARDS WILL BE IMPLICATED

Prison Reform Committee Looking Into Manner in Which Convicts Secured Tobacco.

Kingston, Ont., Dec. 18.—The Prison Reform Committee will not be able to put its report to the Dominion government before that body this year, as had been expected, for there is so much more evidence to be secured that the commission will adjourn until January 6. It is essential that the two prison inspectors be heard, and particularly Douglas Stuart, as the commissioners want to know why improvements were not made to the hospital and insane ward of the penitentiary. When Dr. J. W. Platt, ex-warden, drew attention to the needs of these places it was thought the improvements would at once be made.

A feature of the hearing today was the statement of Chairman MacDonnell, that the commission had evidence which he believes will convict about eight penitentiary guards of trafficking in tobacco. The chairman invited the guilty parties to confess or stand trial under the Penitentiary Act, the Minister of Justice having intimated that those who confess will not be prosecuted, but only be liable for dismissal from office.

STEAMER NORTUMBERLAND GROUNDED

Charlottetown, P. E. I., Dec. 18.—Steamer Northumberland while entering harbor tonight on her way from Pictou, grounded about a mile from the wharf. Weather is thick but calm. She is in no danger and will probably be floated at high water at midnight.

POTATO EMBARGO DISCUSSION YESTERDAY

MUST PROVIDE LIFEBOATS FOR ALL ON BOARD

Committee on Life Saving Appliances Completes Recommendations—Patrols for Detection of Fire.

London, Eng., Dec. 18.—The committee on life saving appliances, appointed by the International Congress on Safety at Sea, have agreed on their recommendations, which will be submitted to the congress early in January.

The principle of "boats for all" has been accepted, subject to the proviso proposed by the British delegates, that where the fullest use is made of the space available for the fitting of davits, pontoon rafts may be provided for twenty-five per cent. of those aboard, and lifeboats of a recognized type for the remainder. The lifeboats may include a limited number of motorboats.

On the initiative of the American delegates, an important recommendation is made relative to the danger from fire, namely, that no passenger vessel should carry a cargo of such a nature or stored in such a manner as might be calculated to endanger lives or the safety of the ship.

Other recommendations relate to patrols for the detection of fire, regulations for the manning of passenger vessels, and the number and qualification of boat hands. On the latter point a great divergence of opinion was shown. The American delegates suggested one seaman for every three passengers, while others favored three years' service. Eventually recommendations were adopted in accordance with the current practice on large liners.

As the committee comprised thirty experts, representing all the nations participating in the conference, it is believed that the congress will adopt the recommendations.

BIG GAIN IN IMMIGRATION

Figures Show 38,000 More for Eight Months this Year than For Same Period in 1912.

Ottawa, Dec. 18.—The immigration department is advising its agents in the Old Country to warn workmen intending to come to Canada that owing to labor conditions here it is not possible to do so unless they have previously secured employment. The immigration returns for eight months, announced today, show a total of 348,899, of whom 132,461 were British; 86,272 Americans, and 122,166 from other countries. The figures for the corresponding period last year totalled 312,058, made up of 124,813 British; 108,035 Americans, and 88,210 from elsewhere.

FIRST TREATY SIGNED UNDER BRYAN'S NEW PEACE PLAN

Agreement Between United States and Netherlands Settled Yesterday—Questions Which Cannot be Settled by Diplomacy Will Go to International Commission.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Secretary Bryan and Chevalier Van Rappard, Netherlands minister, today signed a treaty providing that any question between the United States and the Netherlands which cannot be settled by diplomacy, shall be submitted for investigation to an international commission of five members. The period of investigation is fixed at one year, although it may be shortened.

This is the first treaty between the United States and a European nation based upon Secretary Bryan's peace plan. Similar treaties have been negotiated with five central American nations, and it is planned to sign one with the Dominican Republic tomorrow.

The American-Netherlands convention embodies generally the principles of Secretary Bryan's plan to bring to an end wars between the nations of the world, but it differs in some details from similar pacts already signed. There is no provision in it for the maintenance of the status quo after the exchange of the ratifications.

While none of the peace treaties have been ratified by the senate as yet, Secretary Bryan said this was due to the press of business, and that he expected to encounter no difficulty when the pacts are reached by the upper house.



Meadow Brook Farm—Chatham.

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U. S. Agents Did Not Consult Canadian Officials, Dr. Gussow Says.

Secretary Houston Says Question is Whether Quarantine Should be Absolute, or Depend on Experts' Finding.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Whether common Irish potatoes from Canada, Newfoundland, Great Britain, Ireland, and Continental Europe shall be barred from the United States because of the danger of importation of dangerous plant diseases, or shall be admitted under the same restrictions as apply to nursery stock, was the subject of a hearing today before the Federal Horticultural Board under the direction of Secretary Houston.

T. P. Gill, secretary of agriculture for Ireland; Dr. H. T. Gussow, an expert of the Canadian department of agriculture, and G. F. O'Halloran, deputy minister of agriculture of Canada, were among those who spoke in favor of the admission of foreign potatoes. Representations have been made to the United States department of agriculture that in view of the short disease potato crop caused by last summer's drought, the exclusion of foreign potatoes would go far toward raising prices in the United States.

At the outset Secretary Houston said the question under consideration was not the lifting of an embargo against diseased potatoes, but whether a quarantine should be absolute or administered in such a way as to admit the entry of potatoes properly passed upon by government experts.

Dr. Gussow declared that United States experts had not made a sufficient investigation of the potato crop in Canada upon which to base a recommendation that the whole crop should be barred from the United States because of disease. He said American agents had gone into Canada to investigate potato disease conditions, but without co-operating with the board. The board listened to representatives of several foreign governments and to pathological experts of various states. It then took the question of enforcing the embargo on potato importation under advisement. The state pathological experts urged a strict embargo for a period of years on the ground that potato diseases are known to exist in certain portions of every foreign country, included in the Department of Agriculture's notice on the subject.

Lord Eustace Percy, third secretary of the British embassy, expressed regret that the United States should have suggested the embargo on English potatoes without co-operating with the agricultural experts of that country in their investigation of conditions. The previous treaties do not impose an embargo, he said, would be a disturbing factor in the scientific work of the nations. Great Britain, he added, wished to co-operate with the United States and other nations in a general policy of agricultural education.

LIBERAL PETITION IN SOUTH BRUCE.

Toronto, Dec. 18.—R. Trux, the successful Liberal candidate in South Bruce, has signed the cross petition against his opponent in the recent by-election. Twenty-seven charges are made against Mr. Carrill, the Conservative candidate.

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