

RUSS-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS

Conflicting Rumors Are Still the Main News.

London Cable says—Berlin advices received at Amsterdam say that the commission provided for in the Russo-German armistice agreement proceeded to Petrograd to-day. It is headed by Count von Mirbach, former German minister to Greece, and will undertake to reach a settlement with the Russian authorities for the exchange of civilians and incapacitated war prisoners and also devise measures to restore relations between Germany and Russia.

The commission includes a number of officials of the Foreign and War Ministries.

A Petrograd despatch reads: "It is reported that the German delegation that was expected in Petrograd Thursday is proceeding to Dvinsk instead, fearing that a visit to Petrograd would be misinterpreted. "There is an unofficial report, which cannot be confirmed, that the Russians have given the Germans 48 hours in which to accept or reject the Russian peace proposals."

Other despatches differ from the above. The peace negotiations have been suspended until January 24 pending consultation with the German delegates with their Government on Russia's terms, according to a Petrograd despatch printed by the Times to-day. The Russian delegates, it was stated, are returning from Brest-Litovsk to Petrograd.

Two commissions to negotiate peace will be formed, the Times' correspondent asserted, one to meet at Petrograd, and the other at Odessa. Both will consider purely military aspects of the situation. A third will shortly be appointed to prepare for a prospective European peace conference.

The peasant delegation which went to Kiev to effect a compromise between the Bolshevik authorities and the Ukraine Rada report that they had no success.

The Central Executive Committee of the Workmen and Soldiers' Delegates yesterday approved the appointment of seven Social revolutionists as members of the Council of National Commissioners to replace Bolshevik members. Four of the new appointees will have portfolios, among them those of Justice and Agriculture. Three of them will be without portfolios. The number of Bolshevik members of the Council is ten, including one woman, Alexandra Kollantay, Minister of Public Welfare.

Efforts made by Social Democrats members of the Central Executive to point out the significance of the changes failed. Their request that the president of the Council explain the reason for the changes was voted down by the Bolshevik members.

ATTITUDE OF AMERICA.
Washington Despatch—Great forbearance and patience will be exerted by the American Government in dealing with the chaotic Russian situation because it is realized that German intrigue, working through thinly disguised agents within the ranks of the Bolsheviks, is doing its utmost to bring about a breach between the United States and Russia.

It was authoritatively stated to-day that American representatives in Russia, diplomatic, economic and others, will carefully avoid any interference with the internal politics of the country and will be guided in their conduct by the strictest rules of neutrality as between the Russian factions. It is the purpose to permit the Russian people themselves to work out their own salvation, free from any American interferences.

There still is a deep-seated conviction in administration circles that within a reasonable period of time a satisfactory and probably permanent Government of democratic form will be developed from the present turmoil.

Despatches to the State Department show that every opportunity is being seized upon by the German agencies to misrepresent the attitude of America towards the Bolshevik movement, and particularly to inflame the excitable Russian public against the personnel of the American Embassy and its head, Ambassador Francis.

RATHER KAISER THAN REPUBLIC

H. G. Wells Charges High Groups in England

With Opposition to Allies' War Aims.

London Cable—H. G. Wells in a long and interesting article in the Daily Mail discusses in characteristic fashion the question of the Allies' war aims. He says: "We want Germany to become a democratically controlled state, such as the United States is, with open markets and pacific intentions, instead of remaining the 'barbaric' state. If we can bring that about we have achieved our aim. If we cannot, then this struggle has been for us only waste, loss and failure as inevitably has been known before. "In Great Britain there are groups and classes of people, not numerous and not representative, but who are placed in high and influential positions and are capable of free and public expression. They are secretly and bit-

terly hostile to this great war aim. It is manifest now by a hundred signs that they dread the fall of monarchy in Germany and Austria. Far rather would they make this most abject surrender to the Kaiser than deal with a renegade republican Germany. "The recent letter of Lord Lansdowne urging peace with German imperialism was but a feather from the pacifist side of this most un-English and, unhappily, most influential section of our public life. Lord Lansdowne's letter was the letter of a peer who fears revolution more than national dishonor.

"If we Allies are honest, then if a revolution started in Germany to-day we should, if anything, lower the price of peace to Germany, but these people who pretend to lead us will state nothing of the sort. For them a revolution in Germany would be the signal for putting up the price of peace. At any risk they are resolved that a German revolution shall not happen.

"A plain statement of our war aims that did not more than set out honestly and convincingly the terms the Allies would make with democratic, republican Germany—republican I say, because where a scrap of Hohenzollern is left to-day there will be fresh militarism to-morrow—would absolutely revolutionize the internal psychology of Germany. We should no longer face a solid people. We should have replaced the false issue of Germany and Great Britain fighting for the hegemony of Europe—a lie upon which the German Government always traded, and in which our extreme Tory press always supported the German Government—by the true issue, which is freedom versus imperialism, a league of nations versus that net of diplomatic roguery, and of aristocratic, plutocratic and autocratic greed and conceit which dragged us all into this vast welter of bloodshed and loss."

HUN PRISONERS WARN GERMANY

Captives in Russia Will Fight the Fatherland

If Russ Peace Terms Not Accepted.

Petrograd, Cable—A committee of Austro-German war prisoners, representing all states except Russia, issued a declaration at a meeting in Petrograd demanding the acceptance of Russian democratic peace terms by their captors. They stated that the Central Powers refuse a democratic peace to take up arms against their own country. The resolution is being sent to Lloyd George, addressed to the delegates of the Central Powers. Summarized, the declaration says: "FIRST—It reiterates the Russian peace terms, emphasizing that such conditions of peace extend to the component parts of the Central Empire. "SECOND—It reiterates the Russian peace terms, emphasizing that such conditions of peace extend to the component parts of the Central Empire. "THIRD—It reiterates the Russian peace terms, emphasizing that such conditions of peace extend to the component parts of the Central Empire. "FOURTH—It reiterates the Russian peace terms, emphasizing that such conditions of peace extend to the component parts of the Central Empire."

FOURTH—It reiterates the Russian peace terms, emphasizing that such conditions of peace extend to the component parts of the Central Empire. The movement is growing fast, and it is estimated that the prisoners could form an army of several hundred thousand.

KAISER NEARLY CAUGHT IN RAID

Had Just Left Mannheim When British Came.

London Rejoices at a Real Reprisal.

Deutscha Cable—The German Emperor, returning with his staff from the Verdun front, had a narrow escape during the reprisal raid of a British air squadron on Mannheim Christmas Eve, according to a despatch from Basel. Only about an hour earlier the Emperor's special train left the station, which was partly destroyed by several bombs.

A section of the tracks was torn up, cutting communication north. In fact, the Emperor's train was the last to leave Mannheim, and no trains arrived at Basel yesterday from that city. Two bombs fell on the palace and one on the suspension bridge across the Neckar River, both structures being badly damaged. An ammunition factory in a northern suburb was blown up. Few persons were killed here, however, as the employees were having a holiday. Numbers of persons were killed or injured within the town, and several were blown into the Rhine.

FIRST REAL REPRISAL.
London Cable says—Monsieur's British air raid on the German city of Mannheim was the first instance of an exact reprisal policy for the air raids over England, according to announcements to-day.

It was the first air raid carried out by the British flyers which did not aim at purely military objectives. All London newspapers expressed satisfaction at the actual carrying out of the policy of "eye for eye and tooth for tooth," announced by Premier Lloyd George in October and on December 14 reiterated by Lord Rothermere, British Air Minister.

The man who has one-sided views isn't so bad if he only looks on the bright side.

WEMYSS IS NOW FIRST SEA LORD

Jellicoe is Retired to the Upper House.

Significant, Just When Criticism Strong.

A London Cable says—Vice-Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss has been appointed First Sea Lord, in succession to Admiral Sir John R. Jellicoe, according to an official announcement issued this evening.

Admiral Jellicoe has been elevated to the peerage in recognition of his very distinguished services. The hope is expressed that his experience may be utilized later in another post.

The translation of Sir John R. Jellicoe to the honorable eclipse of a seat in the House of Lords and the promotion of the Second Sea Lord to his place, briefly announced in an official communication to-night, will convey but one interpretation to the mind of the general public in view of the strong criticisms for a long time passed upon the Admiralty, which culminated in deep disappointment and dissatisfaction at the impunity with which German raiders recently again sank a British convoy.

The official announcement says nothing of Admiral Jellicoe's having for any reason desired to resign his appointment, but merely announces his replacement by Vice-Admiral Wemyss and the bestowal of a peerage "in recognition of his very distinguished services."

The announcement proceeds: "During the war Admiral Jellicoe was for two years and four months in command of the Grand Fleet before he came to the Admiralty to take up the position of First Sea Lord, which he has held with distinction for the past thirteen months. It is hoped that his services and experience may be made use of at a later date in another important appointment."

Admiral Jellicoe was made supreme commander of the Home Fleet at the outbreak of the war. In the summer following the Jutland battle he was appointed First Sea Lord, turning over command of the Grand Fleet to Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty, who had commanded the British warships in their fight against the Germans. Jellicoe is 58 years of age.

Vice-Admiral Wemyss became Second Sea Lord of the Admiralty in August of the present year. Although little known to the British public Wemyss has always borne the reputation of being a fighter of the first order. He won commendation for the part he took in the Jutland battle.

Wemyss entered the navy in 1877 and was made a rear admiral in 1912. He represents the old aristocratic element in the navy.

U. S. RAILWAYS TAKEN OVER BY THE STATE

President Assumes Control and Operation of Every Road in Country.

BRITISH SYSTEM

To Be Followed, With W. G. McAdoo, Director-General.

Washington, D.C., Despatch—Government possession and operation of the nation's railroads for the war was proclaimed by President Wilson to-night, to become effective at noon next Friday, Dec. 28. William G. McAdoo, retaining his place in the Cabinet as secretary of the Treasury, is placed in charge as Director-General of Railroads.

Every railroad engaged in general transportation, with its appurtenances, including steamship lines, is taken over, and all systems will be operated as one under the Director-General.

In a statement accompanying his proclamation the President announced that as soon as Congress reassembles he will recommend legislation guaranteeing pre-war earnings and maintenance of railroad properties in good repair.

Government backing will be given to new issues of railroad securities that a ready market may be found. The President's move, although forecasted for weeks, came at this time as a great surprise to nearly everybody in Washington, including railroad officials. It had been generally believed he would await the reassembling of Congress before taking any steps. He acted through Secretary of War Baker under authority conferred in the Army Appropriation Act.

Direct management of the roads will remain in the hands of railroad officials, and the railroad war board, comprised of five railroad heads, will continue to direct actual operation under Secretary McAdoo's general supervision.

TO UNIFY ALL SYSTEMS.

The chief practical effect of Government operation will be to permit a complete unification of all rail systems, impossible under private operation by reason of statutes prohibiting pooling of rail traffic and earnings. The roads themselves had gone as far as they dared in this direction, and it became known only to-day

that they had been warned by Attorney-General Gregory that a violation of anti-pooling laws could not be permitted.

The situation was fully realized by President Wilson, who in his statement declared the roads had gone as far as they could and that already some systems were endangering their earnings in attempting unification.

Although the proclamation applies to all electric lines engaged in general transportation, local interurban systems are specially exempted. **GUARANTEE EQUIVALENT EARNINGS.**

Congress will be asked to guarantee earnings equivalent to the average net operating income of each railroad in the three-year period ending June 30, 1917. Railroad experts estimate that this will cost the Government next year in the neighborhood of \$100,000,000, which can be raised in large part by increased freight, of the Interstate Commerce Commission grants the roads' application of 15 per cent. rate increase now pending. Otherwise it will be paid largely out of the general Government funds.

The Interstate Commerce Commission and other Government agencies, which have to do with the railroads, will continue to perform their functions as heretofore except that they will be subject to orders of the Director of Railroads.

The President makes it clear that his decision was not made because of any failure on the part of any railroads to perform their whole duty insofar as they could while hampered as they were by legal restrictions.

"The committee of railroad executives," said his statement, "have done the utmost that was possible for them to do, but there were difficulties they neither could escape nor neutralize. In mere fairness to them the full authority of the Government must be substituted."

TO FOLLOW BRITISH SYSTEM.

The plan of control, as outlined in the proclamation and statement, leaves much unsaid as to details, but the general scheme appears to follow closely the British system. In England, however, Government freight is carried free, and the guaranteed earnings require an enormous amount of money from Government funds, while in the United States the Government will pay for its freight as in the past, and will stand for its part of increased freight tariffs if they are found to be necessary.

And from the President's statement, there was no comment in the capital to-night on the Government's move. Secretary McAdoo declined to be quoted, and members of the Railroads War Board said they would have no statement to make until to-morrow.

OUR SOLDIERS GREET CANADA

Christmas Messages From Overseas Forces.

Commander Also Greets His Troops.

(By W. A. Whelan, correspondent of the Canadian Press.)

Canadian Army Headquarters in Flanders Cable—"To our comrades and friends in support in Canada, this Christmas message is from the Canadian corps from every division, brigade, battalion and man. It is our deeply sincere wish for a year of future happiness and for our early reunion. We feel to-day that the race behind us is of such strength and magnitude that it will inspire each of us to greater deeds, and will surely lead us to the goal of victory, peace and home."

Such is the message to the Dominion from its fighting men in France, while to the fighting men themselves, the corps commander has sent the following message:

"The corps commander has taken this opportunity of sending every officer, non-commissioned officer, and man in the Canadian corps all good wishes for Christmas. He trusts that the coming year may bring with it the attainment of our great objective—victorious peace and a happy return to our dear and dear ones in Canada. This is not a mere stereotyped wish. Behind it lies the deep appreciation of your splendid work, which has been carried to such successful conclusion by every unit in the corps, and also to a full recognition of the sacrifices that have been made; the difficulties overcome, the hardships endured, and the high standard of discipline maintained. Our actions have made the name of our homeland one to be revered, respected and honored now and throughout the years to come."

HUN GUNS BUSY ABOUT VERDUN

London Cable—Increased cannonading in the region of Verdun, especially around Douaumont, the Chaume Wood and the Carrières Wood, which a year ago, were the theatres of some of the fiercest encounters of the war, indicates apparently the intention of the Germans to keep the French forces in this sector well occupied or might even mean a renewed effort to break through at this vital point.

BLISS U. S. STAFF CHIEF.

Washington, D.C., Despatch—Secretary Baker, announced formally to-night that Gen. Bliss would be recalled to active duty and reappointed chief of staff. He also said Major-General Bliss would be continued as assistant chief of staff.

SINGER HELD AS HUN SPY

A Buenos Aires Favorite Taken From Steamer.

Elena Theodorini Was On Way to Europe.

Buenos Ayres Despatch—The Argentine public has lost a popular idol in the arrest of Elena Theodorini as a spy in the employ of Count Luxburg, former German Minister and instigator of the "sunk without trace" order. La Theodorini, an opera singer, took passage on board a steamer bound for Europe together with a group of theatrical friends of Luxburg. She was arrested by officers of a French cruiser.

The steamship was halted off Montevideo by British cruisers and some of the others of the theatrical group were placed under arrest, but Theodorini was not molested until the steamship was overhauled by a French cruiser off the Spanish coast.

News that the cruiser had taken her from the passenger steamship on charges of espionage came as a surprise to Theodorini's admirers in this city, for the general public did not know, as did diplomatic circles, that she had been in recent years a great friend of Count Luxburg, and a member of a circle of theatrical women who were dined and wined at the residence of the German diplomat.

La Theodorini came to Buenos Ayres in 1884. Singing leading parts in well known operas, she soon achieved a wide reputation and afterwards became so attached to Argentine audiences that she made her home in this city. Since then she has figured in the musical and theatrical life of Argentina, although she had retired from the operatic stage.

One of her acts which endeared her to the Argentine public was her application for naturalization, inasmuch as she was the first woman of a foreign country to take such a step. Last year she paid a visit to New York, where a festival was given in her honor by the Metropolitan Opera stars. She returned to Buenos Ayres in February last.

HEROES ALL.

British Mercantile Marine is Indomitable.

London Cable—Commanders of German submarines now usually require the capture of merchant ships to give their crews instead of making them prisoners, as heretofore, according to the annual report of the London America Trading Company, a large British shipping concern. When men are captured, they cannot re-enter the mercantile marine during the war. The companies employing them give them one-half pay until they obtain other employment. "We have several ship captains in our employ who have sunk more than one German submarine, and a good many of our ships have had square with the enemy during the last year," says the report. "Some have come home with holes in the beams of sides, and others have failed to return. But when a ship has been torpedoed and gone down, the survivors hurry back to the offices of the firm, and report, and then ask cheerily: 'When is the next ship to be ready?' That is the spirit of the mercantile marine."

NO BREAD CARDS.

Loyal French Citizens Made Them Useless.

Paris Cable says—The issuance of bread cards, which was to have been made on Jan. 1, will not be carried out. The Minister of Provisions, Victor Borat, made this announcement to-day. He said the inhabitants of Paris and the other chief cities seemed to have grasped the seriousness of the appeal for food conservation which had been addressed to them, and that he was satisfied with the bread consumption of the last few weeks. Appreciable results had been obtained by this voluntary rationing, he added, and if a further effort were made it would be unnecessary to issue bread cards.

Restrictions in the consumption of bread have been limited since Dec. 20 to hotels and restaurants, resulting a saving of twenty per cent.

A TRICKY HUN.

Escaped for Two Weeks as a French Priest.

Paris, Dec. 15.—(By Mail).—A young German newspaper man, who made his escape from a prison camp in the south of France, has been captured after two weeks' liberty. He was wearing a long black beard and a long cloak, like that worn by some of the French religious orders. In his hand he carried a French prayer book, on the fly leaf of which he had written in perfect French that he was a priest of a pilgrimage to Lourdes, and that he had vowed to make the journey on foot, and without speaking a word. He then asked that he be given bread to eat and water to drink, and a lodging at night. The German had shown this gold of prayer book everywhere along his way, and the simple-minded peasants, believing him to be a priest, had fed and sheltered him without suspicion.

JAPS CONFER ON RUSSIA.

Osaka, Cable—This morning the Emperor of Japan received Viscount Matsuoka, the Foreign Minister, with three members of the General Staff, Yamagata, General Mutsaers and Viscount Kato. The latest intelligence is being given to the consultation, and the subject of the Japanese attitude towards Russia is being discussed.

U. S. RAIL CONTROL

To Cut Executive Salaries, Increase Men's.

Washington Despatch—One of the first acts of the Government in beginning operation of railroads will be to reduce large salaries now paid to the railway executives, and increase in some measure the wages of the railway workers.

Securities to be issued while the Government is in control will be at interest rates not less than four per cent, and the issues will be made under joint authority of the Director-General and the Interstate Commerce Commission.

President Wilson, when he outlines the Government's plans in his forthcoming address to Congress, will ask that the Government be empowered to buy any quantity of new railway securities. All earnings over and above an amount to be agreed upon will go to the Government.

Congress will be asked also to appropriate a large fund—probably two hundred million dollars—for the immediate supply of rolling stock to handle the flood of traffic which has swamped the roads.

The Director-General will have authority to decide whether the Government shall also assume operation and control of the express companies.

MEXICANS RAID U. S.

Killings Again Along the Texas Border.

Marfa, Texas, Despatch—American troops to-day were guarding all outlets to Van Horne canyon, where 200 Mexican bandits on Christmas morning crossed the American border, raided the postoffice and general store on the Brite ranch, 27 miles southeast of here, killed Michael Welch, a veteran stage driver, and his two Mexican passengers, wounded Sam Whill, foreman of the Brite ranch, and carried away booty estimated to be worth \$7,000.

After the bandits had passed over the Rim Rock, which rises abruptly more than 1,000 feet above the Rio Grande, the soldiers, who were in close pursuit, fired many rounds at them, and are reported to have killed and wounded many Mexicans. The shooting compelled the bandits to abandon the horses on which they carried away the loot.

LOYAL IRISH.

Rally to U. S. Flag as to the Allies.

Dublin Cable says—T. P. O'Connor, calling to John Redmond a statement of American subscriptions to the Irish party in the latter's constitutional movement, and in its support of America and the Allies, paid tribute to the manner in which the Irish race and men of Irish blood have rallied to the Stars and Stripes.

Mr. Redmond replied: "Heartiest congratulations and deep gratitude from us all."

14 KILLED AND MANY INJURED

When Pittsburg Car Rans Wild in Tunnel

And Emerges to Jump Rails and Crash.

Pittsburg, Pa., Despatch—Fourteen persons were killed and every other one of the 114 passengers on a Knoxville street car was more or less hurt here late to-day, when the car ran away in a tunnel which connects the south side business district with the South Hills. After a wild dash of almost a mile through the tube, the car emerged at Carson street and turned over on its side. Hospital doctors said that a number of the injured could not recover.

The car, which was of the latest low floor, steel type, was packed with city-bound shoppers when it left the station at the south end of the tunnel. A minute or two later the trolley is said to have left the wire, and the lights went out. At almost the same instant, for some reason not yet determined, the motorman lost control, and it dashed down the steep grade, gaining momentum with every instant as the wheels slipped along the wet rails.

The passengers were thrown into panic, and their shrieks could be heard by persons in cars on the street as the car shot out of the tube. A few feet from the mouth of the tunnel is a sharp curve, but so terrific was the speed the car had attained that the wheels at this point left the tracks. The car instantly turned over on its side, piling the passengers in a struggling mass. It did not stop, but tearing along the sidewalk struck a telephone pole. The roof was ripped off and men, women and children were scattered along the roadway. Even then the wreck continued on its way, and finally brought up in a little confectionery store, near Smithfield street.

An Atlanta woman who is suing for divorce alleges that her wife coaxed and married him, but she knows what he was doing, and it is strange that it is always the man who is pursued, trapped, hypnotized and led to the graveyard?—Savannah News.