

FRENCH ARTILLERY HAMMERING GERMANS; BRITISH REPULSE ENEMY IN MESOPOTAMIA

CABINET CRISIS OVER CONSCRIPTION QUESTION

Two Hours' Special Session Yesterday Revealed Grave Differences of Opinion and Adjournment Until Today Necessary.

RUMORED LLOYD GEORGE WILL QUIT
UNLESS GOV'T FORCES SINGLE MEN TO ENLIST

Political Situation Delicate and May Become Critical Unless Handled With Firmness, Times Correspondent Says—Churchill Back in London.

London, Dec. 25.—That the proceedings of the British cabinet have not been going smoothly is seen in the fact that after a two hours' sitting yesterday (Monday) the council was obliged to adjourn until today, no decision having been reached, and the discussion having revealed grave differences of opinion.

The Times' parliamentary correspondent asserts that the position is undeniably delicate, and may become critical today, unless handled with firmness and decision.

The Daily Mail asserts that Andrew Bonar Law, secretary for the colonies, and Lord Kitchener, the war minister, have not yet made their position clear, while A. J. Balfour, first lord of the admiralty, resolutely opposes conscription, in which he is supported by a majority of the ministers. But David Lloyd George, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Earl Curzon, Sir Frederic Smith, J. Austen Chamberlain, Walter Hume Long, and the Earl of Selborne, advocate immediate conscription.

Mr. Lloyd George, the Mail adds, before the sitting of the council, made his position clear to Premier Asquith, in a message intimating that unless Mr. Asquith's pledge to married men be kept, in the strictest sense, he could not continue as a member of the government.

General Election Possibility
The Morning Post, equally with the Times and the Daily Mail—all conscriptionist papers—sees the possibility of several cabinet resignations, or the other alternative, a general election.

The Morning Telegraph and the

Bulgars Withdraw Six Miles From Greek Border

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London, Dec. 25.—A despatch to the Times from Saloniki says: "The Bulgarians have withdrawn four miles from the Greek frontier, between Bievzeli and Dorian, and are busy fortifying a strong line of natural positions. On our side the work of fortification is being facilitated by the fine weather, and energetically advanced."

Venizelos Refused Again to Take Leadership?

Paris, Dec. 25.—The Saloniki correspondent of the Temps learns from an eminent member of the Venizelos party that ex-Premier Venizelos had an interview with King Constantine at the house of Prince Nicholas a fortnight ago. The king asked M. Venizelos if he would consent to take office again under the present circumstances, and M. Venizelos declared: "I accepted the presidency when Serbia was intact, and when we could have saved ourselves with her. Now that Serbia is crushed it is too late to apply my policy successfully."

According to this correspondent, the rumors suppressed all mention of the interview and stopped the telegrams of the foreign correspondents alluding to it. But in spite of all precautions, the news spread and the government thought it necessary to publish a denial.

London, Dec. 27.—The departure of the Indian army from France for "another field of action" was the most important feature of the day's news, so far as the British public are concerned. Whether the new field of action is Egypt or Mesopotamia is 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 have been filled by drafts from the new armies raised in the soil of the United Kingdom.

In connection with tonight'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. The British public, both home and colonial will read with peculiar sense of national pride the King's words to the Indian veterans: "Before you leave France, I send my dear and gallant son, the Prince of Wales, who has shared with my armies the dangers and hardships of the campaign, to thank you in my name."

Allies Strongly Entrenching at Saloniki.

The Turkish official communication, sent out today, which contained claims to successes in the Egyptian theatre, called forth an official denial from the British press bureau, which states that there has been no fighting between the British and the Allies, except a British attack on the principal Arab force near Mersa Matruh, which "was dispersed with trifling loss to our troops," according to the British version.

The Turkish version says that the Turks took the offensive and killed three hundred British, but the remainder to flight, and captured a quantity of booty.

The news from the 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 some severe fighting with the Turks, without materially altering the situation; the Allies at Saloniki contemplate their nearly completed fortifications with the utmost satisfaction; on the west front there is little to record, except minor artillery and bombing operations.

Cabinet Changes Rumored
The resumption of German submarine activity is evidenced by the sinking of half a dozen ships in the past twenty-four hours, with the loss of eighty lives in the case of the French steamer Ville De La Ciotat, while two boat loads are missing in the case of the Belgian steamer Ministre Beernaert.

BRITISH DEAL TURKS HARD BLOW IN MESOPOTAMIA

Enemy Lost Slight Advantage Won at Kut-El-Amara and Driven 900 Yards Behind His Own Front Line of Trenches Leaving 700 Dead and Wounded on Field.

London, Dec. 27.—The Turks, in an attack on the British forces in Mesopotamia, succeeded in entering the northern bastions of one of the forts at Kut-El-Amara, but were driven out, an official statement issued this evening says. The official statement follows:

"On the 24th Gen. Townshend reported that the enemy had fired heavy throughout the previous night, but had not attacked. Later, he sent a further report as follows: "From ten a. m. until past midday the position was heavily shelled. The enemy, having breached the fort, effected an entrance, but were driven out. Two hundred dead were left inside the fort."

"The fort is a work on the right flank of his landward position, on the north side of the Kut peninsula. On the 25th Gen. Townshend sent a further report, in which he says that at midnight on the 24th, and on the 25th fierce fighting for the possession of the fort took place. The enemy effected a lodgement in the northern bastion and were ejected, but came on again and occupied the bastion. The garrison of Oxford Light Infantry and the 103rd held on to the entrenchment and were reinforced by the Norfolk Regiment and the 104th Pioneers. The enemy vacated the bastion early Christmas morning, and retired into trenches, four hundred to nine hundred yards in the rear, although the attack had been made from trenches only about one hundred yards from the breach.

"The rest of Christmas day passed quietly. The fort and garrison, in excellent spirits, re-occupied the bastion. The enemy's casualties are estimated at about 700; our own at 190 killed and wounded.

"A whole division appears to have been engaged in the attack. Presumably the 200 enemy dead mentioned in the telegram of the 24th are not included in the above."

The Enemy's Version.
Berlin, Dec. 27, via wireless to Sayville.—Senussi tribesmen, advancing

More Than Half Members At Front United Empire Club Ceases to Exist
London, Dec. 27.—(Gazette Cable)—The United Empire Club, a Piccadilly creation of recent years, was struck off the register last Friday on the ground that it had ceased to exist. The secretary explained that more than half the members were away on active service.

Miss Cavell's Murder Ordered by Kaiser?
London, Dec. 25.—A despatch to the Exchange Telegram Company from Copenhagen says a rumor is in circulation there to the effect that Maximilian Harden's newspaper, Die Zukunft, published in Berlin, was suppressed recently because it published a statement that Emperor William had ordered that Miss Edith Cavell, the English nurse, executed by the Germans in Brussels, should be pardoned.

Enormous Sum Spent for Care of Sick and Wounded in Russia.
Petrograd, via London, Dec. 27.—The financial statement covering the operations of the federation of provincial councils for the care of the sick and wounded, from the beginning of the war to December 15, has just been published, and has brought to the notice of the Russian public, for the first time, the enormous extent of these activities. The total turnover amounted to 691,199,156 rubles.

Archdeacon Madden, of Liverpool, Dead
London, Dec. 27.—Rev. Thomas J. Madden, archdeacon of Liverpool, who died yesterday in his 63rd year, was well known in Canadian church circles as a delegate to congresses, and an active figure in social reform work. His only son, who was mentioned in despatches, was killed at Giverny in March last.

Rio Cameras and Maggie Torrant Let to Successful Encounters with the Enemy, in which they took some prisoners.
"On the Carso the enemy attempted during the night to attack our positions on Monte Seibul was promptly stopped by the fire of our troops."

RUSSIA TO FLOAT LOAN IN UNITED STATES

Stockholm Banker Arranging with Guarantee Trust Company of New York—The Amount Said to be \$60,000,000.

Stockholm, via London, Dec. 25.—Confirmation has been received here that Russia is to negotiate a loan in the United States for \$60,000,000 for the purpose of paying for supplies ordered in that country. The loan is being arranged by Olaf Aschberg, a Stockholm banker, with the Guarantee Trust Company of New York.

The agreement has not yet been perfected, M. Aschberg is now in Petrograd.

Announcement was made in the latter part of November in New York that a \$60,000,000 five per cent. loan to Russia was in negotiation with the Guarantee Trust Company. The loan was to run for ninety days. It was said, but would be renewable up to eighteen months on the payment of one per cent. interest additional for each ninety days extension. The report had it that the arrangement was to be purely a bank transaction, and that no securities would be offered to the public.

French Guns Play Havoc With Enemy's Defences.
Paris, Dec. 7.—The following official communication was issued by the war office tonight:

"In Belgium a fire carried out against the enemy positions between the great dune and the sea, gave good results. Parapets were destroyed in several places, and a blockhouse on the first German line was blown up.

"In Artois last evening, we explored a mine to the northwest of Hill 140. The enemy was prevented by us from occupying the crater.

"Between the Somme and the Oise our artillery dispersed an enemy detachment to the northeast of Chilly.

"Between the Somme and Rheims our batteries damaged a German fortified work to the north of Moussy.

"In Champagne, near Hill 198, after a bombardment, the enemy directed against our lines an attack which was easily repulsed.

"In the Vosges, to the north of the Linge, our artillery succeeded in destroying a battery casemate and machine gun shelter. We likewise successfully bombarded enemy trenches at Schratzmannelle.

"The Belgian official communication reads: "A violent artillery action has occurred along the whole front. We effectually shelled various German batteries in the outskirts of Schoor and Woumen. The enemy infantry, who had collected in the trenches, were dispersed by our fire near Woumen, and the Ferryman's House.

"The situation on our front is without change.

"Expeditionary corps of the Dardanelles: Outside of the usual cannonading there was no event of importance in the course of the last twenty-four hours to report."

A STAY-AT-HOME XMAS IN LONDON

Fewer Left Town than in Past Years Owing to Absence of Holiday Rates on Railways.

London, Dec. 2.—One feature that marked Christmas this year was the fact that people stayed at home in the absence of cheap fares on railways, and restricted train service which had an effect.

London has been usually quiet. There was no papers on Saturday.

The chief activity today, which is also one of the public holidays, were the big crowds awaiting for the first pantomimes.

There has been a marked decrease in drunkenness this holiday season.

Austrian Report
Vienna, via London, Dec. 27.—The following official communication was issued today:

"Russian theatre: The situation is unchanged.

"Italian theatre: The activity of the Italian artillery against the southern Tyrolean front was much more vigorous yesterday. In the fighting on the eastern heights of the Eisch Valley, south of Rovereto, the enemy lost two hundred men killed or wounded. On the Isanzo front there has been isolated gun fire.

"Southeastern war theatre: There have been no important events. Fifty-four hundred small arms have been counted among the booty captured in Helopolje."

On Italian Front.
Rome, via London, Dec. 27.—The Italian official statement, issued today reads as follows:

"In the Giulicaria Valley our artillery opened fire yesterday on the positions in the neighborhood of Cologna, on which enemy batteries had been reported, and by a well directed fire caused several heavy explosions and an outburst of flames.

"The activity of small detachments of our troops in the valleys of the

STALL IN PEASANTS' BARN SERBIAN KING'S BED IN FLIGHT THRO' ALBANIA

Only Refuge From Storm Attendants Could Find for Brave King of Brave People

Berlin, via London, Dec. 25.—The Tagessblatt'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 at Uskup.

The physician reached a miserable little Albanian village during a furious snowstorm, and could find no sleeping quarters nothing better than a stall in a peasant's barn. At the very height of the storm four cavalrymen appeared and demanded admission to the cottage.

Two of the riders almost tenderly lifted a third man from his horse and bore him into the house, while the fourth brought up the rear guard with boxes of provisions. The third man, seemingly a wounded Serbian officer, was laid on a couch. He weakly closed his eyes and turned his head as lights were brought. Then, for the first time, the physician, who had come to the house from the stable to watch the operations of the strangers, recognized in the apparently sick man, King Peter of Serbia.

As his companions prepared the semblance of a bed for him, the king, between groans, thanked them, but declined food. One of his companions, a physician, forced the king to take a little liquid nourishment, which the whole party sat for a in a gloomy silence, then made a dash for it. They resumed their journey before daylight.

VILLA WILL FIGHT IT OUT, HIS WIFE SAYS

Wife of Rebel Leader and Family Arrive at Havana to Take up Their Residence.

Havana, Dec. 2.—Mrs. Francisco Villa, wife of the Mexican rebel leader, and Mrs. Hipolito Villa, wife of General Villa's brother, accompanied by their children, a number of relatives and many servants, arrived here today on board the steamer Atenas from New Orleans. They announced that they intended to establish a residence in Havana.

Mrs. Francisco Villa said that neither her husband nor Colonel Hipolito Villa have any intention of leaving Mexico, being determined to continue the struggle against General Venustiano Carranza, and fully confident of ultimate success.

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