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BRANTFORD DAILY COURIER.

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RUSSIA DECEIVED BY GERMANY

Increasing Evidence of Waring Power of Bolsheviki

Huns Violate Principle of Armistice With Russia

Germany Moves Troops From the East Front for Service Elsewhere, Regardless of Her Promise to Russia--Hindenburg Awaiting Reinforcements

By Courier Leased Wire.

London, Dec. 26.—The Russo-German peace negotiations, which were to have been resumed on Monday after a postponement to give the Germans time to formulate their reply on the Russian terms, were again delayed for one day, an Exchange Telegraph despatch from Petrograd reports.. The despatch also says the Germans have asked for a further postponement until January 22.

While their guns bombarded the western front the Germans are taking troops from the eastern front for use elsewhere despite the provision of the Russo-German armistice prohibiting such action. The artillery activity in France has been moderate over most of the front and more violent on the right bank of the Meuse, northeast of Verdun, the scene of the German attack nearly two years ago.

German infantry has not been active and it is probable that Field Marshal von Hindenburg is waiting for more reinforcements before making his heralded attacks. Russian advices telling of the German withdrawals in the east add that some of the troops are being taken to the Roumanian front. Roumania is not taking part in the peace negotiations and the Ukraine, which lies beyond Moldavia and Bessarabia is opposed to the Bolsheviki.

South of Juvincourt, in the Rheims sector of Champagne, the French have carried out a raid into the German lines and brought back prisoners.

On the British portion of the front there have been raids in addition to the artillery duel, but no large operations are yet indicated.

On the northern Italian front, the Austro-German tactics appear to be to strike alternately at vital points on either side of the Brenta. Checked at Monte Asolene last week. The enemy has struck toward the Frezne valley west of the river. After two days of bitter fighting the Italians have regained possession of lost positions on the Col. Del Rosso west of the river and have attacked the Austro-German positions on Monte Pertica east of the river. Berlin claims the capture of 9,000 prisoners in the gaining of the Col Del Rosso which later was lost to the Italians.

Leon Trotzky, the Bolsheviki foreign minister, has protested to the Germans against the transference of troops from the eastern front, but also ordered Russian factories to stop the manufacture of munitions. He did not indicate whether his government would take any other step against German violation of the armistice.

Peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk apparently are making little progress. The Germans have delayed their answer to the Bolsheviki terms and it is reported that the conference will be transeferred to Stockholm shortly. In the meantime the majority party in the Constitutent Assembly, the Social Revolutionists has convoked the assembly to meet January 2, despite Bolsheviki disapproval.

German savagery has been called officially to the attention of the American troops in France. An American sentry has been found with his throat cut and official bulletin says: "He must have been so killed after capture" by a force Germans who surprised him. Information of enemy terorism in driving women and childrne from their home is the occupied sections of France and Belgium to make room for German troops, soldiers and war material.

Berlin Official

London, Dec. 26.—"There was nothing special to report on the British front in France yesterday," says the official statement issued to-day by the war office.

Swam in Icy Water

Paris, Dec. 26.—Gerard Meister, who was five times wounded in the battle of the Marne, yesterday won the annual Christmas swimming contest across the River Seine, a distance of 3500 yards. The temperature stood at about the freezing point, and the bridges and banks of the Seine were crowded with spectators who cheered the swimmers as they plunged through the icy water. Meister won this event in 1913.

French Official

Paris, Dec. 26.—"On the right bank of the Meuse (Verdun front), the energetic reply of our batteries put an end to a vigorous bombardment of our lines in the region of Bezonvaux," says to-day's official communication. "In the region of St. Quentin and in Upper Alsace, French patrols penetrated German trenches and brought back prisoners.

"Everywhere else the night was calm."

Italian Statement

Berlin, Dec. 26.—Via London—Violent counter attacks against the Austro-German positions on Col Del Rossa and neighboring heights on both sides broke down yesterday with heavy losses, says the official statement issued to-day by the German general staff.

WEATHER BULLETIN

Toronto, Dec. 26— The weather has become much colder in Ontario and Quebec and continues decidedly cold in the western provinces.

Forecasts.

Fair and cold, Thursday —Easterly winds with snow.

STEFANNSON IS SAFE AT YUKON

Canadian Explorer and Party on Way Home from Artic Expedition

Ottawa, Dec. 26.—Vilhjalmar Stefansson, the Canadian explorer, and his party are safe. A message received byMr. G. J. Desbarts, deputy minister of naval affairs, today announces that Mr. Stefansson and party have arrived safely at Fort Cukon, Alaska, from the far north. This means that the explorer about whose safety there has been considerable doubt for several months past is coming back to civilization after his long sojourn in the Arctic regions.

It is presumed that the party will now make their way to Nome, and wait for the first steamer that will bring them back to Canada. It is possible, however, that Stefansson may decide to go overland to Dawson.

It is understood here that Mr. Stefansson who was in charge of the northern division of the Canadian Arctic expedition, spent last winter on Melville Island. It was thought that he would come out either via Lancaster Sound and Labrador or the Behring Sea. Apparently he has not chosen either of these routes but chose to come over the ice at Herschel Island and from there to Alaska probably by way of Fort MacPherson. His party consists of about 24 men.

The Canadian Arctic Expedition set out for the north in 1913. It was divided into the northern and southern divisions. The northern division proposed to explore unknown parts of the Beaufort Sea, carry on investigations in the northern islands and search for new land. The members of this division set out in the government Steamer Karluk. They proposed to establish a base on Banks or Prince Patrick Islands. After passing Point Barrow, however, the vessel became icebound and was carried eastward as far as Thetis Island. As it appeared that the vessel was frozen in for the winter, Mr. Stefansson with a small party set out for the mainland on a hunting trip. During their absence the Karluk, with the remainder of the northern division was carried away, crushed by the ice and sunk. In endeavoring to reach Herald Island, eight members of the party lost their lives. The remainder, numbering nine men, including Captain R. A. Bartlett, succeeded in reaching Wrangel Island. Bartlett journeyed on foot to the Siberian coast and thence to Alaska, in the Herman, where he was able to communicate with the outside world to have relief ships sent. The shipwrecked men were taken from Wrangel Island by the schooners King and Wing and transferred to the United States revenue cutter Bear, which landed them at Victoria, B.C.

Despite the loss of the Karluk, Mr. Stefansson determined to continue his work in the far north. He made arrangements to journey on foot over the ice to unknown parts of Beaufort Sea, it being understood that a vessel would be sent to Banks Island in the summer of 1914, provided he did not return before the breaking up of the ice. The party, after being carried eastward to near the 140th meridian, proceeded northward, but they were compelled to make for land at Norway Island when they proceeded south to Kellett, where they were met by George Wilkins with the Mary Sachs. A base was established at Kellett from which Mr. Stefansson made a journey across southern Banks Island to locate Eskimoes in the vicinity of Prince of Wales strait. Failing to locate them, he returned to Kellett and made arrangements for a trip northward.

With a small party he proceeded as far as Cape Alfred, and from thence northwesterly. It was ascertained that no land existed in this direction.

The breaking up of the ice obliged Steffansson to discontinue the expedition for 1915. He arrived at Prince Patrick Island and followed its shore northward to Cape McSlintock. From there they set out over the ice in a northerly direction and in three days land unmarked on an chart was seen. From observations taken, the land appeared to be extensive. Owing to the lateness of the season he was obliged to hasten back to Kellett.

Mr. Stefansson continued his exploration work within the Arctic circle during 1916 with Kellett as his base. An expedition under Mr. Storkersen was sent in the Polar Bear, which had been purchased, to the new land to carry on survey work. When the Polar Bear party failed to arrive at Cape Alfred, the place of rendezvous, Mr. Stefansson undertook to locate them. His party left Cape Ross for the new land on April 19, 1916, and met Mr. Storkersen on May 3rd, at Cape James Murray. From this point the last mail from the expedition received by the Canadian naval service department was dispatched.

HAIG'S MESSAGE

By Courier Leased Wire.

London, Dec. 26—Field Marshal Haig, according to the official announcement sent Christmas messages to the various allied commanders. The following message went to General Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces:

"From all ranks of the British armies in France I send our best wishes for Christmas and the new year to our comrades of the American Expeditionary Force. We are proud to think that the new year will see Americans and British fighting in France for the defence of civilization."

COCKSHUTT CO. PLANT RUINED IN EDMONTON

Building and Stock, Office and Store Room, Destroyed by Fire

DAMAGE OVER $10,000

Blaze Swept Business Section of City on Christmas Day

By Courier Leased Wire.

Edmonton, Dec. 26—Fire which broke out yesterday morning, in the heart of the town business section destroyed the building and stock of the Cockshutt Plow Company, Limited, its office and retail store room, the building and stock of the Moses Lyons Estate, dealers in provisions, hunters and traders supplies and the building adjoining. The stock of J. A. Werner hardware, was greatly damaged by water. The loss of the Cockshutt Company is $10,500; Lyons loss is $18,000 partly covered by insurance and Werner's loss is about $5,000 on stock, caused by water, which is covered by insurance.

Col. Harry Cockshutt, M.P., president of the Cockshut Plow Company, this morning received a telegram informing him of the fire, but giving no further details. The plant destroyed is the district branch headquarters of the company for Edmonton and that vicinity.

MEXICAN BANDITS KILL STAGE DRIVER

U. S. Troops In Pursuit of Outlaws Who Raided Border Town

By Courier Leased Wire

El Paso, Tex. Dec. 26.—Michey Welch, an American, driver of a mail stage, was hanged and his throat cut yesterday by Mexicans who crossed the line, raided the border town, Candelaria, and held up the mail stage. After Killing the driver the raiders looted the mail sacks. Two Mexican passengers on the mail stage were reported to have been shot.

Marfa, Texas, Dec. 26.—American troops to-day were guarding all outlets to Vanhorne Canyon, where 100 Mexican bandits on Christmas morning crossed the American border, raided the post office 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 Neill, 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 of the Mexicans. The shooting compelled the bandits to abandon the horses on which they carried away the loot.

BOLSHEVIKI POWER AND INFLUENCE WANE DAILY

Increasing Evidence That Maximalist Rule is Failing--Defection From Soldiers and Workmen's Convert Growing

By Courier Leased Wire

London, Dec. 26.—There have been occasional assertions in recent Petrograd dispatches that the influence and power of the Bolsheviki was waning, but never with such unanimity as in special dispatches dated from the Russian capital Sunday and printed to-day. Nearly all make the point in one form or other that defection from the Workmen's and Soldiers' organization is growing constantly. Among the causes alleged are general lack of authority, the increase in drunkenness, the reluctance of the population to work and the scarcity of food stuffs. The main desire of the soldiers is said to be for peace. The correspondents cite instances of Bolsheviki troops refusing to march, declining to attack the Ukrainians, and permitting the Cossacks to disarm them without resistance. Fighting, it is said, is the last thing they are willing or intend to do. A hostile spirit is reported to survive among the Baltic sailors and the Red Guard, but the former are not numerous enough to conquer the Ukrainians, and the Red Guard is largely untrained. It is reported therefore that war against the Ukraine probably will not materialize on any serious scale. It is reported that the Bolsheviki intend to control admission to the assembly by issuing tickets. This is sharply opposed by the Social Revolutionists, who are credited with the determination to convene the assembly in any case.

In any case, in consequence of the postponement of the peace negotiations at Brest-Litvosk, because the Germans were not ready to reply to the Russian terms, the Russian delegates are reported to be returning to Petrograd, where apparently they are expected to await the arrival of the delegations from the enemy powers which are to participate in a conference for discussion of the political aspects of an eventual peace conference.

Various explanations are offered in Petrograd dispatches of the purpose of German concentration of troops in the southwest. One suggestion is that part of these forces will be sent to Asia Minor. It is predicted a large force will be retained in the southwest to assure possession of the valuable Russian harvest.

A Reuter dispatch from Petrograd reports the arrest and imprisonment in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul of M. Vyshnegradsky and M. Putilof, managing directors of the International Commercial Bank and the Russo-Asiatic Bank in consequence of the mention of their names in an intercepted letter wherein General Alexieff, former commander in chief, begged Paul Milukoff, the Constitutional Democratic leader, to interest himself in obtaining 300,000 roubles to assist starving families of imprisoned officers.

It is reported from Brest-Litvosk, by way of Petrograd that Finland has appealed to Germany to recognize its independence, and that the Germans expressed their willingness to do so. Leon Trotzky, the Bolsheviki foreign minister, is said to have shown his irritation because the Finns applied directly to the Germans instead of through the Bolsheviki commissionaries. A Stockholm dispatch to The Post records the arrival there of a Finnish delegation to ask Sweden's recognition of the independence of the Finns. According to the same correspondent, anarchist conditions prevail in parts of Finland. The Swedish consul at Helsingfors has sent an urgent appeal to the government, to protect Sweden at Bors. Bandits are said to be running wild in Uleaborg and in various other districts. The Stockholm's Tidningen reports an agreement between the Finnish senate and the Baltic fleet committee under which Finland virtually will buy its independence for 50,000,000 roubles.

Spread Propaganda

Petrograd, Dec. 25.—The Bolsheviki Government has decided to send special representatives to all countries, belligerent as well as neutral, to further propaganda of internationalism. Two million rubles have been appropriated for this purpose.

An American Red Cross train left Petrograd to-day for Roumania with the approval of the Bolsheviki. It carried all its original supplies except automobiles.

To Convoke Assembly.

London, Dec. 25.—The Social Revolutionary majority in the Constituent Assembly has decided to convoke that body on June 22, according to Petrograd despatch to The Times although the Bolsheviki Government has said that it was determined to prevent the meeting of the assembly, independent of its sanction.

M. Borovsky, the Bolsheviki representative in Stockholm, in a despatch to The Morning Post from the Swedish capital confirms reports that Stockholm will be the scene of the continuation of the Russo-German peace negotiations. He says that the sessions in Stockholm will begin early in January when all the delegates now at Brest-Litovsk are expected in the Swedish capital.

STRENGTH THAT WILL INSPIRE TO VICTORY

(By W. A. Willison, Canadian Press Correspondent in Flanders.)

Canadian Army Headquarters, Dec 26.—"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 re-union. 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 near 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. Your actions have made the name of our home land one to be revered, respected and honored now and throughout the years to come."

FRONT QUIET.

(By W. A. Willison, Canadian Press Correspondent in Flanders.)

Canadian Army Headquarters, Dec. 26.—The Canadian front was quiet over Christmas. Our patrols recently have been active, while our artillery,

(Continued on Page 6.)

MILD WINTER IN ITALIAN MOUNTAINS

Green Slopes and Summits, and Little Snow, For Holiday Season

WEATHER FAVORABLE

Comparative Warmth Conducive to Important Military Operations

By Courier Leased Wire

Italian Headquarters in Northern Italy, Dec. 26.—(By the Associated Press)—The entire mountain region, where heavy fighting has been going on in recent days, is having the unusual experience of a holiday season with green slopes and summits and little or no snow. One of the generals on the front said that every foot of snow was worth divisions in obstructing the enemy.

"This is one of the mildest winters we have ever had," said the major in charge of the weather branch of the high command, "and from a military standpoint the weather conditions are of the highest importance, both for our troops and, particularly in their effect on the enemy's transportation of supplies and troops."

Taking the report furnished by the high command to-day on the weather at all vital points, a major pointed out the extreme variation in the mountains, plains and valleys. Here at headquarters the report showed two degrees above zero centigrade (35.6 fahrenheit) and no snow, while the same report showed 15 degrees below zero centigrade (5 degrees fahrenheit) and seven feet of snow in Ortler Alps.

Further east in the Adamello Alps which are the next highest to the Ortler, there is about three feet of snow as compared with nine feet last year.

Around Lake Garda, the condition is much milder. Monte Pasubio, where the Austrians made their big drive last year, now has four feet of snow, as against 12 feet last winter. But all these snow covered points are in the activity military region for the present.

The entire area of the present fighting in the Brenta valley is free from snow and the weather is very mild. This is the valley where the Austrian route brings supplies and troops from Trent to the Asiago and Brenta fronts. Between the Brenta and the Piave Rivers, which is the principal region of the fighting, Monte Grappa, which usually has four to six feet of snow, now has only from ten to twelve inches on the northern slopes and six on the southern slopes. The temperature is from five to 12 degrees below zero centigrade (23 to 10.4 degrees fahrenheit), Montes Asolene, Pertica and Solarolo where the heaviest fighting has occurred in the last few days have only a few inches. It varies from three to five inches and seldom lasts, owing to the mildness. In the foothills there is no snow and the temperature is always above freezing.

The reports show similar mild conditions in the Carso and the Julian ranges, to the east, through which the Austrians maintain their communications with the invaded regions of eastern Venetia. The mildness of communication leading to Gorizia, Udine and Venetia.

These unusual weather conditions are proving an important factor in the campaign for while severe cold and heavy snows would hold the enemy in their grip, the present mild and almost snowless season permits operations to proceed.

King Visited Troops.

Rome. Dec. 26—King Victor Emmanuel spent Christmas with his troops and the Christmas spirit only served to give strength to the Italian arms in the tremendous struggle which they are successfully maintaining against the Austro-German forces. The Pope celebrated three midnight masses in Pauline chapel. Thousands of messages from all over the world bearing words of good cheer were received by the court.

KILLED BY EXPRESS.

By Courier Leased Wire.

Hamilton, Ont., Dec. 26—Fred Tassell, of Thorold, was instantly killed at the Grand Trunk station here early this morning when he walked behind a train into the path of a westbound express. Tassell was employed by the Ontario Paper Company. His mother resides at Niagara Falls, Ontario.