

FOOD CRISIS IS FACED BY GREAT BRITAIN

All Classes Must Line Up for Sugar, Butter and Tea Morsel.

MUCH DISCONTENT

Compulsory Rationing is Working Well in Some Big Cities.

London, Cable.—The food question in Britain is rapidly approaching a crisis. The fourth winter of the war finds the public, rich and poor alike, driven to stand for long hours to secure daily necessities, such as tea, butter, margarine and sugar, of which the minutest portion is doled out to each customer, regardless of the size of the family or the actual needs.

This condition exists in nearly every large city in the country and it is worse in London, where the situation is so serious and public opinion has risen to such a pitch that prompt official action to relieve the situation has been promised and will soon be forthcoming.

LACK OF CONTROL

This condition of affairs is not, as one paper suggests "an inevitable symptom of the malady of death which has afflicted the earth." It is with the control, or rather lack of control, of the transportation and supply system that the fault lies. Of these two difficulties, the first is practically incurable—the shortage of petrol, the lack of transportation facilities and the fact that the railways of the country have a full task in the conveyance of troops and war materials—such impediments as these offer little hope of immediate solution. Accordingly it is toward the question of regulation of the retail supply that the Government's attention will be turned.

To-day the Food Controller declared that no stone will be left unturned in an endeavor to solve the question, the gravity of which is fully realized. "We have some of the finest brains in the country hard at work early and hourly considering most carefully this problem in all its aspects," he declared.

GROWING DISCONTENT

There is great and growing discontent among the housewives, especially those of the poorer classes, who feel that the well-to-do people are able to obtain supplies without inconvenience, whereas the poor are forced to wait hours in the cold to purchase almost infinitesimal amounts. This charge is unquestionably true in many instances, but to-day saw twenty or thirty long queues in different parts of the city, stretching sometimes for blocks, in which well-dressed and fur-coated women mingled with porters' wives and other neighbors to get their daily allowance.

The majority of shopkeepers sell only a certain allowance to each customer. The result is that these women, buying for a large family are forced to stand sometimes almost all day in several different queues to obtain enough for the family dinner. Moreover this is a daily performance, for in no case is it possible to purchase sufficient food to last any length of time.

GREAT SCARCITY OF TEA

A quarter of a pound of tea is the most anyone is able to get, while butter, margarine and sugar are doled out in amounts of a quarter pound or two ounces. One woman told me to-day that she had only been able to buy one ounce of tea daily for the last week.

Bitter cold weather arrived yesterday, adding considerably to the suffering of those poor women who were obliged to stand in line outdoors. Two hours is the average wait in any London queue, and those who arrive late have to wait from three to four hours or run the risk of not being supplied.

There is alleged to be a great deal of ruthless profiteering indulged in in this connection, probably one out of every four standing in line buying to sell at a profit. I was present to-day when a woman who had fainted was discovered to have fifteen quarter pounds of sugar concealed about her person. She declared she had been standing in the line since 5 a.m.

COMPULSORY RATIONING

Some of the big cities, such as Birmingham and Reading, have adopted compulsory rationing on their own hook, and it is working successfully. The Evening News strongly urges the adoption of the same system in London, having the Food Controller give notice to all retailers that they must register their regular customers and sell only to them.

This has been the worst week of the year for butter. No supplies have been received from Denmark or Ireland, and the present restrictions on the use of cream in this country, in order to increase the supply of butter, have not visibly improved the situation.

Of course when Britain increased blockade pressure on the Scandinavian countries a short while ago it cut its own throat so far as the matter of supplying the British people with sufficient butter and bacon is concerned. There is a shortage of these commodities, as well as of tea, sugar and margarine, but not a sufficient shortage to warrant the present queue hardship everywhere.

A RATIONED CHRISTMAS

This is going to be a rationed Christmas for most folks in Britain, owing to the extreme inefficiency of

the meat distribution scheme now in force and to the high price of turkey. There are plenty of birds in the markets to-day, but many housewives already have set out on their Christmas shopping, and it will not be long before the supply is exhausted. Turkeys are going to be sixty and seventy-five cents a pound in the larger markets, and before the holiday they probably will touch a dollar a pound.

The Official Labor Gazette published figures yesterday showing that the rise in the principal items of food in the United Kingdom since the war began has been 165 per cent, an increase greater than in any other country of the world except Norway. Eggs took the greatest jump, costing now 239 per cent. more than before the war.

The average increase in France has been 83 per cent., but it is interesting to note that the daily bread supply there has been cut from three-quarters of a pound to about three-eighths of a pound, and that the wheat supply is less than half of that in 1913.

The trades councils in this country are being urged to organize a national demonstration on Jan. 19 to demand national control of all food supplies.

MUST BACK WAR ON JUNKERISM

Appeal to Americans of German Descent

By Influential Men of That Race.

New York Despatch.—An appeal to American citizens of German birth and descent to join its campaign for helping the United States to win the war, was made public to-day by the Executive Committee of the Friends of German Democracy. Franz Sigel, son of General Franz Sigel, of Civil War fame, is president of the organization.

"This war is not a war on the part of America against the German nation," the appeal stated. "It is rather a war against a peculiar system of society and government, unhappily, dominates the German people to their own and the world's undoing."

The committee declared that "a majority of the German people, if properly informed about their own Government and its misdeeds, will not wait until the German nation is completely crushed by force of arms, but will sooner or later rise against the Kaiser and the junkers and establish a democratic government in Germany."

"President Wilson has very clearly pointed out," the statement added, "that the war must go on until the triumph of democracy is complete. This matter is no longer debatable. All American citizens of German birth or descent must now realize that they are face to face with a known fact and not with an open question. America and her allies are going to win this war against the Emperor and the ruling classes of Germany."

"During the past seventy years over 5,000,000 Germans have come to America. We find that the principles for which many of our immediate ancestors, or we ourselves suffered exile, are threatened by the very powers which forced us, as a people, out of Germany. We must rally with our fellow-Americans against tyranny which has so long cursed the country of our fathers and which now rises as a dangerous threat against the liberty of the whole world."

"The friends of Germany democracy urge our German people in America, by every means in their power, to assert themselves on the side of right in this conflict."

SHIP LOSSES SLIGHTLY LESS

Fourteen Over 1,600 Tons, Three Under That, Sunk.

French Marine Only Lost One Ship.

London Cable.—Fourteen British merchantmen of more than 1,600 tons and three under that tonnage were sunk by mine or submarine during the past week, according to the Admiralty statement to-night. One fishing vessel also was sunk. The shipping losses by mine or submarine in the past week are slightly under those of the previous week, when fourteen vessels of more than 1,600 tons and seven under that tonnage were destroyed.

ONE FRENCH SHIP SUNK

Paris Cable says.—The losses to French shipping by mine or submarine for the week ending December 15 were exceedingly light. Only one vessel under 1,600 tons was sunk, and none over 1,600 tons. One ship was attacked, but escaped. No fishing craft was sunk.

U. S. SUBS. COLLIDE

Washington, Dec. 25.—Nineteen lives were lost when the American submarine E-3 was rammed and sunk by the German U-105 in home waters during a fog Monday afternoon.

The E-3 was undamaged and picked up five survivors of her victim. Secretary Daniels announced the disaster to-day in a brief statement, which gave no further details.

Even the croak may be reformed when he finds himself in straitened circumstances.

2,000,000 HUNS FACE ALLIES ON THE WEST

But Entente Have Still More Men, and Are Confident.

QUIET JUST NOW

Only Small Affairs, While Awaiting Expected Foe Drive.

London Cable.—The fighting on the West front still remains below normal, although the artillery duels on various sectors continue intense. The artillery between the French and Germans in Champagne and in the mountainous regions near the Swiss border is increasing in volume, probably forecasting infantry attacks at an early date.

Germany's strength on the Franco-British front is placed in official despatches at 154 divisions, or within one division of the great forces amassed there last July, when the German military effort against France was at its maximum. The divisions are probably not of full maximum strength, but the total force is believed to be over 2,000,000 men.

Withdrawals from Russia and drafts upon the younger classes of reserves thus have enabled the Kaiser not only to make up the enormous losses suffered in bloody battles with the allies, but to send men to aid the Austrians in their invasion of Italy. Winter, therefore, finds the Germans with armies facing the allies in France equal to the largest ever before mustered, with advertisement of a great offensive.

The allies, however, are understood to maintain a considerable superiority in numbers on the French front.

BRITISH REPORT

London Cable.—The text of Wednesday's War Office statement said: "During the night a hostile raiding party was driven off by our fire east of Guemappe (Arras sector). Other raiding parties attacked two of our posts in the neighborhood of Avion. Two of our men are missing."

"As a result of raids unsuccessfully attempted by the enemy last night near Passchendaele we captured four prisoners and four machine guns. The enemy's artillery has shown considerable activity in the neighborhood of Boegstert and Polygon wood (Ypres sector)."

FRENCH REPORT

Paris Cable says.—The official communication issued by the War Office Wednesday night reads: "Reciprocal bombardments occurred in the region of Juvincourt and north of the Carrières wood (Champagne), as well as in the sectors of Hartmannswillerkopf, and Schoenhof in the Woevre. An enemy attack on our trenches before Regneville failed under our fire."

BELGIAN REPORT

Paris Cable.—The Belgian War Office report of Wednesday said: "In the course of the day of Dec. 13 there were moderately intense artillery actions in the regions of Dixmude and Merckem. Furnes, the approaches to the station at Adinkerke and the region of Duijnhockje were cannonaded. On Dec. 19 the artillery activity was slight. The environs of Adinkerke and Duijnhockje were bombarded."

AWFUL FATE OF SERB CAPTIVES

Wholesale Barbarities by Austro-Germans.

7,000 Died in One Prison Camp Alone.

Washington Despatch.—The official Serbian press bureau has made public a startling report on the fate of Serbian prisoners-of-war and deported civilians prepared by a French journalist at Zurich, Switzerland. Forty thousand old men, women and children have been deported by the Bulgars from Serbia, Turkey, Serbians, interned and prisoners-of-war, are treated with appalling barbarity in Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. The Serbian race is menaced by the measures practiced against it by its enemies.

The report says: "Ever since last autumn heartrending accounts of the fates of the Serbian prisoners in Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria have reached here in Switzerland. A strict enquiry was officially called for. It was a long and difficult business, but I interrogated many persons returning from Germany, French, English, Russian and Serbian wounded or escaped prisoners and subjects of neutral countries, all trustworthy witnesses. The result of my enquiry is appalling."

It is not easy to arrive at the exact number of Serbian prisoners-of-war and deported civilians in enemy countries. According to the returns published in the Frankfurter Zeitung of May 11, 1917, there were at the end of last year 155,950 Serbian soldiers prisoners-of-war, 898 of whom were officers.

"I will now give a small fraction of the evidence I have collected:

"At the beginning of 1916, 754 Serbian prisoners were taken to the prisoners' camp at Saltau (Hanover). They were in the last stage of exhaustion and could scarcely drag themselves along."

"A prisoner who could speak German makes the following report: "We are dying of hunger. During our passage through Serbia the peasant women often came and brought us bread, cheese and bacon; but the Magyar soldiers who formed our escort kept it all for themselves. In several Austrian towns we were mobbed. People spat in our faces and struck us over the head with sticks. About thirty of my countrymen were seriously injured in this way. For three months in Bohemia we were employed in field work and the construction of railway lines. The food was horrible—soup which made you sick, a few potatoes and a piece of bad bread in such insufficient quantity that by the end of six weeks thirty-two of my comrades had died of hunger. There were terrible punishments for those who failed to accomplish their allotted task, flogging, cells with only one piece of bread in four days or punishment like the following: The prisoner was suspended from a tree by his feet and kept in that position until death appeared imminent. In the country punishments were more summary. A soldier who picked up and ate a raw potato was shot on the spot. This happened in several cases. Besides this forty of my comrades were taken back in a body to Serbia under the pretext that they were to indicate the spots where our guns were buried. We never heard of them since."

"There were about 4,000 Serbs at the prisoners' camp at Koelnberg. They were skin and bone and they were clothed in rags. They were housed in a field by themselves, divided from those of the prisoners of other Allied nations by a high barbed-wire fence. No one was allowed to communicate with them. The food they were given was disgraceful. 'Coffee,' clear soup without any taste, and a piece of bread. British and French prisoners who passed them some food were, in punishment, loaded with sacks filled with sand or pebbles and forced to run round the barracks, or they were compelled to sit down and rise again alternately until they broke down under the load. Several hundred prisoners died of hunger and exhaustion in that camp."

"The fate of the Serbian prisoners at Mauthausen was the most terrible of all. Worn out by fatigue, hunger and cold, prisoners succumbed every day. By the month of May, 1917, more than 7,000 of them had died. According to the account of an escaped prisoner, one could often see Serbian prisoners digging up bones which had been thrown on the refuse heap in their search for food. Others piled up grass and herbs and ate the roots, or, defying the blows of their guards, they threw themselves on carts containing mangel-wurzels for cattle and devoured them with the earth that clung to them."

TURKS ROBBED THE HOLY CITY

Treasure of Church of Holy Sepulchre Stolen

And Celebrated Ostensory Sent to Berlin.

Washington, D. C., Report.—An official despatch received here to-day from France says that the Turks before surrendering Jerusalem to the British brutally mistreated Christian priests, carried off the famous treasure of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, valued at millions of dollars, and sent to Berlin the church's celebrated ostensory of brilliants.

Monsignor Camassei, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, is said to have been deposed from his office, and Father Picardo, an Italian priest, to have died from the effects of Turkish brutality. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre had remained un molested heretofore during all the centuries of Moslem occupation of Jerusalem.

The same despatch told of indignation among Mussulmans of Asia Minor over the action of a German general in establishing staff headquarters in the great mosque of the City of Aleppo, near the Syrian border.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was consecrated in the year 336 on the traditional spot where Christ rose from the dead. In the year 614 the buildings comprising the church were destroyed by the Persians. The original building was in the form of a rotunda, the walls of which survive in the existing complex construction, which assumed various forms in the course of re-building during the middle ages. The edifice was badly damaged by fire in 1808. The Greeks contrived to secure to themselves the principal right to the buildings, and with the Armenians contributed most of the money for the erection of the church. The dilapidated dome, which the sepulchre is situated in, was restored by architects of various nationalities in 1863 as the result of an agreement made with Turkey by France and Russia.

The chief entrance to the church is from a court on the south. The court is paved with yellowish slabs of stone and is infested always by traders and beggars.

In the interior is the sepulchre proper, enclosed in a sixteen-sided chapel resting on eighteen piers and containing a great number of chapels appropriated to different creeds or nationalities, or marking various spots traditionally connected with the Saviour's presence.

Use the scales on a fish story and you will generally find that it is weighed and found wanting.

LAUNCHINGS EQUAL LOSSES OF THE ALLIES

Naval Expert Sees the End of the German U-Boat Menace.

NORTH SEA RAIDS

If Conditions Reversed, Would Be More Numerous, He Says.

New York Report.—Arthur Pollen, the British naval expert, who has sailed for Europe after spending six months in the United States, gave to the Associated Press a statement in which he said that the campaign of the allied navies against the submarine has at last resulted in keeping the world's tonnage from showing a monthly decrease, or will soon do so. Mr. Pollen gives credit for this success to the change in the chief command carried out by the British Admiralty last spring, and the participation in the campaign of the American navy.

Mr. Pollen pointed out that six months ago the German submarines were causing a net attrition in the world's tonnage at the rate of nearly 25 per cent. annually. While the present rate of attrition is difficult to estimate, it appeared that last month Great Britain launched as much tonnage as she lost; the first ship laid down by the United States since the war has been launched, and within the next twelve months a substantial portion of the six millions tons provided for in this country will undoubtedly be afloat. Great Britain's shipbuilding program will similarly increase month by month, and moreover, the campaign of the allied navies against the submarine will grow in value week by week, he said.

"The significance of this to the fortunes of war does not have to be pointed out," Mr. Pollen continued. "It means that Germany's flank attack on allied communications has failed, and that there is no reason why ultimately the full military power of Great Britain, France and Italy, and, more important of all, of the United States, should not be felt in the western theatre of war. This is a tremendous result."

Speaking of the change in the chief command of the British Admiralty, Mr. Pollen said:

"In bringing about this new order of things at Whitehall, the reformers were undoubtedly assisted, first, by the fact that an extremely effective, well-equipped and brilliantly-commanded contingent of American destroyers was already at work in a very important area of the theatre of war, and next by the British Government waking up to the truth that the belligerency of America meant not only the co-operation of a very gallant and enterprising ally, but the domestication, so to speak, of a new and extremely intelligent critic."

Mr. Pollen mentioned the concentrations of "three distinguished and resourceful American naval officers—Admirals Sims, Mayo and Benson. Through these men, American professional knowledge," he said, "has gained a first-hand experience of the reality of war, and has been able to contribute an impersonal and impartial judgment upon the character of the operations to be pursued and of the methods of command under which they should be carried out. I cannot doubt for a moment that much of the improved efficiency of the counter-campaign is due to this intellectual stimulus."

Mr. Pollen paid tribute to Secretary of the Navy Daniels, praising what he described as the secretary's policy of obtaining loyal team-work by allowing the forces under his orders to be directed, in strictly professional matters, "according to the judgment and advice of the singularly able and efficient officers that, so to speak, form his council of war."

Adverting to the recent North Sea raid by Germans, Mr. Pollen said: "The only remarkable thing about such incidents is not their occasional occurrence, but their rarity. Were the British or the American navy in the position of the German navy, if anything, they would be far more frequent."

SHORT ITEMS OF THE NEWS OF THE DAY

Roumania Loyal to Allies—Armistice is Only Military.

RABIES IN THOROLD

U. S. Sends Funds for Relief of Jerusalem Sufferers.

William Roliff, of Pembroke, was killed by the collapse of a derrick in West Toronto.

Government the establishment of a Canadian air service.

The women of Canada are asked to pay not more than 35 cents a pound for Christmas turkeys.

Maj.-W. L. Grant was installed in the principalship of Upper Canada College.

George H. Bradbury, former M. P. for Selkirk, Man., has been appointed to the Senate.

Colon La Fortune, who is in his hundredth year, cast the hundredth ballot at Port Dover on Monday.

John Wilson, aged 85, a retired farmer living alone near Hensall, was burned to death when his house was destroyed, owing to his putting coal oil on his fuel.

The Winter Fair building at Regina, costing \$140,000, was destroyed by fire. Seven hundred soldiers were sleeping there, and lost their personal effects and equipment.

Serious food troubles in the Berlin region are reported.

Senator Humbert's immunity was suspended by the French Senate.

Roumania will remain loyal to the allied cause, the armistice being a military and not a political move.

Ex-Sheriff Dugald Brown, of Elkin County, died at his residence in St. Thomas, aged 83 years.

Rabies has broken out in Thorold, and an order has been issued to destroy all dogs running at large.

Two sailors were saved by the Germans from the American destroyer, Jacob Jones, according to an official German announcement.

Andrew J. Peppers, formerly assistant secretary, was elected Mayor of Boston, defeating Mayor James M. Curley.

Dr. C. Gordon Hewitt, F.R.S.C., Dominion Entomologist and Consulting Zoologist of the Department of Agriculture, has been awarded the gold medal of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Brockville lost one of its leading citizens in the death of W. H. Davis. With his father and brother he had been prominent in the mercantile life of Brockville for over 40 years.

Girard Parent, a five-year-old boy, was playing hide-and-seek with himself at his home, in Montreal, when fire broke out in the house. His parents searched the house in vain for him and finally found him burned to death.

The United States State Department telegraphed to American Consul-General Garrett at Alexandria, Egypt, \$185,000 for relief of the 100,000 sufferers at Jerusalem in want of food and other supplies.

Avern Cheese factory, at Fairfield, one of the largest and best-equipped in Brockville, was burned to the ground. There was no person in the plant, and all of the season's cheese had been shipped out. The building was owned by Samuel Walker, whose loss is covered by insurance.

Pere Marquette Engineer McIntosh was drowned and Fireman Henning had a narrow escape from a similar fate when a Pere Marquette engine which was backing up on the south approach of the Black River railroad bridge dropped over into the river at Sarnia.

COSSACKS TAKE ROSTOV-ON-DON

Petrograd Cable.—A Petrograd despatch to the Post says that the Cossacks finally occupied Rostov-Don Monday. The infantry joined the Cossacks, the rearwards surrendering. Gen. Kaledin, hetman of the Cossacks, has proposed to the Bolshevik Government that the civil strife cease, stipulating that the independence of the Don territory and non-intervention by the Maximalists.

The executive council of Workmen's and Soldiers' deputies has proclaimed a state of siege in Petrograd in an effort to repress disorders due to the looting of wine cellars and shops.

LOSS TO ALLIES.

Patterns for Sub. Chasers Are Destroyed.

Albany, N. Y., Despatch.—Valuable patterns for the manufacture of special equipment for British, French and Italian submarine chasers were destroyed early to-day in a fire of undetermined origin, which ruined much of the manufacturing plant of J. George H. Thatcher Company. The loss is estimated at \$100,000. Owners have signified their intention of requesting an investigation by Federal authorities.

Besides the contracts for the Allies, the plant was engaged in turning out work of the U. S. emergency fleet corporation, and for other Government agencies.

TO AID WAR WORK.

Locomotives for France Seized in America.

Philadelphia Report.—Thirty Government locomotives, built at the Baldwin works here for military railroads in France have been ordered into service in Philadelphia and nearby territory by the Federal Government. It was learned to-day. These, without about 100 engines loaned by western railroads to eastern companies, are being used to speed up the movement of congested freight traffic so that coal can be rushed to cities where Government war work is threatened with interference by the shortage of fuel.

It isn't always possible to get straight to the point. A man can't even climb a ladder without going the rounds.