

HUNS GET SETBACK IN CHAMPAGNE

The St. John Standard

VOL. IX, NO. 278.

TWELVE PAGES.

FRIDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 15, 1918.

GALES WITH RAIN.

PRICE: TWO CENTS.

MANY LOSE LIVES!

HALF A HUNDRED CHILDREN PERISH IN A HOLOCAUST IN GREY NUNNERY, MONTREAL

Up to an Early Hour This Morning Two Score Bodies, All of Babies, Had Been Recovered from the Ruins of the Infants' Home Department of Famous Institution—Many More Probably in Debris and Death List May Reach One Hundred—All Inmates in Other Departments, Including Soldiers, Nuns, Nursing Sisters and Aged or Crippled Men and Women, Nearly One Thousand Altogether, Succeeded in Escaping—Number of Rescued May Succumb to Shock or Injuries.

None of the Two Hundred Sick, Wounded or Convalescent Soldiers Suffer Injury and All Are Removed to Other Institutions—Flames Spread Rapidly in Children's Department and Although Heroic Attempts Made to Rescue All Little Ones, Dense Smoke Drives Back Rescuers and Many Children Perish—Only for Gallant Work of Soldiers and Firemen Loss of Life Would Have Undoubtedly Been Much Greater.

(SPECIAL TO THE STANDARD)

Montreal, Feb. 14.—A "holocaust of innocence" apparently describes a tragedy here tonight when more than half a hundred babies perished in a fire in the Grey Nunnery on Guy street, part of which has been in use as a soldiers' convalescent home. Added to the loss of life actually known other fatalities may follow, as many of the older inmates of the institution who were snatched from the grip of the ravishing flames may succumb to their injuries or shock. Many of them are in the various houses or hospitals, but through acts of courage, such as one reads of on the bloody Flanders fields, the returned heroes, it is believed, were all saved from the building.

At midnight over a score of bodies of babies had been taken from the ruins and many others are believed to be lying in a portion of the building where the embers are still smouldering.

ORIGINATED ON TOP FLOOR.

The fire originated on the top floor of the St. Matthew street wing, near the tower, supposedly from electric wiring, and immediately caught in the curtains of a nearby window from which it spread rapidly throughout the wooden interior of the uppermost storey. All of this floor was occupied by babies in cots, some of them only a few days old, little unwanted tots left by harrassed mothers on the doorstep of the convent to be cared for by the kindly nuns. These were the infants lost. The older children, who were in another part of the building, were saved. When the firemen had, after hard work, got the fire under control the northern portion of the top storey had been destroyed, and a great deal of damage done to the remaining portion of the west wing.

MANY DEEDS OF HEROISM.

Deeds of heroism rival in self sacrifice deeds for which some of the soldiers won decorations on the field of honor. The returned heroes who were not confined to their beds lent their efforts to the rescue work. When the first fireman, Sub-Chief Marin, arrived, soldiers were already at work. At great risk to themselves they carried children down the fire escapes.

Nearly the whole upper floor was then ablaze. The firemen rushed in and seized children right and left, Sub-Chief Marin taking four in his arms at a time, but for only a very few minutes were they able to work.

Burst of Flame.

A sudden gust of flame and smoke which burst from the tower made it impossible to reach the children still lying in their cots in that part of the building, but only upon the definite orders of the fire chief were the soldiers debarred from attempting a rescue. On the floors immediately below were returned soldiers who were still undergoing hospital treatment, and some waiting discharge. Not to be outdone by the firemen or soldiers the sisters performed almost superhuman feats in rescue work. District Chief Marin and his men had difficulty in preventing some of the sisters from dashing into the flames when it would have meant death for them to have done so.

Sisters Fall Unconscious.

Two or three of the sisters fell unconscious from their efforts to rescue the children who were in the smoke-filled dormitory behind a curtain of flame and had to be carried out by the firemen. It was only when it was impossible to carry the work of rescue further and after they had carried dozens of little ones from the smoke-filled

room that the chief forbid the firemen, and soon had their charges housed in soldiers and sisters from risking their lives further.

A Fiery Furnace.

The dormitory was like a burning furnace and Marin who is one of the veteran fire fighters of the brigade, saw that it was useless to make any further attempts at rescue. The feeble cries of the infants had been stifled by the smoke and flames. In the other portions of the building were patients ranging in years from a few days to almost a hundred years. All of these were taken out through the Guy street entrance.

Many Carried Out.

Bed ridden men and women and aged nuns some of whom had not seen the outside of the institution for a score of years, were carried out in cots, wheel chairs and blankets, mostly by soldiers, policemen and volunteer workers who had hastened to the scene.

Long years of pain had seared the features of many with deep lines, and snow-white hair crowned many a head. The shock of their sudden removal was expressed on many faces, but the rescuers worked with great tenderness

and soon had their charges housed in nearby homes.

Many May Die.

The Montifors Club on Guy street took in babies, nuns and aged women patients. Many nuns were taken to the Mont Ste. Marie Academy on Guy street, just below Dorchester street, and hundreds of others to nearby houses. It is feared that many will die, however, as a result of the shock.

Every hospital ambulance in the city was there, supplemented by police patrol sleighs, but as these were soon seen to be inadequate the military authorities were called on for military ambulances, trucks and transport cars. Scores of privately owned autos, limousines and runabouts also appeared on the scene to assist and all were pressed into service. Twenty-five patients were taken at once to Notre Dame Hospital, eight to the General, one to the Royal Victoria and one to the Westers, none of whom were injured, but were suffering from years and shock.

Montreal, Feb. 14.—The lives of at least thirty eight little children were blotted out shortly after 9 o'clock today.

(Continued on page 2)

THE AUSTRIAN EMPEROR FOR EARLY PEACE

Charles in Manifesto Says Suffering Humanity Weary of War.

PRAYS TO ALMIGHTY FOR GENERAL PEACE

Rejoices That Austria Has Been Able to End War with Ukrainians.

HAS CONFIDENCE IN FUTURE, HE SAYS

Claims Austria's War is Defensive Struggle for Self Preservation.

Amsterdam, Feb. 14.—The Austrian Emperor has issued at Vienna the following manifesto:

"To my peoples—Thanks to God's gracious aid, we have concluded peace with Ukraine. Our victorious arms and the sincere peace policy which we pursued with indefatigable perseverance, have shown the first fruit of a defensive war waged for our preservation. "In common with my hard-ripped peoples, I trust that after the first conclusion of peace which is so gratifying an event for us, a general peace will soon be granted suffering humanity. "Under the impression with this peace with Ukraine, our glance turns with full sympathy to that aspiring young people in whose heart first amongst our opponents the feeling of neighborly love has become operative, and which after bravery exhibited in numerous battles, also possessed sufficient resoluteness to give expression by deed before the whole world to its better conviction.

Great Common Aim.

"It thus has been the first to leave the camp of our enemies in the interest of the speediest possible attainment of a new and great common aim, to unite its efforts with our strength.

"Having from the first moment I mounted the throne of my exalted forefathers felt myself one with my peoples in the rock-like resolve to fight out the struggle forced upon us until an honorable peace was reached, I feel myself so much the more one with them in this hour in which the first step has now been taken for the realization of this aim.

Praises Troops.

"With admiration for and affectionate recognition of the almost superhuman endurance and incomparable self-sacrifice of my heroic troops, as well as of those at home who daily show no less self-sacrifice, I look forward with full confidence to the near and happier future.

"May the Almighty bless us further with strength and endurance, that, not only for ourselves and our faithful allies, but also for entire humanity, we may attain a full peace."

DEATH RESULTED FROM INJURY.

William Crosby a longshoreman who fell headfirst into the hold of a steamship at Sand Point last Wednesday morning died in the General Public Hospital last evening. The deceased when picked up after falling was unconscious and badly injured about the head and face. He was attended by Dr. Neve and was sent to the hospital and never regained consciousness. He was about 25 years of age, and resided on the corner of Charlotte street and Lancaster avenue, West St. John. Previous to going to work on the ships he had been employed as a barber with Messrs. Parker and Brown on Prince street, and had also been employed in a munition factory.

FIGHTING ACTIVITY ON FRENCH FRONT IS MORE VIOLENT

ROUNDING UP ELIGIBLES IN QUEBEC CITY

Little Trouble Being Encountered by Military Officers.

MANY MEN CLAIM TO BE MARRIED

Bogus Railway, Official Wore Uniform to Escape Draft.

Quebec, Feb. 14.—The preliminary work of rounding up Class 1 men under the Military Service Act has begun here by the Dominion police under Captain G. DesRochers.

While a number of men have continued to report for service every day there also are quite a number that have been taken in by the officers. Little trouble is being encountered by the officers, and any who are challenged on the street usually produce their papers without protest, if they have them and those who cannot show cause for being exempted are being conducted to the citadel.

A Loafing Official.

One party rounded up yesterday was apparently a railroad official. He had the uniform and was looking wise, but his hours on duty seemed to be limited as he was to be found day after day loafing around the same corner. He was challenged and it was found that he had never worked in a railroad and in fact had not worked at all since last November. He was also a Class 1 man and will be wearing khaki in a few days.

The only ones with whom the officers have trouble are married men. They, in some cases, resent being questioned and few if any accepted so far were found carrying their marriage certificates. The consequence was that they were obliged to look around and show proof that they are benedict. "When the campaign is well under way the officers will adopt more rigid tactics and we baffle anyone who does not answer promptly and produce the required proof to justify his not being under arms.

NO IMPORTATION OF COOLIES TO WORK IN CANADA

Government Will Not Consider Men for Farm Labor Under the Military Service Act, But Will Register Man Power.

Ottawa, Feb. 14.—Subsequent to a sitting of the cabinet council, the government, shortly before midnight, gave out an announcement as to its immediate policy in regard to labor. The government will not conscript men for farm labor, under the military service act, but will take immediate steps to secure a registration and inventory of the manpower of the Dominion.

A classification of the industries of Canada will also be secured by the new war-trade board. There will be no importation of coolie labor at present, to which exception is taken by the labor men, but this matter may be given further consideration at a later date. No decision has been reached in regard to the conscription of alien labor.

British and French the Aggressors—In the Champagne Region French Aided by American Batteries, Capture Organized German Trenches Southwest of the Butte du Mesnil—Berlin War Office Admits the Reverse—Canadians Busy North of Lens.

Paul Bolo Pasha, Noted Frenchman, Condemned to Face Firing Squadron for High Treason—Americans Are Now in Campagne District—Teutons Distrust Bolsheviki Leaders and Fear Trouble, Possibly Surprise Attack—Emperor of Austria Wants Peace.

Paul Bolo Pasha must face the firing squad. The first man of the coterie of French and other propagandists favorable to Germany, who by their machinations sought to disrupt the soldiers and populace of France and bring about a separate peace between the republic and the Teutonic allies, has been sentenced to death by a French courtmartial.

Through lavish expenditure of German money Bolo aided in a conspiracy, which in some instances met with success, to corrupt French statesmen and political leaders and to subsidize the French press into expression of the idea that Germany was invincible at arms and that France should take time by the forelock and cease her military activities against her enemies in order to save herself from ultimate vanquishment.

The tentacles of the conspiracy reached even to the United States. Here money was transferred to Bolo through the intermediary of Count Von Bernstorff, then German ambassador to this country and it was mainly upon evidence of the operations of Bolo and several of his followers in the United States that Bolo was convicted.

Reputations Blighted.

Political reputations in France have been blighted as a result of the conspiracy and several other persons are under arrest and doubtless soon will be courtmartialled. Notable among these men is Joseph Caillaux, a former prime minister of the republic.

On the battlefield in France the fighting activity between the British and French and the Germans has assumed somewhat violent proportions on at least two sectors with the forces of Field Marshal Haig and General Petain the aggressors. Probably the heaviest encounter was in the Champagne region, where, aided by American batteries, which gave the French "very effective support" the French have captured organized German trenches southwest of the Butte du Mesnil. The German official communication admits the loss of this ground.

North of Lens, the famous coal mining region, the British and Germans again have met in a sharp encounter, but no details of it have yet come through. The artillery activity continues heavy on Nux sectors from Flanders to the Swiss border.

The mention of American artillery men as being engaged with the French against the Germans in the Champagne, is the first indication that United States forces were in the battle line elsewhere than east of St. Mihiel, which is miles distant from the Champagne front. The presumption is that the American artillerymen are in training with the French preparatory to joining their comrades in their own sector.

Unofficial despatches still indicate that in German and Austrian official circles there is very considerable distrust of the Bolsheviki leaders in Russia and that preparations even are in the making for stemming a surprise manoeuvre on the east front. One Bavarian newspaper asserts that the final conference between the Bolsheviki and German and Austrian peace delegates at Brest-Litovsk ended in a violent rupture which bore all the seeds of a future conflict.

In a manifesto to his subjects dealing with the peace effected with the Ukraine, the Austrian Emperor reiterates his desire for an early general peace.

MORE WINTRY WEATHER DUE

It is probable that another cold wave will reach the Maritime Provinces in two or three days. After a storm centred over Ontario has passed beyond the Atlantic seaboard. Last night cold weather prevailed in the Western Provinces and in Western Ontario. The coldest spot on the map exclusive of Dawson, which had a temperature of 42 below zero, was Winnipeg, where the mercury was 24 below. Prince Albert and Saskatoon reported 16 below, Regina 17 below and Edmonton 12 below. The thermometer was 4 below at Port Arthur, Ont. Gales with rain are predicted for today.

JOFFRE HONORED

Paris, Feb. 14.—Marshall Joffre, former commander-in-chief of the French army was today elected a member of the French Academy by 22 votes out of a possible 29. Six members were absent and one vote cast was a blank.

ACCUSED WILSON

Amsterdam, Feb. 14.—President Wilson is accused by the Lokal Anzeiger and the Vossische Zeitung of Berlin of wishing to act as world judge so that the coming peace may be an Anglo-American compact.

CHURCH BURNED

Quebec, Feb. 15.—The historic church of St. Foye, near here, was destroyed by fire. The church was rich in relics dating as far back as the first days of the colony of Quebec.