



RUSSIA'S BESSARABIA DRIVE FORCES RETREAT OF TEUTON ARMIES FROM MACEDONIA

Sudden Slav Offensive Halts Projected Attack on Salonica—French Halt German Attack on Hill No. 193, in Champagne

SUDDEN OFFENSIVES IN WESTERN AND BALKAN CAMPAIGNS

The sudden Russian offensive in Bukovina and assaults on Austrian invaders of Bessarabia and the renewal of German offensives in the west presage important military developments.

LONDON, Dec. 31.—The Germans and Austrians have begun a general withdrawal along the entire front in Macedonia, according to a dispatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company from Rome, quoting a message from Salonica to this effect.

The reported withdrawal is attributed to the Russian advance in Bessarabia, the message states.

The British have transferred some troops from Salonica to Orfano, a small Greek port 60 miles east of Salonica, with the intention of thus checking any possibility of a hostile advance from this quarter.

This movement is held to indicate that the Allies no longer expect any attempt against Salonica from the North.

FRENCH BEAT BACK FOES' ATTACK IN CHAMPAGNE

PARIS, Dec. 31.—The French War Office today announced the repulse of an attack made last night by the Germans in the vicinity of Hill No. 193, which is situated near Tahure, in the Champagne region. The following communique was issued:

BATTLE ON SLAV BORDER LINKED WITH BALKAN FRAY

PETROGRAD, Dec. 31.

A great struggle is proceeding on the entire southwest Russian line and apparently is equally ardent everywhere. It is intimated that both sides are aiming at the accomplishment of exceedingly important tasks.

The expectation here is that the outcome of this gigantic but still obscure struggle will be a transformation of the military positions in the Russian theater of war.

It is unanimously agreed among the military observers that the aspect of the Eastern front will be changed within three or four days.

\$100,000 Fire at Hempstead

HEMPSTEAD, N. Y., Dec. 31.—Several firemen were overcome and a number of families were driven from their homes in their night clothing when fire destroyed five stores in the heart of the town early today. The loss is estimated at \$100,000.

THE WEATHER

It is always hard to estimate the ultimate position of any span of time on the pages of history, with merely the contemporary viewpoint to which to refer. It is true in reference to everything except weather.

FORECAST

For Philadelphia and vicinity—Partly cloudy tonight and Saturday, with slowly rising temperature; Sunday unsettled with probably rain or snow; light variable winds.

LOST AND FOUND

LOST—Liberal reward for return of three... LOST—A pair of... LOST—A pair of... LOST—A pair of...

AUSTRIA BACKS DOWN IN REPLY TO U. S. DEMAND

Pledges Indemnity for American Lives and Punishment of Captain

"STANDS FOR HUMANITY"

Concurs in Washington Principle of Safety of Passengers on Torpedo Victims

LONDON, Dec. 31.—The reply of the Austrian Government to the second American note on the sinking of the steamship Ancona, with the loss of American lives, is forwarded to Reuters from Vienna by way of Amsterdam.

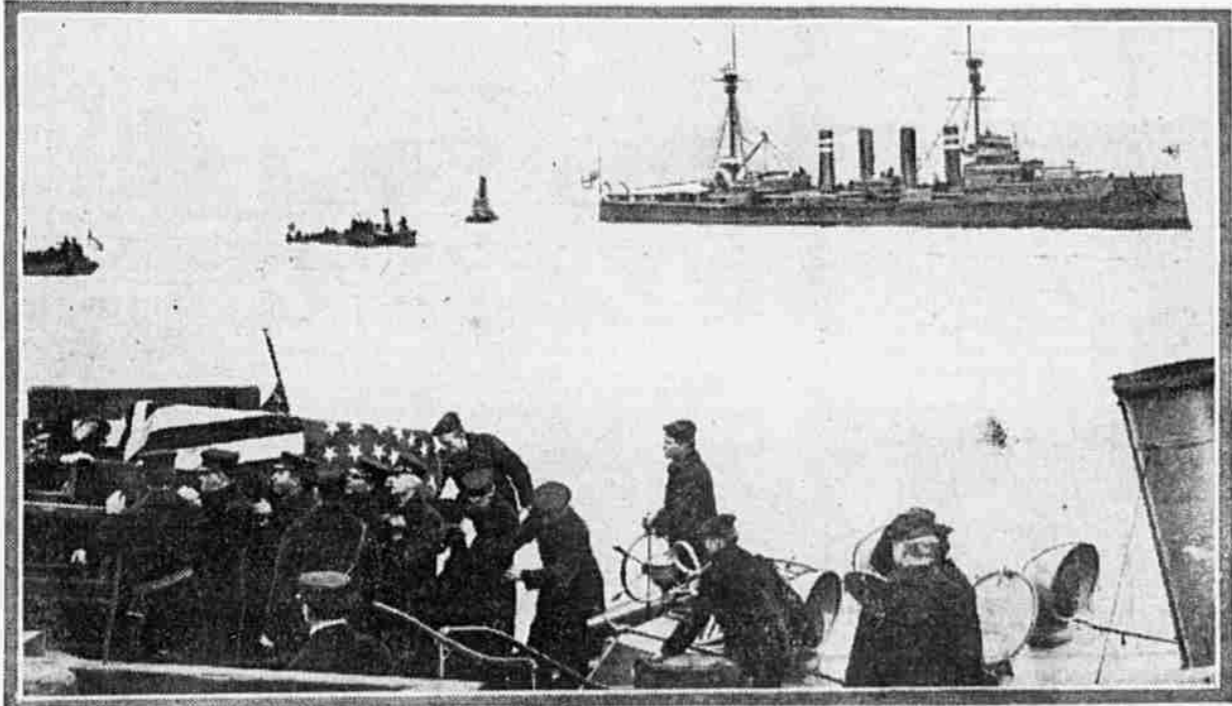
BIG BRITISH CRUISER NATAL BLOWN UP IN HARBOR; 300 LIVES LOST; 400 RESCUED

Warship Smashed to Pieces by "Internal Explosion"—News of Disaster Held Back by Admiralty for Nearly 24 Hours

THIRD BRITISH WARSHIP BLOWN UP IN HARBOR

The Natal is the third British warship blown up, presumably by internal explosion, while in harbor. The battleship Bulwark was blown up in Sheerness harbor on November 26, 1914, with a loss of about 800 lives.

BRITISH CRUISER BLOWN UP WITH LOSS OF 300



The picture shows the Natal, destroyed by an internal explosion while in harbor, as it appeared in the Hudson River, January 3, 1912, after having brought the body of Ambassador Reid to New York from England. The picture shows the British sailors carrying the coffin from the launch to the landing stage, with the Natal in the background.

LONDON, Dec. 31.—The British cruiser Natal was blown to pieces in its harbor yesterday afternoon, with a probable loss of 300 lives.

The official statement from the Admiralty said the ship was wrecked by an "internal explosion." The Admiralty statement reported that 400 of the Natal's crew of about 750 were saved. It is believed many, if not all of these, were ashore when the cruiser was sunk.

An immediate investigation has been ordered, but the results have not been made public. News of the disaster was withheld from publication for nearly 24 hours until the Admiralty had received accurate statements as to the number of survivors and the probable loss of life.

This same precaution was taken last May when the Princess Irene was blown to bits by a similar explosion in Sheerness harbor. Official explanation at that time that the news was withheld to prevent the circulation of wild reports concerning the origin of the explosion.

The Natal sank in a harbor yesterday afternoon," said the official statement.

The Natal was commanded by Captain Eric P. Black, R. N.

The Natal displaced 13,600 tons. She was built in 1903 at Harrow and had a speed of about 30 knots. She was 450 feet long and had a 75-foot beam.

She carried six 9.2-inch guns and four 7.5-inch guns, as well as lesser armament and two torpedo tubes.

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MR. 1916 ARRIVES TONIGHT ON WAVE OF JOY AND NOISE

Balls, Banquets, Parties and Merrymaking to Greet the Newcomer

MUMMERS ARE READY

An elaborate welcome awaits Mr. 1916. The greeting to this happy year, born on a wave of prosperity, will begin tonight and continue throughout tomorrow.

Finishing touches are being added to royal raiment and gilded chariots and the "shooters" are simply waiting for the word "go."

They are enthused as never before, for it is generally agreed that the mummery pageant is gradually becoming a national institution. The fact that the big show has been advertised from Philadelphia to New Orleans and as far west as Chicago warrants enthusiasm in this connection.

The parade itself will be a page of Philadelphia's prosperity. Glistening costumes, handsome equipages, wonderfully gowned women and amazing exhibits of all kinds will tell how the wheels of progress have been grinding in 1915.

L'INTERVENTO RUMENO SAREBBE IMMINENTE

La Russia E' Impegnata a Conquistare la Bucovina per Darla ai Rumeni

Da Londra giunge la notizia che la Romania e' vicina ad intervenire nella guerra europea a fianco degli alleati dell'Intesa. Le forze russe sono ora impegnate in una violenta e grande offensiva nella Galizia orientale e nella Bucovina, offensiva cui sono stati costretti a ritirare truppe dalla Macedonia per parare questo nuovo colpo. Lo scopo della Russia sarebbe questo: conquistare la Bucovina in poche settimane per darla alla Romania. Questa la fortissima speranza dello stesso tempo attaccerebbe l'Austria nella Transilvania e la Bulgaria sul Danubio, mentre i russi continuerebbero la loro offensiva nella Galizia.

HEIRESS FLEES HOME OF WEALTH FOR JOB IN A DEPARTMENT STORE

Leaves a Suburb of Woonsocket for \$8-a-Week Salary and Room in a Boarding House

"I NEVER WAS SO HAPPY"

To be a pretty girl, to live in Woonsocket, to be 19 and to be heiress to something between \$200,000 and \$500,000 is not usually considered a despicable lot. But it was despised by Irene Paul for no other reason but that Woonsocket is Woonsocket.

She ran away from her Rhode Island home, where she had everything the average girl would want, to take an \$8-a-week job in a department store and live in a boarding house. She does not want to go home because the boys and girls of Woonsocket are dull and prosaic.

To be fair to Miss Paul, it should be said that she did not live in Woonsocket proper; not in the throbbing centre of that stirring and vibrant modern place, but in a modest suburb (perhaps one might say "suburb") of Woonsocket, one Uxbridge. There Joseph Paul, her father, is the wealthiest man in the community.

He has had detectives looking for his missing daughter since November 5. Either the detectives were of the usual variety of intelligence or Miss Paul is of unusual variety, for they didn't find her. She managed for weeks to go in and from her work like any other salesman without being taken for an heiress. She had a room at 153 North Stillman street. Now she is in the care of the Court Aid Society, 15th and Summer streets, awaiting the arrival of her father.

DYING AFTER BIG PLUNGE

Frank Fisher Falls 50 Feet While Working at New Bank Building. Another, Who Fell, Disappears

Two men fell a distance of 50 feet through the maze of structural work from the third floor into the sub-basement of a building now being built at 418 Chestnut street when a rigger's board broke at noon today.

note of the United States, peremptory as were its terms.

The note says: "In reply to the second American Ancona note, the Austro-Hungarian Government fully agrees with the Washington Cabinet that the sacred laws of humanity should be taken into account also in war, and emphasizes that it, in the course of this war, has given numerous proofs of the most humane feelings."

The Austro-Hungarian Government, too, can positively concur in the principle that enemy private vessels, so far as they do not fly or offer resistance, shall not be destroyed before the persons aboard are secured.

The assurance that the United States Government attaches value to the maintenance of the existing good relations between Austria-Hungary and the United States is warmly reciprocated by the Austro-Hungarian Government, which now, as heretofore, is anxious to render these relations still more cordial.

ALLIES ARREST TEUTON ENVOYS; GREEKS ANGRY

Athens Enters Formal Protest Against Seizure of Salonica Diplomats

LONDON, Dec. 31.—The correspondent of the Times at Salonica reports that the consuls of Germany, Austro-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria, together with their families, have been arrested and are now prisoners on a French warship. The arrests were made on orders from General Sarraill.

Greece has already entered formal protest. The news has created great excitement in diplomatic circles in Athens. The German and Austrian Ambassadors visited the Foreign Office yesterday afternoon and inquired if the reports were true.

General Sarraill, it is understood, has justified his action by the explanation that German, Austrian, Turkish and Bulgarian consulates harbored spies and that the consuls themselves had sent information to their countries concerning the strength of the Allied fortifications at Salonica. With their families they were taken aboard Allied warships.

CHELtenham GIRL SHOCKED TO DEATH BY FIRE EXCITEMENT

Miss Anna Keenan Dies When Frightened by Noise of Engines Near Her Home

ILL WITH PNEUMONIA

A death from shock resulted today in a 14-year-old girl of Cheltenham, which caused several injuries, destroyed one home, damaged three other homes and drove two families into the street in their nightclothes.

Miss Anna Keenan, 19 years old, weakened by pneumonia, succumbed to the shock when she heard the clanging fire engines and the shouts of firemen and residents attempting to save the home of John Dobbs, a builder and contractor, at Ryers and Beecher avenues, where the fire started. The home of the girl, who was the daughter of Thomas Keenan, a retired business man, is a square away from the Dobbs home.

When the flames and shouts aroused the neighborhood, the young woman became hysterical. She was carried to a secluded room, where the glare of the fire could not be seen and the sound of the battle with the fire was muffled.

The fire raged the Dobbs home, adjacent, then sweeping across the street to the bakery of Charles Wendt. The Dobbs home was the centre of a block of frame structures, and the utter loss of the entire row was imminent before the flames were brought under control.

Fire companies within eight miles, including those of Fox Chase, responded.

France Levies Income Tax, But Will Not Enforce It

France has levied a tax on incomes of more than 5000 francs a year, says Yves Guyot, editor L'Agence et Economique et Financier. It will go into effect tomorrow.

The tax will be due only. No preparations have been made to collect it. Every one liable to pay will be required to make a declaration of income before the end of 1916.

The Chamber of Deputies has passed a bill to tax consumers 15 francs a ton on French coal and use the proceeds of the tax to cut down the price of imported coal. Gold in the Bank of France has increased to \$964,000,000, says M. Guyot, in an article on French finances sent by special cable to the EVENING LEDGER and published exclusively on page 12 of this issue.

QUICK NEWS

GREECE AGAIN PROTESTS TO ALLIES. BERLIN, Dec. 31.—Greece has made a second and stronger protest to the Entente Powers against the erections of fortifications about Salonica, according to reports received from Athens today.

TEN MEN MISSING AFTER EXPLOSION IN MILL. CHICAGO, Dec. 31.—Early reports indicated 10 men are missing as a result of an explosion, followed by fire, at the American Linseed Company plant in South Chicago, Ill., at noon today. Downtown fire headquarters reported two engine companies had been caught beneath falling walls.

JOE MURPHY, IRISH COMEDIAN, DIES AT 83. NEW YORK, Dec. 31.—"Joe" Murphy, old-time Irish comedian, died in this city today, leaving an estate valued at \$3,000,000. Murphy was known from coast to coast for his impersonation in "The Kerry Gow." He was 83 years old.

ALLIES' POSITION SECURE IN GREECE, CASTLEMAN SAYS. PARIS, Dec. 31.—General Castelman, chief of the French General Staff, who went to Salonica to confer with the Anglo-French commanders and inspect the Allies' defenses, has returned to Paris, fully satisfied that the Bulgarians and Germans can never dislodge the Allies from their positions in Greece.

While in Rome on his way back to France General Castelman gave out an interview, in which he declared that the German allies would suffer tremendous losses of life if they attacked at Salonica. One of General Castelman's aides supplemented the interview by saying: "An offensive by the Bulgarian and German forces in Greece would cost them at least 100,000 men."

INDIA'S FREEDOM DEPENDS ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE. DELHI, Dec. 31.—Until the natives of India settle their own religious differences there is little likelihood that their request for self-government will be granted, officials said today, commenting on the action of the Indian National Congress at Bombay yesterday. The congress adopted by unanimous vote a resolution demanding self-government.

BRITISH BLACKLIST 102 NEUTRAL SHIPS. LONDON, Dec. 31.—The blacklist of neutral shipping issued by the Government now numbers 102 steamships. British shippers are advised not to charter ships appearing on it, as they are suspected of actual trading with Great Britain's foes, or of representing German capital. The gross tonnage of these vessels is \$9,000, which means a carrying capacity of 200,000 tons available to British shippers and neutral chartered in any way dependent on British shipping. Neutral nations represented on the list, with the number of ships of each nation, are as follows: United States, 11; Norway, 25; Sweden, 27; Denmark, 8; Spain, 1; Holland, 4, and Brazil, 3.

KAISER CANCER VICTIM, PARIS MATIN SAYS. PARIS, Dec. 31.—The Matin declares it has received definite advice from Switzerland that Emperor William is really suffering from cancer instead of a non-malignant furuncle, as reported from Berlin yesterday.

FORD PILGRIMS ARRIVE IN DENMARK. COPENHAGEN, Dec. 31.—The Ford peace party arrived in Denmark from Stockholm today on the last lap of the cruise "to bring the boys out of the trenches." Business Manager Guston Plattiff hurried out to see shipping men about chartering a vessel to carry the delegates to The Hague. It is possible, however, that the party will accept Mayor Lindhagen's invitation and return to Stockholm for the peace conference. The Ford leaders have virtually abandoned hope of obtaining Germany's permission for their passage over German soil en route to The Hague from Copenhagen.

COAL FREIGHT RATE CHANGE POSTPONED. WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—The Interstate Commerce Commission today postponed the effective date of the new anthracite coal rates from the anthracite region to the seaboard from January 1 to April 1, 1916, to give the railroads more time to prepare new tariffs. The new rates involve an annual reduction of \$5,000,000 revenue to the railroads. They have been twice postponed before by the Commission.

RUSSIA TO SUPPRESS TWO CIVIC LEAGUES. BERLIN, Dec. 31.—The Petrograd newspapers contain indirect but convincing proof the Russian Government is ready to dissolve the Russian Township League and the Russian Self-Government League. The existence of the leagues is considered undesirable for the present. The newspaper Retch announces the right of acquiring real estate, which was conceded to the Jews within certain limits, will be withdrawn. The Russian Government has dissolved the Russian Clerks' Association because members of the Duma delivered speeches at the association's meetings.

RUSSIA PUSHING ROAD TO OPEN RAND. LONDON, Dec. 31.—By early spring, says a Morning Post dispatch from Christiania, the new Russian railway from Petrograd to Alexandrovsk, on the Kola Fjord (in northern Finland, on the north shore of the Scandinavian peninsula, just east of the Norwegian border) will be completed, giving a direct connection from Petrograd to an ice-free port. The Northern Norway Company, the correspondent says, intends to establish a regular line of steamers between Trondheim and Alexandrovsk, providing another all-year communication between Russia and the rest of the world.

FLOODED LANDS BAR WAY TO EGYPT. PITTSBURGH, Dec. 31.—"If the Germans invade Egypt they first will be obliged to cross an arm of the sea 15 miles wide which the British have caused to be flooded over the desert east of the Suez Canal," declared Miss Fannie Bradford, of the United Presbyterian Mission, Khartoum, Egypt, who is visiting in Mount Lebanon, having arrived from the Orient on Christmas Day. "No alarm is felt in Egypt over the possibility of an attack from the Teutonic allies," continued Miss Bradford.

CARRANZA AMENDS RULE OF SUCCESSION. WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—In preparation of his assumption of the title of provisional President of Mexico General Venustiano Carranza has issued a decree changing the rule of succession. During the period of the revolution the constitutional provisions were suspended by the Carranzistas and the regulation provided that in case of the death or removal of the de facto head of the Government the authority would be transferred to the military leader next in command. Under the new decree the constitutional provision is restored and succession to the provisional Presidency will go to the Minister of Foreign Relations.

MRS. VANDERBILT'S \$10,000 EARRING LOST AND FOUND. HOT SPRINGS, Va., Dec. 31.—Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt shared honors with President Wilson and his bride in furnishing excitement for the visitors here yesterday. She lost on the golf links a pearl earring valued at \$10,000. Almost the entire population except the Presidential couple took part in the hunt for the gem when a \$500 reward was announced for its recovery. The earring was picked up near the 12th hole just before sundown by Adam Green, the professional golf player.

TWELVE AIR BATTLES FOUGHT ON WEST FRONT. LONDON, Dec. 31.—The latest British official report tells of a series of thrilling air encounters in the western zone. It says: "Thursday 18 of our aeroplanes bombed the Comines station and hit the station, lines and sheds in the vicinity. Ten of our aeroplanes attacked heavily the aerodrome and did considerable damage. In both cases all the machines returned safely. During the day there were 12 encounters with hostile aeroplanes. One of our machines engaged four of the enemy's, one of which is believed to have been brought down. Another was damaged and all four were driven off. One of our aeroplanes was brought down as the result of a combat with two machines."