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ERA

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PRICE ONE CENT

GERMANS SMASH FRENCH LINE FOR SIX-MILE GAIN IN GREAT BATTLE NORTH OF VERDUN

Crown Prince's Army Sweeps Forward by Terrific Attacks-Suffer Enormous Losses But Capture 3000 Prisoners and Booty

French Defenses Near Consevoye and Haumont Crumble Beneath Onslaught-Battle Still Rages-Teutons Make Big Advance in Alsace-Paris Admits Lines Are Broken.

LONDON, Feb. 23. The Crown Prince has delivered the greatest smash against the Allies'

western front since the English lines were broken at Ypres last May. In a mighty offensive against the French outer positions defending the great fortress of Verdun, the Germans have captured nearly six miles and half of French trenches, according to an official statement from Berlin of afternoon. The German War Office also reports the capture of 3000 French prisoners and great quantities of booty.

The French War Office admits in an official statement this afternoon hat the Crown Prince is he ling a great army against the French lines north of Verdun, on a front 15 miles wide. No similar attack has been made reither side in the west in many months, excepting the French offensive in City's System of Books for the

Champagne last September. The battle is raging less than ten miles from the city of Verdun, itself en the east bank of the Meuse River. Berlin reported the Germans have harled back the French on a wide front between the village of Consenvoye, in the Meuse, and the village of Azannes, eight miles east of the river.

By another forward drive, the Germans have captured 700 yards of French trenches east of Heidweiler, in Alsace, the German War Office nunced. Eighty French prisoners were taken in this operation.

Paris reported the heaviest fighting around the Haumont Woods, just south of the Consenvoye-Azannes lines, indicating that the Crown Prince is attempting to blast a way through to the outer forts of Verdun. The German losses have been enormous, according to the French official statement, which quotes German prisoners as declaring that entire German battalions have been slaughtered.

The German infantry attack was preceded by 48 hours of continuous bembardment, which evidently wrecked the advanced French positions. The Crewn Prince is smashing southward, hoping to conquer the outer defenses of Verdun and bring up German 42-centimetres to level the great fortress.

BERLIN REPORTS GAINS. Following is the text of the official report issued by the Berlin War

"In the neighborhood of the trenches captured east of Souchez (in Ariois) on Monday the enemy's positions were found to have been damaged considerably by mining operations. The number of prisoners taken by us has been increased to 11 officers and 348 men of the rank and file. We also took three machine guns from the enemy.

"We penetrated the enemy's lines for three kilometres (1.8 miles), at

"We penetrated the enemy's lines for three kilometres (1.8 miles), at Consenvoye, taking 3000 prisoners.

"On the Maas hills (the heights of the Meuse) artillery duels have continued. East of the Maas (Meuse River) we attacked a position which the stemy had been engaged in fortifying for a year and a half in the neighborhood of Consenvoye,

"In the northern sector of the Woevre district (the region between the catalogs of the collections of booklovers, and Measure and Measure Pivers) we delivered on attack extending over a front of the Consenvoye, and Measure and Measure Pivers Piv

Meuse and Moselle Rivers) we delivered an attack extending over a front of

nearly seven miles. "This attack was pushed forward and we penetrated into the enemy's lines, inflicting sanguinary losses. In addition to prisoners, we captured a

large amount of booty. TAKE ALSACE POSITION

"In upper Alsace, an attack to the east of Heidwiler resulted in the capture of an enemy position extending over a front 700 yards wide and 400 yards deep.

"Eighty prisoners fell into our hands. "There have been numerous air engagements behind the enemy's front,

h all of which our airmen maintained the upper hand. The Paris War Office communique states that the battle is proceeding Fielently, and admits that the French troops have evacuated the village of Haumont. This position was abandoned after a sanguinary conflict in which the Germans suffered heavy losses.

The text of the communique follows: "In the Artois district we recaptured some trench sections in the forest

of Givenchy. "In the region to the north of Verdun a bombardment by the enemy, energetically answered by us, continued during the night. Infantry engagements have developed on a front of altogether about 15 kilometres (9.3 miles). The conflict continues with violence from the right bank of the Meuse to the southeast of Herbebois. We evacuated the village of Haumont, of which we still hold the outskirts, after a bloody conflict, in which our troops inflicted

very heavy losses on the enemy. "To the east of that point a counter-attack permitted us to recapture the treater part of Caures Forest, located in the salient occupied yesterday by the enemy to the north of Beaumont.

"A strong German attack launched against Herbebois was sharply checked by our curtains of fire.

"According to stories of prisoners, certain German units were completely destroyed in these actions.

"An artillery duel which is slowly developing is going on in the region of Haute Charliere and Fromeizy.

In Lorraine, in the region of Nomeny, our artillery has shown considerable activity. An enemy reconnaissance north of Letroicourt was unable to reach our lines."

WITTORIOSA AVANZATA ITALIANA SU TRENTO

Forti Esterni del Formidabile Campo Trincerato Minacelati dalle Truppe Alpine

de notizie che giungono da Roma ci no di una ripresa di attività nella di guerra del Trentino. Le forze la le truppe alpine, hanno compiuto deportante operazione nella regione unistra dei Brenta, a nordiovest rio, occupando la sona montuosa di a completandone la conquista dopo sieral di combattimenti con l'occupa-di altre localita' verso l'inscitatura

saliate noticio sulla guerra, in ital-

LOST AND FOUND

THE WEATHER

FORECAST

For Philadelphia and vicinity-Rain tonight, probably turning to snow Thursday, followed by clearing; colder late tonight and Thursday; moderate variable winds becoming northwest.

For details see page 17.

Kills Wife and Himself HALTIMORE. Feb. 23 — Following an argument in the dining room of Ganshorn's Hotel here this afternoon a man believed from papers found in his pockets to be Arthur Wills. of 212 North Stricker street, this city, walked to the front door of the place with a woman believed to be his wife, drew a revolver and shot the woman. He then killed himself with the same weapon. The woman died a short time later at Marcy Hospital.

1000 at Marcus Hook Minstrels Nearly 1000 persons withened the second performance of the Viacose Athletic Association's minatrels at Marcus Hook inst night. When the show was originally urran on "maraday of last week, 1150 persons were in the audience.



JOHN THOMSON

JOHN THOMSON, HEAD OF THE FREE LIBRARY, DIES; NOTED WRITER

Masses Mainly Obtained Through His Efforts of Years

INTERESTED CARNEGIE

John Thomsen, for 22 years head of the Philadelphia Free Library and an essayist of repute, died this morning at his home, 2101 North Camac street. His family was at his bedside at the time of his death, which resulted from a compli-cation of diseases. Mr. Thomson, who was 80 years old, had been confined to bed for two months, and hope for his re-covery was abandoned several days ago, when he became unconscious.

when he became unconscious.

It was mainly through Mr. Thomson's efforts that the city of Philadelphia obtained and maintained the system of free libraries which every section enjoys. It was he who, appointed librarian in 1894, when a single room sufficed to hold the 1500 volumes, directed its expansion until it now has 22 branches in which are 366,000 books. And it was John Thomson who interested Andrew Carnegle to give \$1,500,000, to the free library system of this city for the exection of 30 branch libraries.

KNOWN ACROSS THE SEA John Thomson was as well known along the Atlantic seaboard and across the Atlantic as he was to clubmen and educa after being educated in London, came to this country in 1881, settling in Philadelphia. He was later appointed private sec-

retary to Clarence H. Clark and Jay Gould, which positions he held jointly for 1 years... When the subject of a free library was broached in 1894, the name of John Thomson was mentioned prominently, and it occasioned no surprise when he was appointed librarian when the system was

finally started in the same year.

With all his work in the interests of educating the average citizen through better methods of circulating the books (2,000,000 volumes now being taken out

Continued on Page Fifteen, Column One

ASPHALT CO. TO SHARE

PROFITS AND PENSION

Plan to Increase Interest

Among Men - Basis of

Distributing Earnings

Announcement of a profit-sharing and pension plan for officers and salaried employes was made by the Geheral Asphalt Company today. About 300 employes will benefit. The plan applies to the company and all of its subsidiaries.

The pension plan becomes operative from date, while the profit-sharing will be made after the annual meeting of the

Asphalt Company in May, 1917. The first nioneys to be taken from the com-pany's earnings for profit-sharing will come from the fiscal year ending January

In order to participate in a share of the company's profits an employe or officer must have been in the employ of the com-

FAITHFUL EMPLOYES

OPERATIVE NEXT YEAR HELD

BREAK WITH GERMANY SEEN IN WILSON'S ATTITUDE; MAY TELL CONGRESS IN PERSON

U-Boat Controversy Reaches Acute Stage—Berlin Reported to Desire Long-Drawn-Out Negotations. No Further Concessions

Administration Hears Germany Is Sending Instructions to Von Bernstorff to Play for Time in Settlement of All Disputes Now Pending-Senate to Be Warned to Keep Hands Off

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23. The appearance of President Wilson before Congress in the next few days to announce his desire to break off diplomatic relations with Germany

was forecast this afternoon by high Administration officials. This action is certain to follow, one official said, if intimations coming

from German sources are correct. These intimations are that the German Foreign Office is sending instructions to Ambassador Bernstorff to play for further delay in the determination of the Lusitania dispute and for a long discussion of technicalities over the armed merchantman decree scheduled to go into effect March 1.

Bernstorff is expected to receive his instructions in the next 48 hours. Today it was declared by reliable authority that the President intends to make his refusal to temporize so emphatic that there will be no doubt left of his purpose to require a closing of the Lusitania negotiations in keeping with the original demands of this Government.

BREAK WOULD BE NEXT STEP

Since Germany is not expected to withdraw the armed merchantman decree, it was pointed out, one thing only will be left for the President to do and that is to cut off diplomatic relations. This would mean the handing of his passports to Ambassador Bernstorff.

The President, it is declared, is committed to the move, but does not desire to act without first laying the matter before Congress. That, it is said, explains the long conference Monday night between the President and Senate Leader Kern, Chairman Stone, of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Chairman Flood, of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Every party to that conference has refused to discuss the nature of the matters discussed, but it is known that at least one of them has indicated his personal apprehension that certain courses considered might lead to war.

This determination by the President, it is said, is the explanation for the action of Senator Stone in calling off his own speech in the Senate defending the Administration's foreign policy.

PRESIDENT THROUGH PARLEYING

The President, officials said today, is done with parleying. Already, they say, as the result of vigorous activities on his part in the last few days, the agitation among the Democrats in Congress for a resolution warning Americans to keep off armed merchantmen has collapsed. Investigation this afternoon disclosed that Democrats favoring such a resolution have not changed their mind, but the idea that the White House would support the action having been blasted, the desire to press a resolution has disappeared.

President Wilson has served warning President Wilson has served warning on Congress that he will not tolerate any interference at this time with the international relations of the United States. The situation so far as the Administration is concerned, it was learned upon absolutely reliable authority today, is that any agitation now in Congress which could be construed as a criticism of the State Deconstrued as a criticism of the State De-partment must inevitably have a seriously adverse effect among the belligerent European nations.

warning to the Senate that any discussion of an embargo resolution or the Gore res-olution which would gemand that pass-ports be refused Americans traveling on belligerent vessels will, in the opinion of the President, seriously embarrass Amer-ican interests. Whether this will prevent an open debate, however, is very doubtful There are many members of both house

Continued on Page Three, Column Five

POLITE BURGLARS, ONE

IN FULL DRESS, CAUGHT

Home of Mr. and Mrs.

Charles Peacock Betrays

Two Thieves

The politest burglars captured for a long time were arrested early today by Patrolman Scull, of the 32d street and

Woodland avenue station. They stripped the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pea-cock, of 248 South 46th street, who are at Palm Beach, Fla., from top to bottom.

The two men, one of whom was in a dress suit, were seen by the policeman

slipping from one dark spot to another at 46th and Spruce streets after mid-night. Scull decided to investigate the bulky bag one of them carried. When he stole up on

be stole up on them, they at once tried to engage him in a pleasant conversation, but when he demanded to have a look at the bag the men handed it over at once.

WITHOUT BAIL

BRITISH VESSEL WHICH LEFT HERE JANUARY 16 DAMAGED BY BOMB

The Administration will give frank Steamship Strathclyde Towed Into Queenstown Badly Crippled, Message From Queenstown Says

THINK SPY WORKED HERE

A bomb explosion aboard the 4417-tor British provision ship Strathclyde, ailed from this city January 18 for Manchester, England, was reported in cable-grams from Queenstown, Ireland, lato which port the vessel, badly damaged, was towed today.

The bomb was placed on board the

steamship while it was docked here, ship ping men pointed out, if the reported ex losion is true. No details were given in the dispatch

AFTER ROBBING HOUSE except that no one is allowed to board the vessel. A cablegram to the ship's agents, Furness, Withy & Co., Ltd., with offices in the Bourse, today, briefly an-nounced the arrival of the crippled vessel General Company Announces Suitcase Filled With Loot From at Queenstown. No cause was advanced in the latter message.

The steamship carried an inflammable cargo of oils, provisions and automobile parts valued at \$313,421, the bulk of the cargo consisting of wheat, corn and flour. Captain John C. Murray, a Scotchman, master of the vessel, had a crew of 35 men, all Englishmen. There were no passengers.

That a German agent or sympathizer either secreted himself aboard or placed a bomb and time fuse in the hold while the ship was taking on its cargo here was suggested today.

The Strathclyds was loaded at the foot

East Cambria street, Port Richmond in a lonely spot, under heavy guard, but it was learned that after the work of the stevedores was finished the watch was relaxed for a few minutes until sailing

The cargo was not consigned for mili-tary use. It was said at the offices of Furness, Withy & Co., the agents, today. That special guards supervise the loading of vessels at this dock was admitted, and this cystom will be continued. The guards allow no one without the proper credentials to board vessels or lotter about the

ing the departure of the ship were noticed.
"The crew is English," it was added.
"There were positively no Germans or sallors of German descent among the sallors of German descent among the crew. The policy of guarding the loading of vessels, which has been in force for some time, will continue, whether or not an investigation shows that a bomb really was exploded aboard the sithp."

The Strathclyde, a one-funnel, two-masted freighter, is owned by Burrell & Co., Glasgow. It was built six years ago, and is \$70 feet long.

The more important items of the cargo, according to the manifest, are as follows: 1422 boxes C. R. steel.

company's profits an employe or officer must have been in the employ of the company continuously for one year or more prior to the expiration of the fiscal year ending January 31 next, and must have received a satiary of \$60 or more a month. Hefore any profits will be shared with the employes the company must have earned enough for the payment of the preferred dividend, which is at the annual rate of 5 per cent, and at present is equal to \$65,705 yearly. After the preferred dividend is cared for the employes will share.

APPER DIVIDEND PAYMENTS.

The apportionment will be made at the rate of 1 per cent. of the salary of sach employe for every \$100,000 of gain surphins over and above the preferred dividend requirements.

The action of the company in deciding upon a profit-sharing and pension plan is following the footsteps of other companies which have taken similar setion, notably the Fennsylvania Haitroad. While the railroad have not profit-sharing plan, it has a pension, and many employes are retired each year.

The official aumouncement made by the General Asphalt Company follows:

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QUICK NEWS

TERRIFIC EXPLOSIONS ON BELGIAN BORDER

AMSTERDAM, Feb. 23. - Scores of terrific explosions were heard along the Belgian frontier Tuesday, preceded by repeated alarms and the blowing of horns and whistles. Travelers reaching Amsterdam reported that in all probability allied aviators were raiding the new railway the Germans are building between Aix-la-Chapelle and Vise.

BURTON ANNOUNCES CANDIDACY FOR PRESIDENT

COLUMBUS, O., Peb. 23. - Theodore Burton of Cleveland, former United States Sepator, filed an announcement with the Secretary of State today that he would be a candidate for the presidential nomination on the Republican ticket.

DU PONT CO. DECLARES 22% EXTRA DIVIDEND

WILMINTON,, Del., Feb. 23,-The directors of E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company have declared the regular quarterly dividend of 14 per cent, on the common stock and a special dividend of \$5 in cash and \$19 in Anglo-French bonds at 95 with interest, payable March 15 to holders of record February 29. The directors also declared the regular quarterly dividend of 14 per cent. on the debentures stock, payable April 25 to holders of record April 10. The regular quarterly dividend of 11/2 per cent, was also declared on old du Pont common stock, payable May 1.

BILL FOR RECEIVER FOR TEXAS & PACIFIC DISMISSED

DALLAS, Tex., Feb. 23.-Federal Judge Meck ruled this afternoon that he had no jurisdiction in the suit of the Bankers' Trust Comany of New York for appointment of a receiver for the Texas and Pacific Railroad and the New Orleans and Pacific, a subsidiary, and dismossed the bill.

P. R. R. FREIGHT TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT CHANGES

The Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, at a meeting today, confirmed the following changes in the organization of the Freight Traffic Department, incident to the retirement of Division Freight Agent Edward T. Johnson on March 1, under the pension regulations of the company: J. B. Large, Division Freight Agent at Erie, Pa., will succeed Mr. Johnson as Division Freight Agent at Buffalo, N. Y. William C. Glynn, Division Freight Agent at Altoona, Pa., will succeed Mr. Large. E. S. Neilson, Freight Solicitor at Pittsburgh, Pa., will be advanced to Division Freight Agent at Altoona, Pa.

REVOLT IN CHINESE PROVINCE; MARTIAL LAW ON

SHANGHAI, Feb. 23.—Martial law has been proclaimed at Chang-Sha, capital Hu-Nan province, because of revolutionary disturbances.

AGREE TO FLETCHER AS MEXICAN AMBASSADOR

WASHINGTOIN, Feb. 23.—The Senate Foreign Relations Committee today, sided to recommend the confirmation of Henry P. Fletcher as Ambassador to Mexico. The appointment has been held up since early last December because of opposition to Fresident Wilson's Mexican policy. The vote in the Polician Relations Committee was 12 to 2. Senators Borah, of Idaho, and William Alden Smith, of Michigan, both Republicans, voted against the recommendation.

NEW JERSEY MOVIE MEN FIGHT CENSOR BILL

TRENTON, Feb. 23.-Movie men from all over New Jersey today made a vigorous protest before the House Judiciary Committee against the establishment of a State Board of Motion Picture Censors provided for in a bill now before the Legislature. The bill was supported by clergymen and representatives of various Holy Name societies of the State.

ONE MAN CAUSES STRIKE OF 1200

HARRISBURG, Feb. 23.-Twelve hundred union miners of the Lykens anthracite district struck this morning to compel the reinstatement of William Stuppy, a discharged foreman, who, it is alleged, was dismissed because he would not load the mine cars as heavily as the operators desired. Alleged excessive "topping" has been a source of contention at Lykens for some time. It is reported that Williamstown miners may declare a sympathy strike.

MEN WHO DESTROYED ZEPPELIN GET \$1000

PARIS, Feb. 23.—A gift of \$1000 was given today by the Marquis D'Ornano for distribution among the members of the gun crew that destroyed the Zeppelin "LZ-77" near Bar Le Duc on Monday night.

CZAR OFFERS COMMAND TO MONTENEGRIN MONARCH ROME, Feb. 23. - The Gazetta del Popolo, of Milan, states that Emperor

Nicholas of Russia has offered the command of a Russian army corps to King Nicholas of Montenegro, who holds the rank of Russian field marshal.

JAPANESE WARSHIPS REPORTED IN MEDITERRANEAN

LONDON, Feb. 23.-The Admiralty today would not comment on German reports, transmitted through Copenhagen, that a Japanese fleet, accompanied by a large number of aircraft, has arrived in the Mediterranean to co-operate with the Allies. The Times, in publishing the German report, which is said to have come from Italian sources, recalled the fact that it was rumored more than a month ago that Japanese warships would leave for the Mediterranean to protect Japanese shipping against Austro-German submarines,

AMERICANS TO AID NEEDY BERLINERS BERLIN, Feb. 23,-The American Chamber of Commerce, in Berlin, on

March 1, will inaugurate a new auxiliary kitchen for persons who are in need owing to the war. Berlin papers, commenting on the announcement today, speak with satisfaction of "this proof of American sympathies."

CITY GETS \$45,224.37 INSURANCE TAX

City Treasurer William McCoach today received a State warrent for \$45,224.27 from the Auditor General to cover the sum due the county on tax paid by foreign insurance companies operating in Philadelphia. This amount will be appropriated by Councils to the Firemen's Pension Fund.

RUSSIA DISCLAIMS DESIGNS ON SWEDEN

PETROGRAD, Feb. 23.—Foreign Minister Sazanoff, addressing the Duma today, made a statement that is expected to go far toward calming the anti-Russian feeling that has been growing in Sweden for many months. He declared that Russia had no designs on Sweden, adding:

We must obtain an outlet to a free sea in quite another direction." The Minister reiterated his previous assertions that Russia is determined to continue fighting until Germany has been thoroughly whipped, but said that neither he nor any one else could predict when the war would end.

DUTCH TANKER FROM NEW YORK SUNK BY MINE

ROTTERDAM, Feb. 12.—The Dutch tank steamship Las Flandre, 1978 tons. bound from New York to Rotterdam, has been sunk presumably by a mine. Only two members of the crew were reported saved in the first advices received here today. La Flandre sailed from New York on February 2.

CHILD SCALDED BY COFFEE DIES

A cup of coffee that its tiny fingers sought to grasp caused the death today of Thomas, the 11-months-old haby of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Flynn, of \$330 Pleron street. The child died in the Germantown Hospital. Its eyes, face and chest were seared by the liquid which it upset from the table two days ugo.

RUSSIA WOULD BUY BACK CAPTURED WARSHIPS

TORIO, Peb 25.—Russia is negotiating with Japan for the humadiata chase of second wareadps which were captured in the fitting farances was