



FARNESE PALACE, ROME



PALAZZO CHIGI



ST. JOHN LATERAN



PALAZZO MONTECITORIO - THE ITALIAN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES -

HISTORIC ROME BUILDINGS DAMAGED BY 'QUAKE

VICTIMS OF 'QUAKE MAY BE 100,000 SAY MERCER THEN DENIED

Estimates of Killed and Injured in Italy's Disaster Vary From 20,000 Up

SIXTY TOWNS AND VILLAGES SUFFER

Avezzano and Sora Worst Stricken So Far As Loss of Life Is Concerned - Rescue and Relief Work Goes On Night and Day

By Associated Press.
London, Jan. 15.—The "Chronicle's" Rome correspondent estimates the total killed and injured in the Italian earthquake at between 90,000 and 100,000.

A "Central News" dispatch from Rome estimates the number of victims at 20,000, distributed as follows: Avezzano, 10,000; Sora, 4,000; elsewhere, 6,000.

Paris, Jan. 15, 3.10 P. M.—A dispatch to the Havas Agency from Rome quotes the "Messaggero" as saying that the number of dead at Avezzano is larger than has been believed. According to this paper 11,000 persons lie buried beneath the ruins of the city.

Rome, Jan. 15.—There is reason to believe that only a few hundred persons out of the 17,000 who inhabited Sora have been saved. It is, of course, impossible as yet to ascertain the exact number of dead and wounded. Relief expeditions have been hurried to Sora and every hour is bringing more harrowing particulars of the destruction of the town.

London, Jan. 15, 4.32 P. M.—The Exchange Telegraph Company has received a message from its Rome correspondent, who says that the magnitude of the Italian disaster increases as further news from the devastated area is received.

The casualties at Magliano-di-Marsi are estimated at 1,300 out of a population of 1,500. At Pescini 4,000 persons are reported killed and the number at San Benedetto is given as 6,000.

All the people of the village of Capelle are believed to be buried in the ruins of their homes. The entire population of Albafuenceses also is believed to have perished, and out of 500 inhabitants in the village of Lese, 450 are said to be dead.

Every town in the Livi valley is reported to-day to have been either totally destroyed or very seriously damaged. The work of rescue at Sora is being pushed with all possible expedition. There is, however, little hope of saving any of the people alive.

Rome, via Paris, Jan. 15.—Midnight.—The "Giornale D'Italia" estimates the number of earthquake victims in the region of Avezzano and Sora at 25,000.

Rome, Jan. 15.—News from the earthquake stricken districts of Italy

Witnesses Assert Alleged Swindler Intended to Plead Guilty, But Changed Mind

HIS STATEMENT READ IN COURT

Trial of Pair Accused of Having Attempted to Cheat Local Banks by Depositing Two Bogus Checks for \$1000 Each Takes Sensational Turn

That H. R. Mercer and Fred LeBrun, accused as check swindlers, on trial today in Judge Kunkel's side of the criminal court on charges of forgery and false pretense, had originally intended, but subsequently changed their plan, to enter a qualified plea of guilty to the several charges, and that Mercer, acting for himself and in behalf of his alleged confederate, made confession to the District Attorney purporting to describe their connection with the passing in this city two \$1,000 bogus checks drawn on Florida banks, was brought out by the prosecution at this morning's session of court.

In his "confession," however, Mercer made it appear that a stranger, at Mercer's suggestion, had forged the checks, Mercer simply being a party to the offense, and it was because of Mercer's qualified statements that his plan to plead guilty in a qualified way was not accepted by the District Attorney. Upon being informed of the fact that he would have to stand trial Mercer, therefore, made a supplemental statement, in which he repudiated his original story. He declared then that his actions at all times were in good faith, and that he had believed the bogus checks were good ones.

The Commonwealth expected to close its case by early this afternoon, but counsel for the defendants at noon refused to say whether they would put their clients on the stand, hinting that a motion may be made to the court to throw out the case upon the contention that the prosecution "has not made out its case." Should the case be given to the jury to dispose of it is not likely that a verdict will be rendered before to-morrow morning.

Mercer's Confession Read
Mercer's alleged confession was read to the court and jury by Miss Clara Miller, the District Attorney's stenographer.

HIS "DAMN" ANGERS COURT

Youth Who Uses It Is Promptly Sentenced to Reformatory

Four of five Royaltan boys pleaded guilty to charges of breaking into and robbing freight cars on the Pennsylvania railroad in Royaltan and all were sentenced to the Huntingdon reformatory by Judge McCarroll this morning. They are Elmer Dasher, Robert and William Seibert and Jacob Kreiser. John Kreiser, who was implicated by the defendants, stood trial and a jury acquitted him.

Dasher and Robert Seibert some years ago served a term in the reformatory for robbing cars and they begged to be sent to the penitentiary, saying that "a fellow is worse after he comes out of the reformatory than when he goes in."

When Judge McCarroll said he would send them to the reformatory with the hope that when they get out they would be better men, Robert Seibert remarked:

"You're damn right I will!"

"We'll send them all to the reformatory," snapped the court.

William McAllister, Frank Reed and D. P. Reed pleaded guilty to larceny charges and sentence was suspended. John Carrieco, the defendant in a larceny case, also was paroled. Adam Metriviteh got two months on a theft charge.

WHEAT PRICES STILL SOAR

Before Market Was Hour Old May Cereal Gained Two Cents a Bushel

Chicago, Jan. 15.—Immense export business caused a fresh upheaval today in the price of wheat and flour, and even more so in rye and corn. The foreign buying of wheat and corn counted in millions of bushels.

Wheat went to \$1.45 1-4; for May delivery as against \$1.43 3-8 at highest yesterday or any time before since the war began. Flour jumped twenty cents a barrel and corn and rye, respectively 3 3-8 cents and five cents a bushel.

Chicago, Jan. 15.—A minute after the Exchange opened to-day wheat broke the war price higher. First sales of the May delivery shot up to \$1.43 1/2 a bushel, nearly a full cent above last night's close, and overtopping by 1/4 cent the previous figures, which were maintained on yesterday's excited advance.

Liverpool quotations, up 2 to 3 cents, had much to do with the fresh upturn here. Before the market was an hour old, May wheat, selling at \$1.44 1/2 to \$1.44 3/4, had gained more than 2 cents a bushel.

New York, Jan. 15.—The price of flour soared to-day to the highest point it has reached in many years. Some fancy grades in jobbing lots were quoted at \$8 a barrel. On the floor of the produce exchange there was a general advance of about twenty cents a barrel on all grades. Spring patents were quoted at \$7.35 and some fancy patents at \$7.60 per barrel.

No. 2 red wheat went to 156 1/2 and No. 1 Northern Spring to 154 1/2, new high records of the present upward movement. These prices were on export basis all rail to arrive.

JOHN H. SCHELL ACQUITTED

Jury Finds Father Not Guilty of Charge Made by Daughter

It took a criminal court jury but a few minutes yesterday afternoon to acquit John H. Schell, 2118 Derry street, of the charge, brought against him by his daughter, that he had assaulted her. The jury directed the daughter to pay the costs.

The father contended that his daughter brought the suit "as a means of getting him out of the way," so that the father's objections to her suit would be overcome.

To Float New Swedish Loan
Stockholm, Jan. 15.—Via London, 2.40 P. M.—A new Swedish loan amounting to \$10,000,000 will be issued in a few days.

HIATT SECRETARY TO NEW GOVERNOR

He Accompanies Dr. Brumbaugh Here Today and Will Soon Be Named for the Post

LUNCHEON WITH GOVERNOR TENER

Governor-elect Is in the City For Several Hours This Afternoon During Which Time He Is Shown Through Executive Mansion

Dr. Martin G. Brumbaugh, Governor-elect, arrived in Harrisburg this afternoon at 12.45 and was the guest of Governor and Mrs. Tener at luncheon in the Executive Mansion. Accompanying Dr. Brumbaugh was James E. Hiatt, secretary of the Board of Education in Philadelphia, who had charge of Dr. Brumbaugh's primary election campaign and participated largely in the campaign preceding the general election.

Mr. Hiatt, it was accepted here today as certain, will be the private secretary to Governor Brumbaugh for four years beginning next Tuesday. Capitol Hill is convinced that will be one of the first announcements to be made to the Senate by the new Governor, as the private secretary is his personal messenger in the transmission of executive documents to the Legislature. The announcement of Mr. Hiatt's selection as private secretary, has not yet been made, but it can be said on good authority that it is a certainty.

Dr. Brumbaugh was met at the station by Walter H. Gaither, former private secretary to Governor Tener, and went at once to the Executive Mansion. Mr. Hiatt being Mr. Gaither's guest at luncheon in the Harrisburg Club. Before leaving the station the Governor-elect and Mr. Hiatt arranged for Pullman car seats on the 5.30 train back to Philadelphia, so the stay was several hours. In that time, after luncheon, Dr. Brumbaugh had a conference with Governor Tener regarding occupancy of the Executive Mansion, and was shown through the building that will be his home for the next four years.

Late this afternoon Governor-elect Brumbaugh received the newspapermen in the Executive Mansion. He declined to discuss his Cabinet appointments except to say:

"I will make no announcement as to the Cabinet until it has been selected in its entirety."

Dr. Brumbaugh said he had finished the work on his first message to the

HAGER DEATH A MYSTERY

Coroner Orders Post Mortem In Case of Jobless Man Whose Body Is Found in Bed at Noon

A post mortem examination will likely be held under the direction of Coroner Eekinger to determine the cause of the death of William Hager, who was found dead in his room, 1006 Haddock street, at noon to-day.

Hager was last seen alive last evening, according to a report made to the police. The body was cold and stiff when found showing that he had been dead many hours. Hager was about 42 years old and apparently in good health. There were no marks on the body and the cause of death was not apparent. He was known to have been worried because he was out of employment.

When Hager did not appear at the dinner table at noon, William Fry, with whom he boards and lodges, went to his room and found him in his night shirt in his bed, apparently asleep. Closer investigation showed that the body was lifeless and the Coroner was notified.

Hager had been out of work for some time. In his pockets this afternoon there was found a dollar and some small change, believed to be the last money he had in the world.

Coroner Eekinger has had the body removed to an undertaking establishment where the investigation will be made as to the cause of death.

COUNCILMAN HURT IN FALL

Joseph Wise, of Highspire, Suffers Broken Shoulder Blade

Joseph Wise, a prominent member of the Highspire borough council, is suffering from a fracture of the right shoulder blade, received late yesterday afternoon when he fell from the roof over the kitchen of his home, Water street, Highspire.

Mr. Wise placed some tar paper on the roof to stop a leak. On attempting to descend, after doing this work, his foot knocked against the ladder upon which he had ascended, the ladder slid to one side and Mr. Wise slid after it, being unable to grip anything to break his fall. He landed on the soft ground, ten feet below, and in addition to the fracture he suffered a number of body bruises.

Amos Dangler and a companion, who were cutting up a tree near the Wise home, heard the drop and went to the injured man's assistance. Mr. Wise was carried into the house and Dr. W. B. Kirkpatrick reduced the fracture.

MORTALLY WOUNDS WIFE

Pittsburgh Man Then Blows Out His Own Brains

Montclair, N. J., Jan. 15.—James Hutchins, of Pittsburgh, shot and mortally wounded his wife, Ida, and then blew out his own brains early to-day.

LATE WAR NEWS SUMMARY

A British victory not recorded in the official statements from Paris or Berlin and described as important is reported unofficially from St. Omer, France. It is said that on January 10 the British stormed the German entrenched positions near La Bassée, in France, about ten miles south of the Belgian border, driving back the Germans with heavy losses and advancing one mile. The positions involved are of considerable strategic value, but confirmation of their reported capture is lacking.

Heavy fighting continues near Soissons, where the Germans have won important advantages over the allies. Near Perthes, in the Argonne and upper Alsace and elsewhere along the western front, where recently there have been heavy engagements, activity has subsided. Other phases of the military situation in the west apparently have been subordinated for the present to that in the Soisson region, where the outcome may exercise a marked influence on future operations over a long stretch of the front.

Petrograd is confident that the German offensive movement in Poland has

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TURKS TO EVACUATE PERSIA PROVIDED RUSSIANS GET OUT

Teheran, Persia, Thursday, Jan. 14, Via London, Jan. 15, 4.40 P. M.—The Turkish Ambassador here has notified the Persian government that the Porte is ready to evacuate the province of Azerbaijan as soon as the Russians definitely move out of this territory and after the heir to the throne reaches Tabriz to assume control. The heir to the throne is to leave Teheran for Tabriz in a few days.

Turkey's note to Persia is a reply to a Persian ultimatum recently forwarded to Constantinople demanding that Turkish invading forces withdraw from Persian territory. It is in accordance with Persia's announced intention of maintaining her neutrality in the war.

Several towns in the province of Azerbaijan have been occupied by Ottoman troops in the present Turkish campaign in Northwestern Persia against the Russians. On Wednesday Tabriz, the capital of the province, was occupied by the Turks after the evacuation of the town by a Russian force which had garrisoned it.

London, Jan. 15, 11.05 A. M.—The Turkish troops who recently invaded Persia are now advancing to the interior of the country, according to a news dispatch from Teheran to Reuters Telegraph Company. The message follows:

"It is reported that the Turks when they occupied Tabriz in Azerbaijan province, a few days ago, shot the Persian governors of the towns of Soujbulak, Maragha and Burat, through which they passed in making their way to Tabriz."

The small Turkish force which went into Tabriz is now moving in the direction of Isfahan, in Central Persia, 200 miles south of Teheran. It is supported by other Turkish contingents."

QUARTERS FOR THE DEMOCRATS

They Will Be Maintained in 9 North Market Square by State Committee

Despite the fact that numerically they are very much below one-third voting strength in the Legislature, the Democratic lawmakers are going to be active in the important legislative matters during the present session, and to enable them to hold conferences the Democratic State Committee has decided to place the old State Headquarters, in No. 9 North Market Square, at their disposal. Secretary VanDyke will be in charge of the rooms which will be open at all times for conferences among the Democratic legislators.

The active headquarters of the State Committee will continue to be located in Philadelphia, where State Chairman Morris resides.

BORE HOLES IN SAFE DOOR

But Yeggmen Fail to Get Into Junk Yard Strong Box

Yeggmen last night spent considerable energy in the office at the junk yard of D. Cooper & Co., 411 1/2 Verbeke street, without getting anything to pay for their trouble.

Holes were bored around the combination of the safe, but apparently no effort had been made to force the door. Nothing else had been touched, according to a report made to the police.

FRENCH ARE FORCED BACK OVER AISNE

General Von Kluck Directs Violent German Attack to North of Soissons

KAISER'S TROOPS STEADILY GAINING

Engagement North of Soissons First Notable Fighting in That Vicinity Since Last September, When British Army Crossed the Aisne

London, Jan. 15, 12.10 P. M.—The violent German attack to the north of Soissons under the direction of General Von Kluck which, coupled with a flood stage of the river, has forced the French back across the Aisne, is the most striking news of the last twenty-four hours from the seat of war. The Germans have been gaining in this locality for several days, but they had not recovered all of the ground lost by them. This engagement north of Soissons is the first notable fighting in the vicinity since last September, when the British army, which subsequently was transferred to Belgium, was successful in crossing the Aisne.

Snow in the Vosges mountains and floods in Flanders still prevent any extensive operations of the eastern or the western wings and to British observers it appears as though the Soissons district had been selected for the point where, with reinforcements and first line troops, the Germans are planning to display once more the hammering tactics so familiar during the autumn. On the other hand some war experts argue that the operations at Soissons may have been undertaken to compel the allies to lessen the pressure in Alsace.

The British claim to have won a marked success several days ago near Labassee, when they drove the Germans from strongly entrenched positions, gaining one mile in distance and inflicting severe losses on their antagonists. There has been no change of importance in the eastern area of the war.

Italy has been momentarily distracted from thoughts of war by the devastating earthquake of January 13. The assertion is still being made in London that the allies confidently expect Italy to join them in due course.

BRITISH GAIN VICTORY AND ADVANCE NEAR LA BASSEE

Paris, Jan. 15, 5.45 A. M.—The Havas Agency has received a dispatch from St. Omer dated January 10, which relates to a British victory and an advance near La Bassée of one mile. The message follows:

"The British, by an impetuous attack stormed the strongly entrenched German position near La Bassée at 2 o'clock this afternoon after a vigorous preliminary shelling. This is an important strategic point, and its occupation represents an advance of one mile. The British losses were slight but the Germans lost heavily. Many Germans were taken prisoners."

WALL STREET CLOSING

New York, Jan. 15.—Low priced specialties were conspicuous in the final hour. Gains of 1 to 3 1-2 points were made in this class, Missouri Pacific being most active. The closing was strong. Greater activity and diversity of the movement were recorded by to-day's stock market, with substantial gains in secondary issues.

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OTHER EARTHQUAKE NEWS WILL BE FOUND ON PAGES 9 AND 10