

GREAT SUFFERING IS REPORTED IN GERMANY

Literally True That the Entire Population Has Long Since Been Unable to Eat Its Fill.

A despatch from London says: The Daily Telegraph publishes the following from its Paris correspondent: "I have had private information indirectly from Germany which is decidedly encouraging. A friend of mine, head of an important Paris business firm, has a partner who is Swiss. The latter has just visited Germany and returned to Paris. He is a level-headed business man, and says positively that Germany can scarcely hold out more than six months longer. The shortage of food is more serious than it has ever been, he said. It is literally true that the entire population has long since been unable to eat its fill. He himself saw many persons in various German towns actually fainting in the street exhausted by hunger, and in one case at least a man dropped dead from starvation in the road before his eyes. Such a sight is apparently now not uncommon in Germany."

BRITISH ARMY FLOUTS PEACE

Army Has Absolute Confidence in Early Defeat of Central Powers.

A despatch from the British Front says: "Never has the British army been so prepared to fight; why should we talk of peace?" "You can safely give that as the British army's answer to all peace talk," declared a staff general on Wednesday in response to the question of what he and his men thought of President Wilson's note.

The note was variously commented upon by the fighting men. The feeling was that strong influences had succeeded in including him to believe this was an opportune moment to act. Such action was regarded as smoothing Germany's road and enabling her to take the second step in her peace plot.

Sentiment at the front is unconditionally against peace now. Every indication points to much worse conditions in Germany than the world even suspects; on the other hand, the allies are daily better situated to wage a successful offensive.

The British, who are little given to demonstrativeness, are unanimous in their expression of absolute confidence of the comparatively early defeat of the Central Powers under pressure of the allies' gathering strength.

WILSON'S PEACE MOVE FALLS TO GROUND

Frank German Statement of Terms to U.S. Alone Can Prevent Collapse

A despatch from Washington says: "Unless Germany makes known her peace terms to the United States it is unlikely that any result will follow the President's message to the belligerents. The failure of Germany to meet the issue in its reply to the President has afforded the Entente an opportunity of which it is taking full advantage. The Entente will state their peace terms not only in reply to the original German peace overture, but also in reply to President Wilson."

It is possible that Germany may communicate her terms confidentially to the United States, thus affording the President an opportunity to ask the allies for a confidential statement along the same lines. It is possible that some progress might be made in this way, but unless all the Washington diplomats are mistaken there is no chance for the two sets of belligerents agreeing on terms now.

40,000 AMERICANS IN THE BRITISH ARMY

A despatch from London says: "Sir H. Rider Haggard in a letter to the Times quotes an American correspondent as writing: 'In your next book do not let us have something about the thousands of Americans who have gone to a strange land and given their lives for liberty and humanity, putting these above everything else in the world.'" Sir Rider Haggard continues: "My public work and other reasons prevent my acting on the suggestion, but there are qualified writers to whom the letter may appeal, at least I hope so." There are said to be about 40,000 Americans in the British army, including those in the Canadian division.

OVER \$150,000,000 DAMAGE OCCASIONED IN OIL FIELDS

British Military Mission to Rumania Rendered Stock and Property Utterly Useless to Germans.

A despatch from London says: Speaking on Friday at a meeting of the Rumanian Consolidated Oil Fields, William W. Rutherford, member of Parliament from the West Derby Division of Liverpool, said that probably the value of the oil fields destroyed by the allies in the Rumanian retreat amounted to \$30,000,000. It was a wholesale destruction, he remarked, carried on by a British military mission acting under the instruction of headquarters. This work, he added, rendered the property and the stock utterly useless to the foe. The oil wells of German companies met a similar fate, he said.

The Volks Zeitung of Cologne reproduces the narrative of an officer of the German general staff in regard to the Rumanian campaign, in which it is said the destruction wrought in the Rumanian oil fields was "terrible," surpassing everything of the kind during the war.

POOR WORLD CROP FOR THE PAST YEAR

18 Important Countries Show Decreased Wheat Yield of 25 Per Cent.

A despatch from Rome says: "The International Institute of Agriculture harvest estimates continue to indicate the poor world crops. It is now reports for the first time, through new wheat production of Argentina. The Argentine wheat crop is estimated at 70,000,000 bushels, one-half that of 1915."

Australia's wheat crop is estimated at 135,000,000 bushels, which is four per cent. better than the yearly average. For the world's eighteen most important countries, including the United States, Canada, British India, Japan and all Europe the estimated total wheat crop is placed by the institute at 2,500,000,000 bushels, which is 25 per cent. less than for 1915.

MAN-POWER INVENTORY PRODUCING RESULTS.

A despatch from Ottawa says: The man-power inventory being made by the National Service Board is already producing results. The cards sent out by the board are coming back filled in with the information asked for. Five thousand are in already well in advance of the time when it was expected the first returns would be made. There are indications that the information asked for by the board will be readily and quickly forthcoming.

IMMENSE INCREASE IN NATIONAL DEBT.

A despatch from London says: The interest on debt created under the war loans of 1914-15 amounted during the financial year ended March 31 last to \$38,445,856, according to the white paper issued on Friday. The total capital of the national debt, which on March 31, 1915, was \$1,104,967,076, had increased by March 31, 1916, to \$2,133,147,644, the statement shows.

CONSTANTINE'S ARMY BEING DEMOBILIZED.

A despatch from London says: The Foreign Office has received advices that the Greek Government is carrying out its promise to demobilize the Greek army. The work is proceeding satisfactorily, the advices indicate. Exports supply commanded last year.

Trench Chicken Soup.

The English soldier boys in the trenches in France find that time hangs heavily on their hands, and try various devices to amuse themselves. Several trench magazines have been published. This recipe was copied from one of them—R. M. Growler—in an English paper: "Take a piece of white paper and a lead pencil, and draw from memory the outline of a hen. Then carefully remove the feathers. Pour one gallon of boiling water into a saucepan and sprinkle a pinch of salt on the soup. Now let it simmer. If it with a lead pencil, which will make it more of a brunette. Let it boil two hours. Then coax the hen away from the saucepan and serve the soup hot."



Where North Sea Heroes Regain Lost Vigor. This is an exterior view of Dungeness, the beautiful mountain residence of the Duke of Hamilton, which the ten officers and ninety men. The hospital stands 800 feet up in the Ayrshire hills and is an ideal spot for a convalescent home.

Markets of the World 1,000,000 TURKS IN THE FIELD HALF OF THEM IN THE CAUCASUS

The Remainder are Scattered Nowhere in Great Force, With 60,000 on Tigris.

A despatch from London says: In the course of an article on operations in the East, the Times' military correspondent says: "Out of 50 to 55 Turkish divisions still in the field there will be, beginning December 23, about 25 on the Caucasus front, 5 to 7 in Arabia, 5 or 6 in Austria and Dobruja, 5 in Syria, 3 in Mesopotamia, 3 in Persia, 2 each in the Dardanelles, Constantinople, Smyrna, Silesia, and on the Struma front. The general situation seems that half the Turkish army is engaged in the Caucasus and Armenian theatres, and the rest scattered nowhere in great strength. Only two divisions are engaged south of Smyrna."

TIME FOR PEACE IS NOT YET RIPE TEUTONS WIN 5-DAY BATTLE

Czar Says to End War Would Mean Failure to Secure Objects Sought.

A despatch from Petrograd says: In the course of an order issued to the Emperor, in a brief review showing how the inequalities in the technical resources for warring as between the allies and the Central Powers are being gradually removed, with the result that the enemy strength is apparently waning, while that of Russia and her allies is continually growing, proceeds to say: "Germany is feeling that her complete defeat is near, and near also is the hour of retribution for all her wrongdoings and violations of the moral law. As in the time of her strength she declared war, so now, feeling her weakness near, she suddenly offers to enter upon peace negotiations before her military talent is exhausted."

"At the same time she is creating a false impression about the strength of her army by utilizing her temporary success over the Rumanians, who lack experience in the conduct of modern warfare."

50,000 ARMENIANS STARVING. ALL OF THESE DEPORTED NOW IN VICINITY OF ALEPPO.

A despatch from New York says: Fifty thousand deported Armenians are starving in the vicinity of Aleppo, Asiatic Turkey, as a result of a recent temporary suspension of relief appropriations, according to a cablegram from American Ambassador Elkus, received through the State Department at Washington, and made public here on Thursday night by the American Committee for Armenian and Serbian Relief.

GREAT BRITISH MEAT PURCHASE

A despatch from Washington says: The British Government has contracted for the entire exportable supply of New Zealand meat until at least three months after the close of the European war, according to reports reaching the Commerce Department from its agents abroad. Higher prices will be paid than the Dominions' Victoria Crosse are cast from canon taken by the British.

FOOD-SHORTAGE SERIOUS FOR FOE

A despatch from London says: Gen. F. B. Maurice, Chief Director of Military Operations of the War Office, in a statement issued on Friday, said he had reliable reports indicating that the problem of food for the German army was extremely bad, as well as the situation of the civil population in this regard.

YOUTHS OF 17 CALLED OUT TO FIGHT IN GERMAN RANKS

Little Time Will Be Spent in Their Training, It is Announced From Berlin.

A special despatch to the London Times from Copenhagen says that, according to Berlin newspapers, all youths in Schleswig who have completed their seventeenth year have been summoned to undergo physical examination in January. After a short training those fit will be sent to the front. The fact that it is expected they will be in the fighting line within three months indicates how short of reserves the Germans are.

Viewed With Pleasure.

"I find lady customers very hard to please." "I can't say that. My goods seem to give eminent satisfaction." "What line?" "Mirrors."

BRITISH FRONT IS EXTENDED ACROSS THE BORDER

WHAT IS GOING ON OVER IN THE STATES. Latest Happenings in Big Republic Condensed for Busy Readers.

A despatch from London says: The continuation of the British offensive along the Somme front is impossible so long as the present weather lasts, Major-General Frederick B. Maurice, chief director of military operations of the War Office, so informed the Associated Press on Friday. "I told you some time ago," he said, "that our offensive would not cease during the winter, but it must be apparent from the daily reports that no real battle has been offered in that sector since October. In the first place we underestimated the effect of the shelling on the terrain. The country over which the advance will have to be made is thickly sprinkled with shell-holes filled with water. Also, never having held the same line in any other winter, we underestimated the effect of the fog in the valley of the Somme."

"There have been frequent frosts, not severe enough to harden the ground, but sufficient to form fogs, making artillery observation fire practically useless, and also preventing the drying of the ground." "The French arrived at the same decision, and transferred their attention to Verdun, with results which you know. We may be able to resume in March, as we found the ground at Neuve Chapelle in fairly good shape in March, 1915, although it had been very bad during the winter. Unable to continue the offensive for the present, we have done the next best thing. The taking over of a section of the French line has kept us busy during the past ten days. The operation has been successful, and I will be glad to tell you the exact extent of the line taken over when I am sure the Germans know the point of junction."

"In Rumania the first Rumanian army, which has borne the brunt of the fighting, has been entirely withdrawn, and is now re-forming in Moldavia, while its place has been taken by the Russians. In Dobruja the line has been moved back in alignment with the battle-front north of the Danube. In this region both our allies and the enemy are suffering from adverse weather conditions."

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION.

Causes of Ignition of Barne Without Contact With Flame.

During the months of August, September, October and November last, barn fires were unusually prevalent in Ontario. There were, in the first three months named, according to the Provincial Fire Marshal's records, 182 barn fires in this province, the losses, with their contents, being worth approximately \$425,000, and about two-thirds covered by insurance. In three months forty-four special investigations were made into the causes of forty-four different barn fires, investigations being made only where the causes of fire were reported to the Fire Marshal's Department as unknown or suspicious. In 11 cases it was impossible to find the cause, but of the remaining 33, 18 were assigned to spontaneous combustion.

Spontaneous fires, which break out in barns where hay is stored, are due to fermentation. Fermentation is due to the growth and rapid multiplication of bacteria which feed upon the organic matter of the hay and rapidly develop when moisture is present, and the material and the enclosed air are not too cold. If the process proceeds slowly the results are blackened and charred masses which are occasionally found in the interior of stacks, manure heaps, etc. With the right degree of moisture present and a sufficiency of air to provide the bacteria with the necessary oxygen, the growth of the bacteria is rapid, more and more heat is generated until, if the hay is in a confined and poorly ventilated space, the temperature is reached at which the gases produced take fire, and the stack and building in which it is stored is burned, though it may be weeks, or even months before the firing occurs. The initial and essential cause of these cases of spontaneous combustion is the storage of the hay in a damp or moist condition.

The most obvious preventive is to be sure the hay is thoroughly cured before storing in the barns. Especially should care be taken with alfalfa and with other hay containing a large percentage of clover, as these ferment much more rapidly than timothy. A few years ago the number of fires from spontaneous combustion in Kansas were exceptionally large and in every case investigated the hay destroyed was found to be so wet that curing was impossible, as in some wet seasons, a little salt scattered over the mow, or stack, every few loads will prevent fermentation. Ventilate the barns well.

The Drawback.

She (thinking of the wounded)—Poor fellows! How dreadful it must be to be paralyzed. He (with recollections)—Aw, yes, you do have rather a bad head next day.

We always lose our patience with the man who can't keep his temper during a political discussion.

ACROSS THE BORDER

WHAT IS GOING ON OVER IN THE STATES. Latest Happenings in Big Republic Condensed for Busy Readers.

An administration measure was introduced in Congress to give ultimate control of all wireless stations to the Federal Government. The measure, which has investments in Mexico said this nation faces the greatest crisis with Carranza Government. The safety of the country depends on the building of a great air fleet, Robert E. Peary told the Hunters' Fraternity of America at a seasonal dinner. The Govern, a three-masted sailing vessel, formerly the Chesapeake, of the U.S. navy, has been sold by the Naval Department for \$40,000, and will be fitted up for trade. Illinois Highway Association have approved a bond issue of sixty million dollars to build six thousand miles of good roads. The question is to be submitted to a vote in November, 1918. Capt. W. S. Sims, U.S.A., told the House Committee on Naval Affairs that the United States commerce could be destroyed and the navy swept from the seas without the protection of battle cruisers. A thief stole a tray with diamonds from a jewellery store in Derby, Conn., when the clerk's back was turned. Although the clerk gave chase, the thief escaped with booty valued at \$2000. Joseph Feldman, a shoe merchant of New York, was followed home from his store after closing hours, black-jacked by three highwaymen and robbed of \$1800 worth of jewellery and \$38 cash. The Youngstown, Ohio, Sheet and Tube Company have declared a stock dividend of 100 per cent., together with the regular 2 per cent. quarterly on the common stock, and 1% on the preferred. The United States has the right to restrict the use of the Panama Canal without reference to any foreign nation, said Major-General Goethals, speaking at a luncheon given by the Merchants' Association of New York. After losing her handbag containing cash and securities valued at \$5100 in an elevator car in New York City, and accusing a woman in the car of stealing it, Mrs. Evelyn Conway found that her bag had been found in the car and turned into the lost property office. Sing Sing Prison was plunged into darkness by "short circuited" wires and 1500 unguarded prisoners, instead of attempting to escape marched to their cells and closed the doors. The fire from the electric wires was extinguished by guards and prisoners together. Washington Force, 19, admitted stealing \$25,000 worth of diamonds from the office of a steamship company in New York, but could not dispose of them as the best offer he had for a lot worth \$11,000 was fifty cents, from the Bowers second-hand dealers. He then left the whole lot in a Chinese laundry and wrote the firm where to find them. Mrs. Elmira Brockway, of Chicago, is under arrest at London, England, charged with fortune telling. Efforts are being made to obtain her release, and it is said that she went to England to help organize a college of psychic science. She has a son at the front with the American Red Cross, has independent means, and owns a theatre in Paris, it is said.

MAIL FOR THE FRONT.

Ten Million Letters Also Many Parcels Every Week.

It seems almost incredible that something like 10,000,000 letters and 750,000 parcels are sent every week to British soldiers fighting in France. These astounding figures make one realize the wonderful organization which has been set up. When you post a letter to one of our fighting men, it leaves for France the following morning, and as a rule, if he is in billets, it will reach him in three days, and only a day longer if he is in the trenches. All letters, no matter whether they come from Land's End, John O'Groat's or the wilds of Concomar, are first dealt with at the home base in London. They are sorted into mail-bags, of which there is a separate one for each military unit, and then they are made up into mails for troops on the various fronts, such as France, Egypt, Salonica, and other parts of the world where fighting is taking place. No fewer than three special trains are run every day from London for army mails alone. Five million letters are sent home from soldiers in France every week, and the sorting of these is also done in London, before they can be sent to their various destinations. Women, of course, do most of the sorting nowadays, and although they carry out their duties in an admirable manner it is open to question whether the quickest woman worker quite comes up to the speed attained by experienced male sorters.

A man's brain is 5 1/2 ounces heavier than a woman's.