

### ADVANCE IN RATES BEFORE OFFICIALS OF FIVE STATES

Members of the Commissions and Their Attorneys Spend Day in Conference Debating What Course to Pursue.

THREE PROPOSITIONS ARE UP  
That of Appealing from Decision of Commerce Commission Decided Only Way to Secure Relief.

QUESTION IF APPEAL WILL LIE

Members of the state railway commissions of five of the states that are included within the boundaries of Western Passenger association territory, together with the attorneys general and legal representatives of the commission met in conference in Omaha yesterday to devise ways and means for combatting the recent decision of the Interstate Commerce commission authorizing the railroads to increase their passenger rates from 2 to 2.4 cents per mile. The meeting was practically continuous; starting at 10 o'clock in the morning and concluding at 6 o'clock last night, with one-half hour taken out for lunch.

When final adjournment was taken last night Clifford Thorne of the Iowa State Railway commission for the commissioners and for the legal representatives gave out the following, asserting that no final action was taken and that no line of action was decided upon:

"It was the sense of the meeting that the decision of the Interstate Commerce commission in the western passenger advance rate case in its general application and the basis followed by the commission in reaching its conclusions are subject to serious questions, and that the various states should resist the order of the commission increasing passenger fares throughout the west providing methods of review in court exist."

Those Who Were Here.

The meeting was held behind closed doors at the Hotel Loyal and was attended by the following: Clifford Thorne, chairman, H. T. Clarke, T. P. Hall and H. G. Taylor of the Nebraska commission; Clifford Thorne, Wayne Ellis and J. H. Wilson of the Iowa commission; C. E. Emquist of the Minnesota commission; W. H. Stutzman, of the North Dakota commission; U. G. Powell, state clerk of the Nebraska commission; Willis Reed, attorney general for Nebraska; Lydan Smith, attorney general for Minnesota; Attorney General Coxzans, Iowa; A. Helm, attorney general for Kansas; J. W. Murphy and H. R. Ritzing, assistants to the attorney general of Kansas, in addition to a battery of chief clerks and stenographers.

It is not probable that the meeting of members of state railway commissions and attorneys will end the fight against the advancing of passenger rates as authorized by the Interstate Commerce commission. It is possible that this meeting marks the beginning of a long battle between the states in Western Passenger association territory and the railroads, a battle that perhaps will last for years.

Three Propositions.

When the commissioners and attorneys went into session yesterday they were confronted by three propositions. One was that they drop the fight against the advance in rates and accept the decision of the Interstate Commerce commission as being final. This proposition was dropped without being given serious consideration.

The second proposition that came up, but which was not given serious thought, was that of asking for a rehearing before the commission. This was quickly rejected, it being generally asserted that the Interstate Commerce commission having decided in favor of the advance from 2 to 2.4 cents per mile could hardly be expected to reverse itself.

The third and last proposition to receive consideration was that of an appeal to the United States court and if any action is taken this will be the final outcome. However, the State Railway

### The Weather

Temperature at Omaha Yesterday.

Hours	Deg.
6 a. m.	34
7 a. m.	35
8 a. m.	36
9 a. m.	37
10 a. m.	38
11 a. m.	39
12 m.	40
1 p. m.	41
2 p. m.	42
3 p. m.	43
4 p. m.	44
5 p. m.	45
6 p. m.	46
7 p. m.	47
8 p. m.	48

Comparative Local Record.

1916	1915	1914	1913
Highest yesterday	48	49	49
Lowest yesterday	34	30	23
Mean temperature	42	40	30
Precipitation	0.2	0.0	0.0

Reports from Stations at 7 P. M.

Station and State	Temp.	High.	Rain.
Cheyanne, partly cloudy	46	52	0.0
Denver, partly cloudy	42	49	0.0
Des Moines, cloudy	44	49	0.0
North Platte, cloudy	47	50	0.0
Omaha, clear	48	50	0.0
Rapid City, clear	52	59	0.0
Sioux Falls, clear	50	57	0.0
St. Joseph, clear	50	57	0.0
Sheridan, cloudy	36	44	0.0
Sioux City, partly cloudy	48	53	0.0
Valentine, cloudy	40	50	0.0

### MELON CUT BY THE NEW HOTEL OWNERS

Douglas Hotel Company, Which Owns Fontenelle Property, Declares 3 Per Cent Dividend.

MAKES SIX PER CENT FOR YEAR

Although in operation only ten months, Hotel Fontenelle, Omaha's new \$1,250,000 enterprise, is already proving such a successful investment for the builders that the Douglas Hotel company, which owns the property, has been able to declare a substantial dividend.

At a special meeting at the Omaha National bank the board of directors of the owning company declared a dividend, which will amount to practically 6 per cent per year, according to explanation by Gurdon W. Waties, president of the company. The dividend will cover the year ending July 1, 1916, which date really marks the close of the first full year of the operation of the big hotel, after it was entirely completed.

Three Per Cent Declared.

The dividend as declared will be 3 per cent for the half year just closing, payable January 1, and the other 3 per cent will be paid at the end of the first six months of the new year.

The final report of the building committee was accepted and congratulations were expressed over the favorable settlements secured with both the contractor and the tenant for the tardy completion of the building. A penalty of \$5,000 damages for this was collected from the contracting firm, Secretary A. L. Reed reported, and then a satisfactory settlement for the delay was made with the Interstate Hotel company, the firm that leases and operates the Fontenelle.

Total Cost Within Estimate.

It was also reported that the big hotel was completed at a total cost well within the estimates, the contractor's original bill having been reduced \$15,000 more, in addition to the money paid as penalty for late completion.

Great enthusiasm marked the meeting of directors, because of the successful completion of the big enterprise and because of the fact that it is already a paying proposition to the public spirited and prominent citizens who invested their money to give Omaha a fine new hostelry.

HOTEL COMPANY MAKES GOOD

Directors Say They Are Doing Even Better Than They Expected.

Directors of the Interstate Hotel company, which leases and operates the Fontenelle, have not held their annual meeting yet. Under their lease, they pay the owning company approximately 6 per cent net per year for the use of the hotel property, and the fact that the owning company is declaring its present generous dividend shows that the leasing company is making its payments promptly.

"Our expectations for the first year's business have been more than realized," said Managing Director Abraham Burbank of the Fontenelle. "Patronage has been gratifying, and we are coming out very well financially."

"Each month's business since the opening last spring has shown a fine increase, in spite of the late opening, dull summer tourist patronage on account of the exceptionally wet season, and the general slackening of hotel business throughout the country because of the war. We have enjoyed a very encouraging share of the hotel business coming into Omaha."

Expect an Increase.

"Our directors and stockholders living in Syracuse, N. Y., told me on my last visit there that they were very well satisfied with the results so far. We look forward to even better business after the first of the year."

The Fontenelle is now well advertised, well thought of and firmly established in the approval of Omahans and the traveling public, and is rated as well as any in the country.

An adjustment of rates will be made January 1, Mr. Burbank said, to meet the popular demand for accommodations at not over \$1.50 per day. The Fontenelle will at that time change its rate on a certain number of rooms with private shower bath, making the \$20 instead of \$25 per day. At the same time another innovation will be the serving of a 75-cent table d'hôte luncheon in the main restaurant, while the business men's hasty luncheon at 55 cents will be continued in the men's cafe.

### Strike of Chicago Switchmen Averted

CHICAGO, Dec. 22.—Settlement of the threatened strike of 4,500 switchmen employed by roads entering Chicago, was announced today, when the railroad general managers' committee informed the Brotherhood of Trainmen officials that they would agree to the employees' contention that transfer trains should carry cabooses. A minor point of difference, involving the reinstatement of a conductor, it was given out would be adjusted satisfactorily.

### Lawyer Shoots and Kills Two Men

BATON ROUGE, La., Dec. 22.—Albert L. Knox, survivor of customs for the port of New Orleans and prominent Louisiana attorney, shot and killed Ben Foster, an attorney of Hattiesburg, Miss., and Alex Franko of Matchitoches, La., in a railroad station here this afternoon.

### AUSTRIAN SUBMARINE IS REPORTED CAPTURED

PARIS, Dec. 22.—According to a dispatch to the Messagero from Malta, forwarded by the Havas correspondent at Rome, an Austrian submarine has been captured by two torpedo boats, presumably Italian.

### ALLEGED PRO-GERMAN PLOTTERS

At the left is Fredrick Schleitner, employe of the National City bank, charged with stealing documents relating to munitions; at the top, right, is Richard Emil Levy, New York art dealer, who, with Paul Koenig, H. American line official, is held on charge of attempting to blow up the Welland canal.



FREDERICK SCHLEITNER, RICHARD EMIL LEVY, PAUL KOENIG

### FIND MISSING LINK IN THE KOENIG CASE

Federal Authorities Believe They Have Thing Needed to Clinch Matter.

### ARREST A NIGHT WATCHMAN

NEW YORK, Dec. 22.—Edmund Justice, a night watchman, employed by the Atlas Steamship company, a subsidiary of the Hamburg-American line, was arrested by federal officers this afternoon, charged with being a party to the conspiracy directed from this country against the entente allies' by Paul Koenig and other alleged German agents.

With the arrest of Justice at his home in south Brooklyn, the authorities believe they have found the "missing link" in the Koenig case.

It is charged that in Koenig's direction, Justice accompanied Frederick Metzler under arrest to Quebec and there sought to determine the number of troops being sent to the United Kingdom, and to learn what ships they would sail on, and details of artillery equipment and other supplies being sent abroad.

It is alleged that such activities were part of a military plot directed from the United States and as such violated federal statutes.

Brincken Will Move to Dismis.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 22.—Baron George Wilhelm Von Brincken, attached to the German consulate here, Charles C. Crowley, a detective and Mrs. Marjaret Cornell, were granted today a delay until Friday to enter pleadings to charges of participation in alleged German bomb plots. When they appeared today it was announced that Samuel Fraut of Reno, Nev., former United States district attorney in Nevada, was associated with counsel for the defense.

The defendants' attorneys said they would make a motion to quash the indictments Friday, on the grounds the indictments were too broad and did not specify the time, place or manner of the crimes alleged and that there was not enough information in them to enable them to obtain witnesses.

If the motion to quash should be denied it was said other legal rights would be used, such as the filing of a demurrer and a demand for a bill of particulars.

The delay granted today was given by Judge Maurice T. Doelling of the United States district court upon the defendants' motion. A speedy trial was demanded by the defendants. It was stated previously by counsel for the defense.

### Sofia Paper Says Serbia Plotted the Death of Archduke

BERLIN, Dec. 22.—(By Wireless to Sayville.)—"According to the Sofia newspaper 'Dnevnik' says the Overseas News Agency today, 'the former Bulgarian minister to Serbia, M. Tchaprachikoff, says the Bulgarian government holds proof in writing that the Serbian government was a direct accomplice in the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand at Sarajevo. The Bulgarian government, it was stated, will soon publish the documents.'"

### LAST OF VILLISTA ARMY WIPED OUT; NO QUARTER GIVEN

Nine Hundred Soldiers Killed Wounded or Taken Prisoners in Desperate Fight Near Chihuahua City.

BATTLE ALL DAY AND NIGHT  
Rebel Chief Still at Large and None Knows Where He Keeps Himself.

OCHOA JOINS THE VICTORS

LAREDO, Tex., Dec. 22.—Carranza troops under General Jacinto Trevino engaged what remained of the Villa army in a fierce battle yesterday and today at Mapula, ten miles outside Chihuahua City, inflicting a severe defeat, according to reports reaching here. Nine hundred Villa soldiers were killed, wounded or taken prisoners, according to advices to Carranza officials in Nuevo Laredo.

The Carranza losses were said to have been small.

They Fight Desperately.

General Trevino with his soldiers, who have advanced rapidly in Chihuahua during the last ten days, encountered the Villa soldiers moving southward. A fierce battle ensued in which no quarter was shown. The Villa soldiers fought desperately and the battle lasted all yesterday afternoon and was prolonged through the night in the streets of the village of Mapula were strewn with dead when firing ceased.

The leader of the Villa soldiers was not learned. Troops engaged were said to have been the remnants of a force until recently operating in Sonora.

Makes Marked Progress.

EL PASO, Tex., Dec. 22.—The de facto government of Mexico made marked progress today in assumption of civil and military authority through the territory surrendered recently by followers of Francisco Villa, according to reports reaching here from various sources. Villa's whereabouts was still unknown here.

General Jacinto Trevino, at the head of a military force, representing the de facto government, was reported to have occupied Chihuahua City. General Alvaro Obregon, whose forces recently drove General Villa from Sonora, was said to be en route from Nogales to Juarez to assume military control.

Renounces Villa Cause.

General Manuel Ochoa, former Villa military chief at Juarez, today renounced the Villa cause and joined the de facto government. Temporarily he had been placed in control of the surrendered territory by Mexican Consul Andres Garcia-Hipolito Villa, brother of the deposed chief, was said to have left Juarez for San Antonio, Tex.

General Jose Rodriguez, until recently, one of Villa's principal leaders, was reported with a small force at Casas Grandes. His attitude toward the de facto government was unknown here.

General Ochoa, the only officer of the Villa faction in Juarez who did not sign the agreement of surrender December 20, after accepting the terms of the peace pact today issued a proclamation to the people on behalf of himself and his troops pledging alliance to the de facto government. The proclamation was published after Andres G. Garcia, Carranza consul here, had overruled the action of former Villa generals to place General Ysael Robles in charge of civil and military control.

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### Little Girl Shot by Watchman at the City Dump May Die

Ida Stroud, 9 years of age, 202 North Thirteenth street, was wounded when a revolver held in the hands of Fred Baker, a watchman at the city dump, was discharged this afternoon.

Baker declared the shooting was accidental. He fired the revolver, he said, to frighten away several men who approached the little girl and a companion, Hazel Compton, 15 years of age, in a threatening manner.

The little girl who was wounded did not weep, but sat in the ambulance in silent anguish.

"Why don't you cry, little girl?" she was asked.

"Hazel and I were playing soldier with our brothers," she said, "and soldiers don't cry when they are shot."

The two girls live near the dump and were wandering about the place when the shooting occurred.

Ida was shot in the side, the bullet passing through her body and came out the other side.

The girls said the watchman shot in the direction of the Compton girl.

The physicians held out little hope for her recovery.

### Foreign Trade of United States for November Half Billion Dollars

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22.—Foreign trade of the United States in November jumped to the unprecedented total of half a billion dollars. A Department of Commerce statement issued today shows that imports as well as exports broke records for the month. A record of \$500,000 for the last twelve months' exports and imports was set.

November imports were \$184,219,169, more by \$1,800,000 than the previous November record, made in 1912. November exports of \$315,184,527 were the greatest of any month in the country's history. The best previous month was last October, when exports were \$238,090,561.

### REPLY TO AUSTRIA IS FIRM AND CLEAR

Vienna Government Told that Report of Austrian Commander Sufficient Basis for Demands.

VIOLATION OF LAW DELIBERATE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22.—The reply of the United States to Austria's note on the destruction of the Italian liner Ancona declares that the official admission of the Austrian admiralty that the liner was torpedoed after it had stopped and while passengers still were aboard, alone is sufficient for the American demand for disavowal, reparation and punishment of the submarine commander.

Secretary Lansing's second note, already probably in the hands of the Austrian foreign minister and made public here today, renews the demands of the United States and says the details to which Austria referred in its reply to the first American communication are in no way essential to the discussion.

Full Text of Note.

It emphasizes that continuance of good relations between the two countries depends upon the action of the Austrian government. The full text of the note, which is addressed to American Ambassador Penfield, follows:

"The government of the United States has received the note of your excellency relative to the sinking of the Ancona, which was delivered at Vienna on December 15, 1916, and transmitted to Washington, and has given the note immediate and careful consideration.

"On November 15, 1915, Baron Zwiadnek, the charge d'affaires of the imperial and royal government at Washington, transmitted to the Department of State a report of the Austro-Hungarian admiralty with regard to the sinking of the steamship Ancona, in which it was admitted that the vessel was torpedoed after its engines had been stopped and while passengers were still on board. This admission alone is, in the view of the government of the United States sufficient to fix upon the commander of the submarine which fired the torpedo the responsibility for willfully having violated the standing laws of nations and entirely disregarded the humanitarian principles which every belligerent should observe in the conduct of war at sea. In view of these admitted circumstances the government of the United States feels justified in holding that the details of the sinking of the Ancona, the weight and character of the additional testimony corroborating the admiralty's report and the number of Americans killed or injured are in no way essential matters of discussion. The

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### Murray in Command At the Dardanelles, Officially Stated

LONDON, Dec. 22.—Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Murray, has been appointed to succeed Sir Charles Monro as British commander at the Dardanelles, says an official statement issued this afternoon.

Sir Charles Monro has been appointed in command of the First British army in France, in succession to Sir Douglas Haig.

The official announcement follows: General Sir Douglas Haig having assumed supreme command of the British forces in France and Flanders, General Sir Charles Monro will succeed him in command of the First army.

Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Murray, chief of the imperial general staff, will succeed Sir Charles Monro.

Lieutenant General Sir William Robertson, now chief of the general staff in France, will become chief of the imperial general staff with the temporary rank of general, with Major General W. B. H. B. as his deputy.

Major General L. Kiggell, now assistant chief of the imperial general staff, will become chief of the general staff of Sir Douglas Haig.

General Murray was chief of the imperial staff at London until a few days ago. Premier Asquith announced yesterday that he had been succeeded by Lieutenant General Robertson, chief of the general staff in the field and that he was to receive an important command.

The command of the First British army was made vacant by the promotion of General Haig to be the British commander-in-chief.

### Warning Tells How to Prevent Fires in Christmas Trees

NEW YORK, Dec. 22.—The Safety First Federation of America is sending out an appeal to the public to beware of the danger of Christmas fires. Warning is given that if candles are used on Christmas trees they should be constantly watched and a sheet of iron, tin or zinc should be placed beneath the tree to catch the drippings from the candles.

"Don't use any inflammable material in decorating the tree. Read the warning. Cotton batting particularly should be avoided. Protect all gas lights with a globe or screen.

"Don't decorate electric light globes with paper.

"Have several pails of water handy in case the unexpected should happen.

"If any one's clothing takes fire, smother the flames with a rug, blanket or coat."

### Munitions Depots at Muenster Blown Up

LONDON, Dec. 22.—According to advices to the Amsterdam Telegraph, forwarded by Reuter's correspondent, a powder factory and several ammunition depots at Muenster, Westphalia, have been blown up. Great damage was done to the town, the newspaper adds.

### BRITISH HOUSE VOTES MILLION MEN FOR ARMY

Action of Commons Raises the Paper Strength of the Land Forces to About Four Million Men.

TEUTON DIPLOMATS ARE ACTIVE

Since Flight from Dardanelles They Are Trying Wiles on Roumania and Greece.

FIGHTING IN WESTERN FRANCE

LONDON, Dec. 22.—After an all-night debate the House of Commons early today granted an increase of 1,000,000 men in the British army, bringing up its strength on paper to 4,000,000. With the increase come changes in higher command. Lieutenant General Robertson, chief of the general staff, having been recalled from France to become chief of the imperial staff in London in place of Lieutenant General Murray, who is about to receive an important command. These changes are accepted here as indicating closer cooperation among the allies in the conduct of military operations on the western front.

Teuton Diplomats Busy.

The Teutonic powers are represented as taking full advantage of the moral effect produced by the withdrawal of British forces from the Gallipoli peninsula and to attempting once more to swing Greece and Roumania to their side in the Balkan operations. If the news of the bombardment of Varna is correct, Russia is losing no time in an attempt to forestall these efforts. From several sources, all unofficial, London has heard of the bombardment of the Bulgarian port. Valerious dispatches state that the Russian warships are accompanied by a fleet of transports which, according to the morning papers, already has landed a sufficient force to hold the town.

While the Greek elections have given a large majority to former Premier Gounaris, a powerful member of the present cabinet, it is believed that the government will have to resign.

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### John Snyder, Wanted in Clay County, is Held at Grand Forks

GRAND FORKS, N. D., Dec. 22.—(Special Telegram.)—Sheriff Paul Bonfield of Clay county, Nebraska, last night obtained from John Snyder, alias Martin Greene, confession of a murderous attack upon August Peterson at Verona, Neb., July 28 last, and which nearly resulted in Peterson's death. Snyder was jailed at Devil's Lake, N. D., on a vagrancy charge. He was identified by postal card descriptions sent out by Clay county officials. Ever since the attack on Peterson, Snyder has labored under the suspicion that he killed him. Snyder used a razor on Peterson, slashing him in a horrible manner. Bonfield will leave today for Nebraska in charge of the prisoner.

### Blind Persons Get Uncensored News

NEW YORK, Dec. 22.—Miss Helen Keller and other blind persons in the United States are obtaining uncensored news from the belligerent countries in Europe in newspapers published for the blind, in London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna, according to Miss Keller. These newspapers are not censored, she says, because they are printed in short-hand Braille, a point type used for the blind, which the censors are unable to read.

"These uncensored accounts of conditions in the warring countries tell me the true sentiment among the working people and the intolerable conditions that surround them," said Miss Keller. "Their hearts are almost at the breaking point."

### THE WANT-AD. WAY



Going to need help soon

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Some time ago you may need clerks to help you carry your mail. You'll get clerks by the score.

For a well-wanted Want-Ad. Who is looking for a job? Add who really wants to work.

So no matter what you want, no need to fret and worry. Put up a Want-Ad. And fill them in a hurry.

The "Help Wanted" columns of "The Omaha Bee" are read daily by all of the brightest and most efficient men and women in the various industries of the city. To secure the best help of any kind, use a "Help Wanted Ad."

TELEPHONE THREE 1000 AND PUT IT IN THE OMAHA BEE.