

MEXICO LAND OF FAMINE EQUAL TO ANY IN EUROPE

Conditions on Eastern Continent Shocking Civilization for Years at U. S. Door.
SO REPORTS AMERICAN CONSUL
Country Peopled with Widows and Orphans and Starvation Everywhere.
DYING FROM LACK OF FOOD
Sound of Laughter and Playing Children No More Heard.
REACHING END OF STOICISM
Cry for Bread in Republic Across the Border Rising and Heed Is Met with No Response.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26.—Conditions of famine and suffering in Mexico, said by some observers to rival the distress in the European theater of war, are described in reports today to the American Red Cross, with appeals for help.
Consul General Hanna has sent the following message from Monterey:
"There is an alarming shortage of staple food supplies. Several outlying towns are appealing to me for help. If the winter keeps cold there will be great suffering. I need 2,000 cheap blankets. After four years of war this whole country is short of food."

Famine Everywhere.
The consul at Matamoros confirms an appeal, which said:
"The conditions in Europe, which shock the civilized world, have existed here against our borders for four years, unconsidered. Mexico is peopled with widows and orphans and famine is in the land. One sees it daily in emaciated forms, shrunk cheeks, tightly-drawn skin and burning eyes. I see it in the faces of women, old men and little children. Many have died on American soil during the last year, ostensibly from disease, but actually from starvation, and there are hundreds of children who have never had sufficient food in their lives. The sound of laughter and playing children is stilled in Mexico.
"They have endured much, but now have reached the end of even their stoicism, and from the east and the west and the south comes a cry for bread from the starving."
Need Is Pressing.
"There is need for food and clothes and medical aid. The need is pressing. There is no time to be lost. Arrangements have been made whereby supplies can be distributed from the American consulate at this place to any locality in Mexico."
The Red Cross a short time ago, on an appeal from Rear Admiral Howard, sent \$1,000 worth of food supplies to Acapulco on the west coast.

Bryan Disclaims All Action Respecting Belgian War Tax

PARIS, Dec. 26.—German proclamations announcing a levy of 500,000,000 francs (\$100,000,000) indemnity at Brussels have been pasted over," says the Journal, "and the report is current that the measure was withdrawn by the German government as the result of representations by the American secretary of state, William J. Bryan, through Minister Brand Whitlock, pointing out that the tax was in violation of the Hague convention.
"It is announced that the Germans have imposed a tax of 25 francs on all unmarried persons over 27 years of age in Brussels."
WASHINGTON, Dec. 26.—Secretary Bryan reiterated today that if Brand Whitlock, American minister to Belgium, had taken any action to dissuade the German military authorities from collecting a war levy on Brussels, he had been acting entirely in a personal and unofficial capacity, and without any instructions from the American government. The secretary said he had no information that Mr. Whitlock had been concerned.

ADMIRAL DEWEY IS SEVENTY-SEVEN YEARS OLD

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26.—Admiral Dewey was 77 years old today. Secretary Daniels and his aides and members of the navy general board called on the admiral at his home and found him in good spirits and health.
The admiral took his customary drive during the morning, and later received a number of officials and friends.

The Weather

Forecast till 1 p. m. Sunday:
For Omaha, Council Bluffs and Vicinity—Unsettled; probably snow; warmer.
Temperature at Omaha Yesterday:
WARMER
Comparative Local Records:
1914. 1913. 1912. 1911.
Highest yesterday 17 25 27 24
Lowest 9 15 18 12
Mean temperature 12 18 20 18
Precipitation 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00
Temperature and precipitation departures from the normal:
Normal temperature 23
Deficiency for the day 11
Total excess since March 1 25
Normal precipitation 50 inch
Deficiency for the day 33 inch
Total rainfall since March 1 39.99 inches
Deficiency since March 1 10.01 inches
Deficiency for year, period, 1914, 5.42 inches
Deficiency for year, period, 1913, 4.17 inches
Deficiency for year, period, 1912, 4.17 inches
Deficiency for year, period, 1911, 4.17 inches
* * * indicates trace of precipitation.

SISTERS OF MERCY ON ERRANDS OF MERCY—Nuns doing their work of ministrations to the wounded everywhere in France. This picture was taken within the sound of the firing.



REGULAR BLIZZARD IN CENTRAL STATES

Heavy Snow Accompanied by High Wind and Extreme Cold Blocks Iowa and Illinois Traffic.

WARMER TO WEST OF HERE

Zero Weather in Omaha, but It Seems Much Colder Because of Raw Wind—Warmer Predicted by Weather Man.

According to the advices received by the railroads, the most severe blizzard in several years is sweeping over Illinois and Iowa, extending west as far as the central portion of the state. In addition to the wind and snow, temperatures are low, running from 15 to 20 degrees below zero.

Among the coldest places were Charles City, Ia., 24 below; LaCrosse, W. below; Peoria, Ill., 18 below; Davenport and Des Moines, Ia., 14 below; Dowl's Lake, N. D., 15 below; St. Paul, 22 below; Green Bay, Wis., 18 below.

As a result of the storm in the Mississippi river valley, all trains from the east, except those that arrived early and ahead of the blizzard, are badly off schedule. The Burlington trains are from three to six hours late; the Northwestern, one to three; the Rock Island, four to six; and those of the other roads, from one to four.

A wire to Burlington headquarters conveyed the information that in Chicago and across Illinois the wind was blowing a gale, that there was a heavy fall of new snow and that temperatures ranged from 15 to 20 degrees below zero and that conditions were growing worse, instead of better.

Along the Northwestern, from Boone, Ia., east, all the way to Chicago there was a heavy fall of snow, that was drifting badly before a wind that was blowing from twenty-five to thirty miles per hour.

While Nebraska laid no claim to weather that was summer-like, it was, too, compared with that over in Iowa. According to the railroads, Nebraska city with 3 degrees below at 7 o'clock, was the coldest point in the state. Farther west it was much warmer, being 20 above at Chadron and 28 at Crawford. Out in Wyoming temperatures were from 10 to 15 above zero, with clear to calm, following light snows Friday and Friday night.

The thermometer reached zero here Saturday morning, though chilly winds from the south made it most uncomfortable for pedestrians. The mercury dropped again to zero at 8 and 9 o'clock and again started up, accompanied by snow flurries.

Cold in New York.
WATERBURY, N. Y., Dec. 26.—Northern New York is experiencing today the coldest weather of the winter. The official thermometer registered 24 below zero during the night in this city. Temperatures from 20 to 40 below have been reported from various points in the Adirondack mountains.

New Records in New York.
NEW YORK, Dec. 26.—New York shivered today in the grip of the coldest weather of the season. The temperature dropped to 4 degrees above zero. The wind blew thirty miles an hour.
New cold weather records for December were reported tonight. Ogdensburg reported 23 below and Utica 25 below.

Thirty Below in Pennsylvania.
CORRY, Pa., Dec. 26.—December records for cold weather in northern Pennsylvania were broken here today, when thermometers registered 24 to 30 degrees below zero.

Half Million Motor Cars Made in United States Within Year

CHICAGO, Dec. 26.—In the rear drawing to a close, American manufacturers turned out 515,000 motor vehicles valued at \$485,000,000.

This information came today from Alfred Reeves, general manager of the Automobile Chamber of Commerce, who added that this output came from 450 concerns. He said that there are 1,500,000 cars registered in the various states; that there are 15,000 automobile dealers in the country; 15,000 garages and 600 supply houses.

The New Army

Kipling Describes the Guns and the Supplies Now Being Prepared

By RUDYARD KIPLING.
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LONDON, Dec. 18.—One had known the place for years as a picturesque old house standing in a peaceful park; had watched the growth of certain young oaks along a new-laid avenue, and applauded the owner's enterprise in turning a stretch of pasture to plow. There are scores of such estates in England which the motorist, through passing so often, comes to look upon as almost his own.

In a single day the bracken turf between the oaks and the iron road-fence blossomed into tents, and the drives were all cut up with hoods and wheels. A little later one's car sweeping home of warm autumn nights was stopped by sentries who asked her name and business; for the owner of that retired house and discreetly wooded park had gone elsewhere in haste, and his house and lands were taken over by the military.

Then one met men and horses arguing with each other for miles about that countryside; or the car would be flung on her brakes by artillery issuing from cross lanes—clean batteries flinging off to their work on the downs, and hungry ones coming back to meals. Every day brought the men and the horses and the weights behind them to a better understanding, till in a little while the car could pass a quarter of a mile of them without having to hoot more than once.

"Why are you so virtuous?" she asked of a section encountered at a blind and brambly corner. "Why do you outrage your personality less than an average tax-cart?"

"Because," said the driver, his arm flung up to keep the untrimmied hedge from sweeping his cap off—"because those are our blessed orders. We don't do it for love."

No one accuses the gunner of maudlin affection for anything except his beasts and his weapons. He hasn't the time. He serves at least three jealous gods—his horse and all its saddlery and harness; his gun whose least detail of efficiency is more important than men's lives; and, when these have been attended to, the never-ending mystery of his art commands him.

Crazy Mixture in the Rain.
It was a wet windy day when I visited the so long known house and park. Cock-pheasants ducked in and out of trim rhododendron clumps; neat gates opened into sacredly preserved vegetable gardens; the many-colored leaves of specimen trees pasted themselves stickily against sodden tent walls; and there was a mixture of circus smells from the horse lines, and the faint civilized breath of chrysanthemums in the potting sheds. The main drive was being relaid with a foot of flint; the other approaches were churned and pitted under gunwheels and heavy supply wagons. Great breadths of what had been well-kept turf between unbrowsed trees were banks of slippery brown wetness, dotted with picketed horses and field kitchens. It was all a crazy mixture of stark necessity and manicured luxury, cheek by jowl in the indiscriminating rain.

The cook houses, storerooms, forges and workshops were collections of tilt, poles, rickcloths and odd lumber, heaved together as on service. The officers' mess was a thin, soaked marquee.

Less than a hundred yards away were dozens of vacant, well furnished rooms in the big brick house of which the staff furiously occupied one corner. There was accommodation for very many of the men in its stables and outhouses alone, or the whole building might have been gutted and rearranged for barracks twice over in the last three months.

Scattered among the tents were rows of half-built tin sheds, the ready prepared lumber and the corrugated iron lying beside them, ready to be pieced together like children's toys. But there were no workmen. I was told that they came at morning, but had knocked off because it was wet.

"I see. And where are the batteries?" I demanded.
"Out at work, of course. They've been out since 7."
"How shocking! In this dreadful weather, too?"
"They took some bread and cheese with them. They'll be back about 9:30, if you care to wait. Here's one of our field kitchens."

Batteries look after their own stomachs, and are not catered for by contractors. The cook house was a wagon-tilt. The wood, being damp, smoked a good deal. One thought of the wide, adequate kitchen ranges and the concrete passages of the service quarters in the big house just behind. One even dared to think Teutonically of the perfectly good paneling and the thick hardwood floors that could—

"Service conditions, you see," said my guide, as the cook inspected the baked meats and the men inside the wagon-tilt grated the carrots and prepared the onions. It was old work to them after all these months; done swiftly with the clean economy of effort that life teaches.

"What are these lads when they're at home?" I inquired.
"Londoners chiefly—all sorts and conditions."

Battery Gets Hungry.
The cook in his shirt sleeves made another investigation and sniffed judiciously. He might have been cooking since the Peninsula. He looked at his watch and across toward the park gates. He was responsible for 160 rations, and a battery has the habit of saying all that it thinks of its food.

"How often do the batteries go out?" I continued.
(Continued on Page Five, Column Two.)

BRITISH MAKE AIR RAID ON GERMANY; FOG STOPS FIGHT

English Ships Dash Into Teuton Bay and Hydroplanes Assail River Mouths.

DROP BOMBS ON VESSELS

Also Shell Gas Tank, but Fail to Hit Anything or Do Any Damage.

BERLIN ANNOUNCEMENT TELLS

English Say Nothing of Christmas Day Assault to Pay Back Coast.

NO NAMES OF PLACES GIVEN

Assumed Streams Referred to Elbe and Weiser.

MIST HINDERS AN ENGAGEMENT

Kaiser's Planes, It is Reported, Land Explosives on Two Destroyers of the Enemy.

BERLIN, Dec. 26.—(By Wireless via Sayville.)—The German admiralty made the following announcement today:
"On December 25 eight British ships made a dash into a German bay. Hydro-aeroplanes, conveyed by them, made an advance against the mouths of German rivers and dropped bombs at ships lying at anchor and a gas tank near Cuxhaven without hitting them or doing damage.
"The hydro-aeroplanes were fired at and withdrew in a westerly direction. German airships and aeroplanes reconnoitered against the British forces and succeeded in hitting with bombs two British destroyers and one other vessel of the convoy. On the latter fire broke out.
"Fog prevented a continuation of the fighting."

The announcement by the German admiralty of an attempt by British warships against the German coast is the first intimation of what appears to be a reply to the recent attack by German cruisers against the English seaports of Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool, the British authorities having as yet made no mention of this operation.

From the reference to Cuxhaven in the German announcement it would seem that the German rivers indicated, but not named, were the Elbe and Weiser. Cuxhaven is a fortified seaport of Germany, fifty-eight miles west-northwest of Hamburg. It is at the mouth of the estuary of the Elbe. The approximate distance across the North Sea from the English coast to Cuxhaven is 300 miles.

Letter by Edison Tells How His Fire Might Be Avoided

If the Edison laboratory buildings had been properly constructed, of the most modern materials they would not have burned.

Why, Thomas A. Edison, the great wizard of invention, says so himself. When he read the account of the big fire at Orange, C. Louis Meyer, who is in business here in Omaha as a concrete construction engineer, wrote direct to headquarters to ascertain the facts, and the letter which he has just received in reply, under date of December 19, not only autographed by Mr. Edison, but with a postscript added in his own hand, reads as follows:

"Dear Sir: I am in receipt of your favor and in reply beg to say that my wooden buildings and my brick and steel roof buildings are flat on the ground with all their contents of machinery ruined.
"My principal buildings, which are made of reinforced concrete, are all in good condition, except some of the columns and the few spots where the concrete floor has sagged. The concrete buildings have saved nearly all of my machinery, so that it can be cleaned up and used.
"The effects of the fire constitute a great triumph for reinforced concrete. Yours very truly,
"THOMAS A. EDISON."

Turks Win Decisive Victory Over Russ

BERLIN, Dec. 26 (By Wireless to London).—Reports received in Berlin from Constantinople say that the Turks have won a decisive victory over the Russians in the Caucasus between the towns of Olti and Id.

Olti is in the Russian territory of Kars, while Id lies about twenty miles further to the south in the Turkish province of Ezerum.

Italian Queen Gives Birth to Daughter

ROME, Dec. 26.—Queen Helena of Italy gave birth to a daughter this afternoon. Both mother and child are doing well.

Queen Helena, who is a daughter of King Nicholas of Montenegro, married King Victor Emmanuel, October 24, 1895. The royal couple now have five children, four daughters and one son.

The Day's War News

Bombardment by an American cruiser of the Turkish port of Tripoli, Syria, is said at Athens to have been threatened on account of an attack by Turks on the crew of an American merchantman, on which British and French citizens desired to depart. The incomplete reports received from Athens state that the threat of the warship's commander quelled the attack. The cruiser Tennessee has been in the eastern Mediterranean for several months and was last reported not far from Tripoli.

Italy's occupation of the Albanian port of Avlona was believed to open up possibilities of complications which might make it difficult for the Roman government to maintain its neutrality. The attitude of Roumania, also, was more than ever a matter of doubt on account of reports from Paris that the only obstacle which prevented it from joining with the triple entente had been removed. Bulgaria was represented as having given assurances that it would remain neutral, relieving Roumania from the fear of an attack from that quarter should it enter the war.

The German cruiser Dresden, with the converted cruiser Prince Eitel Friedrich, were said to have been engaged by the British cruiser New Castle, near Valparaiso.

ASKS RECOGNITION OF RULE IN BELGIUM

Kaiser Demands Neutral Nations Assume Sovereignty of Germans in Conquered State.

U. S. STAND IS NOT YET TAKEN

American Position Not Defined at Just This Time—British Authorities Are Surprised.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26.—Germany has notified some of the neutral countries having consuls in Belgian territory now under German military authority, that the exequaturs crediting the consuls to Belgium will not be recognized further, though provisional recognition will be granted to those whose countries so desire.

Representatives of South American republics have informed Secretary Bryan of the receipt of such notice from Germany, but State department officials said tonight they knew of no communication on this subject being received here. It is believed in diplomatic circles, however, that the notice is on its way to all powers whose consuls would be affected.

Report of Sea Fight Off Coast of Chile is Not Confirmed

VALPARAISO, Chile, Dec. 26.—No new sea fight has occurred off the Chilean coast, so far as can be ascertained today at Valparaiso.

The commanding reported last night 230-ten miles off this port by the Chilean torpedo gunboat Toms, and which was supposed to be an engagement between the British cruiser Newcastle and the German cruiser Dresden and converted cruiser, Prinz Eitel Friedrich, is now believed to have been the Newcastle saluting the flag of Vice Admiral Sir Frederick Sturdee, commander of the British squadron which sank the German squadron off the Falkland islands.

The Australian battle cruiser, Australia, anchored in the bay this morning. Vice Admiral Sir George Paty, commander of the Australian, came ashore and paid his respects to the Chilean authorities. He said he had not met the cruiser Newcastle while on his way to Valparaiso and declared he was unable to explain the origin of the firing reported off the coast. The Australia has been cruising along the Pacific coast of South America for the last several weeks. A few days ago it paid a visit to Callao, Peru.

South Dakota Gold Output for Year is Lower

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27.—The output of South Dakota gold mines this year was valued at \$7,270,000, compared with \$7,325,248 in 1913, according to the federal geological survey today. Production of silver was about 114,000 ounces, against 112,700 ounces in 1913. From 1875 to the end of 1914, the state has produced \$18,500,000 in gold and 6,500,000 ounces of silver.

British Authorities Surprised

LONDON, Dec. 26.—The British authorities have been advised of Germany's notification to neutral governments that it will no longer recognize the exequaturs crediting their consuls to Belgium.

This action has created some surprise in England, where it is regarded as a preliminary step to the official taking over of Belgium by the Germans. The result of this action probably would be the refusal to recognize Brand Whitlock, the American minister at Brussels, or the marquis of Villalobar, the Spanish minister, as diplomats accredited to Belgium.

Page Without Advice

W. H. Pace, the American ambassador here, is without advice in the situation. Nevertheless great interest is manifested in London as to the probable action of the American government if Germany grants only provisional recognition to neutral consuls.