

President Wilson States U. S. War Aims

(Washington, D. C., Dec. 4.—The president spoke as follows:—)

"Eight months have elapsed since I last had the honor of addressing you. They have been months crowded with events of immense and grave significance for us. I will not undertake to detail, or even to summarize, those events, or the part we have played in them. This will be laid before you in the report of the executive department. I shall discuss only our present outlook upon these vast affairs, our present duties and the immediate means of accomplishing the objects we shall hold always in view.

War Aim Is to Win.
"I shall not go back to debate the causes of the war. The intolerable wrongs done in the name of Germany by the sinister masters of Germany have long since become too grossly obvious and odious to every true American to need to be rehearsed. But I shall ask you to consider again and with very grave scrutiny our objectives and the means by which we mean to attain them for the purpose of discussion here in this place is action and our action must move straight towards definite ends. Our object is of course to win the war and we shall not slacken our courses to be diverted until it is won. But it is worth while asking and answering the question 'when shall we consider the war won?'

Safe to Let Pacifists Strut.
"From one point of view it is not necessary to breach this fundamental matter. I do not doubt that the American people know what they are doing and what sort of an outcome they will regard as a realization of their purpose in it. As a nation we are united in spirit and intention. I pay little heed to those who tell me otherwise. I hear the voice of the patriot who hears the criticism and the clamor of the noisy, thoughtless and troublesome. I also hear men here and there fling themselves in impotent disloyalty against the calm, indomitable power of the nation. I hear the voice of the man who understands neither its nature nor the way in which we may attain it, with uplifted eyes and unbroken spirits. But I know that none of these speaks the heart of anything. They may safely be left to strut their uneasy hour and be forgotten.

"But from another point of view I believe that it is necessary to say plainly what we here at the seat of action consider the war to be for and what part we mean to play in the settlement of its searching issues. We are the spokesmen of the American people and they have a right to know whether their purpose is ours. They desire peace by the way of compromise, or by the way of a war of desperate self defense against deliberate aggression. Nothing could be more grossly or wantonly false and we must seek by the most openness and candor as to our real aims to convince them of their falseness. We are, in fact, fighting for their emancipation from fear, along with our own, from the fear as well as from the fact of unjust attack by neighbors or rivals or schemers after world empire. No one is denying the existence of the independence of the peaceful enterprise of the German empire.

No Threat Against Germany.
"The people of Germany are being told by the men whom they now permit to deceive them and to act as spokesmen for them that they are fighting for the very life and existence of their empire; a war of desperate self defense against deliberate aggression. Nothing could be more grossly or wantonly false and we must seek by the most openness and candor as to our real aims to convince them of their falseness. We are, in fact, fighting for their emancipation from fear, along with our own, from the fear as well as from the fact of unjust attack by neighbors or rivals or schemers after world empire. No one is denying the existence of the independence of the peaceful enterprise of the German empire.

Peace Terms Are Stated.
"I believe that I speak for them when I say two things:
"First, that this intolerable thing of which the masters of Germany have shown us the ugly face, this menace of continued intrigue and force which we now see so clearly in the German power, a thing without conscience or honor or capacity for covenanted peace, must be crushed, and if it is not utterly brought to an end, at least shut out from the friendly intercourse of the nations, and when this thing and its power are indeed defeated and the time comes that we can discuss peace—when the German people have spokesmen whose word we can believe, and when those spokesmen are ready to name the terms of peace, we shall be ready to make the common judgment of the nations as to what shall henceforth be the bases of law and of covenant for the life of the world—we shall be willing and glad to pay the full price for peace and pay it accordingly. It will be full, impartial justice—justice done at every point and to every nation. The final settlement must affect our enemies as well as our friends.

Against Punitive Indemnities.
"You catch with men, the voices of humanity that are in the air. They grow daily more audible, more articulate, more persuasive, and they come from the hearts of men everywhere. They insist that the war shall not end in punitive indemnities, that no nation or people shall be punished because the irresponsible rulers of a single country have themselves done deep and abominable wrong. It is this thought that has been expressed in the final articles of the peace, no contributions, no punitive indemnities, just because this crude formula expresses the instinctive judgment as to right of plain men everywhere, it has been made diligent use of by the masters of Germany in their attempt to lead the people of every country their agents could reach, in order that a premature peace might be brought about before autonomy has been taught its final and convincing lesson, and the people of the world put in control of their own destinies.

Declares Idea Is Good.
"But the fact that a wrong has been made of a just idea, is no reason why a right one should not be made of it. It ought to be brought under the patronage of its friends. Let it be said again that autonomy must first be shown the utter futility of its claims to power or leadership in the modern world. It is impossible to apply any standard of justice so long as such forces are unchecked and undefeated as the present masters of Germany command. Not until that has been done can right be set up as arbiter and peacemaker among nations. But when that has been done, we shall at last be free to do an unprecedented thing, and this is the time to avow our purposes to do it. We shall be free to base peace on generosity and justice, to the extent of all selfish claims to advantage, even on the part of victors.

Determined to Win War.
"Let there be no misunderstanding. Our present and immediate task is to win the war and nothing shall turn us aside from it until it is accomplished. Every power and resource we possess, whether of men, of money, or of materials, is being devoted and will continue to be devoted to that purpose until it is achieved. Those who desire to bring peace about before that purpose is achieved, I counsel to carry their advice elsewhere. We will not entertain it. We shall regard the war as won only when the German people say to us, through properly accredited representatives, that they are ready to agree to a settlement based upon justice and the restoration of the peace which they have done. They have done a wrong to Belgium, which must be repaired. They have established a power over other lands and peoples than their own—over the great empire of Austria-

Hungary, over hitherto free Balkan states, over Turkey and within Asia—which must be relinquished.

Germany's Exploits Reviewed.
"Germany's success by skill, by industry, by knowledge, by enterprise, by real not grudge or oppose, but admired rather. She had built up for herself a real empire of trade and influence, secured by the peace of the world. We were content to abide the rivalries of manufacture, science, and commerce that were involved for us in her success and stand or fall as we had or did not have the brains and the initiative to surpass her. But at the moment when she had conspicuously won her triumphs of peace she threw them away to establish in their stead what the world will no longer permit to be established, military and political domination by arms, by which to crush the peoples of the world. Her rivals she most feared and hated. The peace we make must remedy that wrong. It must deliver the once fair lands and happy peoples of Belgium and northern France from the Prussian conquest and the Prussian menace, but it must also deliver the peoples of Austria-Hungary, the peoples of the Balkans and the people of Turkey, alike in Europe and in Asia, from the impudent and alien domination of the Prussian military and commercial autocracy.

We owe it, however, to ourselves to say that we do not wish to impair or to rearrange the Austro-Hungarian empire. It is no affair of ours that they do with their own life, either industrially or politically. We do not purpose or desire to dictate to them in any way. We are not going to see that their affairs are left in their own hands, in all matters, great or small. We shall hope to secure for the peoples of the Balkan peninsula and for the people of Turkey the right and opportunity to make their own lives safe, their own fortunes secure against oppression or injustice and from the dictation of foreign courts or parties. And our attitude and purpose with regard to Germany herself are of a like kind. We intend no wrong against the German empire, no interference with her internal affairs. We should deem either the one or the other absolutely unjustifiable, absolutely contrary to principle. We have professed to live by and to hold most sacred throughout our life as a nation.

No Threat Against Germany.
"The people of Germany are being told by the men whom they now permit to deceive them and to act as spokesmen for them that they are fighting for the very life and existence of their empire; a war of desperate self defense against deliberate aggression. Nothing could be more grossly or wantonly false and we must seek by the most openness and candor as to our real aims to convince them of their falseness. We are, in fact, fighting for their emancipation from fear, along with our own, from the fear as well as from the fact of unjust attack by neighbors or rivals or schemers after world empire. No one is denying the existence of the independence of the peaceful enterprise of the German empire.

The worst that can happen to the (German) people is this, that they should still, after the war is over, continue to be obliged to live under ambitious and intriguing masters interested to disturb the peace of the world, men or classes of men whom the other peoples of the world would not permit to rule over them. It is impossible to admit them to the partnership of nations which must henceforth guarantee the world's peace. That partnership must be a partnership of peoples, not a mere partnership of governments. It is not possible also in such unfavorable circumstances to admit Germany to the free economic intercourse which must inevitably spring out of the other partnerships of a real peace. But there would be no aggression in that; it is the sinister, inevitable because of distrust would in the very nature of things sooner or later cure itself by processes which would assuredly set in.

Germany Is Protected.
"The wrongs, the very deep wrongs, committed in this war will have to be righted. That, of course, but they cannot and must not be righted by the commission of similar wrongs against Germany and her allies. The world will not permit the commission of similar wrongs as a means of reparation and settlement. Statesmen must by this time have learned that the opinion of the world is everywhere wide awake and fully comprehends the issues involved. No representative of any self-governed nation will dare disregard it by attempting any such covenants of selfishness and compromise as were entered into at the congress of Vienna. The thought of the plain people here and everywhere throughout the world, the people who enjoy no privilege and have very simple and very unphilosophical standards of right and wrong, that is the air all governments must henceforth breathe if they would live. It is in the full disclosing light of that thought that all policies must be conducted and executed in this midday hour of the world's life. German rulers have been able to upset the peace of the world only because the German people were not suffered, untried their tutelage, to share the comradeship of the other peoples of the world, either in thought or in purpose. They were allowed to have no opinion of their own which might be set up as a rule of conduct for those who exercised authority over them. But the progress of the world's life will feel the full strength of the ideas that are now in the hearts and consciences of free men everywhere. Its conclusions will run with those ideas.

All these things have been true from the very beginning of this stupendous war; and I cannot help thinking that if they had been made plain at the very outset, the sympathy and enthusiasm of the Russian people might have been once for all enlisted on the side of the allies, suspicion and distrust swept away and a real and lasting union of purpose effected. Had they believed these things at the very moment of their revolution had they been confirmed in that belief since, the sad reverses which have recently marked the progress of their affairs towards a stable government of free men have been avoided. The Russian people have been poisoned by the very same falsehoods that have kept the German people in the dark and the poison has been administered by the very same hands. The only possible antidote is the truth. It cannot be uttered too plainly or too often.

Insures Germany Freedom.
"From every point of view, therefore, it has been my duty to speak these declarations of purpose to add these definite interpretations to what I took the liberty of saying to the Senate in January. Our entrance into the war has not altered our attitude towards the settlement that must come when it is over. When I said in January that the nations of the world were entitled not only to free pathways upon the sea, but also to assured and unimpeded access to those pathways I was

thinking, and I am thinking now, not of the smaller and weaker nations alone, which need our countenance and support, but also of the great and powerful nations, and of our present friends as well as our present associates in the war, thinking, and am thinking now, of Austria herself, among the rest, as well as of Serbia and of Poland. Justice and equality of rights can be had only at a great price. We are seeking permanent, not temporary, peace for the peace of the world and must seek them candidly and fearlessly, as always the right will prove to be the expedient.

What shall we do, then, to push this great war of freedom and justice to its righteous and speedy conclusion? We must go away with a thorough hand, all impediments to success and we must make every adjustment of law that will facilitate the full and free use of our whole capacity and force as a fighting unit.

Recommends War on Austria.
"One very embarrassing obstacle that stands in our way is that we are at war with Germany but not with her allies. I therefore very earnestly commend that the congress immediately declare the United States in a state of war with Austria-Hungary. Does it seem strange to you that this should be the conclusion of the argument I have just addressed to you? It is not. It is, in fact, the inevitable logic of what I have said. Austria-Hungary is for the time being not her own mistress, but simply the vassal of the German government. We must face the fact as they are and act upon them without sentiment in this stern duty. The government of Austria-Hungary is not acting upon its own initiative or in response to the wishes and feelings of its own peoples but as the instrument of another nation. We must meet its force with our own and regard the central powers as but one. The war can be successfully conducted in no other way. The same logic would lead also to a declaration of war against Turkey and Bulgaria. They also are the tools of Germany. But we must not stand and do not yet stand in the direct path of our necessary action. We shall go wherever the necessities of this war carry us, but it seems to me that we should go only where immediate and necessary considerations lead us and not heed any others.

Urges Check on Aliens.
"The financial and military measures which must be adopted to suggest themselves as the war and its undertakings develop but I will take the liberty of proposing to you certain other acts of legislation which seem to me to be needed for the support of the war and for the release of our whole force and energy.

It will be necessary to extend in certain particulars the legislation of the last session with regard to alien enemies; and also necessary, I believe, to create a vast industrial and particular control over the entrance and promulgation of all persons into and from the United States.
"Legislation should be enacted defining as a criminal offense every willful violation of the presidential proclamations relating to alien enemies promulgated under section 4667 of the revised statutes and providing appropriate punishments, and women as well as men should be included under the provisions of the law, placing restraints upon alien enemies, and as time goes on many alien enemies will be willing to be fed and housed at the expense of the government in the detention camps and it would be the purpose of the legislation I have suggested to confine them in penitentiaries and other similar institutions, where they could be made to work as other criminals do.

Wants More Price Limits.
"Recent experience has convinced me that the congress must go further in authorizing the government to set limits on prices. The law of supply and demand, as it is, has been replaced by the law of unrestrained selfishness. While we have eliminated profiteering in several branches of industry it still runs impudently rampant in others. The farmers, for example, complain that they are not getting a fair price for their products of justice that while the relation of food prices restricts their incomes, no restraints are placed upon the prices of most of the things they must themselves purchase; and similar inequities obtain in many other lines.

It is imperatively necessary that consideration of the full use of the waterpower of the country and also the consideration of the systematic and yet economical development of such of the natural resources of the country as are still under the control of the federal government should be immediately resumed and affirmatively and constructively dealt with at the earliest possible moment. The pressing need for such legislation is daily becoming more obvious.

Warns Against Waste.
"The legislation proposed at the last session with regard to regulating combinations among our exporters, a order to provide for our foreign trade a more effective organization and method of cooperation, ought by all means to be completed at this session.

And I beg that the members of the House of Representatives will permit me to express the opinion that it will be impossible to deal in any way that is very wasteful and extravagant with the enormous appropriations of the public moneys which must continue to be made if the war is to be properly sustained, unless the House will consent to its former practice of initiating and preparing all appropriation bills through a single committee in order that responsibility may be centered, expenditures standardized and made uniform and waste by duplication be avoided as much as possible.

Additional legislation may also become necessary before the present congress adjourns in order to affect the most efficient co-ordination and operation of the railway and other transportation systems of the country. But so that the kind of circumstances demand call the attention of congress upon another occasion.
Devote Session to War.
"If I have overlooked anything that ought to be done for the more effective conduct of the war, your own counsels will supply the omission. What I am perfectly clear about is that the present session of the congress our whole attention and energy should be concentrated on the vigorous and rapid and successful prosecution of the great task of winning the war. We can do this with all the greater zeal and enthusiasm because we know that for us this is a war of high principle, debased by no selfish ambition of conquest or spoliation; because we know, and all the world knows, that we have been forced into it to save the very institutions we live by from corruption and destruction. The purposes of the central powers strike straight at the very heart of everything we believe in; their methods of warfare outrage every principle of humanity and of knightly honor; their intrigue has corrupted the very thought and spirit of many of our people; their sinister and secret diplomacy has sought to take our very territory away

from us and disrupt the union of the states. Our safety would be at an end, our honor forever sullied and brought into contempt were we to permit their triumph. They are striking at the very existence of democracy and liberty.

Declares Purpose Holy.
"It is because it is for us a war of high, disinterested purpose, in which all the free peoples of the world are banded together for the vindication of right, a war for the preservation of our nation and of all that it has held dear of principle and of purpose, that we feel ourselves doubly constrained to propose for its outcome only that which is righteous and of irrevocable intention, for our foes as well as for our friends. The cause being just and holy the settlement must be of like motive and quality. For this we can fight, but for nothing less noble or less worthy of our traditions. For this cause we entered the war and for this cause will we battle until the last gun is fired.

I have spoken plainly because this seems to me the time when it is most necessary to speak plainly, in order that all the world may know that even in the ardor of the struggle and when our whole thought is of carrying the war through to its end we have not forgotten any ideal or principle for which the name of America has been held in honor among the nations and for which it has been our glory to contend in the great generations that went before us. A supreme moment of history has come. The eyes of the people have been opened and they see. The hand of God is laid upon the nations. He will show them favor, I devoutly believe, only if they rise to the clear heights of His own justice and mercy."

Mobilization of Banks.
From the Bache Review.
The mobilization of the banking forces of the country into the federal reserve system is going on. From October 1 the number of state banks and trust companies which have joined the federal reserve system is approximately 40, representing combined capital and deposits of about \$1,840,000,000. On November 1 there were 50 applications for membership by state banks and trust companies in the hands of the federal reserve agents in the several districts, and the boards of directors of 23 state banks and trust companies passed resolutions authorizing application.

It is fair to assume that this increase will continue as a war measure, if for no other reason, until practically the whole banking system of the United States is included in the federal system—a consummation which would make it the most impenetrable fortress for national financial defense ever erected since the beginning of civilization.

Cruise's Relics.
A biography written in the early part of the last century by Dr. A. W. Davis, of Tenbury, Eng., tells of the good doctor's visit to Largo in Fifeshire where he saw a chest that once belonged to Alexander Selkirk. This Selkirk was none other than Robinson Crusoe, and the chest was that which had been with the redoubtable adventurer on the island of Juan Fernandez. It was an heirloom that had been handed down in the family and was then in the possession of a poor woman, also named Selkirk. She had a drinking cup that had belonged to her distinguished ancestor, made of cocoon shell and tipped with silver.

Dr. Davis was convinced that both relics were genuine. The chest was of a kind commonly used by seamen and had "A. S." cut into the lid at several places. This same woman also had owned a musket of Selkirk's, but she gave it to the laird of the parish. Dr. Davis notes that visitors were permitted to see the weapon upon request.

Valuable Stuffing Evidently.
From Answers, London.

A certain millionaire presented to his native city a fine collection of stuffed birds and animals.
The attendant, escorting a visitor through the silent halls, noticed that he was yawning, and ventured to say:
"Perhaps you're not aware, sir, that this is one of the richest taxidermist exhibits on earth. Yes, sir, this collection of stuffed animals and birds is worth £100,000!"

"Is that so?" said the visitor. "What the dickens are they stuffed with?"
High prices for fuel have led to the appointment of two committees in Bern to report on the coal fields of the central and northern sections of that country. If the investigations prove that coal exists in considerable quantities railroads will be extended to reach the new fields.

NAMED ASSISTANT TO WAR SECRETARY



Maj. Benedict Crowell of Cleveland has been appointed assistant secretary of war to succeed William M. Ingraham. He was associated with the general munitions board of the council of national defense shortly after that body was organized. Recently, however, he has been in charge of the Washington office of the Panama canal.

ITALY SLOWLY HELDS GROUND

Austro-German Forces Take Mountain Peaks, But Italians Hope to Hold Passes.

KAISER TAKES OFFENSIVE

With Hundreds of Thousands of Men From East Front He Prepares Mightiest Onslaught in West.

Petrograd, Dec. 8.—Germany apparently is to be permitted, under the Russo-German armistice plan, to transfer all the troops she desires from the Russian front for use against the allies. The full text of the armistice agreement, signed by the sixty-seventh Russian and the thirty-first German infantry division commanders, as published here today in the newspaper Pravda, shows no stipulation that German troops must not be used against the allies on the other fronts. Such a stipulation was specifically pledged by Foreign Minister Trotzky in a recent speech.

By Associated Press.
While the tremendous effort the Austro-Hungarian army in the eastern Trentino is making to gain the passes into the Italian plains resulted yesterday in the pushing back of the Italian line on that point, the vital front remains unbroken. The Italian line on the east of Asiago, where, according to today's official statement from Berlin, the eminence of Monte Sisemol was captured, has been held. The capture may have been one result of the recession in the Italian line just to the east the day previous after heavy fighting for Monte Flor and Monte Castelgomberto. Dispatches from Italian headquarters have reflected confidence there that the new line in this sector was capable of holding the route to the passes.

German wedges driven into the salient before Cambrai have compelled the British to evacuate exposed points and they have given up to the Germans several villages west of Cambrai as well as the Bourlon wood.
The British line has been shortened and made more capable of strong defense.

Berlin (via London), Dec. 8.—Four thousand more Italians have been captured in the new Austro-German offensive on the northern front, bringing up the total to 15,000, according to today's official communication.
Monte Sisemol was captured by storm, the statement says.
German troops stormed La Justice farm and cleared Marcoling of the enemy, today's official statement from the Cambrai sector said. Not only German troops maintained their positions. The enemy penetrated them for a time, but was thrown back by counter attacks.

Vienna, Thursday, Dec. 6.—(Via London, Dec. 7.)—The Austro-Hungarian general headquarters today issued the following official communication:
"The enemy has suffered a heavy defeat. Early Tuesday, after powerful artillery preparation, in which the German troops cooperated with the troops under Field Marshal Conrad, we launched an attack against the mountain positions in the Meletta region. The deep snow and severe cold rendered progress difficult, but the courage and bravery of the attackers—natives from all parts of Austria-Hungary—were able to overcome every counter measure.

Early Wednesday Monte Badenece and Monte Tondarecar fell and at midday Kaiserjäger regiment No. 3 stood on Monte Giffa. Toward evening the Italian resistance on the Meletta ridge broke down before our encircling and storming attacks. Enemy machine guns were captured from Valstagna were taken on the flank by the fire of our batteries.

"During the morning hours yesterday the enemy, after a bitter struggle, lost Monte Bello and the rear positions near Fozza. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon the brave Italian defenders, who had been completely cut off for 24 hours on Monte Castelgomberto, laid down their arms. All the terrain north of Frenzella ravine is in our hands."

Rome, Dec. 8.—"On the Asiago plateau the battle is continuing without interruption," says today's official report.

By Associated Press.
Italian Headquarters in Northern Italy, Thursday, Dec. 6.—The big operation which the enemy is attempting in the north is virtually a repetition of the turning movement he executed six weeks ago in the great offensive above Gorizia. At that time he broke through the upper end of the line and thus endangered the lower end. This is exactly the situation which is being repeated today.

It has been established that while Field Marshal Conrad Von Hoetzendorf is directing the movement, General Von Krobatin's forces also are cooperating. In addition to the superiority in numbers, the Austro-Germans are taking advantage of the backward season and are striking before the mountain fighting. Enemy reserves were poured in until the Italians were far outnumbered. They continued to struggle desperately, however, and in one case a small detachment of Bersaglieri met the shock of an entire Austrian regiment.

The importance of the fighting around Asiago is not underestimated, but it is believed the line of resistance on which the Italians have retired is capable of holding the Franzella and Gadenia passes leading into the Brenta valley and the open plain some miles below. The fighting has been of the most desperate character and while the enemy has paid dearly for his success, the Italian losses also have been very heavy.

An eye witness from the scene of operations gave the correspondent details of the extent and bloody nature of the fighting. Enemy reserves were poured in until the Italians were far outnumbered. They continued to struggle desperately, however, and in one case a small detachment of Bersaglieri met the shock of an entire Austrian regiment.

AMERICANS EXPECT TO ENTER BATTLE

Men Wonder If Training Will Not Be Cut Short So That They May Aid in Crisis.

By United Press.
American Headquarters in France, Dec. 8.—The American soldiers are beginning to wonder whether their period of training will not be shortened so that they may be sent into the fray to strengthen their allies, the British and French, now battling with the Germans around Cambral. News came from home today that the American congress is about to discuss a bill to draft Austria. This heartened them greatly. Officers and men seem to realize the doings of the next week or two probably mean much to them and their allies. The success or failure of the Germans at Cambral and in Italy, they believe, will determine in large measure the length of the war. They are anxious to get into it, believe they have had enough training and believe that now is the psychological time to make the step.

By Associated Press.
With the American Army in France, Thursday, Dec. 6.—The greatest school of war the American army has never known and which will be fully under way will probably be the greatest of any army, began operations today in and about a French town, the history of which dates back 1,000 years. Within field glass range of the old Roman walls surrounding the town in which the headquarters and staff college are established, there are numerous localities where already many men are being trained in the science of war and all its finer details. When the school is in full progress more than 10,000 students will be in training here,

as well as bayonets in fierce hand to hand fighting.

Surrounded, They Fight On.
But the greatest single instance of heroism and loss was in the case of several detachments of Alpini, which held Monte Castelgomberto against overwhelming odds until surrounded. Thus encircled, they made repeated charges, but the heavy surrounding lines held and the entire party was still on the mountain when the remainder of the Italian line fell back.

In another case one brigade of Bersaglieri lost a great number of officers and men in the same proportion. The extent of the enemy reserves is shown by their concentration in the average number of a division for every kilometer. The artillery fire also has been the heaviest since the new Italian line was formed.

Up to Them to Hold.
Conditions this morning were virtually unchanged. Much depends on the ability of the Italians to hold the passes to which they have now retired, commanding the Brenta valley and the plains.

TRY BLOW AT FRENCH.
Paris, Dec. 8.—Two attempts were made by the Germans to break the French lines east of the Meuse in the Verdun region last night, after a heavy bombardment. The attacking forces, the war office announced today, were driven off by the French fire.

By the United Press.
With the British Armies in the Field, Dec. 8.—British army officers expect Germany's biggest and perhaps final effort of the war shortly. General Byng's retirement from Bourlon wood is regarded as a precautionary measure for the British to withstand the shock.

As the British see it Germany is at the zenith of her military power. With Russia out of the way the Germans have been able to draw on her man power along that front. She is preparing, evidently, to throw every ounce of her man power into the stroke about to be delivered in her final attempt to attain a military victory before the American troops arrive on the fighting line.
On the Bourlon sector there were two alternatives for General Byng. One was to push ahead and the other to step back to a more secure footing.

U. S. AIRMEN WOUNDED

Washington, D. C., Dec. 8.—American airmen fighting the German planes on the western front have suffered their first casualty. Two men, a corporal and a private, were today reported wounded.

No report of the engagement in which the Americans were wounded was forwarded. They are:
Corporal Walter A. Warren, Dublin, Ga.
Private Edward F. Ebsen, Buffalo, N. Y.

AUSTRIANS RELEASE RUSSIAN PRISONERS

Captives Taken by Italians Say Emperor Didn't Wait on Slavs.

Rome, Dec. 7.—Austrian prisoners taken in the last few days say that the release of Russian prisoners held in Austria began 10 days ago. Austria took the initiative in this without waiting for Russia to release Austrian prisoners.

SAYS HE SAW U. S. SAILORS AMONG DEAD

Truro, N. S., Dec. 7.—A telegram operator sent here from Halifax by the Western Union Telegraph company said today that he saw the bodies of several sailors of the United States navy who had been killed by the explosion yesterday.

No accurate statement of the number of persons killed and wounded was available early today. Estimates made here during the day and night varied from 300 to 2,000 killed. The property damage, chiefly along the water front and in the manufacturing, wholesale and residential districts, will reach several millions of dollars.

Mrs. Sarah Ann Pickens, age 73 of