

VATICAN IS PORT OF MISSING MEN

Pope Benedict Conducts Department of Lost Soldiers—Clearing House for Sorrow.

HIS SISTER ASKS HELP

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.) Rome, Dec. 18.—Pope Benedict XV, through the department of lost soldiers established at the Vatican, has aided in learning the whereabouts of more than 10,000 lost soldiers about whom heart-broken relatives had inquired through personal appeals to his holiness. He is receiving, and has received since the war began, some 200 letters a day from distraught parents, wives and sweethearts in all of the belligerent nations, pleading that he use his good offices to learn whether their loved ones, about whom they have been unable to hear anything, are dead, wounded, sick or prisoners.

The pope has found this one of the saddest phases of the war. Notwithstanding the size of his daily mail, he reads all such letters himself. In the beginning of the war he attempted to investigate each personally, but the task became so formidable that it was necessary to establish a separate department at the Vatican, now in charge of Father Huismann, under the pope's direction. His holiness, after reading one of the appeals, makes some notations on its envelope and sends it to the department of lost soldiers, which has its offices on the fourth floor of the Vatican near the papal secretary of state. Here are some thirty priests and civilians engaged in clerical work.

The department has access to official records transmitted by the Prussian minister of war to the holy see at Lugano, Switzerland and has offices at Paris, Constantinople, Vienna, Freiburg, Brussels and Paderborn, Westphalia, Germany, with several minor branches in other countries.

Efficient Organization.

The department has become one of the most highly organized of any in the Vatican. It writes several hundred letters a day, and to date such letters have run up to a total of more than 5,000,000. As the department returns all money enclosed in letters of appeal and as a person writing from England cannot well enclose Italian stamps for international correspondence, the stamp bill alone of the department has been upwards of \$200,000.

After making an official demand on the government of the country where the lost soldier is supposed to be, the department causes each new name to be posted up in the military prison camps, by the aid of a Catholic chaplain always present, in the hope that some of the lost soldiers' comrades may see the name and offer some clue that will lead to his location. Several thousands of such lists have been printed. There are 110 lists, each containing 200 names, for the Italian army alone, making thus a total of 22,000 lost Italian soldiers. Aside from this, the department has copies of official army prisoner lists, arranged by nations and it immediately searches these lists carefully for the name of the lost soldier.

Despite the difficulties of the task, the department has so far been able

to find more than 10,000 lost soldiers, and the pope has received a treasured collection of letters of thanks from families, often from little children, who address him as "Mister," or who give him the title names of popes dead many hundreds of years.

The correspondent of the Associated Press on a visit to the department saw a bundle of letters that had just been sent by the pope, possibly seventy-five in number, and on the envelope of each one, in his own handwriting, was written directions concerning its disposition. Among the heap was a letter from his sister, the Countess Persico della Chiesa of Genoa, the pope's home city, asking that a search be made for a certain soldier of Genoa. "The countess begs attention again," the pope had written on the letter. Another one of the letters was one of thanks from a French family whose son, Jean Laforgue, had been for two years in the orient without being able to send news to his family of himself, but the pope had been able to discover this lost son at Sansam, in distant Turkey.

Another letter was one of thanks from the family of Count Hugo de Rochefort, lieutenant in the aeronautic corps, who, during the Somme offensive, fell into the German lines. By telegraphing to the Nuncio at Munich, Bavaria, the department had been able to learn that the young man had died in the hospital of Vathland and been buried in the cemetery attached to the hospital. "It was at least a consolation for the family to know the burial place," said Father Huismann.

Japan Suffers Slight Losses On the High Seas

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.) Tokyo, Dec. 10.—A total of 1,290 merchant vessels, with an aggregate tonnage of 2,910,000, have been sunk since the outbreak of the war, according to Baron Kenjiro Den, minister of communications, who spoke before the Japan Trade association on the subject of war and shipping.

"Despite the heavy losses suffered by some of the entente countries," he said, "Japan's loss has been comparatively slight. So far only six Japanese steamers, with an aggregate tonnage of 26,000, have been sunk by the enemy, while three more of 12,000 tons are missing, making a total of nine ships and 38,000 tons. Since the outbreak of the war Japan's maritime trade to foreign countries has greatly developed, and the tonnage of 'tramp' steamers now trading to America, Australia, India, etc., is put at 800,000. This shows a five-fold increase since the outbreak of the war."

London Women Working As Clerks of Courts

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.) London, Dec. 29.—In the central law courts women are now being trained to do the work of clerks. Six women typists have been engaged in the scriveners' office, but only for such ordinary work as shorthand and typewriting; engraving is still being done, as typewriting lacks permanence as a record, and is also open to facility for forgery. The engravers, however, are all elderly men.

There are ten women in the admiralty division of the courts. In the prize department their work is varied; they keep the ledgers and look after the premiums of insurance payable on prizes.

AMERICA ALARMS BRITISH ARTISTS

England Plans to Buy Back Noted Paintings from the Yankee Millionaires.

ART LOVERS UP IN ARMS

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.) London, Dec. 21.—There is a peculiar appeal to the art world of America in the proposal now before the House of Lords to sell famous pictures in the National gallery in order to provide funds for the purchase of still more noted paintings and thus stem the flow to the United States. America is the only country buying works of art just now. Recent sales to noted collectors in the United States of some of the noted pictures in England have alarmed the local art world.

But the proposal which authorizes the trustees to sell works of art which have been bequeathed or given for the benefit of the nation is opposed by a large body of distinguished painters and sculptors on the ground that it involves a serious breach of faith. Another objection is that it would break up the works of J. M. W. Turner, who is ranked by many as the greatest artist this country has produced and the greatest landscape painter.

In a formal protest to the prime minister a score of noted painters and sculptors declare that the proposed powers have never yet been given to any state or legislature. They say that the immediate result would be to discourage prospective donors and testators and that no future purchases could compensate the nation for the destruction of the Turner collection.

Squabble Over Turner.

Supporters of the bill say that the Turner works are redundant, are not appreciated and could easily be sold and the funds devoted to obtaining more wonderful masterpieces. Led by Lord D'Abernon, the author of the bill, they assert that of 23,000 pictures and drawings owned by the National gallery 20,000 are all other and 3,000 by artists of whom there are too many "Turners." They want to get rid of some of them so that they can prevent other masterpieces from crossing the Atlantic.

Many artists and students of Turner have joined in the opposition to the bill. Lord D'Abernon and the trustees of the gallery have been attacked in Parliament and through the press, the trustees being accused of selecting a favorable opportunity to smuggle a bill through giving themselves power to betray their trust and buy a few more pictures which under present conditions are regarded as unnecessary luxuries.

But it appears that what the objectors fear most is that the privilege thus given to the trustees will prove the entering wedge to a system that will threaten the unique collection of Dutch pictures. "It was only the other day," wrote a noted artist to the Telegraph, "that a certain noble peer parted with a celebrated Italian picture for America, and is it not to be presumed that the proverbial sum of 100,000 pounds has been obtained? Supposing then that Lord D'Aber-

non's bill had become law, it is evident that Turners would not have supplied the required demands, and in order to make the purchase the trustees would have been obliged to dip into the Dutch collection."

A strong appeal is made on sentimental grounds. The pictures were obtained by bequest, and it is considered unfair to deprive donors to have their gifts traded with, or the National gallery "changed from a permanent resting place into an occasional auction mart."

John Bull Feeds War Prisoners On Two Dollars a Week

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.) Douglas, Isle of Man, Jan. 4.—As an experiment in communal feeding the British government's camp for war prisoners at Knockloe is the biggest and most successful thing of its kind ever attempted in the British Isles. Here 22,000 prisoners are housed and fed at a figure which averages only \$2 per man, per week.

The capital cost of the camp, which was built on farm land in the north of the Isle of Man, was \$1,250,000. This figure covers the building of all the barracks and administrative offices, kitchens, streets, sewage, water and electricity plants, telephones and all the other essentials of a modern city. On a basis of a population of 25,000 the cost of building this prison camp city figures out at about \$50 for each inhabitant.

The question of food as related to health has been a prime consideration with the British officials from the start. "Our dietary," explained the commandant, "has been constantly observed and studied scientifically by a staff of medical men, who from time to time make such changes as experience dictates. The cooking is all done by the men themselves, and the excellent results they achieve are not to be wondered at when it is remembered that they have among them some of the finest chefs of the big German hotels and restaurants. At one time their table was so much superior to the English officers' mess that the officers discharged their English cook and requisitioned one of the prisoners, who has been in charge of their kitchen ever since."

The health of the prisoners bears testimony to the adequacy of the food provided. In this improvised town of 25,000 inhabitants, there have been only seventy deaths in two years—a year death rate of less than 1.5 per thousand. This compares with a death rate in all England of 13.3 or in the United States of about 14.1.

Nebraska Naval Militia Will Train On the River

Ensign H. E. Reed of the Minnesota naval militia is in Omaha to organize Nebraska young men into a similar body. Lieutenant W. W. Waddell of the navy, recruiting station is co-operating with him. Headquarters are temporarily at the Delmar hotel. Boat drills on Carter lake and the Missouri river are planned, to train civilians for naval service in time of war. The naval militia is a reserve plan, similar to the National Guard, and except on vacation cruises for training purposes would be active only in wartime.

BRITISH HOLDING THE INDIAN TRIBES DOWN

Efforts of Emissaries to Stir Up Trouble Is Overcome in Short Order.

ROOS-KEPPEL AT THE HELM

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.) Peshawar, Northwest Frontier Province, India, Feb. 12.—British army officers and Tommies in this northwestern section of British India, who often turn their thoughts longingly towards the activities in the great theaters of war, solace themselves with the fact that they are holding the eastern end of the front anyway. Under the direction of Sir George Roos-Keppel, chief commissioner for the northwest frontier province, they are keeping open the Peiwar Kotal and Khyber passes, the gateways into Afghanistan, and are preventing the tribesmen of the intervening territory from carrying into British India a warfare which might have a strong bearing on the situation as a whole.

When the war broke out there was considerable uneasiness among British officials regarding the thousands of independent tribesmen, who are ever ready to make trouble and who, if they should succeed in burying their tribal feuds and unite, would present a serious menace. Numbers of German and Turkish emissaries had made their way into this independent region and had been busy trying to stir up the mountaineers to war, playing on the religious fanaticism of the latter. To a certain extent they were successful, for they created more or less unrest and aroused hopes of conquest which held dangerous potentialities.

Gets Situation in Hand.

At this juncture Sir George Roos-Keppel, who was then on protracted leave of absence in England, returned to take charge of his province, which forms the buffer between the tribesmen and the rest of British India. As the result of the measures which he instituted the situation is said to have been got thoroughly in hand and while the habitual fighting still continues there is no longer any fear of serious trouble.

The handling of the tribesmen is largely a matter of personal influence and Sir George is credited in official circles with being extraordinarily successful. One thing that undoubtedly has contributed to his success is the fact that he is a typical leader of men—tall, broad-shouldered, keen-eyed, quick of mind and with a particularly strong personality—the type the tribesmen respects. The chief commissioner deals with the chiefs as man to man, employing their own open-handed form of diplomacy. He has established a reputation among the tribes of never trying to bluff, a fact which is said to have bridged many a difficulty.

Influence of Sir George Felt.

The Afridi, the most warlike and powerful of the tribesmen, have been remaining strictly neutral ever since the arrival of the chief commissioner, although they were restless when he left England. Here the personal influence of Sir George came into play, for he had worked among the Afridi for nine years and is known and re-

spected by the people. The fact that the Afridi are friendly is most important, as it prevents the tribes on either side of them from joining hands against the British.

The Mohmands, whose territory lies near Peshawar, have been giving considerable trouble, as have also the Mahsuds, far to the southwest, but it is not deprecations by individual tribes that is feared, as only a concerted action by all of them would give cause for particular worry. The Mohmands, who have been committing outrages in British territory and waging petty warfare from time to time, already are paying for their hostility. Not only have they been barred from entering the province to carry on trade by which they have been wanting to secure the necessities of life, but virtually all the Mohmands in the British domains have either been

driven back into their own country or interned.

Former Omaha Man Dies In Detroit Last Tuesday

Mrs. Ross Hyde of this city received news of the death Tuesday of her brother, Fred Thrall of Detroit, who has been ill from a nervous breakdown for some weeks. Mr. Thrall is the elder son of Mrs. George Thrall, formerly of this city, and his boyhood was spent here before the family moved to Detroit. He leaves a wife and little daughter. His death occurred a year after that of his father almost to the day, and his own breakdown of health is in part due to the shock he suffered at his father's death and from overwork since that time.

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Admitted Assets Dec. 31st, 1907,	7,612.00
Admitted Assets Dec. 31st, 1908,	25,866.00
Admitted Assets Dec. 31st, 1909,	86,345.00
Admitted Assets Dec. 31st, 1910,	178,328.00
Admitted Assets Dec. 31st, 1911,	268,250.00
Admitted Assets Dec. 31st, 1912,	345,624.00
Admitted Assets Dec. 31st, 1913,	428,680.00
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