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PRESIDENT WILSON ASSESSING EUROPEAN OPINION

His Advisers Say the Allies Are Largely in Accord With His Principles

CLOSE ATTENTION TO IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS

American Commissioners Are Working to Clear Up Any Divergencies of Opinion.

Paris, Dec. 19.—Definite plans for the peace conference are not shaping as rapidly as some of the American commissioners expected. Meanwhile President Wilson is taking advantage of the opportunity to assess public opinion in France, and incidentally in Great Britain. His advisers say that he is entirely satisfied that these peoples are largely in accord with the principles he has announced as necessary to a durable peace.

CONFERENCE OF ALLIES

The members of the American mission are employing their time before the peace delegates from the various countries actually assembled, in a series of informal conferences, which eventually will include a representative of each of the Entente belligerents. Neutral states will not come into these sessions.

Feeling between all the Entente countries is that the making of peace should be their first task, so that they may determine upon the broad outlines of a league of nations, which, later, representatives of neutral countries will step in to complete.

BRINGING UP DIFFERENCES

While the American commissioners are holding these informal exchanges, which are designed to clear up divergencies of opinion, the President is constantly giving the closest attention to immediate problems.

IN TOUCH WITH WHOLE WORLD

He is receiving reports from the United States from American diplomat, to agencies throughout the world and from the group of investigators, both here and abroad, for the purpose of studying the special problems which will arise. These investigators are continuing their studies with the advantage of being on the ground and in intimate touch with the local conditions.

WANT YET A CHANGE PROGRAM

The President may change the program of his movements while awaiting the opening of the conference. It was not supposed until today that he would be here, but he has received urgent invitations to come soon.

Accompanied With Cabins for 199

Accompanied by 199 members of the aeroplanes club and the Trainian Society for Emigration, presented to Giovanni Caproni, one of the brothers who designed the Caproni aeroplanes a large medal in recognition of what he did for his country. An enthusiastic throng, as well as representatives from the military and political world were present at the ceremony.

After the presentation of the medal, Mr. Caproni, in a speech, prophesied a great future for aviation in general and Italian aviation in particular. There are few persons at present, he said, who are capable of imagining the dimensions and shapes which aeroplanes of the future will take. He spoke of aeroplanes with cabin capacity for as many as a hundred passengers. He reaffirmed his faith in the great part which Italy will play in the development of the aeroplane, which he believes will soon be used as a common mode of transportation supplementary to our present means of transportation on land and sea. The war, according to Mr. Caproni, has to its credit the development of the aeroplane which has been so great in recent years.

State Has Averted Wheat Crop.

Raleigh, N. C., Dec. 18.—Whether the decrease in the acreage sown to wheat this fall in North Carolina is due mostly to labor shortage, to the prospects of peace, or to the financial loss suffered by farmers in growing the crop, is a matter of conjecture. According to the final crop report for Dec. 1, the best conditions issued by Frank P. Baker, state field agent of the Federal Department of Agriculture, shows that North Carolina is the only state east of the Mississippi that did not plant an increase in wheat acreage as compared with last year, there being a one per cent decrease in these two states, and total of 1,025,000 acres is the preliminary estimate for the state, the condition of our crop averages 91 per cent of a full crop, this being the same as last year, and for the 10 year average. The present prices received by farmers averaged \$2.30 per bushel for wheat.

The wheat crop for the United States

shows decidedly different figures from those for North Carolina, there being a large increase in acreage and con-

dition. The autumn sown acreage is 49,027,000 acres compared with 42,301,000 last year, which gives an increase of 16 per cent. The condition of this crop is over 98 per cent of a full crop as compared with 79 per cent last year and 88 per cent for the ten year average. The price received by farmers is \$2.07.

The rye crop shows one per cent increase in acreage for North Carolina, and almost two per cent for the United States. Our state's estimated acreage for threshing is 65,650 acres with a condition of 94 per cent. The United States' acreage for grain is 6,820,000 acres with condition of 89 per cent.

The fall plowing for North Carolina showed about 6 per cent less done than usual. This was doubtless due to the extra efforts combined with shortage of labor that was given to harvesting of other crops. The drought conditions in certain sections made the soil too hard to be worked.

The State's wages of male farm labor estimated showed that the average rate per month when hired by the year was \$26.00 with board and \$35.00 without. While the average per day for ordinary farm work with board was \$1.40, and without board \$1.70. Of course special harvest work received higher wages.

The weather conditions for the entire year have been the most favorable toward farmers of any experienced in recent years. And the farmers worked as never before.

DEATH CLAIMS REV. A. D. BETTS.

Aged Minister Passes Away Following Injury Sustained at Goldsboro.

Greensboro, Dec. 18.—Rev. A. D. Betts, known to North Carolina Methodists as "Father Betts" or "Uncle Betts," died early this morning at the home of his son, Dr. J. S. Betts, at the age of 86. He was the oldest member of the North Carolina Methodist Episcopal Conference, and one of the oldest in the United States. He was a minister in the state for 50 years, and had been in the ministry for 67 years. He was born in Virginia and worked in Virginia and North Carolina for 30 years.

He was a member of the American Fraternity, and took a very great interest in the orphanage at Oxford supported by his fraternity. He had lived here with his son, Dr. J. S. Betts, for nearly ten years, and had become a familiar figure on the streets of the city, especially when on account of the hardships of age he was unable to get out so often. The funeral will take place tomorrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Dr. Betts is survived by his second wife and the following children: Rev. W. A. Dr. J. S. and Rev. James Betts; Miss Sallie P. Betts, Mrs. L. P. Wilkins and Mrs. R. L. Davis.

"Armistice" Asked Foch, Then He Made Huns Beg.

BY FAYOLLE E. BECHTOL, European Manager for the Newspaper Enterprise Association.

Marshal Foch gave the German armistice delegates wine of the vintage of 1876 to drink with their meals in France, according to the inside story of what went on at the conference which has just reached London.

The story is given me by a high official, in detail, and he assures me that it is already a part of the record of the war.

Here is the story: When the German delegates entered Foch stood stiffly and inquired: "Well, gentlemen, why am I thus honored?"

"We have come to see about the armistice," replied a German.

Foch looked astonished, his eyebrows raised.

"Armistice, armistice, I know nothing of an armistice."

Which flustered the Germans for a moment, then the spokesman said:

O Christmas Merry Christmas

O Christmas, merry Christmas!

Is it really come again?
With its memories and greetings,
With its joys and with its pain.
There's a minor in the carol
And a shadow in the light.
And a spray of cypress twining
With the holly wreath tonight.
And the hush is never broken
By laughter light and low.
As we listen in the starlight
To the bells across the snow.

O Christmas, merry Christmas!

'Tis not so very long
Since other voices blended
With the carol and the song.
If we could but hear them singing
As they are singing now,
If we could but see the radiance
Of the crown on each dear brow;
There would be no sigh to smother,
No hidden tear to flow,
As we listen in the starlight
To the bells across the snow.

O Christmas, merry Christmas!

This never more can be:
We cannot bring again the days
Of our unshadowed glee.
But Christmas, happy Christmas!
Best would be if we could will,
With the stars of glory
Bring us joy and gladness still.
For peace and hope may brighten,
And without how may glow,
As we listen in the starlight
To the bells across the snow.

Francis Bidder Hayward

Food Administration

The chief activity of the Food Administration, until the signing of the armistice, will be the preventing of speculation and profiteering in essential commodities, and the direction and control of such a degree of food conservation as will enable America to keep her reserves to export 20,000,000 bushels of wheat to starving European nations.

The necessity for the conservation of food prices and production, the Food Administration will continue to detect and punish any profiteers who are disposed to take advantage of the World food situation in order to profiteer.

The sale of whole and retail products will remain effective, and will continue to be operative until the treaty is formally signed. The sale of whole and retail products is indicated will also remain unchanged.

The Federal Society Meets.

The Federal Society held its regular annual meeting in the city of Raleigh on Thursday last week, at which meeting the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

President—Dr. H. G. Perry.
Vice President—Dr. H. M. Beane.
Secretary and Treasurer—Dr. S. P. Burt.

Delegates to State Convention to be held in April, 1919—Dr. J. O. Newell, alternate—Dr. J. E. Malone.

A meeting for the purpose of discussing the Spanish influenza was called for March 1st, at which time Dr. H. M. Beane will read a paper on "Spanish influenza" and Dr. S. P. Burt will read a paper on "Vaccine in Spanish influenza."

Letters from France

Kerhoun Hospital, Brest, France, Dec. 3, 1918

Mr. A. F. Johnson, North Carolina, U. S. A.

Dear Asher:

I have thought many times since arriving in France that I would write you, knowing that you would be interested in news of these Hospital No. 1, as so many Louisburg boys are in the unit, but heretofore censorship has been so strict that letter writing has been a difficult proposition. There were so few things that we could write about that it took a genius to write more than a page. Now that some of the rules have been abolished, a fellow can write a letter that is at least readable if not interesting.

We have with us now from Louisburg James B. King, Joe E. Nash, W. Blair Tucker and Festus M. Fuller. There was originally six of us from Louisburg in the unit, but Myers W. Page was taken sick a few days before we sailed, and was left at Camp Upton, in the hospital. All the boys are well and

enjoying themselves.

We sailed from New York on the 30th of August and landed here at Brest on September 13th, taking 13 days to make the trip. Everybody boarded the ship in high spirits but quite a few were exactly the opposite when we landed, after thirteen days of "fish-feeding." However a few days after landing all were on their feet again and went to work with renewed energy. When we first landed we went to Pontenazen Barracks, just outside the city of Brest. These barracks during Napoleon's reign were used by his troops as a training camp. The building all of stone, the walls being more than two feet thick. This place is used now by American troops as a rest camp after debarking. We were there three days, coming from there to this place, which is located directly across the city from Pontenazen. When we arrived here we found none of the buildings finished, no roads or any conveniences whatever. However we went to work putting up beds, and had the carpenters to tack cloth over the windows in hot of glass, and ten days after we arrived we had more than a thousand patients in our care. To show you some of the difficulties under which we had to work, we had no lights except candles, not even an oil lamp available, and the whole hospital grounds was a network of ditches, cut for the sewer system. We were receiving more patients in the night than day, and had to carry the litters across these ditches in the rain and mud with a candle as our only source of light. Incidentally I forgot to mention that it rained here day and night and mud shoe deep everywhere. We now have fairly good roads and electric lights and have a 300 bed hospital fully equipped with everything including patients. Our first days here seem almost like a dream, but believe me it was "some" and we were experiencing it.

For the first few weeks that we were here we handled nothing but influenza patients, all coming direct from the boats from the States. I have seen as many as 1800 patients in the hospital here at one time with it. We had one boat to land here, off which we received more than 800 influenza patients. The death rate was terrific for a while, reaching the maximum of 62 patients within twenty four hours. Now, however, it is all over. We have very few influenza patients in the hospital, and most of these are convalescent.

We are now handling practically nothing but wounded men going back to the States, the only being made an Invalid Hospital for D class patients which stands that they are unfit for further duty in foreign service. We are handling them in great numbers, and the armistice was signed they are commencing to come across as fast as they are available. I trust many of them will be wounded and sick men that will be on American soil and troops will begin to move

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are small, telling nothing only fancy embroidered articles, jewelry and toilet requisites such as perfumes, powders, face lotions, etc. I would certainly hate to go shopping with an American girl in Brest and have to carry the bundles; especially if she got into one of the perfumery stores. Wine shops are very much in evidence also, of course, as every house along the country roads has its saloon, and in the city they are the most popular establishments, both as to number and customers.

The roads of France are the best I ever saw. We are located on a road that was built by Napoleon years ago, and has had practically no repair since, but still is in far better condition than the average road of America today. They are built of stone as is everything else over here, and are never muddy or dusty.

All the homes of the wealthier class of people (known as chateaus) are surrounded by rock walls about 10 feet high, entrance being affected thru iron gates which are kept locked at all times when not actually in use. The city of Brest is also surrounded by a huge rock wall built by Caesar. The peasantry or poorer class of people live in two story stone structures which are always built near the walls of the chateau of their owner, and are built right beside the road, having no lawns or even a veranda. In most of the peasant homes they have no furniture except chairs and tables the beds being built in the walls of the house. They use candles exclusively for lights, none of them having electricity or oil lamps even. They still dress in the old Briton costumes, the men wearing the little jacket of blue, with loose trousers and wide brimmed black hat turned up at the edge with streamers of black ribbon or behind. The women dress similar to the Quakers except the head-dress which is no larger than your hand, and is always made of white material and trimmed with a white lace and embroidery. It is very odd, looking, yet pretty.

Well, I will close this as I am sure you will tire of it. I have written more than I intended when commencing but trust you will have the patience to read it through.

With best wishes and kindest regards I am sincerely,
Your friend,
W. D. ALFORD.

Reasons for Pardon.
Governor Bickett's reasons for the pardon of Wilcox follow:

A mass of letters on file in this office conclusively show that public opinion in Pasquotank county has reached the condition that James Wilcox has been consistently punished. Hon. Geo. W. Wood presented the case as a soldier, but as a man and a citizen. He afterwards became a distinguished Judge of our State Courts, and a year ago before his death he filed a paper asking for the pardon of Wilcox, which was being pending in Pasquotank county at the time and just before he was presented the case. I have read it.

The statement, however, that turns the scales in favor of the prisoner is a letter written to me by him, in which he says:

"The fifteen months and seven months I have worked hard and faithful, been industrious and obedient to those whom I have been under, and that is what a prison record will show and that is a record that very few ever attain, after years of working against it."

"And now, dear Governor, it is with the same spirit that you ask our heavenly Father for me, that I come and ask you for mercy, and should you see fit to grant me a pardon, I can assure you I will not cause you one regret for having done so."

"Another letter that has great weight with me is from Capt. H. T. Peales, who says that he has been connected with the management of the State's Prison for 18 years, and that the prisoner Wilcox is the best prisoner that he has ever known. All the officials of the prison support this opinion. They say that for 16 years the conduct of Wilcox has been exemplary in every respect. He has not only obeyed the prison regulations but he has supported these regulations and encouraged good boys to do so. He has been respectful to the authorities and kind to his fellow prisoners."

"The jury found him guilty of murder in the second degree, and under it the wretch could not be executed. I do not believe in life imprisonment except in incurable cases. I am clearly of opinion that no further good can come of society or to James Wilcox by keeping him in prison any longer. For these reasons a full pardon is granted."

What He Says About His Wife.
To his Mother—You will be my mother as long as I live, and in all matters, I assure you.
To his Brother—Your mistress will never give up anything. She is a perfect housekeeper.
To his Partner—Yes, my wife is extravagant, but how can I help that?
To his Sister—She is a wonderful manager, is Adele. I never saw a woman who could make a dollar go so far.

To his Best Friend—Yes, old man, all women, as you say, are alike, and I guess my wife is no worse than the rest of them.

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