

WEATHER FORECAST

North Carolina—Fair tonight and Saturday, except rain or snow Saturday in west portion; warmer Saturday.

THE WILMINGTON DISPATCH

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WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA, FRIDAY, AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 7, 1917

PRICE FIVE CENTS

2,000 DEAD 2,000 HURT AT HALIFAX

Energies Bent Toward Relieving the Injured and Feeding the Hungry

HEAVY SNOW STORM AIDS FIRE FIGHTING

Flames Still Rage in Many Sections of City—Disaster Caused by Explosion of 4,000 Tons Trinitrotoluol.

(By Associated Press.) Halifax, N. S., Dec. 7.—Stunned by the magnitude of the disaster which has overwhelmed the "Garrison City," the people of Halifax today bent all their energies to relieving the injured, feeding the hungry, and comforting the homeless and gathering the dead.

A heavy snowstorm set in early today and while this in a measure impeded the work of relief and rescue, it served to aid the firemen in fighting the flames which still burned fiercely in many places among the ruins in the devastated district.

Reports from the improvised morgues and hospitals, church, schools and private residences seemed to bear out last night's estimate that at least 2,000 lives were lost when the Belgian steamship Imo collided with the French munitions steamer Monte Blanc, causing the detonation of 4,000 tons of trinitrotoluol, one of the most powerful explosives manufactured. Help from outside began to reach the stricken city today. Doctors, nurses, medical and food supplies arrived on special trains from Truro and Windsor, N. S., and from Moncton, N. B.

Other trains were reported on the way and were expected to reach here during the day. The special train sent from Boston by direction of Governor McCall, of Massachusetts, will arrive this evening.

All business is suspended and the schools now closed while the inhabitants generally are turning their attention to relief work. Soldiers and sailors, including seamen from an American warship, which rushed to the port when it received word of the disaster, are patrolling the stricken district and aiding in the rescue work.

Smoldering ruins, and piles of debris of demolished houses continue to threaten their dead victims of yesterday's explosion aboard the French line munitions laden steamship Monte Blanc, following a collision in the Narrows of Halifax harbor with the Belgian steamer Imo—in such numbers as to surpass any disaster on the continent in recent years.

Estimates of the number of dead at 2,000 or more appeared to be borne out by the rapidly filling morgues and increasing numbers of deaths reported from hospitals, private homes, churches and schools where hundreds of injured men are being cared for by their more fortunate townsmen and members of relief parties from nearby cities. The exact number of dead, it appeared certain today, might never be known.

HEARTS BEAT FAST WHILE HARRY RICH PERFORMS IN AIR

Falls Turned Away as Daring Man Literally Flirted With Death

SECOND PERFORMANCE TO BE GIVEN TONIGHT

Trapeze Act on Roof of Trust Building Proved One of Most Thrilling Ever Seen in City

The hearts of several hundred people here tonight were as they were at Harry Rich in his acrobatic performance on the trapeze erected on the roof of the Trust Building. It was a feat of great and a majority of the spectators and waited from half past seven to a few minutes after midnight to witness the performance, and it was a thrilling wait in the cold wind that blew up the street from across the river. But the cold and impatience were wiped away in forgetfulness of the fact that the act sent the blood surging through the veins of the onlookers.

There is a doubt it was the most thrilling performance that has been

AUSTRO-GERMANS ATTEMPT ANOTHER FLANK MOVEMENT

Operations in Northern Italy Similar to Those Six Weeks Ago

ASIAGO BATTLE MAY BE ITALY'S VERDUN

Italians Are Making a Most Gallant Resistance to the Superior Enemy—Austria Releases Russians

(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.

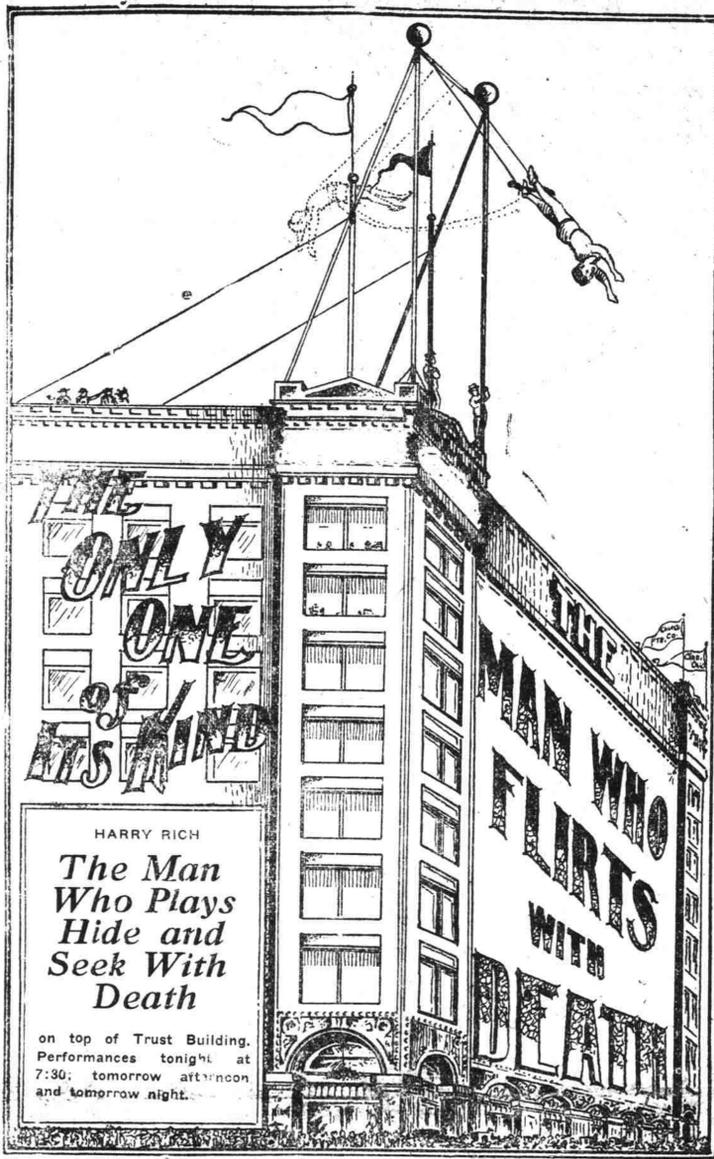
The Austro-German attack on Meletta not only affects the lines in that region, but if the enemy could pierce through and drive his way southward onto the plains, it might place him on the left flank of the Piave lines such as the Duke of Aosta had his third army at Gorizia with the enemy on his left flank.

It is this quite as much as the frontal attack that is receiving consideration. The line east of Asiago probably is stronger today than before the retirement yesterday, as it is now a straight line. Formerly it was like a long inverted letter U with the Italians on the inside of the U and the enemy on the outside.

It has been established that while Field Marshal Conrad von Hetzendorf is directing the movement, General von Krobatin's forces also are co-operating. In addition to the superiority in numbers, the Austro-Germans are taking advantage of the backward season and are striking before the mountain snows impede operations. The weather this year happens to be favorable to the enemy. The snow is only a few inches deep, whereas in December, the snow usually reaches a depth of from four to 10 feet. One such snow fall now would be worth divisions. Gray skies today indicated snow, but the fall was light.

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. Each

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GOLDSBORO WINS 1918 SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE

Two Invitations Extended, the Wayne Capital Being Duly Selected

SUMMER SCHOOL FOR PREACHERS

North Carolina Conference Concur in Suggestion of Western Conference and Suggests Trinity College

(Special to the Dispatch.) Greenville, N. C., Dec. 7.—The North Carolina Conference of the Methodist church in session here, this morning selected Goldsboro as the place for the 1918 meeting, that city's invitation securing more support than the invitation of Benson.

The third day of the conference was opened by singing the old hymn, "Come Ye Who Love the Lord," which Bishop Chandler himself raised. He then read the seventeenth chapter of Matthew. Rev. L. E. Thompson led the prayer. In the Bishop's remarks he spoke of the danger of being over-anxious for our own rights. "If we always get what we think our rights are, we are apt to infringe upon the rights of others. The Master surrendered all His rights, even the right to live, and admonished the preachers to have higher ideals than their rights. The salvation of men is of more importance than the rights of any man."

By order of yesterday's session, 10 o'clock was the hour for the selection of a place of meeting next year. At that time Rev. A. D. Wilcox gave the Conference a very cordial invitation to meet in St. Paul's church in Goldsboro, Rev. J. T. Stanford put Benson in nomination. Goldsboro was selected.

The following resolution was passed: "In keeping with the action of the Western North Carolina Conference (Continued on Page Eight).

AMERICAN AIRMEN WOUNDED

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Dec. 7.—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, sister, Mrs. Ida Smith, 303 Smith street, Dublin, Ga.; Private Edward F. Ebsen, father, George H. Ebsen, Buffalo, Mo.

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WAR RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY SENATE WITHOUT A DISSENT

EXAMINATION OF GASTON B. MEANS STILL PROCEEDING

Defendant Begins Second Day's Testimony in Concord Murder Trial

VALIDITY OF NEW WILL BROUGHT UP

Alleged Second Will Likely to Prolong the Trial—Letters Read—Means Admitted Speculating

(By Associated Press.) Concord, N. C., Dec. 7.—Gastor B. Means on the stand in his own defense in his trial on charge of the murder of Mrs. Maude A. King, continued a direct examination today to explain letters which he had written to his wife, to Afton Means and others last July, and which the State had presented as evidence of duplicity on the defendant's part in dealing with Mrs. King. These letters were written soon after the arrival of Mrs. King, Mrs. Robinson, her mother and Mrs. Harry C. Melvin, at Asheville, from Chicago.

He explained that passages in his letters and telegrams referring to a party on Chesapeake Bay, Maude "flying the track," etc., had reference to a joke which he and Mrs. Means had with Mrs. King about a certain foreigner she had seen in New York, Washington and Asheville and in whom she was deeply interested.

He explained that his caution against his wife and baby riding in the Fiat car around Asheville was based solely on the ground that it was a car not adopted to mountain roads and that the chauffeur had never driven a car except in very level country. The witness told this morning of having at Mrs. King's direction employed expensive handwriting experts and lawyers to endeavor to secure the probation of "last will" of James C. King, known as the "second will." This evidence was presented, counsel explained, to account for certain expenditures of Mrs. King's money made by Means. Clashes over admission of various papers, finding of certain papers wanted and the reading of letters, etc., made progress this morning slow.

Armistice Agreement. Petrograd, Dec. 6.—The text of the armistice agreement between the Sixty-seventh Russian Infantry Division and the Thirty-first German Division is printed by The Pravda. It does not contain a word concerning the non-transference of German troops to other fronts.

Retirement Was Carried Out Without Knowledge of the Germans

CONTINUED SEVERE FIGHTING IN ITALY

Austro-Germans Make Violent Assaults But as Yet Have Not Broken Through the Italian Line

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 retirement was carried out so quietly that the Germans continued to shell the empty positions for several hours. The British line has been shortened and made more capable of strong defense by the retirement.

British Evacuate Certain Exposed Cambrai Points

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RUMANIA JOINS RUSSIANS

(By Associated Press.) Jassy, Rumania, Thursday, Dec. 6.—It has been decided that Rumanian troops shall associate themselves with the Russians in the proposed armistice, though the Rumanians have rejected every attempt at fraternization, says an official announcement made here today. Hostilities were suspended today on the whole front.

THE DEATH LIST MAY REACH 5,000

Red Cross Rushes Special Relief Trains to Scene of Disaster

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Dec. 7.—Arrangements for despatching a third relief train at 11 a. m. today, from New York to carry supplies and assistance to Halifax, were made by the Red Cross. Railway officials are assisting and will push the train through as fast as possible.

John F. Moore will be in charge of the Red Cross relief work in Halifax. Surgeons and nurses are being rushed to the scene of devastation in three trains.

From Boston, a medical base hospital has been ordered to Halifax with a full corps of surgeons and nurses whose work will be supplemented by that of an organized body of social workers. The train from New York will not arrive there before midday tomorrow.

TEJTONS CAPTURE MORE ITALIANS

(By Associated Press.) Berlin, Dec. 7. (via London).—Four thousand more Italians have been captured in the new Austro-German offensive on the Northern front, bringing the total up to 15,000, according to today's official communication. Monte Sisemol was captured by storm, the statement says.

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