

DEATH RATE IN BELGIUM IS HIGH

Under German Occupation, Ill Treatment and Poor Food Kill Thousands.

WORSE THAN AN EPIDEMIC

Mortality in Civil Life Greater Than on Battlefield—Situation Can Only Be Worse, Says Legation—One Execution Daily.

Washington.—The existing death rate in Belgium is as high as at the time of the most terrible epidemics and greater than that on the battle field, due to the extremities to which German occupation has reduced the country. In addition, at least one Belgian daily is executed by the German authorities, according to a statement made public by the Belgian legation. The statement came from Havre and read as follows:

"Not taking into account the losses on the field of battle Belgium has suffered heavily in its civilian population through the invasion and occupation of its territory by the Germans.

"1. Civilians killed during the invasion, August-September, 1914—Although we are not yet in possession of a complete list of the civilians killed by the Germans during those fateful days, we know the number of victims to be well over 5,000. For the following provinces we have approximate estimates: Namur, more than 1,800; Luxembourg about 1,200; Liege, more than 1,000; Brabant, 897; Hainaut, about 300. Most of these victims fell in the towns where, under pretext of the existence of sharpshooters, German fury knew no limits. Dinant counted 606 victims; Ahdenne, more than 200; Tamines, more than 400; Louvain, 210; Aerschot, about 150; Namur, about 75.

"2. Among the deportees the mortality resulting from privations, ill treatment, underfeeding, etc., exceeds largely the normal percentage of deaths. Some, too, have met death on the battle fields, where the Germans forced them to do auxiliary work. If we possess ample information about individual places and undeniable testimony on the broken health of the returned deportees in general, we are, however, unable to quote figures.

"3. The electrified wire which makes the Belgians prisoners in their own country accounts for a great number of victims, especially among young people, who try to escape in order to join the army, or among couriers, who try to smuggle news in or out of Belgium. In less than a year, between August, 1916, and July, 1917, 160 persons were electrocuted. Since then the average number of victims has increased, owing to the strengthening of the guards and the putting up of new wires.

"4. The death penalty, pronounced by the German military courts for crimes of patriotism, levies a heavy toll on the population. It is estimated that each day one Belgian at least suffers the supreme penalty.

"The unsatisfactory food situation, due to the requisitioning of the home-grown foodstuffs and the sinking of many relief ships, the use of unsuitable substitutes, the lack of fuel, as a result of the exploitation by Germany for her own consumption, and for exportation, of the Belgian coal fields, has dangerously increased the death rate.

"Deaths from hunger and cold are not unusual, but it is mostly indirectly that the underfeeding of the population causes numerous premature deaths, for, through lack of physical strength, many people are subject to rickets or pre-tuberculosis, and so become unable to resist slight illness which, under normal conditions, would not prove fatal. As to the bad effect of unsuitable substitutes, it will suf-

face to recall the diseases contracted by the deportees through the use of raw rutabagas and the paralysis of the brain and of the marrow or the special kind of jaundice provoked by the use of lupin seeds as a substitute for coffee berries.

White Plague Prevalent.

"The death rate all over Belgium, but especially in the large towns, is as high as at the time of the most terrible epidemics. A Brussels paper, appearing with the consent of the German censorship, admits that there are more civilian dead from lack of sufficient food than Belgian soldiers fallen on the battlefield. On the other hand, a report on the 'Work of the War Orphans' in Belgium shows that in 1917 there were fewer orphans of soldiers fallen in the war than of civilians killed during the same period and of deportees dead in consequence of their deportation.

"Cardiac affections and cerebral hemorrhages account for the greater part of the deaths, tuberculosis, especially under the form of tubercular meningitis, for almost as many. Typhoid fever, caused by the occupying army, has occasionally levied a heavy toll on the civilian population.

"The situation in 1918 can only grow worse; it is undeniable that the physical standard of the nation is lowering dangerously and that the effects of the German occupation on the health of the people will make themselves felt for a long time after the war."

SCRATCHED RASPUTIN'S FACE

Mlle. Vera Smirnova is known to every Russian who has been in Petrograd within the last five years. Her marvelous contralto voice had won for her the most enviable position in court life.

She was the lioness of the most exclusive set of all of Russia, and she was the idol of the peasants of that ill-fated country. Her rendition of the Russian gypsy songs endeared her to all.

Traveling in the set she did, she was bound to come, sooner or later, to the notice of that famed mystic of all mystics—Rasputin, the Holy One of Russia.

For a long time the man who dominated Russia even more than the czar himself, had cast covetous eyes on the charming singer. Finally, the mo-

ment he had long wished for came during an entertainment held in the home of a grand-duchess.

On the plea that he desired to talk with her on spiritual things, she went with him into the conservatory. When she realized his plans, she forgot that she was the guest of the grand-duchess, forgot what the result might be, forgot her surroundings completely and almost tore into shreds the face of the Holy One. When Rasputin was questioned as to the cause of his scars, he replied that he had been wrestling with the spirits of evil controlling the fair Mlle. Vera.

Prince Youssoufov and his wife, Princess Irene, were the intimate friends of Mlle. Smirnova. Naturally she told her story of the encounter with Rasputin to them. The prince,



already worked up to a pitch over a similar insult by Rasputin to Princess Irene, vowed that within 48 hours she would be revenged. Almost to the minute the body of Rasputin was found.

Mlle. Smirnova is now in this country, where she is helping to swell the coffers of the Red Cross fund by singing her loved gypsy songs to the people of her own country, in the language they understand.

Famine Stalks in Petrograd

Hams at \$300 Each, Eggs 75 Cents Each, Are Examples of Food Scarcity.

BRITISH COLONY SUFFERING

Its 500 Members Appeal to Foreign Office to Send Supplies—Relatives Rob Each Other of Food.

London.—A dispatch to the London Times from Petrograd says:

"The famine in Petrograd is becoming positively alarming. There is practically no food in the markets or in the shops. Two-thirds, if not more, of the latter are permanently closed for want of goods of all kinds besides food stuffs. There is no flour, no sugar, no potatoes, cheese, or milk, no grain or groats, and very little meat. All is under control unless accidentally or privately obtained. The principal necessities of life have to be got when possible through friends and chance acquaintances at enormous cost if you have money to pay for them, or as meager rations doled out by the au-

thorities, and absolutely inadequate for subsistence. The present ration of indigestible black bread, half baked, with as much moisture as possible left in it to increase its weight, is one-eighth of a pound per day, and often that is not forthcoming on account of the hopeless disorder and universal thieving habit.

Rob Without Compunction.

"Relatives and dependents rob one another of food without compunction. Hunger has no conscience. If a morsel of anything is left on the plate for later consumption it will disappear as soon as you turn your back. Every scrap has to be put under lock and key after each meal. In my own case, the house committee which receives flour from the town authorities for distribution to us tenants could not account for nine pounds (324 pounds) of flour, so that we all had to go without any bread for two days.

"In spite of special commissions and stringent measures against hoarding and speculation, profiteering goes on to a great extent among all classes. In fact, food is a far more valuable commodity than paper money and secretly circulates instead of it. All conversation indoors and out is about food and how to get it. Half the working day is wasted in pursuit of sufficient to eat.

"As an illustration of how far disorganization and greed can go, I may mention the fact that no fewer than fifteen carloads of rotten hares were recently brought into town and several attempts made to fust them on the municipal executives; but they were finally rejected and condemned. Good hares are being sold at £2 10 shillings apiece (nearly \$12.50, according to the rate of exchange before the war.)

Hams at \$300 Each.

"Prices of other articles are quite fabulous. Hams are offered at £40 and £60 each. Butter costs 42 shillings a pound; cheese, 3 shillings a pound; white flour, 30 shillings a pound; eggs, 3 shillings apiece; carrots, 5 shillings a pound; potatoes, 6 shillings a pound. With the exception of occasional limited sales most of these articles can only be obtained privately.

"In these circumstances the British community in Petrograd, which is now reduced perhaps to about 500 persons who are unable for various reasons to leave Russia, felt obliged to induce the British consul and the incumbent of the English church to wire to London for a few edible supplies to help us tide over this serious crisis. I am told that a telegram to this effect has been sent to the foreign office, but so far no assistance is forthcoming. We do not want luxuries, but a few cases of crushed oats, for example, some sugar, margarine, and flour, would be a god-send.

"There has been no essential improvement of internal affairs here. On the contrary, the situation in many respects has been going from bad to worse."

IMPORTANT NEWS THE WORLD OVER

IMPORTANT HAPPENINGS OF THIS AND OTHER NATIONS FOR SEVEN DAYS GIVEN

THE NEWS OF THE SOUTH

What is Taking Place in the Southland Will Be Found in Brief Paragraphs

Domestic.

Henry Ford, Detroit automobile manufacturer, who has been mentioned as the Republican candidate for United States senator to succeed William Alden Smith, has been endorsed by the Michigan Democrats in conference and urged "to become our candidate, although he is not within our fold."

At the behest of President Wilson, the Postal-Cable Telegraph company has decided to permit its employees to form a union.

At a meeting of the mayor and council of the town of Berlin, Iowa, the name of the town was changed to Lincoln, and the postoffice department so notified.

"Prussianism and the idea of enduring peace among nations can never be brought into harmony; compromise can't even be considered," Secretary of State Lansing declared at Schenectady, N. Y., in an address as honorary chancellor of Union college for 1918.

Sentences of life imprisonment were imposed by a courtmartial at San Antonio upon 45 "conscientious objectors" who had refused to wear army uniforms. The sentence was reduced to 25 years each by Brig. Gen. J. P. O'Neil, who reviewed the record. The "objectors" belong to the Mennonite faith.

Survivors of the American freighter Pinar del Rio, arriving at Norfolk, Va., from Majitoe, N. C., say the German submarine which sank their vessels 110 miles northeast of Cape Henry, was accompanied by a large steamer which they believed to be a "mother ship." They also asserted that two sailing vessels were sent to the bottom immediately after the sinking of the Pinar del Rio.

The Florida state board of control, holding supervision of the state institutions higher learning, has discontinued the use of the German language in Florida colleges.

Washington.

Modifications of the recent freight rate increase order, announced by Director General McAdoo, provide that the plan, by which intrastate rates shall be reduced; that the minimum charge of \$15 a car shall not apply to local switching movements nor to heavy articles such as brick, sand, lumber, ore and coal; and that the increase of 15 cents a hundred pounds on cotton is to apply to any quantity instead of only to car loads.

Two Norwegian steamships, the Vindeggen and Henrik Lund, were sunk by a German submarine when about two hundred miles east of Cape Charles, Va. This brings the total of vessels sunk by U-boats since they began their campaign in these waters to eighteen.

President Wilson has approved a nation-wide compulsory work movement to supplement Provost Marshal General Crowder's "work or fight" regulation. In a letter addressed to Governor Harrington of Maryland, made public in Washington, the president endorsed adoption by other states of the Maryland compulsory work law under which the "work or fight" principle is made applicable to all men between the ages of 18 and 50.

An arrangement by which army officers may purchase their uniforms from the quartermaster department at cost has been announced by the war department. Heretofore officers have had to purchase their own clothing outside, and many complaints have been made that the dealers have taken advantage of this fact to raise prices beyond a reasonable level.

Members of the house ways and means committee have given expression to growing impatience over the fact that most of the witnesses appearing to discuss the new revenue legislation have come with pleas for exemption from war taxation.

That the war department will ask modification of the select service law—so as to include all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five or forty-nine—is the forecast of well-informed congressional leaders.

In the crushing of Germanism in the United States the Koelnische Volks Zeitung sees a disaster in a measure balancing the Teutonic military success.

Under an agreement among all the allies, it is stated in Washington, it is understood that the military service ages of all the allied nations are to be made uniform.

To check further industrial congestion in the already overburdened east, the government has prescribed a district in which it will permit no increase in the volume of war orders nor in the number of plants handling them.

For the first time in more than thirty years the granaries of the Mormon churches are being swept clean. More than a quarter of a million bushels of wheat have been turned over to the food administrator from the Mormon wheat storehouses in Utah.

Nearly complete reports to the provost marshal general's office show that 744,895 young Americans registered for military service on June 5.

A St. John, N. F., dispatch reports that the Cunard line steamship Ascania ran upon a rock shore in a dense fog about two o'clock in the morning, and that the ship was abandoned, as it was seen that she would be soon torn to pieces.

A report from "An Atlantic Port" tells of an all-day fight with a German submarine off the Virginia capes by the British steamship Author. The raider did no damage and gave up the chase 70 miles off the Virginia capes, apparently fearing to brave the coast patrol.

The senate requested information of Secretary McAdoo regarding what steps were being taken to stabilize the American dollar abroad, but the secretary, acting at the instance of President Wilson, declined to give out anything whatever, further than to say that some neutral European cousin and South American sister were attending to the matter, and that there need be no concern.

Members of the senate foreign relations committee opine that the ratification of the treaty with Great Britain and Canada will impose a moral obligation on the United States to raise the service age.

There is strong sentiment in congress in favor of raising the service age and considerable opposition also.

In view of what has been happening during the past few days, officials in Washington are inclined to regard as a bit of grim humor the report from Berlin via Holland that the German government is about to declare the eastern American coast a danger zone and to warn neutral shipping of its purposes.

The frank declaration of President Wilson, in his address to the Mexican editors, will lead the world to an era of peace, says the 'Santiago, Chile, Mercurio, in an editorial, expressing approval of the president's words.

Until the end of the present critical shortage of wheat flour federal food administrators will discourage the opening of new commercial bakeries, the United States food administration has announced. Those intending to enter the business of baking bread and rolls are requested not to apply for licenses until after August 1.

A baker who desires to surrender his license must satisfy his local food administrator that he is no longer in business, and turn over his license to him. When selling his business, a baker is not permitted to transfer his license. The license of the seller must be surrendered to the food administrator, and the purchaser must apply for a new license.

European.

The drive of the German crown prince to Paris has been checked definitely.

The maneuvers of the German commanders for the past two weeks apparently has gained them nothing but severe losses in men and supplies, and the only gain has been on the Noyon salient and the capture of a few unimportant positions southwest of Soissons.

The feeling still prevails on the western front that the main effort of the Germans is yet to be launched—and whether it will be for Paris or the channel ports is purely speculative.

Scouting patrols report that the German armies on the west have been largely reinforced by the men who have been operating on the Russian front.

The heroism of the veteran troops of the allied armies who in these last days have inflicted such terrific losses on the flower of the German army has given the foe a rude shock.

Considerable artillery activity is reported in the Hangard wood, south of the Aisne and in the sector between Villers-Cotterets and Chateau Thierry.

There seems no doubt that the central powers will make one more effort to capture Paris before the Americans arrive in sufficient numbers to stop them.

The central powers are showing the utmost concern about the numerical strength of the American troops arriving on the western front, and seem to be taking no interest whatever in what happens to the Bulgarian front on the Grecian border.

British casualties reported for the week ending June 14 totalled 34,171 officers and men.

In a recent memorandum issued by the Austrian Men's Democratic League, "the immediate opening of peace negotiations in a neutral country" is demanded.

Sir Joseph Jonas, lord mayor of Sheffield, in 1900, and a steel manufacturer, was in the Bow street, London, police court on the charge that with various other persons, whose names were not known, he "did obtain and communicate certain information prejudicial to the interests of the state and information useful to the enemy and information relating to prohibited places and things therein." Sir Jonas was born in Germany and was naturalized in 1876.

One Austrian dreadnaught was destroyed and a second one damaged in the torpedo attack made by Italian torpedo boats upon the Austrian naval division near the Dalmatian islands, it is officially stated in Venice.

The German admiralty, says a London dispatch, intends to declare the eastern coast of the United States, from Mexico to Canadian waters, a danger zone, and will warn neutral shipping.

HARD FIGHTING IS STILL IN PROGRESS

SPIRITED AGGRESSIVE IS BEING HOTLY PRESSED BY ITALIANS AND THEIR ALLIES.

LOST GROUND IS REGAINED

Important Sectors Lost in Initial Conflict Wrested From Enemy in Fast and Furious Fighting.

Not alone are the Italians and their British and French comrades-in-arms holding in check the Austrian offensive along the greater part of the 100-mile battle front from the region southeast of Trent to the Adriatic sea, but they themselves have turned aggressors on some of the more important sectors, especially in the mountain regions.

Counter-attacks in the hill country on the north at several points have resulted in the occupation by the allies of ground won from them in the initial onslaught and the rectification of their lines, while a stiffening of the front along the Piave river has made impossible, for the time being, at least further fording of the stream by the enemy.

Hard fighting still is in progress, however, with the Austrians bringing the strongest kind of pressure to bear against the allied armies on both northern and eastern parts of the battlefield in an endeavor to reach the lines and gain access in force to the plains.

The strokes of the enemy are particularly violent on the Montello plateau, the highest bit of ground along the middle reaches of the Piave, the capture of which would give him command of the roads leading through Treviso to Venice and a fairway westward through the province of Treviso. The Italians are inflicting heavy casualties on the troops of Emperor Charles which crossed the river at this point.

To the south from St. Andrea to Fossalata, respectively, the northern and southern flanks of the famous Zenson loop where last year the Austrians effected a crossing of the Piave, only later to be driven back with sanguinary losses, and from Fossalata to San Dona di Piave the fighting also is of a violent character, with the Italians heroically and successfully, according to the Rome war office, holding the line of the river.

Between Chandelu and the Zenson loop where the Austrians crossed the Piave in Saturday's fighting, the Italians have driven them back to the river bank and are endeavoring to push them across the stream. The latest Austrian official communication records the gain of additional ground west of San Dona di Piave and the capture of the village of Capo Sile, on the eastern edge of the Lagoon region in the provinces of Venetia and about 20 miles from the city of Venice itself.

GAS BEING USED BY GERMANS IN MUCH LARGER PROPORTIONS

With the American Forces on the Marne.—The Germans have begun using gas to a greater extent along this front than they have done heretofore. The Bois de Belleau came in for its share, but notwithstanding the heavy gas and other shelling the American lines remain intact.

An American patrol crossed the River Marne last night east of Chateau Thierry and at once established contact with the Germans. After an exchange of shots the Americans recrossed the river safely by means of boats.

To the west the Germans have taken to drenching certain localities with mustard gas. One of these places is Belleau wood, the Germans apparently thinking that this was the only way to drive the American troops out. But it was not, for they are still holding their positions and at the same time are giving the enemy clouds of American gas to worry about.

STRUGGLE WITH DEATH BY CREW OF SUBMARINE

London.—Harrowing details of the destruction of one of the largest and more recently constructed German submarines are given in a dispatch from a neutral correspondent. The U-boat struck a mine and out of the crew of 40 only two survived on reaching the surface after a terrible struggle with death for an hour and a half, twenty fathoms below the surface. Some of the crew committed suicide having lost all hope.

IMMENSE ESTATE OF WEALTHY WIDOW SEIZED

Washington.—The entire estate in this country of Mrs. Mily Busch, widow of Adolphus Busch, late millionaire brewer of St. Louis, Mo., has been taken over by the government under the alien property law. This fact became known in connection with the return to America of Mrs. Busch, who has been living in Germany for several years. The government has not yet appraised the property.

U. S. ENGINEERS EXTEND TRENCH LINES



American engineers are doing splendid work in extending and perfecting the trench system in the American sector in France. Demolished walls and ruined buildings are considered especially valuable for the establishment of intermediate depots and posts. This American engineer is converting a tunnel into a post command by the quick methods known to army constructors.