

WEATHER.

Fair Saturday, continued cold; Sunday fair, warmer.

WILMINGTON THE MORNING STAR

WILMINGTON, N. C., SATURDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 16, 1916

CHRISTMAS shopping should be done this week while stocks are complete, clerks have time and the buyer avoids haste.

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NO MEDIATION OFFER TO ACCOMPANY NOTES OF CENTRAL POWERS

President Wilson Has Not Decided as to Whether Such Action Will be Taken Later

MAY BE DELIVERED TODAY

Slight Difference in Phraseology in Three Teutonic Notes is Cause of Delay

THIS WILL BE CORRECTED

Cabinet Holds Most Prolonged Session of the Year

Washington, Dec. 15.—President Wilson has decided that the notes of the Central Powers proposing a discussion of peace to the Entente Allies will be sent forward by the American government acting as intermediary without any accompanying mediation offer of its own.

Probably Be Cabled Today The course to be pursued was made known tonight after the President had conferred with Secretary Lansing, and after a prolonged cabinet meeting.

Prolonged Cabinet Meeting The fact that the cabinet meeting today lasted more than three hours and was the most prolonged of the year, attracted profound attention in official circles.

Notes Highly at Variance Secretary Lansing, explaining the delay in transmitting the communications of the Central Powers, pointed out that the German note was translated into English by Charge Grew at Berlin and the one from Austria by Ambassador Penfield, at Vienna.

To Deliver Separate Notes In England, France and Japan this government represents all three Teutonic countries and will therefore have to deliver three separate notes.

German Note to Italy without Comment The German note to Italy without comment is announced through the Italian parliament by foreign Minister Sonnino.

German Embassy Statement The German embassy statement that partial disarmament will be one of the subjects taken up at any peace conference was discussed generally in official and diplomatic circles with speculation as to how far in this direction Germany might be willing to go.

Diplomacy Stopped Temporarily American diplomacy in the various questions relating to the war may be said to have stopped short, temporarily, with the announcement of the Teutonic offer to talk peace.

Peace Has Been Given the Right of (Continued on Page Two.)

WOULD BAR LIQUOR 'ADS' FROM MAILS

Bill Introduced in the House is Favorably Reported by the Postoffice Committee

WEBB WANTS EARLY ACTION

Will Ask for Special Rule to Get Federal Amendment Bill Before the House Soon After the Holiday Recess

Washington, Dec. 15.—Legislative measures aimed at destruction of the liquor traffic continues to accumulate in Congress as both houses are deluged with petitions from all parts of the country urging adoption of Nation-wide prohibition constitutional amendment and passage of other anti-liquor measures, including the Sheppard bill to prohibit the manufacture and sale of liquor in the District of Columbia.

The House Postoffice committee counted the door to another phase of the problem today in reporting favorably a bill designed to close the mails absolutely to advertising of any intoxicating liquors and to deny mail order houses the right to go into either "wet or dry" territory to solicit sales through the medium of the mails.

No move was made during the day by prohibition leaders in the House regarding the constitutional amendment reported yesterday from the Judiciary committee, but Representative Webb, chairman of the committee, plans to ask the Rules committee for a special rule to get the resolution before the House soon after the holidays.

Even Representative Webb is not sanguine of success now, but he is confident that the amendment will receive more votes than it did in the last Congress when it had 13 votes more than a majority.

The District of Columbia Prohibition bill was under consideration for several hours in the Senate today. Debate on the measure and the Underwood amendment to provide for a referendum on the issue to the voters of the district will be resumed tomorrow.

HAS BEARING ON SUIT AGAINST N. CAROLINA

Important Bill Introduced by Congressman Dillon

Would Govern Procedure Where One State Sues Another—Fayetteville to Have Hearing in Washington Today.

(Special Star Telegram.)

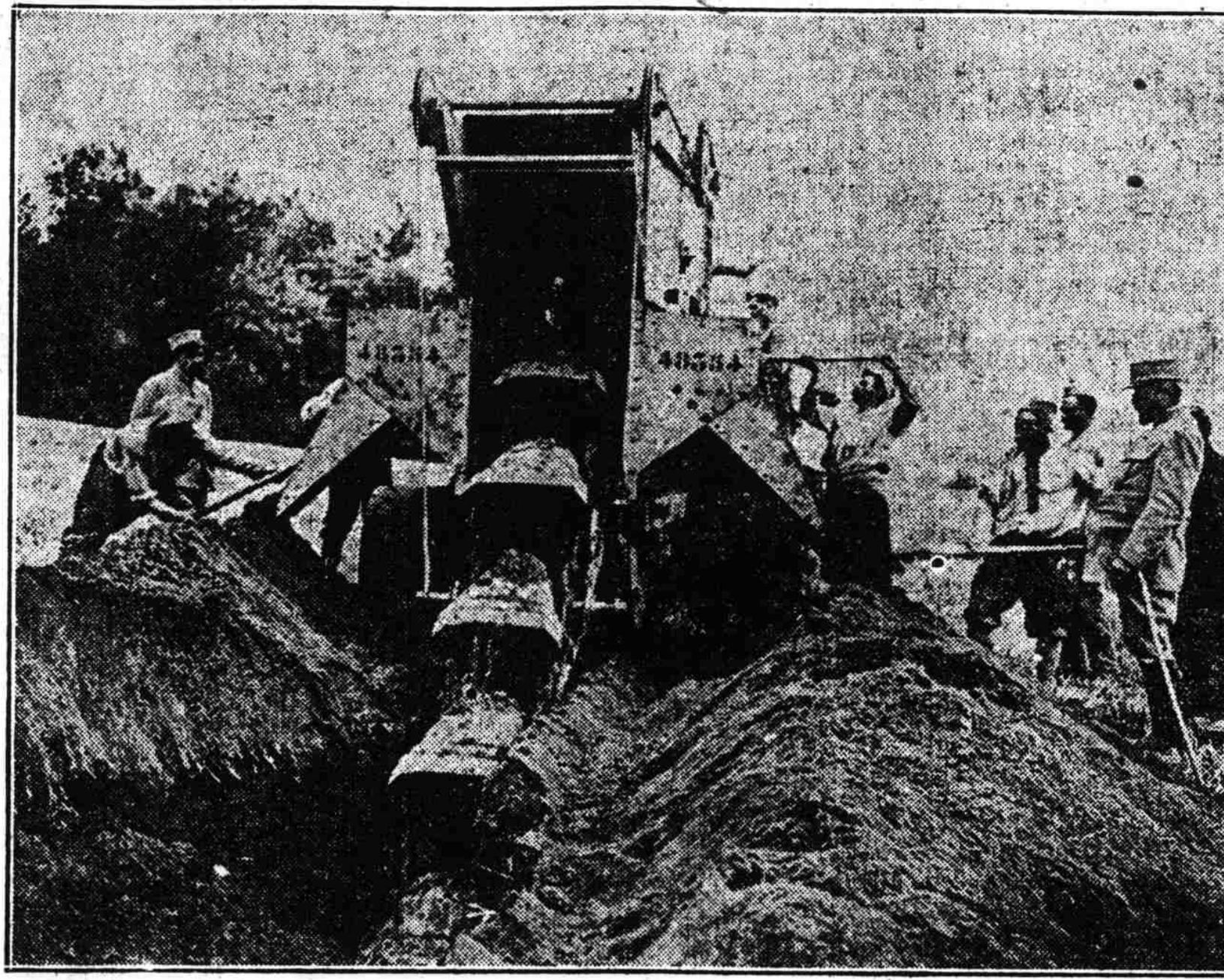
Washington, D. C., Dec. 15.—Representative Charles H. Dillon, of South Dakota, today introduced a bill in the House which if passed would prevent or rather govern the procedure where one state seeks to maintain an original action against another state in the Supreme Court of the United States.

The bill has direct bearing on the pending suit which the republic of Cuba has brought against North Carolina to recover certain repudiated State bonds.

That in all cases where one state seeks to maintain an original action against another state in the Supreme Court of the United States upon any obligation or dispute which does not arise directly between such states, but does arise between the defendant state and some individual or corporation that has transferred such right or obligation to the complaining state, such transferee must show, in order to maintain such suit, that it became such owner by transfer in good faith for full value before maturity in the usual course without any notice of the dishonor of such obligation.

Fayetteville Hearing Today Mr. Godwin and the entire delegation in Congress, including Senators Simmons and Overman, will confer with Secretary of the Navy Daniels tomorrow for the purpose of presenting the claims of Fayetteville as a location for the government's \$11,000,000 armor (Continued on Page Eight.)

NEW FRENCH TRACTOR FOR DIGGING TRENCHES



This cut is a rear view of the tractor showing huge scoops which remove dirt, and other parts of the mechanism which does the work of scores of men.

BITTERLY CONDEMN BELGIAN 'SLAVERY'

Vigorous Expressions of Indignation are Voiced at Mass Meeting in New York

LETTERS FROM NOTED MEN

Resolutions are Adopted Promising Support to Government in Protesting to Germany With All Its Force.

New York, Dec. 15.—Vigorous expressions of indignation were voiced at a mass meeting held here tonight to protest against the "enslavement of Belgians" by the German government.

The deportation of the Belgians was condemned in letters read from Theodore Roosevelt, Archbishop Ireland, J. T. Choate and Bishop Thomas O'Grady, of Sioux Falls.

Resolutions were adopted urging the government of the United States to protest with all its force and detestation with which the American people regard these abuses, and to request the German government in the name of all neutrals to cease its policy of expatriation and slavery, and pledging "our utmost support to the administration in whatever way it may conclude to act."

"The meeting in New York in protest of deporting Belgians," Archbishop Ireland wrote, "receives a cordial and sympathetic re-echo from Americans elsewhere on the continent. The meeting speaks in the name of primary duties of justice and humanity."

"We have not come here to speak the language of hate," Dr. Manning said. "We do not condemn indiscriminately the whole German people. We know that they have been misled, misled and cruelly betrayed by those in whom they have trusted. We believed that there are many Germans who condemn these infamous deeds as strongly as any of us do. We hope yet to see them free themselves from the power of autocratic and unscrupulous leaders who have robbed Germany of her high place among the nations and carried her into crimes which have shocked and amazed the world."

FLOUR HAS DECLINED \$1.50 PER BARREL IN MINNEAPOLIS Minneapolis, Minn., Dec. 15.—Best grades of flour dropped 25 cents a barrel today. First patents were quoted at \$9.00, or \$1.50 a barrel below the high mark touched a month ago.

BRITAIN TO AWAIT THE OFFICIAL TEXT

Arthur Henderson Says Germany's Proposals Must be Examined With Great Care

SEE IF THEY ARE SINCERE

Says England is Prepared to Accept Peace if Conditions are in Accord With the Policy of the Entente Powers

London, Dec. 15.—In discussing the German proposals at a dinner of the Steel Smelters Association tonight, Arthur Henderson, member of the British war council without portfolio, said that the government knew nothing concerning the text of the proposals and that Germany's motives must remain a matter of speculation for the moment.

"From past and recent events," Mr. Henderson said, "we may anticipate without over-assumption that any proposals Germany may put forward not err on side of magnanimity. They must be examined with the greatest possible care."

"We, of all people, must not forget that Germany was prepared for peace with this country as late as August, 1914. But on what conditions? That we were prepared to betray France and acquiesce in the violation of the neutrality of Belgium which Germany, like (Continued on Page Eight)

MAY SETTLE RAILROAD DISPUTE OUT OF COURT

W. G. Lee Tells of Negotiations Now Under Way

Should They Succeed, the Entire Controversy Would be Disposed of Before the Adamson Law Goes Into Effect.

Evansville, Ind., Dec. 15.—W. G. Lee, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, announced here today that negotiations are under way between the brotherhood and the operating departments of the railroads looking to a settlement of the entire controversy out of court before January 1 when the Adamson law is scheduled to go into effect.

Mr. Lee made the statement in the course of an address before the Central States Conference on Water and Rail Transportation which closed its session here tonight. He declared that both sides to the controversy are carefully considering plans for settling the entire question before January 1 but that the settlement was still in a crude state.

MAKES OVERTURES TO UNITED STATES

Villa Would Spare American Lives and Property if Our Army Will Let Him Alone

PLEDGES MADE BY FRIENDS

Bandit Chief Would Cease Depredations if Unmolested in Military Operations in Mexico—Sends Courier to Border

El Paso, Texas, Dec. 15.—A Mexican courier reached the border today from Francisco Villa's camp at Creel, 50 miles west of Minaca in the Guerrero district of Chihuahua with proposals for the United States—government that Villa would refrain from the further destruction of foreign life and property in Mexico on condition that the United States would not interfere in any way with his campaign against the Carranza government.

This was officially announced late today by a high representative of the government here after Villa's proposal had been forwarded to Washington by telegraph.

Villa also offered to protect all foreigners and their property from the raids of irresponsible bandits, it was stated. This proposal, it is noted, all Americans in Mexico, it was added.

At the camp where Villa had left his wounded in the Guerrero district a number of Carranza wounded were also being treated by Villa's surgeons after they had promised to join the Villa army, the Mexican report to the government's agents stated. Villa had 8,000 well armed men, and 3,000 rifles in reserve, the courier reported, and also a number of artillery pieces with him and a supply of shells for these pieces.

UNION COUNTY WINS BANNER FOR BIGGEST DEMOCRATIC GAINS

Increase of 59.97 Per Cent—87 Counties Made Gains

Raleigh, N. C., Dec. 15.—Union county wins the silk banner offered by the Democratic State executive committee to the county making the greatest percentage of gains in its Democratic vote for governor over the vote for the same officer four years ago, it is announced by Chairman T. D. Warren. The Democrats of Union increased their vote 59.97 per cent. The Democrats made gains in 87 counties and the Republicans in 13, the latter, in reverse order of the percentage of the gains, being: Brunswick, Pamlico, Swain, Robeson, Pender, Wilkes, arteret, Randolph, Craven, Perquimans, Bertie, Northampton, and Chowan.

WM. C. NIXON DEAD

Was President of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad St. Louis, Mo., Dec. 15.—William C. Nixon, president of the St. Louis and San Francisco railroad, died here late this afternoon. Mr. Nixon had been in poor health for some time and for the last two weeks had been in a critical condition. Death was due to heart failure. He was 55 years old.

FRENCH IN ATTACK IN VERDUN REGION TAKE OVER 7,500 PRISONERS

WHEAT DROPS OVER 13 CENTS A BUSHEL

German Suggestion of Limited Universal Disarmament Causes Frantic Stampede

BIG SLUMP ALSO IN STOCKS

Violent Declines in Leading Speculative Shares, With Loss of 47 1-2 Points in Bethlehem Steel Bethlehem Rallies

Chicago, Dec. 15.—In a frantic stamped today wheat prices were trampled down 13 1-8 cents a bushel. The prime reason for the break was a German official suggestion of limited but universal disarmament.

Initial downturns in wheat, although sensational, did not exceed 9 1-8 a bushel, whereas the final few minutes of business witnessed the last of a series of additional smashes that carried the market just four a bushel still lower. Stock market weakness and reports that leading neutrals especially the United States were giving indications of readiness to assist in a stoppage of the war tended materially to keep the wheat market headed most of the time for lower and lower levels.

Estimates from Washington that the 1916 yield of wheat in the United States was 32,000,000 bushels more than was generally supposed did a good deal to discourage bulls yet further in the last part of the session. Fluctuations, nevertheless, continued to depend in the main on the chances of peace and there was a tumultuous close with May at 154 to 155 1-2 and July at 131 3-4 to 131 1-2—10 1-4 to 12 5-8 cents loss as compared with 24 hours before.

BETHLEHEM STEEL DECLINES AS MUCH AS 47 1-2 POINTS

New York, Dec. 15.—Violent declines of 5 to 10 points in leading speculative shares and as much as 47 1-2 for Bethlehem Steel, most distinguished of the "war brides," with belated rallies, nevertheless, continued today's turbulent session on the stock exchange.

It was the third day of liquidation and in all respects the most severe, establishing minimums for many months. Selling was again largely enforced, and to that extent somewhat indiscriminate with further material assistance from an emboldened short interest, flushed with its success of the three preceding days. Soft spots were again discovered in the war group and related issues.

United States Steel, which registered (Continued on Page Two.)

CONDITION OF STATE TREASURY IS SHOWN

Legislative Committee Signs Report on Financial Status

Balance in General Fund is \$220,921, Not Including Balance in Education Fund of \$3,681—Books in Offices Audited.

(Special Star Telegram.)

Raleigh, N. C., Dec. 15.—Affixing their signatures to their endorsement on the books of the State Treasury, as found in order and correct, the Legislative committee for the examination of the books and vouchers of the Treasury and the State Auditor, made the following entry this evening, showing status of the State finances at the close of this fiscal year:

Balance general fund, last year \$120,008; receipts to December 1, this year, \$4,970,873; total receipts, \$5,100,881; disbursements, \$4,879,965; balance December 1, \$220,921.

Board of Education fund, total receipts \$126,348; disbursements \$122,662; balance, \$3,681; grand total, all funds in the Treasury, \$224,602.

The committee report is signed by Chairman Laughinghouse, of Pitt; Representative Greer, of Iredell; Senator Thompson, of Iredell. Representative Harry Stubbs and Senator Faircloth are absent.

Four Expert Accountants.

The legislative committee for the semi-annual examination of the books and vouchers of the State Treasury, the State Auditor, insurance and other departments of State, has had four expert accountants at work on the books of the Treasury and the State auditing departments for several days. It is the regular time for the examinations. Heretofore it has been the practice of the committee to do this work in person, but the task has come to be such a big one and requires so exactly the service of experts that the calling in of experienced accountants is (Continued on Page Two.)

Troops of German Crown Prince Forced Back Over Distance of Almost Two Miles

NUMEROUS GUNS CAPTURED

Attacks Were Made Along Front of About Six Miles—Berlin Admits Losses

TEUTONS CAPTURE BUZEU

Austro-Germans and Bulgars Begin Offensive in Dobruja

French troops again have made an effective thrust in the Verdun region.

Striking at the German positions between the Meuse and Woevre rivers, north of Donaumont and north-northeast of the fortress along a front of about six miles, the French forced back the soldiers of the German crown prince for a distance of almost two miles. More than 7,500 prisoners and numerous guns were taken from the Germans, Paris announces.

In its latest official communication, the German war office admitted that "advantages" had been obtained in this region by the attackers.

Austro-Germans Take Buzeu. Buzeu, an important railway center, northeast of Bucharest, and an excellent base from which to begin operations in Moldavia, has been captured by the Austro-Germans. The retreating Russians and Rumanians are reported to be burning villages behind them. Four thousand additional prisoners have been taken by Field Marshal von Mackensen's army.

Simultaneously with the taking of Buzeu the Austro-German Danube army and the Bulgarians have begun an offensive in Dobruja. The Russians and Rumanians, however, have evacuated their positions under the pressure exerted by the advance in Great Wallachia.

British troops have taken the offensive near Kut-el-Amara in Mesopotamia and Turkish positions on the right bank of the Hal river, south of Kut-el-Amara, have been taken, London announces. At one place the British are within two and a half miles of Kut-el-Amara.

The Greek government has accepted the demands of the Entente Allies contained in an ultimatum presented to the Athens government Thursday, it is said unofficially. Greek troops will be withdrawn from Thessaly and only a certain number will be stationed in the Peloponnese, it is said.

BERLIN ADMITS GAINS BY FRENCH IN VERDUN REGION

Berlin, Dec. 15. (via Sayville).—French attacks delivered today on the east bank of the Meuse in the Verdun region resulted in a gain of ground for them toward Louvemont and Hardaumont, the war office announced in today's supplementary statement. The engagement has not yet been concluded. The Russo-Rumanian army in Dobruja, influenced by the retreat in Wallachia, has now begun a retreat, pursued by the Teutonic forces, the statement adds. The official statement reads:

"On the Somme there has been little fighting. The French have been in progress in which the enemy obtained advantages in the direction of Louvemont and Hardaumont. The fighting has not yet been terminated.

"Our Dobruja army is pursuing the enemy, who, under the influence of our rapid advance in Great Wallachia last night evacuated his positions.

"On the Macedonian front there is calm."

MILDER WEATHER SUNDAY

Cold Wave in South Atlantic States Will Last Through Today

Washington, Dec. 15.—Cold weather will continue in the South Atlantic States on Saturday, according to the Weather Bureau forecast tonight, but Sunday is expected to bring slightly milder temperatures.

The atmospheric disturbance that was over southwest Alabama last Tuesday night has moved northeastward by way of the Carolina coast and was central tonight as a severe storm over the island of Nantucket. From southern Virginia northward the storm was accompanied by snow.

Norfolk, Va., Dec. 15.—J. Lindsay Heard, 38 years old, one of Norfolk's best known lawyers and former president of the local bar association, committed suicide here late this afternoon. Mr. Heard shot himself while in the cabin of his hunting launch. He had recently returned from a New York hospital, where he was under treatment for a nervous break down.