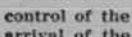


CURRENT EVENTS PASS IN REVIEW

INTERNATIONAL ARMY IN THE SAAR—COLD SHOULDER FOR ELECTRIC POWER PEOPLE.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD
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SOLDIERS from Great Britain, Italy, Sweden and Holland, to the number of 3,300, under the command of Maj. J. E. S. Brind, a British veteran of several wars, marched into the Saar from north and south with flying colors, and were stationed at strategic points throughout the area, prepared to maintain order until after the plebiscite of January 13 which will determine whether the Saar shall again become a part of Germany or remain under control of the League of Nations. The arrival of the troops was watched by the league authorities with considerable anxiety for there had been fears that Nazi enthusiasts there might cause trouble. But the inhabitants of the basin remained quiet, none of them showing either enmity or enthusiasm for the league's armed forces.



Major Brind

Under the terms of the treaty of Versailles any person living in the Saar at the time of the signing of the treaty is eligible to vote in the plebiscite, and the Nazis of Germany made great efforts to gather as many of their adherents as possible from other lands to which they had migrated. From the United States 352 Saar Germans traveled back to their old home aboard the liner Bremen, and were welcomed with feasts, as was another large contingent from South America. The German government denied that it was paying the expenses of these voters from abroad, asserting they were financed by private donations.

PEACE in central Europe was promoted by two events. The Yugoslavian cabinet resigned and a new cabinet was formed with Bogoljub Yevitch as premier. As foreign minister he had conducted the case of his country against Hungary before the League of Nations and accepted the compromise decision, and he is a close friend of Prince Paul, head of the regency, who is inclined to a moderate course.

The Austrian government refused the extradition to France of Colonel Perchevich, Croat exile, who was accused, along with Dr. Ante Pavelich, of instigating the assassination of King Alexander in Marseilles. Italy had previously refused the extradition of Pavelich. It is said in informed quarters that further examination of these two men would have revealed facts that would have endangered peace in Europe.

IF ANY doubt existed that Japan would denounce the Washington naval treaty, it was dissipated by the action of the privy council. That powerful body of statesmen, meeting with all ceremony, unanimously recommended abrogation of the pact to Emperor Hirohito, whose speedy approval was given.

Baron Kichiro Hiranuma, vice president of the council, read the report to the emperor and afterward said to the press: "The imperial government desires continuation of clauses of the Washington treaty relating to limitation of fortifications and naval bases in the Pacific ocean, but, if such clauses are terminated, the government is prepared to cope with the situation."

In plain words, then, Japan wants equality on the high seas with the United States and Great Britain, but wants the United States to remain restricted as to its Pacific ocean defenses.

SENATORIAL investigators of munitions and the War department clashed when Clark of Missouri suggested, in a committee hearing, that the war mobilization plans of the department, long held secret, should be laid before congress in peace time to be debated at leisure. He held that, under the army's plan, the eight bills embodying the scheme to mobilize the nation's resources would be rushed to congress to "pass under whip and spur" without proper consideration.

War department witnesses replied that the war policies commission believed certain legislation might be held unconstitutional in peace time but legal in a war emergency.

enemy propaganda, "establishing rules and regulations for censorship" and "enlisting and supervising a voluntary censorship of the newspaper and periodical press."

Lieutenant Colonel C. T. Harris of the army said he never heard of a plan to license the press.

The eight bills which the army has ready for presentation in case of war would authorize a military draft, permit government control of material resources and speedy condemnation of property needed in the war, set up a system of marine and war risk insurance and create an administration over war trade, a war finance corporation and a committee to supervise capital issues.

COL. CHARLES A. LINDBERGH, by his flights across Arctic regions in 1933, has enabled the Department of Agriculture to demonstrate conclusively that the spores of plant disease can be borne on remote air currents.

With a spore trap of his own devising, which he called "the skyhook," Colonel Lindbergh obtained specimens which confirmed the previous theories of government experts that plant diseases may be carried even across continents by air currents.

That was announced by Fred C. Meier, the department expert who interested Colonel Lindbergh in the work.

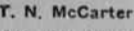
Colonel Lindbergh devised his "the skyhook," a light, strong contrivance, easy to operate and well adapted to protecting sterile glass slides from contamination except for the time they were exposed. Mr. Meier prepared the slides and has examined and photographed them. He credits Colonel Lindbergh with careful work.

JOSEPH BROWN SANBORN, wartime commander of the One Hundred Thirty-first infantry, formerly the Illinois "Dandy First," and wearer of six war decorations from four nations, died in Chicago at his home. He held the rank of lieutenant general, retired, in the Illinois state guard.

As commander of the One Hundred Thirty-first regiment Sanborn was extraordinarily active, though then sixty-three years old. He distinguished himself on the British front.

AFTER winning the handicap prize in the England-to-Melbourne air race, the giant American-built plane Uiver, pride of the Royal Dutch Air Lines, started on a speed flight from Amsterdam to Batavia, Java, with seven persons aboard. During a thunderstorm it crashed in the desert ten miles from Rutba Wells, Irak, and burned to cinders, all its occupants perishing.

ELECTRIC utility companies of the United States, worried by the power program of the New Deal, appealed to President Roosevelt to abandon the movement toward public ownership which threatens, they say, to deprive millions of security holders of their savings. The plea was presented to the President personally by Thomas N. McCarter, president of the Edison Electric Institute. That gentleman promised that the utilities would effect the reforms in financing that Mr. Roosevelt has called for, and then requested that the government join with the institute in a suit to test the constitutionality of the Tennessee Valley authority.



T. N. McCarter

In the memorial he handed to the President, Mr. McCarter gave it as his own opinion that the government in the TVA experiment is exceeding its constitutional powers and infringing the sovereign rights of the state. He cited the joint opinion of Newton D. Baker, Democrat, and James M. Beck, Republican, that TVA is unconstitutional and the "similar conclusion" of United States Judge W. I. Grubb in a recent decision.

Mr. Roosevelt turned the memorial over to Frank R. McNinch, chairman of the federal power commission, and he and his aids speedily prepared a sharp reply rejecting the proposal of co-operation in carrying the matter to the Supreme court.

"In all the history of the American people," it said, "no parallel for such a proposal can be found. . . . The call is not for the government to halt, but for the industry to catch step and move forward along progressive lines."

"The Edison Electric Institute has, of course," it continued, "a legal right to promote litigation to test the act creating the Tennessee Valley Authority or any substantial progress toward placing the industry on a sound and permanent basis until it cleans its own house, reduces excessive rates to consumers and eliminates the malpractice and abuses which are responsible for its present condition."

Attacking McCarter's contention that rates are reasonable, Mr. McNinch said Canadians pay on an average 2 1-5 cents for a kilowatt hour, while Americans pay 5 1/2 cents. He said the Canadian figures cover public and private

plants, the latter supplying "46 per cent of the consumers."

"It is the purpose of the administration," he set forth, "to narrow this excessive gap between what the consumer pays for electricity in this country and what Canada has proved it can be generated and sold for. This program does not involve either 'destructive competition or strangulation'."

BUSINESS leaders of the country who met in conference at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., drew up a long list of things they want the government to do or not to do, and then created a "business conference committee" that will have headquarters in Washington and maintain "liaison" with the administration.

The conference's recommendations to the government are phrased in inoffensive language and the idea is conveyed that the business men earnestly desire to co-operate rather than criticize. The things they ask are substantially the same as those sought by the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, previously summarized in this column. The essence of it all is that government should attend more to its traditional functions and permit business to put men and capital back to work.

CHRISTMAS in the White House was a season of jollity and noise, especial attention being given to the entertainment of the younger members of the large house party. First, on Christmas eve, the President lighted the community Christmas tree in Lafayette park, and then he read Dickens' "Christmas Carol" to the assembled family. Early next morning the children gathered in Mr. Roosevelt's room and opened their gifts, and then had a frolic around the tree in the upstairs corridor.

Mrs. Elizabeth Donner Roosevelt of Philadelphia, former wife of Elliott Roosevelt, was a guest at the White House with her small son, William Donner Roosevelt.

MARTIN J. INSULL, brother of Samuel, was given a Christmas present by a Chicago jury in the form of a verdict of not guilty of embezzlement from the Middle West Utilities company. The money, \$344,720, was used, according to the prosecution, in a desperate effort to recoup Insull's personal losses in the stock market.

FOR the first time the RFC has undertaken the management of a railroad. John W. Barriger, chief examiner for the interstate commerce commission, announced that nominees of the RFC would be placed in charge of operation of the Denver & Salt Lake railway, which has received large loans from the government agency.

The railway is a short road which has leased for 50 years the railroad bore of the Moffat tunnel, from the Moffat Tunnel Improvement district.

GOVERNMENT ownership of the arms and ammunition industry was vigorously opposed by the War department in a prepared statement submitted to the senate munitions committee.

Several of the committee members have proposed such a course as a means of "taking the profit out of war." The War department contended that such a policy would fall in war and therefore does not appear logical in peace, but its statement added that it does not oppose in any way a program of licensing the munitions industry.

ARMED and navy officers are concerned by the attempts of Communists to spread dissatisfaction, mutiny and rebellion among the armed forces of the nation, and have asked the house committee on un-American activities to approve a law permitting punishment of those who urge any soldier or sailor to violate his oath of allegiance.

Commander V. L. Kirkman of the navy told the committee that the Communists' campaign was planned and supervised from headquarters in New York city, and he submitted a number of pamphlets and leaflets circulated in the navy which, he said, "actually incite to mutiny, sabotage and assassination." He described how the propaganda work is carried on, good looking girls taking an active part.

MRS. MARY HARRIMAN RUMSEY, who fought valiantly but not altogether successfully to protect the interests of the consumers against the contentions of industry and labor, is dead in Washington. Always interested in sociology and public affairs, this daughter of E. H. Harriman and inheritor of some of his millions, took an active part in promoting the New Deal and was made head of the National consumers' board of the NRA.

Two men of note who died were Eugene R. Black, former governor of the federal reserve board, and Martin W. Littleton, New York lawyer, who appeared in many sensational cases and for a time served as congressman.



Among the Big Trees in Sequoia National Park.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

THINK of an ant crawling on the ground through a vast cornfield, looking up at the tall stalks. To the ant the cornstalks are as high as the California Big Trees are to a man gazing at their distant tops.

But it is their astounding age, as well as their size and beauty, which fills the soul of puny man with awe and reverence for the Creator.

Big Trees, stout and healthy today, were centuries old when Christ was born. Men call them "the oldest living things." So nearly indestructible are they that some naked, fire-scorched trunks still stand, though dead before America was discovered; others, which fell centuries ago, remain sound and solid inside. Such vitality has the Sequoia that when felled its branches do not wither for years. One giant crashed in 1926. In 1931 its foliage was still fresh and green.

They link us with the past. Their Sequoia forebears grew here when the world was younger, when reptiles grew to enormous size. Such mammoths as the dinosaur, unable to adjust themselves to climatic and other changes, faded from the earth; but the Sequoia family endured and saw the rise of the mammals. Yet today, when you walk beneath these towering tree giants, you feel that the deer and the squirrel hardly fit into a scene set for the brontosaurus and the pterodactyl.

Time was when the Sequoia genus was spread over four continents. At least twelve fossil species are known, scattered from Greenland and across Europe to Asia.

Big Trees and Redwoods Differ.

Some people confuse California's Redwoods with its so-called "Big Trees." Both are "big" and both are of the genus Sequoia; both have pink or red wood and both are trees of the largest size. But they are two species, distinct in habitat, in bark, foliage, and in reproduction.

The Coast Redwood, or Sequoia sempervirens, is found only near the coast or within the belt of sea fogs, and extends from southern Oregon down to Monterey county, in California.

The larger species, the California Big Tree, or Sequoia gigantea, is confined to the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada, between 4,000 and 8,500 feet elevation, from Placer county, in the north, to Tulare county, in the south, and is much more abundant in the south than in the north.

The Coast Redwood forms an almost continuous forest in which it is the dominant stand; the Big Trees grow in scattered groves, 71 in all, interspersed among the heavier stands of white fir, sugar pine, and other trees.

Though smaller in diameter and bulk, the Coast Redwood is taller than its cousin, the Big Tree. The former attains a maximum height of 363 feet and a maximum base diameter of about 35 feet.

When the Coast Redwood is cut down, it "stump-sprouts," as foresters say. A ring of young trees springs up around the stump of the slaughtered sempervirens; hence its Latin name, the "Ever-living Sequoia."

But the Big Tree reproduces only from seed; and, since its seeds require specially favorable conditions to root, there was real danger of the extinction of the species until national and state parks were created.

Survived Ice and Fire.

Agas before man came to chop these trees for his use, ice and fire were their fierce foes. Again and again moving glaciers mowed them down—glaciers whose icy fingers stretched down mountain canyons to freeze all animal and plant life. Whether in warm and sheltered spots a few trees remained, or whether only seeds survived, can probably never be known; but slowly the cold hands relaxed and the forests returned. The fact that the Big Trees are more abundant and larger in the southern part of their range indicates that there the effects of the glacier were less severe.

With the passing of the Age of Ice, the struggles of the sequoias had only

begun. Fires followed the ordeal of ice. The abundant rains ceased, and long, dry summers rendered the forests tinderlike, ready to be ignited by lightning or by brands tossed by Indians to drive out game or clear land for forage.

There is scarcely a mature sequoia that does not show the effects of at least one fire. Every 20 or 30 years flames swept through the forest, sometimes licking hungrily, but with little effect, at the thick, asbestos-like bark; again, where a litter of boughs and fallen logs was piled up against a Big Tree, the fire burned fiercely enough to penetrate the outer cover and into the heart. That is why the great black caverns in the living sequoias are almost always found on the upper side of those standing on a slope.

White Men Slow to Find Them.

No doubt the Coast Redwoods were seen by the first Europeans to visit our Pacific coast. Yet for more than two centuries after the visit of Sir Francis Drake, in 1579, white men roamed up and down California apparently without climbing far enough up the high Sierras to find the Big Trees.

The Indians knew them, of course. In summer they camped among them and left potholes in granite rocks where they ground acorn meal.

Even now the identity of the first white men to gaze on the Big Trees of the Sierras is in doubt. It may have been some member of the Joseph R. Walker expedition of 1833. One Zenas Leonard, clerk of the Walker party, recorded:

"In the last two days' traveling we have found some trees of the Redwood species incredibly large, some of them which would measure from 10 to 18 fathoms (96 to 108 feet) around the trunk at the height of a large man's head from the ground."

That group of Big Trees, now known as the Calaveras North Grove, was, however, the first of these sequoias to become well known.

John Bidwell, a member of the first immigrant party to enter California by the overland route, stated that he saw the Calaveras Big Trees in 1841; but Dowd is popularly given credit as the discoverer of the Sequoia gigantea. It was the Calaveras Grove which inspired Bret Harte to write his poem, "On a Cone of the Big Trees."

In 1857 Galen Clark discovered the Mariposa, or Wawona, Grove in what is now the Yosemite National park. The following year Hale D. Tharp, a pioneer of Three Rivers, in Tulare county, was led up the Middle Fork of the Kaweah river by Yokut Indians, and on up the grassy slopes beneath Moro Rock to the plateau where grows the noblest forest of the Sequoia gigantea, the Giant Forest, in what is now Sequoia National park.

"General Sherman" the Biggest.

Here, in Sequoia National park, stands that hoary veteran of all Big Trees, the "General Sherman," found and named by James Wolverton in 1879. Many other trees, including Redwoods, Douglas firs, and the Australian eucalyptus, are taller; but no other, so far as one knows, has its bulk. Its greatest base diameter is 36.5 feet and its trunk contains 600,120 board feet of lumber.

To save some of these trees, the Sequoia National park was created in 1890, and for years patrolled each summer by United States cavalry.

Private individuals, however, still owned the finest parts of the sequoia forests and had, of course, a perfect right to cut them down for lumber. To avoid this, the late Stephen T. Mather, as director of the National Park service, asked congress for funds with which to buy and save more of the Big Trees. An appropriation was made, but it was insufficient.

Then aid was asked of the National Geographic society. Immediately, from its own funds and with voluntary contributions from individual members, it subscribed sufficient money to purchase the lands and Big Trees desired.

In all, the society bought and gave to the United States a total of 1,916 acres at a cost of \$85,939.