

300 KILLED IN EXPLOSION ON FRENCH BATTLESHIP

Warship Liberte Wrecked in Toulon Harbor When Flames Ignite Magazine.

VESSEL AN INFERNO OF SMOKE AND FIRE

Scores of Men Hurlled High in Air, While Others Leap to Death in Sea—Many Perish in Their Sleep—Another Vessel Damaged.

Toulon, France, Sept. 25.—More than half her crew of 793 officers and men met death early today when fire broke out in the ammunition hold of the battleship Liberte, one of the finest vessels in the French navy.

The fire was discovered at 5 o'clock. At first it was not thought serious, but the flames gained great headway, although the sailors fought them desperately.

Three Explosions Shake Ship. Suddenly fire reached the magazine which had not been flooded owing to the apparently slight nature of the blaze. The explosions were terrific, shaking the vessel fore and aft, each seemingly stronger than the preceding.

Early hour unofficial estimates place the number of dead at 500. Estimates by naval men vary widely. There is no doubt the loss of life was as high as 300.

Scores of seamen died in their berths. A few dozen saved themselves by jumping overboard. Many of those injured leaped into the water and drowned before other boats in the roadstead could reach them.

Two Hundred of Crew on Shore Leave. Two hundred of the crew escaped death because they were on shore leave. Commander James was not aboard.

The explosion's carnage was worse than could ever occur in actual naval warfare. The first crash came when the crew was dispersed to various sections of the vessel.

The first explosion was without warning. Scores were hurled high into the air, accompanied by great fragments of framework, armor, bursting shells and blinding powder smoke. Many of the men were killed in their sleep. Others were awakened by the explosion and started to jump overboard and were caught by the second detonation.

Obey Orders Which Meant Death. There were three tremors of explosion in quick succession after the fire reached the magazines and a hundred men saved themselves by jumping. Scores of others would have escaped but for the rigid discipline which held them at their posts.

Between 300 and 350 of Liberte's crew and about a hundred men from other warships sent to help extinguish the fire have disappeared.

The warship Democrite lost 20 dead and 50 injured. A piece of armor-plate blown from the Liberte struck the cruiser Republique on her port side with great force, damaging her plates.

Destruction of Battleship Is Stunning Blow to France

Paris, Sept. 25.—News of the explosion, sinking 20 minutes later, of the number of dead run between 300 and 500. The Liberte was of 14,900 tons displacement, with a length over all of 452 feet. She carried a crew of 792 men and had four 12-inch guns and 10 guns of the French 7.6-inch type. She also had 23 small guns and four torpedo tubes. She was completed in 1907 at a cost of \$7,900,000.

Naval Officer Put to Death by Filipinos; Sailors Hurt

Washington, Sept. 25.—Ensign Halpinne Archipelago. Several sailors were severely injured. Details have not reached the navy department.

Pyromaniac Caught. Albert Smith Admits Having "Touched Off" Twenty Buildings in Six Weeks.

Minneapolis, Sept. 25.—Albert Smith, under arrest, admits firing 20 buildings in the past six weeks. He offers no explanation to thirty-eight on his favorite pastime.

TURKEY THREATENS APPEAL TO ARMS

Will Resist to the Last Italy's Proposed Aggressions in Tripoli, It Is Said.

Rome, Sept. 25.—The Italian government is moving rapidly and with determination in the matter of an Italian protectorate over Tripoli. Its plans are no longer concealed and its attitude is favored by all classes except the advanced section of the socialists, who threaten to call a general strike in the event of hostilities.

Although not attaching much importance to this threat the government, which is acting with the greatest prudence, has decided to call to the colors 112,000 reservists so as to be prepared for all emergencies at home and abroad.

According to the information in official circles, the government still hopes to effect an amicable arrangement with Turkey whereby Italy will secure a lease of Tripoli under the sovereignty of Turkey, paying therefor an annual rental. If Turkey definitely refuses to meet this proposal Italy will proceed with military measures.

Threaten Naval Demonstration. The government is prepared to meet any aggressive measures on the part of Turkey, such as attacks upon the lives and property of Italian subjects in Turkey in which case it is understood a naval demonstration will be made before Smyrna immediately.

The material difficulties of these operations have been given full consideration. The memory of the calamitous Abyssinian campaign has been called up by the government, which realizes that the failure of the proposed expedition would be a grave disaster. Accordingly, most careful precautions have been taken. The Turkish forces in Tripoli are estimated at a minimum of 20,000 men. To cope with these Italy will send her whole fleet and an expeditionary force of 60,000 men.

Turkey Will Resist Vigorously. Paris, Sept. 25.—In a published interview the Turkish charge at Paris declares that he has no knowledge that negotiations have been opened by Italy on the subject of Tripoli. He did not see how such negotiations would be possible. Tripoli could neither be taken from Turkey by force nor bought.

"If Italy has any desire to take Tripoli from us," said the charge, "we will defend ourselves and our defense will be desperate. The whole population will rise up as one man. If Italy lands troops in Tripoli she will find something more than a military promenade. We will immediately expel all Italian subjects and denounce the treaties."

"If Italy attempts to land troops elsewhere we are in a position to repulse them. I repeat, and I am speaking officially in the first place, no transaction is possible concerning the open or disguised cession of Tripoli; second, if it comes to fighting we will fight desperately."

Italy's initiative in Tripoli has awakened intense interest here as introducing a new and very important factor in the African question by reopening the Mediterranean problem on another point, and there is no doubt that Europe is on the eve of a complete settlement of Africa. It is held that the territorial modifications, which from the essence of the Franco-German agreement will logically lead to other changes in which other powers besides France and Germany can participate with profit and without danger to their dignity.

BROOKLYN NAVY YARD PLANS ARE COMPLETED

Fourteen Million Dollars to Be Expended in Making This Greatest Naval Station.

New York, Sept. 25.—Plans for enlarging the Brooklyn navy yard, involving an expenditure of fourteen million dollars and making it the world's greatest naval station, have been completed by Engineer Harris and Naval Constructor Grossbeck and will be forwarded to the navy department.

Allego Inequitable Rice Rates. Houston, Tex., Sept. 25.—An investigation was begun today into rice growers and development associations' complaints against the International and Great Northern railroad and 19 other railway lines before the interstate commerce commission.

The growers complain that the present adjustment of rice rates give New Orleans dealers an advantage over those of Houston practically eliminating the Houston factories from competition in several parts of the United States, especially the southwestern territories.

New Prime Minister of Canada



R. L. BORDEN AND MRS. BORDEN. Robert Laird Borden, Canada's new prime minister, is the first man to attain that office who has not given the better part of his life to politics.

SEARCH FOR LARGE SUM HIDDEN BY ALLEGED SWINDLER GANG

Believed Jared Flagg and Associates Have Reserve Fund of \$100,000 or More—Their Promise of 52 Per Cent. Return Drew an Immense Business—Flagg Declares Every Dollar Made Through Legitimate Transactions.

New York, Sept. 24.—Postoffice authorities have taken steps to lay their hands on a large sum, probably \$100,000, in cash which they believed was kept in reserve by Jared Flagg, Jr., and others, arrested Saturday charged with violating the postal laws to defraud investors. Flagg and his alleged associates, former United States Treasurer Daniel N. Morgan, Tennessee Neely, a former publisher, and others, spent Saturday and Sunday nights in jail. The court will require \$25,000 bail before releasing them. To prevent the accused stockbrokers from reaching their reserve fund before the federal authorities get control of it, the postoffice inspectors prepared to have some of Flagg's customers file a petition in bankruptcy against him.

Enormous Business. In addition to \$27,000 in cash which the inspectors discover Flagg and his partner kept in a safe deposit box, it said \$191,000 was received from customers since September 1, indicating the magnitude of the business contributed by investors anxious to profit by the concern's offer of 52 per cent annual return. Flagg maintains that his profits averaged 52 per cent, but declares every dollar was made through legitimate stock exchange transactions. Federal officers have collected a number of witnesses,

four of whom turned over to Flagg's concern \$50,000. Flagg's plan, government detectives say, was to secure a well satisfied customer in the community and treat him or her so well that these customers' friends would be induced to invest their money. A pretty 19 years old girl, it is said, played an important part in Flagg's financial operations. Postoffice inspectors are to question her today. "They say I am running a 'Miller syndicate,'" the statement read. "Let them bring forward one customer to whom I ever paid a dollar out of my or other customer's money and I will make no further protest against the high-handed proceedings."

Explains His Transactions. "Every dollar in profit on closed transactions that I have paid out has been honestly made. When a customer has bought stock the date, the price, the firm and the name of the stock exchange brokers from whom it was bought has been sent to him. When the stock was sold the date, the price and the name of the stock exchange brokers to whom it was sold has been sent out to my customers with a check for the difference, less the commission, tax and interest."

"After having conducted business on this basis for almost four years, I am arrested and accused of 'intending' to defraud some person who has never had an account with me and to whom no 'misrepresentations' could have been made."

"The arrest of my friends and employees, who have absolutely no voice in my business, is an outrage beyond words."

Handled More Than a Million. Postoffice Inspector Elmer L. Kincaid made the complaint in the case. Mr. Kincaid stated that thousands of customers of the Flagg enterprise had invested about \$1,500,000 in the scheme. Flagg, it is charged, had claimed that he would invest their money in gilt-edged securities which would pay them high dividends. Early investors, it is alleged, were paid out of funds which came to the concern from new customers.

According to Chief Postoffice Inspector Warren W. Dickson, his attention was drawn to Flagg's business by a conversation with a young woman, calling herself Lillian Gibbs Keyes, who referred to Flagg as a "financial wizard." Inspectors who made a secret investigation reported that Flagg was conducting business after the fashion of the "Miller syndicate." They also reported that former United States Treasurer Morgan was interested in the enterprise to the extent of \$200,000. The scheme, according to the authorities, has been in operation for more than 18 months.

Stonewall Jackson's Sister Dead. Buchanan, Va., Sept. 25.—Mrs. Laura J. Arnold, the only sister of the late General Stonewall Jackson, died here today at the age of 85 years. She was active until within two weeks of her death.

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OFTEN INSPECT SHIP MAGAZINES

How American Naval Authorities Guard Against Such Accidents as That at Toulon.

COLD STORAGE SYSTEM USED ON U. S. VESSELS

Washington Believes Spontaneous Ignition of Smokeless Powder Caused the Appalling Disaster.

Washington, Sept. 25.—Based upon first reports about the extent of loss of life on the Liberte, the explosion will go down into naval history as one of the greatest disasters ever known. The loss of over 250 lives on the battleship Maine 13 years ago is second in point of mortality.

United States naval authorities require careful examination of powder in the magazines of warships at short intervals to demonstrate the absolute safety of the powder. American practice also provides for the refrigeration of magazines by adopting a cold storage system.

If subsequent advice bear out the first reports about the extent of loss of life on the Liberte, the explosion will go down into naval history as one of the greatest disasters ever known. The loss of over 250 lives on the battleship Maine 13 years ago is second in point of mortality.

MAY USE MILITIA TO CURB STRIKERS

Gov. Blease Orders Three Companies in Readiness for Duty at Spartanburg.

Spartanburg, S. C., Sept. 25.—Three companies of state militia—Greenville, Spartanburg and Clifton—are under arms by orders of Governor Blease to hold themselves in readiness to assist in the operation of the city's street car system, which has been tied up for several days on account of a strike of motormen and conductors.

Mayor Lee was asked for a conference with Adjutant-General Moore to discuss the advisability of placing troops in charge of operation of the system until the strike is settled.

Mayor Lee, in requesting the advice of state officials, practically admitted that the Spartanburg police "was either unwilling or unable to furnish the necessary protection that was needed in operating the city's street car system. It is understood that the occurrences of Saturday, when non-union carmen were pulled from a car and beaten. There was no disorder Sunday and no attempt was made to operate cars."

Negotiations between the striking motormen and conductors and the officials of the company were suspended Saturday when it was seen that there was small chance for agreement.

TOBACCO CONFERENCE IS BEING HELD TODAY

New York, Sept. 25.—A conference is being held here today to further plans for the dissolution of the American Tobacco company. Attorney General Wickersham and Special Assistant James C. McReynolds, Judge Lacombe and Ward, of the United States court, James B. Duke and Percival T. Hill, president and vice president, respectively, of the American Tobacco company, counsel for the company for the British-American Tobacco company and the United Cigar Stores company are attending.

It is planned to spend the entire day in consultation. Wickersham declined to discuss the situation before entering the conference.

TO LEAD OPPOSITION

Premier Laurier Decides to Remain in Parliament Through the Next Session.

Ottawa, Ont., Sept. 25.—"I will remain in parliament as leader of the opposition for some time. I should be a deserter of my party if I ran away now," said Sir Wilfrid Laurier to the newspaper men today.

Sir Wilfrid said that he had intended to retire and he ought would do so after some time, but not immediately. He undoubtedly will go through the next session as leader of the opposition and he may continue there a good many sessions. Though 70 years, his health is good.

LATHAM'S SEARCH ENDS IN TRAGEDY

Engineer Killed by His Locomotive Striking Stolen One He Was Looking for.

Gazette-News Bureau, Raleigh, Sept. 25.

Engineer H. D. Latham, an employee of the Greenleaf-Johnson Lumber company of Norfolk, was killed today when his engine, with which he was searching for a logging engine that had been stolen from his company, crashed into the stolen engine near Vaughan, a small place near Norlina. Latham was sitting on the coal tender, and as his engine crashed into the other engine he was crushed through the groins. The man was hurried toward Raleigh but died at Norlina.

Latham was originally from Williamson, but his wife lives at Elizabeth City. He was 29 years old. No trace has been found of the persons who stole the engine, yesterday.

Raleigh Minister Goes to Georgia. Gazette-News Bureau, Raleigh, Sept. 25.

Rev. A. J. Mencer, pastor of the Tabernacle Baptist church, announces that he has accepted a call to the pastorate of the First Baptist church at Harpersville.

THE CONSERVATIONISTS MEET IN KANSAS CITY

Kansas City, Sept. 25.—From a dozen different states delegates are here today for the third annual conservation congress, which opened in Convention hall. According to Thomas R. Shipp, executive secretary of the congress, the total registration of delegates will approximate 2500. Every state will be represented. Among the arrivals in United States Forester Henry S. Graves. Another noted arrival was Theodore Kryshofovich, who represents the Russian government at the congress. He is in this country for the purpose of gaining information that will prove beneficial to the Russian farmer.

Routine business and welcoming addresses occupied the greater part of the morning session.

VICTIMIZES PREACHERS "Groove" Hands Over \$20 Counterfeit as Fee and Takes the Change.

Chicago, Sept. 25.—A dozen preachers here are victims of an elderly pair going about getting married. The scheme is to present a twenty dollar bill as the groom's gift to the preacher, receiving ten dollars change.

PREMIER'S SLAYER IS HANGED TODAY

Bagroff Pays Penalty for Assassination of Russian Statesman.

Kiev, Russia, Sept. 25.—Dmitry Bagroff, Premier Stolypin's assassin, who was condemned to death by a court martial, was hanged today.

Before his execution Bagroff asked that he might see a rabbi but refused this consolation when informed that this interview must be in the presence of officials.

DISSOLUTION PLANS OF THE A. T. COMPANY Petition Setting Them Forth to Be Filed with the Circuit Court on October 2.

New York, Sept. 25.—Announcement is made, after a conference looking to the reorganizing of the American Tobacco company that petition will be filed with United States Circuit court October 2, setting forth the proposed plan of dissolution in consonance with the Supreme court's mandate, and public hearings on the plans would follow.

The dates for the public hearings are not announced.