

The Asheville Gazette News.

WEATHER FORECAST:
CLOUDY, PROBABLY RAIN.

VOLUME XIX. NO. 274.

ASHEVILLE, N. C., MONDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 23, 1914.

PRICE FIVE CENTS

ONWARD MOVEMENTS OF ARMIES LOSE HEADWAY

LACK OF VIGOR IN ALL FRONTS

Allies Making Only Minor Gains; Von Hindenburg Not Very Active; Austrians Were Checked.

RELATED COLD MAY ASSIST THE GERMANS

Invaders in Poland Have Been Greatly Impeded by Mild Weather—Freezing Has Begun.

London, Dec. 23.—On the east and west battle fronts in Europe the onward movements of the armies seem to have lost something of their headway. On the west the allies' offensive movement gives evidence of a lack of vigor as compared with the operations of last week, while General Von Hindenburg, the German commander in the east, seems to have come to a standstill in his campaign along the River Vistula, and the Austrian advance in the Galician Carpathians is apparently checked.

The French during the last three days of fighting have made minor advances, judging from official reports from Paris but not at the same rate as during the two weeks previous. The heavy fogs along the coast have evidently caused the slackening of efforts. With the exception of the capture of certain Anglo-Indian trenches along the Lys last week, most of which appear to have been retaken, the German effort to push back the allies has apparently been generally abortive.

North of the Vistula, in Russian Poland, the Germans again reinforced, have retaken Mlawa, but south of the river they have come to a standstill on their old ground. In South Poland, where the German right wing joins the Austrian left, there is fierce fighting which has resulted in slight gains for the Austro-Germans, judging from reports from Berlin and Vienna. In the Galician Carpathians the Austrians have been compelled to give ground, this being admitted in a statement from Vienna, and Petrograd claims that the Russians have pushed the Austrians back into the mountains and that thousands of prisoners have been taken by the Russians.

Cold Weather at Last.
Petrograd, Dec. 23.—Related cold weather in Poland is expected to precipitate the definite result of the German Polish campaign, which has been practically at a standstill. The weather conditions are paramount in the region, since the whole German invasion is predicated on the freezing of the soft, marshy ground, which has been impeding the transportation of their heavy guns and the digging of trenches.

The ground generally freezes in this region by September 15. Thwarted by the mild weather, there has been a lull in the activities around Mlawa. After their unsuccessful efforts to cross the river Bara, the Germans are resting on the left bank of the river near Sobowies. In the meantime they have shifted their attack to the south of the Pilsa river near Rawa where the ground is not so marshy. The Austrians activity in Hungary.

CORPORATIONS BUREAU CLOSES

Is Soon to Be Absorbed by the Federal Trade Commission Only Recently Created.

HAS SURVEYED WHOLE INDUSTRIAL FIELD

Davies' Last Report Contains Comprehensive Review of How Commission Will Work.

Washington, Dec. 23.—Commissioner Joseph E. Davies made to Secretary Redfield today the last report of the bureau of corporations. At the close of eleven years work, it soon is to be absorbed by the new federal trade commission which will carry forward its activities and develop new fields according to the act of congress which created it. Commissioner Davies reports that before the bureau is absorbed by the new federal commission, it plans to complete additional and final reports on tobacco, farm machinery associations, taxation of corporations, oil, trust laws and conflicts of corporation laws and leave its force as free as possible for the new work of the trade commission.

During the last few months, the report says, the bureau has been making a comprehensive survey of the whole industrial field with the view of having immediately available for the trade commission the general facts of the processes of manufacture organization and dominant financial control of any line of industry.

The report this year contains a very comprehensive review of the law under which the trade commission will work. The new body, it explains, will have, not only those functions of investigation and publicity which the bureau of corporations exercises, but also other functions of publicity investigation and recommendation and powers which are quasi-judicial, which distinguish it in a marked manner from the bureau of corporations. It will have much broader discretion and will act, when requested to do so by the courts, as master in chancery in the preparation of trust decrees.

In view of the impending merger of the bureau of corporations with the trade commission, Commissioner Davies makes no recommendations as to policies or plans for the future, and in addition to a lengthy review of the functions of the trade commission, his report is confined to a review of the year's work in his bureau which has been previously disclosed from time to time in partial reports upon investigations at various stages.

SHIPS READY FOR TILT WITH TURKS

Italian Cruiser to Help North Carolina if More Trouble Occurs.

Rome, Italy, Dec. 23.—The Italian cruiser Calabria, now at Beirut, Syria, has been instructed to assist the American cruiser North Carolina if necessity arises as the result of further demonstrations against the departure of Europeans from Turkish territory. The cruiser Tennessee, the fuel ship Vulcan and the gunboat Scorpion of the American navy, which also are looking after American interests in the eastern Mediterranean, are ready to steam to any place where they are needed, according to reports received here.

According to a dispatch from Athens the North Carolina recently threatened to use her guns as the result of an incident at Tripoli, Syria. The American cruiser, conveying the American minister, entered Tripoli harbor and the commander requested the Turkish authorities to permit the British and French consuls to depart with their nationals resident in the city.

The request was refused but several French residents boarded the Virginia. They were attacked by a mob who wounded the captain and first officer. The North Carolina threatened to fire and the mob fled. The Virginia and the North Carolina left for Dedagatch. Later the cruiser proceeded to Smyrna.

A CONSPIRACY AGAINST BRIGGS

Washington Advised That the Raleigh Postoffice Scandal Instigated by News and Observer.

BRITTON AND BAILEY ARCH CONSPIRATORS

Charges Against Postmaster Not Published, But His Removal Now Seems to Have Been Deferred.

Gazette-News Bureau
Wyatt Building
Washington, Dec. 23.
Unconfirmed rumors reached Washington Saturday to the effect that the charges preferred against Willis G. Briggs, postmaster at Raleigh, were instigated by the News and Observer and Collector of Internal Revenue J. William Bailey, E. E. Britton, editor of the Raleigh publication, wants to be postmaster at Raleigh. Mr. Bailey wants to be the political leader in the eastern end of the state.

The postoffice department continues to refuse to make public the charges which were preferred against Mr. Briggs and upon which the postmaster general stated last week he would remove the Raleigh man from office at once.

It is learned, however, from a reliable source, that one of the main charges against Mr. Briggs is that he did not weigh the mails in Raleigh in accordance with the wishes of the Raleigh News and Observer. The first edition of that publication goes to press some time after midnight. Reasonable people do not understand why Mr. Briggs as postmaster should call at the News and Observer office every night after midnight and personally "overlook" the weighing of the papers that go from that office. "Overlook the weighing of mails" is a special charge against Briggs.

Taking everything into consideration, the Raleigh News and Observer's editor's ambition, and the further ambition of the man who at one time was the political mouthpiece of former Governor Russell, it is thought that those opposing Postmaster Briggs will have to support their charges by affidavits before the department will take any action toward removing Briggs.

One thing is certain, if Briggs is removed it will not be at the request of Representative Edward W. Poirer. Mr. Poirer has always held Mr. Briggs in high regard. He is not going to play little politics now by requesting the removal of a man whom everybody in Wake county, with the exception of a few politicians, concede has done the "impossible" by making a good postmaster although allied with the republican party.

A few days ago Briggs was to be removed at once. Now, it seems, those who filed forty-five pages of "charges" against him have been suddenly seized with cold feet. Postmaster General Eurlen and his chief "dispenser," Dan Roper, seem to have been stricken with a like malady.

In the meantime Willie Briggs is drawing \$3,400 a year as postmaster at Raleigh and is asking no questions. Neither is he submitting to newspaper interviews.

Word was received here today that Chairman Linney has called a meeting of the republican state committee to meet in Raleigh Tuesday, January 12, for the purpose of perfecting plans for the presidential campaign in 1916. A business man whose ability and integrity cannot be questioned will be brought out as a republican candidate for governor, it is said.

Cambridge, Mass., Dec. 23.—Four inmates of the city home were burned to death and another was probably fatally burned by a fire which trapped the sleeping inmates early today. Many others of the 233 people in the home, mostly aged men and women, suffered severely from fright and exposure.

FRENCH CRY "WE WANT ALSACE"

Troops Along Right of Battle Line Show Great Eagerness in Fight—Combats in Snow Storms.

SOLDIERS ON BOTH SIDES ARE GIVEN SKIS

Recently French Company on Skis Swept Through Forest, Cut Off and Captured Germans.

Paris, Dec. 23.—French aviators have bombarded the aviation hangers, a railroad station and barracks at Metz in retaliation for the bomb attack on Nancy by a German Zeppelin, according to the official communication issued in Paris yesterday afternoon. The communication also states that the Germans have re-occupied the city of Mlawa, in Russian Poland.

In Belgium and most of northern France intermittent cannonading and slight gains are reported together with the repulse of German attacks at various points.

The report says in part: "A dirigible dropped a dozen bombs on Nancy in the center of the city and without military reason. Our aviators in return bombarded aviation hangers, one of the railroad stations at Metz, where movement of trains were noted and the barracks of St. Privat at Metz.

"In Russia, the Germans who resumed their march upon Mlawa have re-occupied that city. The situation in Poland remains without notable change."

last night's statement says: "After having all last night directed a very sharp artillery and infantry fire against our troops stationed at La Boisselle and in the adjacent trenches, the enemy delivered two consecutive attacks without success. "We hold strongly the trenches captured near Palselaie. On the heights our occupation of the ground taken near the trench of Garonne. "St. Dis has been bombarded violently from 9.30 o'clock in the morning to noon."

MEXICANS TO TRANSFER BATTLE TO AGUA PRIETA

Washington, Dec. 23.—Secretary Bryan received word unofficially last night that the Mexican factions had agreed to the plan proposed by General Scott, United States chief of staff, to prevent further firing into American territory along the border.

Enrique C. Lorente, Washington agent of the Gutierrez government of which General Maytorena at Naco is a supporter, was advised that the latter had accepted General Scott's plan. It provides that General Hill of the Carranza force abandon Naco and be permitted to go unmolested to Agua Prieta, already held by a portion of his troops. General Maytorena, who has withdrawn his forces would agree not to occupy Naco, which would become neutral.

As Maytorena already holds Nogales, a port of entry, he is said to believe the arrangement was neither to his advantage or detriment. From Hill's viewpoint, the continued possession of Naco was said to be of little value because the Maytorena forces besieging it prevented further transportation of supplies southward.

Fighting at Agua Prieta or at Nogales would not be close enough to the American towns to produce the same situation as had existed for several months at Naco, where stray bullets constantly fell on American soil.

The state department had no advances from Mexico City, but Mr. Lorente said Villa had wired him that harmony prevailed between Gutierrez and all his chiefs. Lorente thought the statement issued by Gutierrez's secretary charging Villa with disobedience was due to a misunderstanding which could have had no serious results.

NO FURTHER NEWS OF PHILIPPINE TROUBLES

Washington, Dec. 23.—No further replies have been received to the inquiry concerning the reported insurrectionary disturbances in the Philippines by the war department since the cablegrams of yesterday. The trouble will be regarded as of minor importance unless there are later developments.

COMMISSION ON TAXES REPORTS

Many Radical Changes Are Urged to Improve Taxation System—Present Methods Inefficient.

WOULD REDUCE RATE BUT ON FULL VALUE

Publicity of Assessments, Sales Value Appraisements and Equalizing Boards Are Recommendations.

Raleigh, Dec. 23.—The corporation commission has made its recommendations to Governor Craig and the general assembly in a document of 18 pages embodying full value assessments, reduced tax rates, publicity of assessments, sales value appraisements, "separation of land from improvements," county assessors, deputy assessors, local and state boards of equalization, and a change in the time of listing.

Each of these recommendations is amplified and explained in paragraphs which indicate radical changes from the present system which has not yielded the revenue that the state needs. Early in its address to the governor, the commission records itself against the suggestion that the people are satisfied with their present system. It declines to accept the vote on the tax amendment as reflecting the willingness of the state to make no changes. The commission thinks the vote was an endorsement of the principle of taxation but far far satisfied with existing assessments and listing of property in the state.

It finds much dissatisfaction with unequal assessments and the failure to list. It notes the variant valuations in the several counties of the state and finds that the small property owner pays a much higher proportionate tax than the large property owner. Solvent credits and intangible property are missing from the list altogether. To the rectifying of these conditions the commission addresses itself in its report to the governor.

It tells a very interesting story of the growth of values in the state despite the tendency to dodge. Its estimate upon all the values is \$308,000,000, which is \$25,000,000 more than the state has claimed before. The commission under general assembly order has begun some inheritance tax suits. The first test case is yet undecided. From one estate it has raised \$46,000. But for the doubtful wording of a statute, it believes many hundred thousands would have been raised thus. In automobile licenses, corporation franchises, express company franchises, inheritance taxes, railroad, telephone, and telegraph privilege taxes, licenses under B and C schedules and in the insurance tax receipts, a gain of \$436,638 is recorded.

The first recommendation is the valuation of all property at its money worth as required by the constitution. The commission thinks this would equalize the burden and lighten the pride of every individual who would wish his property to be recorded at its actual worth. States that have adopted this plan have reduced their rate, the commission says, from one to ten cents, and other taxes not for state purposes, twelve and one half cents. The commission believes North Carolina's rate of 27 and 2-3 could be reduced to 15 cents.

The commission goes luminously into reduction of rates. It calls this the "first and absolutely essential requirement." It makes something of the fact that the legislature has been fixing the rate before the property was assessed, thereby creating a high rate that could not be changed during its operating period. It thinks well of the Ohio plan and offers it for consideration, that plan providing for a rate by the tax commission after the assessment has been made and that rate not to produce a greater revenue than the preceding year plus six per cent. "We prefer the Ohio method and recommend it," the commission says.

It goes lengthily into publicity of assessments and believes this would make for equalization in all the townships where the assessors would be acquainted with almost all individual property. The report from this feature goes much into the detail of working out the machinery of such an act. It would change listing time to February but would not begin until February 1916.

Washington, Dec. 23.—The Carranza agency here has made public a message from the Carranza representative at Galveston saying that semi-official reports, not confirmed, say that Villa is evacuating Mexico City and that Eulalio Gutierrez has resigned as provisional president of Mexico.

STATE MAY BUY MT. MITCHELL

The Geological Survey Recommends Purchase of Tracts for a State Forest Reserve in N. C.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS TO BE ASKED TO ACT

Also Recommended in Annual Report That Appropriation Be Made for Protection of the Forests.

The annual report of the North Carolina Geological survey will be submitted this week to Governor Locke Craig by State Geologist Joseph Hyde Pratt, and, aside from an outline of the important work of the survey during the past year, certain recommendations are made that will be of vast interest throughout the state. One of these recommendations, according to a statement given a representative of The Gazette-News by Dr. Pratt, is that the state of North Carolina set aside an annual appropriation for the purchase of forest areas as a reserve.

If this recommendation is acted upon favorably it will doubtless affect western North Carolina more directly than any other section of the state. No special area is specified in the report, but it was gathered from the interview with Dr. Pratt that the officials of the survey are especially anxious to have the state purchase the area on the summit and the slopes of Mount Mitchell.

It is believed that such action will be taken by the state, since Governor Craig has already stated that he will ask the next general assembly to purchase approximately 500 acres on the summit of Mt. Mitchell in order that this vast watershed may be conserved, and the destructive lumbering operations now in progress there be stopped. The report of the state survey along general lines will doubtless bear much weight in having the assembly act favorably on this matter.

Another fact that makes Dr. Pratt feel sanguine over the prospects of having this recommendation adopted is that Grandfather mountain is now really the possession of the state as a reserve, but is being held in trust. He believes that this trust will continue until the state takes some action to establish a forest reserve, and at the same time establish a system for its upkeep. With the acquisition of Grandfather mountain and Mt. Mitchell, the state would have a really fine nucleus around which to build up a forest reserve in this section.

Another important recommendation in this report relative to the forests of the state is that an appropriation be made to protect the forests against fires. If an appropriation worth while is made, the state authorities will receive a similar amount from the Federal government for fire protection, this being made possible by a provision of the Weeks law. A strong argument for such an appropriation is made in the report, and Dr. Pratt believes that the recommendation will receive favorable consideration when the general assembly meets next spring.

Endorsement is given in this annual report to the establishment of a state highway commission for North Carolina, for which a fight has been in progress now for several years. Dr. Pratt has been one of the prime movers in the fight, and such a commission has been endorsed by a number of the leading organizations and individuals of the state. Among the leading endorsers is the North Carolina Good Roads association, the members of which believe that a great forward step would be taken for improving the public highways of the state if such a commission were established to superintend the expenditure of road funds and the methods used in road building.

Altogether, the report of this year of the survey is one of the most important submitted to the governor in many years; and it is believed that almost all the recommendations made therein will call for the close consideration of the next session of the general assembly.

FRENCH CONTINUE TO ADVANCE IN BELGIUM

Paris, Dec. 23.—An official statement issued in Paris this afternoon is as follows: "In Belgium we have continued our advance. To the west of Lombaertzyde, we have actually reached the foot of the sand dunes on which the enemy had established their forces for resistance. At a point near Ypres, we lost a section of trenches near Hellebeke."

Legislature Asked to Consider Ten Very Specific Things in Resolution Passed at Convention.

REPEAL OF CROP LIEN LAW RECOMMENDED

Greater Economy, Salary Instead of Fee, State-Wide Primary, Land Segregation Among the Ten.

(By W. T. Best.)
Raleigh, Dec. 23.—Every member of the incoming General assembly has either received or will receive a copy of the resolutions recently passed by the State Farmers' union convention in Greenville, a paper advocating ten very specific things which the legislature is asked to consider.

President H. Q. Alexander has issued these suggestions with a letter congratulating the members upon their opportunity to serve the state, particularly to "the farming interests." Dr. Alexander thinks the fact that the union in its convention enthusiastically advocated these measures should count for something.

The convention wants the crop lien law repealed, greater economy in government, the salary instead of the fee system, the abolishment of the county treasurer's office, land segregation between the races so that white communities which wish to remain white may limit land sales to their own race, for a state-wide primary act for all offices accompanied by a strong governing co-operative enterprises, lighter taxation of labor compensated for by heavier taxation of inheritance and unearned incomes, extending the anti-luxury territory, raising the compulsory attendance age to fourteen, an appropriation that will give the farmer the full benefit of the Smith-Lever funds and the listing of the source of ammonia on all fertilizer sacks.

Segregation Unlikely Now.
Much as the union, particularly that part of it close to Dr. Clarence Poe, is committed to land segregation, it is hardly probable that this feature will be pushed at the coming session. The mass meeting in which Drs. Alexander, Poe and other popular leaders participated last spring was about as far from segregation as it could get, likewise pretty distant from anything else that these gentlemen advocated. It was long on the pass editor and the legislator primary. It is believed that the legislature will not be urged to take up segregation this time until public sentiment gets more behind the move. There is a great deal of opposition to it and in the state administration it is one of the most liked public measures.

But the crop lien law will be pushed. The union calls this law slavery. It thinks the best way to get segregation is to get the repeal of the crop lien "body of death," for that's what it calls the law. It calls upon the craft to prepare for a fierce battle against the "interests." It is being urged passionately by Poe in his Progressive Farmer and the charge is being made that white merchants and time traders are opposed to segregation because the black man is more improvident, a better slave to the credit system and more easily taken in by the plea that the time merchants is the "poor man's friend." This is the big thing that the union is after. It has caused peasant totting attorneys to drop them, several men in the legislature now having dropped their card to remove all cause for offense.

The demand for more economical buying on the part of state institutions will take legs and travel. The elimination of the large legislative expense entailed by parceling of small jobs will be asked, and a better system of accounting everywhere. The union has its eye on the legislature.

Rumor has it that Dr. Alexander is being trained for state treasurer; S. H. Hobbs of Clinton, for commissioner of agriculture; and J. A. Hartness of Iredell, for secretary of state. J. A. Hartness of Iredell, though not farmer to hurt, is agreeable to leaders of the union because of his influence. Nobody can prove that. But it isn't doubted that the platform of the union will make some men now in office hustle to retain their position.

Governor Craig left yesterday for Asheville to spend several days in the zero climate before returning to Raleigh to have the legislature on his hands.

Governor Craig will have his message ready this week. He has been asked to read it to the general assembly but has not said whether he will do so or not.

Mrs. Henry B. Stevens will give a dance at her home on Montford avenue on Monday evening for her nephew, Mr. Millard of Atlanta.