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LOCAL RAIL-ROAD BUSINESS

President McLean of V. & C. S. Talks of Probable Effect of Government Control Locally.

FREIGHT MUST BE MOVED QUICKLY

Not Much Difference on Local Roads in Handling Freight—Passenger Service May be Curtailed

FERTILIZERS SHOULD BE ORDERED EARLY

Everybody is more or less—and most people more—interested now in the result of the recent order of President Wilson placing the railroads of the country under government control. How is it going to affect local traffic, if at all? Mr. A. W. McLean, president and general manager of the Virginia & Carolina Southern railroad, which has its head office in Lumberton, is better prepared than any other local man to speak about the effect of this order and The Robesonian sought an interview with him yesterday.

Mr. McLean, as head of this road, has received an order from Secretary of the Treasury W. G. McAdoo, who is director-general of railroads, that all freight must be moved expeditiously. This does not necessarily mean, Mr. McLean says, that freight must be moved over the shortest lines between two points but does mean that it must be moved by the route over which it will be handled quickest. He does not think this will affect the volume of business over the V. & C. S., for its line to the North—Richmond and beyond—is 50 miles shorter than the Seaboard, and it also has a fine freight service from Wilmington to Lumberton. Freight which leaves Wilmington at midnight gets to Lumberton the next day.

There will be very little, if any, difference, so far as roads in this section are concerned, in the matter of moving freight, Mr. McLean thinks, for there has been no trouble on these roads in that matter. The trouble has been on lines to the north and east of Richmond, where lines entering large centers have been congested, owing largely to the great volume of export business due to the war. This has naturally affected business on Southern lines because they have been compelled to deliver their freight in the North and East to lines which have been unable to accept it on account of the great congestion. Passenger Schedules May be Interfered With.

There probably will be, soon or late, considerable interference with passenger schedules, Mr. McLean thinks. Passenger service probably will be reduced to a minimum in order to save coal and other expense of operation, as the government under the new order of President Wilson guarantees railroads the same net income they received before the government took them over, and the government will have to see to it that the roads are operated economically, as every unnecessary expense might involve ultimate cost to the government.

Inconvenience and Delay Probable. Patrons will have to make up their minds to suffer some inconvenience and delay in travel, Mr. McLean says. As far as the Virginia & Carolina Southern is concerned, it will try for a while to maintain its present schedule, if the government permits, but if it is found that the expense is too great, there will be some reduction in the number of trains. The V. & C. S. now has the best passenger service it has ever had to Northern points and return, as well as in the county, two passenger trains daily, besides an accommodation freight, and the service is maintained at a loss.

Order Fertilizers Early. Mr. McLean calls special attention to the fact that farmers and merchants should order their fertilizers and fertilizer materials early, as there probably will be considerable congestion and delay in getting freight. These should be ordered shipped out at least 30 days earlier than usual and stored until needed.

A Strange Light in the Heavens.

"Is that a star?"—"That's an aeroplane!"—"I never saw a star like that!"—"It's moving!"—"Sure it's not a star!"—"It's nothing but a star!" These are only a few of the many remarks made by people who saw a strange light in the western skies Sunday night. This reporter saw the star—if it was a star—just a short while after dark. The light was somewhat larger than the stars one usually sees when he looks up on a fair night. From the center light one could see rays of light shining forth. If it was a star it must have been playing a little closer earth than stars usually play.

Some colored people at the union station after looking at the strange light for a spell—not a long spell—darted into the waiting room.

New High Record for Cotton.

Cotton made a new high record yesterday when New York spots went to 32.15 the pound. No prices are quoted on the local market.

RED CROSS ORGANIZATION MEETING POSTPONED

On Account of Unfavorable Weather Meeting Scheduled for Tomorrow Evening Will Not be Held Until Some Time Next Week—Additional Members.

On account of the unfavorable weather it has been decided to postpone the meeting which was scheduled to be held at the court house tomorrow evening to organize a chapter of the Red Cross. Mr. J. W. Bailey of Raleigh, collector of internal revenue for the eastern district of North Carolina, agreed to deliver an address at the meeting tomorrow evening, as stated in Monday's Robesonian, and it is hoped that it will be possible for him to attend the meeting when it is held. It is hoped to be able to hold the meeting some time next week.

More definite announcement of the date of the meeting may be expected in Monday's Robesonian if weather conditions seem at all favorable. Red Cross members heretofore reported total 278. Since the report published in Monday's Robesonian new subscribers have been secured as follows: Miss Pollie Carmichael, Miss Annie Thompson, Miss Flossie Brown, Miss Maud Carter, Miss Julia Thompson, N. A. Thompson, Jr., Mrs. Sandy McLeod, Mrs. E. M. Johnson, E. M. Johnson, Oakley Lovett, B. B. Britt, Walter Little, Mrs. I. L. Pope, Miss Mary Pope, Mrs. W. I. Linkhaw, Mrs. J. M. McCallum, L. C. Townsend, Mrs. M. W. Floyd, Miss Pearl Howard, Miss Sadie Rae Pope, E. L. Holloway, A. W. McLean, Jr., Miss Margaret F. McLean, Jr., Mrs. A. T. Parme, Miss Emma Norment, Miss Laura Norment, Mrs. Stinson Powell, Miss Hilda Weinstein, Miss Miriam Weinstein, A. T. McLean, H. T. Hux—making a total of 309 members.

Every man, woman and child is invited to join. You can give in your name to The Robesonian office by phone, by card or in person.

U. S. TO SEND GREAT ARMY TO EUROPE

Plan to Offset Defection of Russia—Allies Will Move as United to Crush Teutonic Domination Scheme.

Washington Dispatch, Jan. 2. An engagement by the United States to send a great army against the Germans in time to offset the defection of Russia was revealed today through the publication by Secretary Lansing of a review of the work of the American mission which recently participated in the inter-allied war conference at Paris.

American fighting men are to cross the Atlantic as rapidly as they can be mustered and trained. France and Great Britain on their part undertake not only to join in providing ships to carry them but to see that any deficiencies in arms and equipment are made up on the other side. This was one of the great decisions reached at the conference through which the co-belligerents planned to pool their fighting resources and move as a unit toward driving the Germans and their allies out of conquered territory and crushing the Teutonic world domination scheme. There is to be co-ordinated effort not only in fighting on land and sea but production at home and in the vast shipbuilding projects on which depends the vital problem of maintaining uninterrupted transportation in spite of submarines.

A SPELL OF WEATHER

About One Inch of Snow Fell Yesterday and Last Night—Some Woodpiles Are Getting Too Small for Comfort.

With the mercury playing around 15 this morning and the ground still covered with snow the weather is far from favorable hereabouts. A fine snow fell part of the day yesterday and more snow fell last night. Mr. B. M. Davis, who has charge of the local government station, said this morning that the total snowfall yesterday and last night was only about one inch. There was a good supply of Saturday's snow still on the ground, however. The sun is shining this morning, to the delight of all, and here's hoping it will continue to shine and that things may change for the warmer in the not distant future.

The coal supply is short and the weather has been such for several days that wood could not be brought in from the country. The result is that many are the woodpiles about town that are growing small indeed. People living in the country who have wood will do a good work by bringing it to town as early as possible. Bring it along.

2,500 Persons Killed in Guatemala Earthquake.

Newspapers of San Salvador state that no fewer than 2,500 persons lost their lives in the series of earthquakes which began Christmas day and continued until last Saturday, laying the city of Guatemala in ruins. A dispatch of December 31 from Guatemala city stated that only a few people had been killed.

SUMMARY OF WAR NEWS

American Troops to be Rushed to Fighting Fronts in Large Numbers—Germans Expected Soon to Make Strong Offensive—Little Fighting of Moment in Progress—Peace Negotiations Reach Impasse.

Entire unity henceforth is to be the watchword of the United States and her allies in the prosecution of the war. American troops are to be rushed to the fighting fronts in large numbers as quickly as possible and there is to be perfect co-ordination in naval, military, financial, food, war industries and diplomatic matters.

The agreement for unified action was reached at the recent inter-allied conference in Paris, which was attended by an American mission headed by Col E. M. House and arrangements have been made for the United States to carry out its part of the compact. In order that American troops may be dispatched in a constant stream to Europe, the allied nations are so arranging their merchant shipping that the necessary transports will be available for the huge task. That quick work in getting the American army to the front is most vital is indicated by a statement of Major General Maurice, chief director of military operations at the British war office. General Maurice says it is probable that with their heavy reinforcements, drawn from the eastern to the western front, the Germans shortly may make a strong offensive against the British and French armies and that the enemy may be expected to make some gains. Optimism was expressed, however, that the enemy would not be able to inflict the same degree of damage upon the Allies as he has sustained at the hands of the British during the last year.

Apparent proof that the Germans are preparing for a big offensive is the almost continuous bombardment of various sections along the French and British fronts. Aside from these bombardments there has been little activity except by small raiding parties. A heavy snow is falling and another cold wave has set in on the French front from St. Quentin to the Vosges mountains.

Snow and cold weather also are giving the Italians a chance further to strengthen their northern line against the Austro-Germans. Aside from reciprocal artillery duels little fighting of moment is in progress. In an endeavor to offset their loss of ground resulting from having been driven back across the lower Piave the enemy has tried to effect a landing on the west bank of the stream a short distance from the mouth of the Piave. His boats, however, were caught under the Italian gunfire and had to be abandoned.

Austro-German airmen continue to bombard Venetian plain towns. Treviso and Bassano have again been attacked and bombs also were dropped on Mestre. Little damage was done by the bombs. Three of the enemy aircraft were shot down in aerial battles or by anti-aircraft guns.

Reports from Russia indicate that the negotiations for peace between the Bolshevik government and the Teutonic allies have reached a virtual impasse owing to the unreasonable demands of the Teutons. Particularly distasteful to the Russians is the attitude of the Central powers with regard to holding Poland, Lithuania and Courlands and their determination to retain garrisons at Riga, Libau and other Baltic ports.

Twenty-one British merchantmen were sunk by mines or submarines last week as compared with 12 the previous week.

HEALTHCAMPAIGN RESUMED

Those Who Had Engagements for Free Medical Examination This Week Will be Given Other Dates.

Dr. A. J. Ellington, of the State Board of Health, who is assisting Dr. W. A. McPhaul, county health officer, in the health campaign being carried on in the county, has returned from Raleigh after spending the holidays, and has resumed his work at the court house. A good many applications for the free medical examination have been received and it is hoped that many more will send in their applications soon.

On account of the inclement weather, Dr. McPhaul states that all who were given dates from Wednesday to Saturday of this week will be given other dates for their examinations.

Questionnaires to Registrants of Robeson District 2.

From December 24 to December 29, inclusive, questionnaires were mailed to all registrants of Robeson district 2 whose order numbers are between 768 and 1,400, inclusive. On December 24 they were mailed to those whose order numbers are between 768 and 900; on the 25th, from 901 to 1,000; on the 26th, from 1,001 to 1,100; on the 27th, from 1,101 to 1,200; on the 28th, from 1,201 to 1,300; on the 29th, from 1,301 to 1,400. Registrants have seven days from the date of their notice in which to execute their questionnaires.

On account of the shortage of fuel and the wisdom of exercising the saving spirit the Horner Military school, Charlotte, has postponed the opening of the spring term until Jan. 15.

PARKTON PARAGRAPHS

Community Christmas Tree—School Opened the 2nd—Death of an Infant—Rev. J. L. Jenkins Claims Bride at Wagram—Social and Personal.

Correspondence of The Robesonian. Parkton, Jan. 1.—Another Christmas has passed and a merrier one never was spent up our way. It seemed like everybody enjoyed themselves. The fireworks were not so noisy as in the past, but the small boys enjoyed their cap pistols and some skyrockets.

The large community Christmas tree at the M. E. church on Monday night, the 24th, was a decided success, as all the Sunday schools came together and every child so far as we have learned, received a gift, and the grown up people in large numbers were not forgotten. Santa Claus was there in the person of Mr. Angus Jenkinson, and he proved to be a satisfactory representative and all had a jolly good time. Rev. W. L. Maness, the new pastor of the M. E. church, was present and after the choir rendered a couple of appropriate Christmas carols, addressed the large audience briefly, which was quite interesting.

The cold weather prevented any services in our town Sunday.

Miss Annie Williamson entertained the graduating class of 1916 on Christmas night.

The teachers of the graded and high school have moved and the school will start tomorrow, the 2nd.

The following soldier boys spent Christmas with home folks: Messrs. Carl Johnson, W. E. McMillan, Harvey Stanley, Pemberton McCormick, Jno. D. McCormick. Mr. B. A. McDonald arrived Saturday morning for a five-days' furlough. We are always glad to shake the boys' hands, and they are all looking fine and enjoying fine health, except colds.

We extend our sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. George McClain in the death of their 4-months-old baby, which died on the 26th and was buried on the afternoon of the 27th at the Parkton cemetery.

Rev. Mr. Hall, pastor of the Presbyterian church, moved today into the manse building. We welcome this interesting family to our town.

Rev. J. L. Jenkins, pastor of the Baptist church, will leave Wednesday morning for Wagram, where he will marry Miss Kate McArn Watson of that place. The bride and groom will spend a few days on a Northern bridal trip, after which they will reside in our town for the present.

Mr. H. B. Culbreth has accepted a position with the Parkton Mercantile Co. as salesman in the dry goods department, to the delight of his many friends. Mr. M. R. Tolar having resigned. Miss Mary L. Culbreth left this afternoon for Hamlet to resume her duties as teacher. Miss Annie Williamson left for Piney Creek.

Miss Ninett McNatt entertained the young people of our town tonight, a large majority being present. Refreshments were served. All had a happy New Year.

LOCAL FUEL SITUATION

Not So Bad Right in Town—150 Tons Requested for Next 30 Days.

A car of coal was received in Lumberton Friday of last week and it is understood that not quite all of it has been taken. It has been distributed in small lots. Mr. H. M. McAllister, fuel administrator for the county, was asked yesterday by the State fuel administrator, Mr. A. W. McAllister of Greensboro, to let him know how much coal would be needed in Lumberton during the next 30 days and advised him that 150 tons would supply the need. It is hoped that that amount will be received in a few days. Mr. McAllister says that he has had calls for coal from the country but that in such cases he is advising the people to go into the woods and secure a supply of wood.

Officers Home From France to Assist in Training Troops.

Major Generals George A. Mann, William L. Sibert and Richard H. Blatchford, who have been with the American expeditionary forces in France, arrived at an Atlantic port Tuesday on a French steamship. It is understood the officers have been ordered home to assist in training the American forces being made ready for overseas duty. General Mann, who left the United States in command of the "Rainbow" division, made up of troops from practically every State of the Union, said the men are now comfortably billeted and are making satisfactory progress in the intensive training they are undergoing preparatory to being called upon for action against the Germans. They are in excellent health, he said, adding that through him the entire command sent home a hearty New Year's greeting to their homeland and the American people.

Advocates Government Purchase and Sale of Sugar.

Government purchase and sale to consumers of all sugar used in the United States and control of the amounts and kinds of food to be served in public eating places were advocated to meet the abnormal war conditions by Food Administrator Hoover yesterday in testimony before the Senate committee investigating sugar. He said additional legislation conferring upon the food administration such powers should be enacted by Congress.

SMYRNA NEWS ITEMS

Too Rough for Union Meeting Saturday—Boys Think They Will Have to go "Over There"—Church Being Painted—Fine Christmas Exercise.

Correspondence of The Robesonian.

Smyrna (Lumberton, R. 4), Jan. 2.—The year has passed and a new one here and we are having such rough weather that farmers haven't any work yet. About all they are doing now is sitting around the fire. This is well everybody was expecting a big time around here at the union, but they only met one day and it got so rough until no one came for the union Saturday. We are awfully sorry that we missed it and we think we missed a lot.

It seems that the farmers are going to have a bad time getting help on the farms this year. Miss Letha Stone of Lumberton is spending a few days with her cousin Miss Hattie Cox of this section. All the boys around here seem to think that they are going to have to go across over into France pretty soon. We hope some of them will get Kaiser Bill's head and throw it in this little stream of water which they have to cross. But then that would not stop the war, we don't think.

Well, it seems like we haven't seen a Robesonian in a month and sure are missing it. We haven't got a paper this year but think we ought to get one today. We hope so, anyway.

A few days ago two of our men from here drove 30 miles to get to a party. One was a pretty old man who had never been to one, we think. But they got the old man. They say he didn't take any part in the play, but we suppose it was because he thought he was so old until he was afraid he couldn't take his part. The other was a young man, but he was as much afraid of the girls as the old man, so he decided he couldn't take his part either. We think both the men will be right up for going to the next one they hear of, but we think they'd better stay away if they can't do better than they did this time. Maybe this one helped them and they will do better next time.

Our church is being painted, which helps the looks a lot.

The Christmas exercise was fine and a good crowd present, considering the weather.

Wishing The Robesonian and all its readers a Happy New Year.

3 Degrees Below Zero in North Lumberton.

Winter's cold blast is felt more and summer's fierce heat is felt less in the northern part of Lumberton than anywhere else in all these counties. The difference is appreciated in the "good old summer time", but those who have their local habitation in that part of town are not so keen about it when comes such weather as this section has been blessed withal during the past few days. The official thermometer at the home of Mr. B. M. Davis, in the heart of town, registered 4 degrees above zero last Sunday morning, as stated in Monday's Robesonian, while the thermometer at the home of Mayor Jas. D. Proctor hastily shrunk down to 3 degrees below zero on the same memorable morning when placed on the north side of the house. The mercury did not even hesitate, so Mayor Proctor deposes and says; and the thermometer at the home of Mr. Jno. S. McNeill, a little closer to the warmer regions of town, said the same thing. Three degrees below zero is something cold, if anybody should happen to ask you.

Changes to be Made in British Diplomatic Service.

Washington Dispatch, Jan. 2. Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, who has been British ambassador in Washington since May 6, 1913, called at the State Department today to say he was going home on leave of absence. That was as far as the official statement went but it is known from London through the reports that come through English newspapers of a general sweeping change in the British diplomatic representation in most of the larger capitals. The purpose of the reorganization, it is learned, touches the personnel of the embassies rather than the policies of the British government in its relations with its allies and it is expressly stated in an authoritative quarter that there is to be no change in these policies connected with the prosecution of the war.

Valuable Town Property to be Sold.

As announced in a page ad elsewhere in this issue, some valuable town property will be sold at auction Wednesday of next week. The lots are located on West Fourth street, between Elm and Water, and are in a desirable part of town for location of business houses. No doubt the sale will attract a large crowd and the lots will go at good prices.

A Good Year for LaFayette Mutual.

Mr. E. E. Page, secretary-treasurer of the LaFayette Mutual Life Insurance Co., which has headquarters in Lumberton, says the year just closed has been a good one for the company. There was a gain during the year of over \$11,000 in premium income, a gain of over \$15,000 in assets and of over \$250,000 in new business.

BRIEF ITEMS LOCAL NEWS

—License has been issued for the marriage of A. E. Watson and Sarah Graham.

—Mr. Carl Bullard has been added to the night police force, making two night policemen. He began work last night.

—Mr. James Farmer of Wilmington has accepted a position as day clerk at the Lorraine hotel. He began work Tuesday.

—Messrs. W. F. French and Ira Bullard returned Tuesday from the West, where they went to buy mules for their sales tables.

—Mr. N. H. Ward of McDonald is a Lumberton visitor today. Mr. Ward reports plenty of snow and cold weather out his way.

—Mr. F. A. McLeod returned Tuesday from St. Louis, Mo., where he spent several days buying mules for Mr. C. M. Fuller's sales tables.

—The Alfred Rowland chapter of the U. D. C. will hold its regular monthly meeting on Saturday at 3 p. m. at the home of Miss Margie Russell.

—The spring term of the Lumberton graded and high schools will open Tuesday, January 8. Supt. R. E. Sentelle says he has enough coal on hand to last some two months.

—Miss Elizabeth Snead spent yesterday in Fayetteville visiting her sister Miss Mary Snead, who is a patient at the Cumberland General hospital. Miss Snead's condition has not been very favorable for the last few days.

—Rev. R. A. Hedgpeth and family moved yesterday from Barnesville to Lumberton. They moved into Mr. S. E. Britt's residence, Eighth and Cedar streets. Mr. Britt recently moved back to his farm at Ten Mile church.

—Mr. W. H. McDonald and family moved Thursday from their farm on R. 5 from Lumberton to a house owned by Mr. R. E. Lee, east Seventh street. Mr. Kennedy Davis, also of R. 5, moved to Mr. McDonald's farm and will farm for him this year. Mr. Davis farmed for Mr. J. T. Phillips last year.

—Miss Charlotte Merritt left last evening for her home at Tracy City, Tenn., after spending a few days here with her brother, Mr. M. J. Merritt, who Wednesday of last week underwent an operation for appendicitis at the Thompson hospital. Mr. Merritt is fast recovering from the operation.

—Born to Mr. and Mrs. Wright J. Prevatt, this morning, a fine boy.

—Mrs. W. W. Whaley and two children, Elizabeth and Ruth, returned Tuesday to their home in Wilmington, after spending several days here visiting at the home of Mr. Whaley's parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Whaley, Elm street. Mr. Whaley came with his family to Lumberton but returned to Wilmington Friday night. Elizabeth was taken sick while here, but her condition was greatly improved Tuesday.

—As already has been stated in The Robesonian, Mr. C. V. Brown's resignation as cashier of the National Bank of Lumberton was effective Tuesday, the first day of the year. Mr. Brown, who resigned on account of his health, is succeeded by Mr. H. L. Newbold, former assistant State bank examiner. Mr. Brown has not yet decided what he will do. However, their many friends will be pleased to learn that he and his family will continue to make their home here for some time, at least.

—Lieut. and Mrs. C. B. Skipper, Jr., who were married at Kinston Thursday of last week, an account of which was published in Monday's Robesonian, arrived here Monday afternoon from Washington, D. C., where they went immediately after their marriage. Lieut. and Mrs. Skipper are guests at the home of Mr. Skipper's parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Skipper, Water street. They will leave Saturday for Columbia, S. C., where they will make their home. Mr. Skipper is first lieutenant of Co. E, 371st infantry.

—Mr. W. G. Gilchrist, who for the last two years has made his home here, has accepted a position as farm manager for Mr. L. A. Tatam of Elizabethtown and will leave for Elizabethtown as soon as the weather clears up. During 1916 Mr. Gilchrist was agricultural and industrial agent for the V. & C. S. Ry. Co. and last year he looked after Mr. A. W. McLean's farming interests. Mr. Gilchrist made many friends here. He returned to Lumberton Tuesday from his old home at Laurinburg, where he went to spend Christmas, traveling in his auto, and is snowbound.

Thompson Hospital Notes.

Reported for The Robesonian. Mrs. T. W. Bullock is a patient at the hospital, suffering with grippe and ear complications.

Mrs. Charlie Storm, one of the victims of the Richardson automobile wreck Christmas day, is getting along very well.

Mr. M. J. Merritt, who was operated on a few days ago, mentioned in Monday's Robesonian, is improving nicely.

Little Ezra Martin, son of Charlie Martin, R. F. D. 3, was operated on Monday for adenoids and tonsils, returning home Tuesday.

Mrs. N. A. Regan, Elizabethtown, is still improving and will return home soon.

At least six Mexican bandits were killed in a fight between bandits and United States troops and Texas rangers Saturday at San Jose, Mexico, opposite the Indian rancho, which is 20 miles south of Eagle Pass. The Americans had crossed into Mexico on the trail of Mexican cattle thieves. There were no American casualties.