

FIGHT BETWEEN VILLISTAS AND ARMIES OF CARRANZA AND PERSHING IS BEING FOUGHT SOMEWHERE SOUTH OF THE LINE

San Antonio Awaiting Details—Douglas, Ariz., Alarmed Over Encampment of Big Force Carranzistas Within Mile of City—Ashurst Gets Alarming Telegram—Funston Calls for More Aviators—More Troops Going to Border—Charged in Senate That "Sinister Forces" Trying to Stir Up War Between America and Mexico—National Guard Will Not Be Called for Yet—Herrera's Desertion Disproved

(By the United Press)

Washington, March 24.—A Mexican army of three thousand men, with 40 pieces of artillery, is camped within ten blocks of the center of Douglas, Arizona. Americans have been ordered not to prepare for defense in the fear of offending the Mexicans. The city is in grave danger of attack, a telegram received by Senator Ashurst from D. A. Richards, an attorney, says. Senator Ashurst was asked to do all he can. Messages received at the State Department say there has been no massing of Carranzistas along the border.

Ashurst has appealed to the War Department. His telegram was forwarded to Funston. The army is not worried over the Douglas situation.

The Durango consul today reported Americans to be leaving that city, with no disorder. The Department says ammunition shipments will be watched to see that none reach the enemy forces. The War Department is inclined to believe reports of Herrera's loyalty. It is admitted that they gave relief.

Fort Houston Eager for News of Battle.

San Antonio, March 24.—Officers at Fort Sam Houston are standing close by the telegraph office awaiting word of a rumored battle between Villistas and the combined forces of Americans and Carranzistas at El Oso, as yet unconfirmed.

Rumor of Herrera's Disloyalty Disproved.

Washington, March 24.—Gen. Luis Herrera, reported as disloyal to Carranza and having joined Villa, is really loyal to Carranza, and is still commanding the Chihuahua City garrison. He is not heading a new revolt, as rumored, Consul Letcher at Chihuahua, today telegraphed the State Department.

Villa Surrounded; Impossible for Him to Get Away.

(By E. T. Conkle, United Press Staff Representative)
El Paso, March 24.—Villa is surrounded and may be engaged by American troops any hour, say reports. Mexican Colonel Bertani today telegraphed that the Villistas are surrounded by Carranzistas and Americans at Santa Clara Canyon, east of Namiquipa. Carranza Consul Garcia in publishing the telegram, said it was impossible for Villa to escape.

El Constitution, a Mexican newspaper, has been suppressed for publishing a story urging Mexicans to join Villa. Nine employees of the paper were arrested.

Stone Says There's Plot to Start War.

Washington, March 24.—A resolution calling it treasonable to furnish supplies to or otherwise aid Villa, was introduced today by Senator Lewis. Sinister forces are seeking to cause a war with Mexico, Senator Stone charged, in the course of his remarks.

More Troops to South.

Washington, March 24.—A battalion of the Twenty-first Infantry, located at Vancouver barracks, Washington, has been ordered to proceed to El Centro, California, complying with the request of General Bell. Funston's call for more aeroplanes and aviators will be answered. Sentiment in Congress favors giving Funston as many as he needs. The militia will not go to the border at present.

SAYS VILLISTAS HELD UP TRAIN MILES FROM WHERE THOUGHT TO BE

El Paso, Tex., Mar. 23.—Garcia Flores, a Spanish merchant of the City of Chihuahua, who arrived here tonight, said that Villa had held up a train on which he was travelling, at Mochituma, eighty-five miles north-east of Namiquipa.

"We were travelling north of Chihuahua City," he said, "and were near Mochituma Wednesday when we encountered a large force of men, mounted and on foot.

THE ODDDEST STORY IN THE NEWS OF THE DAY

Boston, March 24.—Dr. Samuel A. Eliot, member of the United States Board of Indian Commissioners, declared today that Minnehaha has turned milliner and that the Indian women and girls of the southwestern reservations are rapidly acquiring the art of hatmaking. Also they have turned from the gaudy hues that delighted the heart of the old warrior and now prefer modest shadings. Dr. Eliot is just home from a trip through the west.

er to the Americans.
"Villa stopped to chat with some friends of his who were on the train. He told them that General Herrera had joined him three days since with 2,000 men. He finally left the train without molesting any one but he took some supplies which he said he needed badly."

HARD FIGHTING ON BOTH RUSSIAN AND FRENCH FRONTS NOW

Slavs Hurling All Strength At Enemy on the Riga-Dvinsk Line

ACTIVITY ABOUT VERDUN

Decisive Battle There May Have Been Commenced By Germans—Loop in the French Front But Defenders Holding Own Well

(By the United Press)

Petrograd, Mar. 24.—Savage fighting is in progress at Jacobstadt, Southeast of Riga. The Russians are battering the German positions with artillery and using liquid and gas bombs. Simultaneously they are attacking Friedrichstadt and Illuxt, aiming to force retirement of the Germans on the Riga-Dvinsk front for a distance of 140 miles.

Terrific Fighting in West.

London, Mar. 24.—The Germans have resumed their attacks Northwest of Verdun, say Paris dispatches. They are terrifically assaulting the French positions South of Malincourt and on Dead Man hill. Paris believes a decisive battle in that sector has begun. The French front has been bent into a dangerous loop. The French heavily bombarded the Germans South of Malincourt last night, after which the Germans failed to renew their infantry attacks. A Paris official bulletin says along the rest of the front all is calm.

Action on Belgian Coast.

Amsterdam, Mar. 24.—The Flushing correspondents of Amsterdam newspapers reported sounds of heavy firing from the channel in the direction of Ostend and Westende today.

SAYS THE CIVILIAN SECRETARY SHOULD BE SHORN OF POWER

Admiral Fiske Tells Congressional Committee Naval Head of Strategy Should Be Officer Hard to Overrule

(By the United Press)

Washington, March 24.—Elimination of the Secretary of the Navy for all practical purposes was suggested by Admiral Fiske today to the House Naval Committee.

He proposed that Congress should make an officer head of the strategy section, and that the secretary should be without authority to overrule him except by consent of Congress.

AUGUSTA, NASHVILLE GOT ALONG WITHOUT AID FROM OUTSIDE

Augusta, Ga., March 23.—With six business blocks leveled by fire and more than 600 houses destroyed, Augusta tonight was feeding and housing its three thousand homeless without aid from the outside world.

Mayor J. B. Littleton declared a moratorium today to aid fire sufferers, and it may extend through several days.

Nashville Takes Care of Own Homeless.

Nashville, Tenn., March 23.—National guardsmen were on watch today and tonight in East Nashville, parts of which were devastated yesterday by fire.

All the homeless were cared for tonight and it was stated that it would not be necessary to accept aid from other sources.

INDICATES CRUISER WENT DOWN OFF THE N. CAROLINA COAST

Logbook of H. M. S. Cumberland Picked Up By Coast Guard, Hatteras

LINER WAS IN DISTRESS

Mallory Ship Alamo Being Towed Into Hampton Roads—War Vessel's Log Book Floating Up On Shore Starts Inquiry

(By the United Press)

Norfolk, March 24.—The coast guard cutter Onondaga has found the Mallory liner Alamo in distress, 130 miles off Hatteras. The ship is carrying passengers and freight. She broke her rudder four days ago, and developed engine trouble. The Onondaga is towing the Alamo to Hampton Roads.

Logbook of British Man-of-War Washed Up.

Coast guards are drying the logbook of the British cruiser Cumberland, washed ashore at Chicomico (N. C.) station, and are hoping to find whether or not the cruiser met with disaster.

AVIATOR CORRELL IS LOCATED; OUT OF GAS

Columbus, N. M., March 23.—Lieut. Edgar S. Correll of the United States Aero Corps, missing since last Sunday, was found today three miles south of Ascension by a 20th infantry motor truck train, according to reports tonight to military headquarters. Correll was uninjured, but was out of gasoline and lost his way.

ALLIES REFUSE TO CONSENT TO DISARM MERCHANT VESSELS

Conditions Will Not Warrant It, Believed to Have Stated in Joint Reply Received by State Department From Overseas

(By the United Press)

Washington, March 24.—A joint reply from the Allies to the State Department's proposal to disarm merchantmen has been received.

It is understood on the highest authority that the Allies refused, saying conditions will not warrant it.

A. & M. DEFEATS W. VA. WESLEYAN FOUR-TO-TWO

West Raleigh, Mar. 23.—Fanning 16 men and allowing four scattered hits "Bill" Evans won his game for A. & M. from West Virginia Wesleyan this afternoon 4 to 2. Evans was master of the game at all times, and should not have been scored on, but errors by his teammates were responsible for the two tallies which were registered by the visitors. Both teams were wild, but the Tech's connected with Thurman's offerings more frequently than could the visitors with Evans.

THE DAY ON LOCAL COTTON EXCHANGE

Sales of cotton here today totalled 35 bales by 3 o'clock, prices ranging from 10 1-8 to 11 3-4c.
New York futures quotations were:
May 11.90 11.88
July 12.02 12.02
October 12.16 12.12
December 12.31 12.83
January 12.35 12.34

SENATE LIKELY TO RAISE ARMY TO AN EVEN LARGER FORCE

Compromise With House for 160,000 Instead of 140,000 Proposed

COMMITTEE CONSIDERS

Question of Preparedness Looms Up Largest in Upper Chamber Today, Following Passage Hay Bill By House On Thursday

(By the United Press)

Washington, March 24.—The preparedness question today swung to the Senate. The military committee is said to be considering the Hay bill, passed by the House yesterday, and paving the way for an increase of the army to 160,000 instead of 140,000 men.

WHAT THEY WANT IN THE WAY OF HUSBANDS

Minneapolis, Minn., March 24.—Physicians who don't wear those nasty little mustaches, who do not drink and who get \$1,042 a year, are most eligible for husbands for Minnesota University co-eds. This is the result deducted from 210 answers to a "first aid to Cupid" questionnaire conducted by the University daily.

BULLETINS

(By the United Press)

T. R. DUE AT NEW YORK TODAY.

New York, March 24.—Colonel Roosevelt is due to return from his West Indian trip this afternoon.

EVIDENCE AGAINST WAITE IS IN HANDS OF THE PROSECUT'N

Reported From Grand Rapids—Man Arrested In New York Charged With Poisoning Wealthy Father-In-Law Jailed

(By the United Press)

New York, March 24.—Arthur W. Waite, suspected of poisoning his millionaire father-in-law, John E. Peck, at Grand Rapids, Mich., will be taken from his palatial apartment this afternoon and lodged in a cell. Waite is recovering from the effects of drugs.

Grand Rapids dispatches today said positive evidence connecting Waite with the crime was in the hands of Francis Manusco, working at the Grand Rapids end on the murder case.

NEW INVESTIGATIONS SO. AMERICAN MARKETS

Washington, March 24.—South American markets for textiles, wearing apparel, and electrical goods of all kinds are to be investigated by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Department of Commerce. The Bureau has appointed Philip S. Smith, of New York, to take up the work on electrical-appliance markets, and he will sail about the middle of April. W. A. Tucker of Massachusetts, will leave about the same time for South America, to study the markets for textiles and wearing apparel.

One of the principal imports into South America is textiles, particularly cotton goods, and the United States has heretofore supplied a much smaller part of this commodity than many European competitors.

A. C. L. WILL REMOVE TRACK FROM STREET RATHER THAN PAVE

Expense of Complying With City's Demand In the Bright Street Spur Matter Would Be Too Great, Says Railroad

It was announced by counsel here today that the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company had decided to remove its track, a spur, from Bright street west of Independent. This move follows a demand by the city authorities that the company pave between the rails and for a short distance on either side of the track, after removing it from one side to the center of the street, with vitrified brick on concrete base. Several communications had been addressed to the railroad or its agents in the matter. The A. C. L. had offered a compromise, stating that if agreeable to Council, it would use what was regarded as a presentable and durable material for paving between the rails, and plank on either side, calling attention to the fact that the latter was used with satisfaction in a number of places, Kansas City among them. It would have to remove the track to the center of the street for its entire distance now, and since paving for the entire distance of the spur would be made necessary sooner or later, would find it expedient to pave the whole distance now and have it done with the A. C. L. said Council declined the proposition. The city called upon the company to pave the portions of the track abutting upon paved streets.

Council first passed a measure requiring brick to be used for the paving, but later supplemented that by specifying that the brick should be laid upon concrete base, it is said.

The paving would cost the Atlantic Coast Line many thousand dollars, the railroad contends. The spur track which is to be taken up has been of benefit principally to business men, it is said. Residents along at least a portion of Bright street declare satisfaction over the decision to remove it. Maintenance of the track has been at more or less expense to the company, it is claimed. The correspondence from the railroad officials, who have made known their intention to the city authorities, indicates that the decision is final. No further suggestion for a modification of the municipality's demands is made.

OLD MAN AND CRIPPLED GIRL BEATEN AND LEFT FOR DEAD; BLACKS HELD

(By the Eastern Press)

Washington, N. C., March 24.—Three negroes suspected of assaulting George Bowen, an elderly white man living near Plymouth, and Bowen's crippled daughter, are being held in the Washington county jail. Robbery was the motive of the attackers. Bowen and the girl were left for dead presumably, after having been severely beaten. Bloodhounds trailed the three blacks held. There is no talk of summary vengeance.

BROKEN BELT KILLED FIREMAN AT SAWMILL

Siler City, March 23.—At C. B. Thomas' sawmill about one mile north of Siler City, John Fox of Stanly, was instantly killed when a heavy belt broke and the loosened end struck him fairly in the face and breast. He was fireman at the mill and had been there only a few weeks.

GOING ON IN OTHER E. CAROLINA TOWNS

The lively town of Bridgeton in Craven county may have a bank soon, it is reported.
The "Masked Marvel" and Max Smith wrestled to a draw in a match at New Bern.

EAST CAROLINA R. R. WILL EXTEND LINE BEYOND SNOW HILL

To Build From Hookerton to Seven Springs or Fremont, It's Stated

CONSTRUCTION RIGHT OFF

Road Will Enter Greene Co. Seat and Proceed From There to One of Two Hustling Communities—Compete With K.-C. R. R.

Officials of the East Carolina Railroad have given assurances to Greene county citizens that the road will be extended from Hookerton to Snow Hill. At a conference held in Tarboro the railroad men stated that construction would be commenced in a short time, it was said today. From Snow Hill the road will be continued either to Seven Springs, via La Grange, or Fremont, via Faro and Eureka.

Snow Hill hears that it may get another railroad. "There is a persistent rumor that the East Carolina Railroad is to be extended to some point South at an early date," says the Standard Laconic of that town. The rumor is not confirmed by railroad men, "who are keeping mum in the matter." It is believed by some, says the Standard Laconic, "that it is headed towards LaGrange and thence via Seven Springs for Duplin county." The paper has been informed that "the road is collecting large quantities of cross ties at Hookerton, which would indicate that some move of importance is on foot."

The rumor that the East Carolina, from Tarboro to Hookerton, will extend, is almost simultaneous with the well-founded report that the Kinston-Carolina is preparing to continue its line from Snow Hill to Stantonburg, on the Raleigh division of the Norfolk Southern.

The East Carolina by extending to Snow Hill would be expected to give that town a much better freight service from Norfolk and Richmond. Then, it is said that "within sixty days the East Carolina will put on two motor cars which will furnish a double service from each end of the road daily. This will enable one to go to Raleigh or Norfolk, and many other points and return the same day." The Kinston-Carolina extension would afford identical facilities, but in any event, the Standard-Laconic seemingly thinks, the competition caused by the entrance of the East Carolina there would benefit the town considerably.

SMALLER LOSS FROM FOREST FIRES, SAID

Less Than 300,000 Acres Burned In 1915—72 Per Cent. of Damage In Oregon—Below the Average for Five Years—Timber Destroyed Valued at \$190,000,000, Report Says

(Special to The Free Press)

Washington, March 24.—Forest fires burned over not quite 300,000 acres of national forest land in 1915, according to official reports just compiled, or less than two acres per thousand. Out of a total of 6,324 fires, 345, or 5 1-2 per cent., did damage to the amount of \$100 or more.

The timber loss was 156,000,000 board feet, valued at \$190,000. Although the season was regarded as one of unusual exposure, owing to delayed fall rains, the loss was materially below the average of the last five years. Over 87 per cent. of this loss occurred in the States of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, while more than 72 per cent was in Oregon alone.

Lightning figured as the chief cause of forest fires in 1915, as it does in the average year.

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