

WEATHER FORECAST

For North Carolina and South Carolina—Generally fair tonight and Sunday.

THE WILMINGTON DISPATCH

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WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA, SATURDAY AFTERNOON, AUGUST 18, 1917.

PRICE FIVE CENTS

COAL SUPPLY MAY BE TAKEN OVER BY GOVT.

This Question in Balance Today at the Seat of Government.

PRESIDENT HOLDS VITAL CONFERENCES

Being Urged to Take Over Output and Control Distribution—Hoover Holds Confab With Wilson—President Can Fix Price of Coal.

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Aug. 18.—President Wilson sent to the Food Administration today for a personal conference with Herbert Hoover and later went to the Federal Trade Commission. It is believed the President discussed the coal situation and the extent to which he would assume the powers to control distribution vested in him by the food bill.

Under the law the President may fix price of coal, operate the mines or commandeer stocks and sell to the public. Some decisions of which course he will pursue is expected as the result of today's conference, which were based on the Federal Trade Commission's now completed report on the coal situation.

At the Federal Trade Commission the President went over the figures gathered on costs of producing coal. The trend of the commission's report on the subject was to urge the President to take over the supply and its distribution. The President will take some action in the coal situation early next week. He carried back to the White House from the trade commission a mass of statistics on coal production costs and will go over them tomorrow. His decision probably will be announced Monday.

The President's intention, it was learned authoritatively, is to reduce the prices, not only at the mines, but of jobbers and retailers. The trade commission's report indicates that operators can sell their bituminous at a price far below the maximum of \$3, fixed at a recent conference between mine managers and government officials, and still make a handsome profit.

Evidence was given the President that operators have failed to abide by the \$2 a ton agreement and that they have been selling their product for any amount they could get. Shortages in some sections have made it possible, it is said, for them to obtain extortionate prices. The trade commission gave to the President specific recommendations respecting the situation. It was suggested, it is understood, that the President immediately put into operation provisions of the food control bill which give the government authority to take over and resell to the public all coal mined.

AMERICAN VESSEL IN DISTRESS AT SEA

(By Associated Press.) An Atlantic Port, Aug. 18.—A report was received here today that the American steamship Rapine has suffered a mishap a few miles off the coast. It is not believed the accident is serious. The Rapine is a new steamship, built on the Great Lakes.

CUBAN SOIL TO BE USED BY AMERICA

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Aug. 18.—Cuba's offer to provide a mobilization and training ground for some American forces has been accepted. The number and description of the forces to be sent cannot be disclosed for military reasons.

AMERICA WILL MAKE SEPARATE REPLY.

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Aug. 18.—The reply of the United States to the Pontifical peace note will be sent independently and not in connection with any answer from the other belligerents. At least this is the plan at this time as indicated by Secretary Lansing. A reply may not be expected until the proposal has been carefully considered. It is generally taken to be the fact that the President will consider in opinions of the other allies in making a reply and that the diplomatic representatives in Washington are exchanging the views of their governments with the State Department.

TWO DIVISIONS OF STATE GUARD

To Be Sent to France at Early Date—The Second From New England.

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Aug. 18.—Two army divisions instead of one, comprising a total of at least 38,000 men, probably will make up the first contingent of the National Guard to go to France. Although no official confirmation was obtainable, there was evidence that the composite Forty-second division whose organization recently was announced, will be accompanied abroad by the Twenty-sixth, made up of New England guardsmen.

The commander of the Twenty-sixth is Major-General Clarence Edwards, now acting as commander of the Department of the Northeast. The Forty-second is commanded by Major-General W. A. Mann.

A report was current today that sufficient shipping will be available for forwarding two divisions within the time fixed for the departure of the Forty-second and that the Twenty-sixth had been selected to go because it comes from a compact area and is composed largely of regiments of high rating, and representing States whose troops were left out of the composite division.

The Forty-second division is being mobilized at Mineola under the new European standard, which requires that the strength of the individual infantry regiments be increased more than 50 per cent. The process necessitates the addition of some units not included in the original order, for where one company of infantry, for instance, was to have come from any State, two companies have been consolidated to give the 250 men necessary. Thus hundreds of men have been transferred to fill up the regiments selected to go. All the other National Guard divisions will go through a similar process on arrival at divisional camps. No hint has been given as to the probable time it will require to prepare the Forty-second for embarkation. The question of equipment also enters into the fixing of a sailing date. The same considerations apply also to the Twenty-sixth.

TO LOOK AFTER DUES OF SOLDIER PRINTERS

(By Associated Press.) Colorado Springs, Colo., Aug. 18.—The 63rd annual convention of the Typographical Union before final adjournment last night voted to take care of the dues of members who join the National Army, the necessary fund to be raised by a per capita tax of 10 cents a month beginning January 1 next.

CAREFUL STUDY OF POPE'S PROPOSAL

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Aug. 18.—That the government is determined to give Pope Benedict's peace proposal the most deliberate and painstaking consideration before framing a reply was evinced again today by developments both at the White House and the State Department. The cabinet, holding its first session since the note arrived, avoided any general discussion of the subject; because President Wilson is understood to feel that there must be a searching analysis of the questions raised before such discussion would be profitable. Secretary Lansing and his advisers, on whom most of the responsibility for making this analysis will rest, continued their study of the Pontifical suggestions with every indication that probably would be several days before any concrete step could be expected.

FATAL COLLISION OF TWO AIRPLANES

(By Associated Press.) Toronto, Ont., Aug. 18.—Two airplanes flying at high speed crashed together 800 feet in the air at the Armour Heights aviation camp yesterday, one of the machines bursting into flames, and plunging to earth, killing the aviator, Cadet S. H. J. Dorr. The victim's neck was broken and his body badly burned. The other aviator, whose name is withheld by the Royal Flying Corps, was able to manage his machine and reached earth safely. Both aviators were Americans, Dorr coming from New Jersey.

SECRETARY BAKER DIST RIBUTES COMMISSIONS TO 1,800 NEW OFFICERS AT FORT MYER, VA.



The men commissioned from Fort Myer were graduated on August 13. Their commissions were handed to them by Secretary of War N. D. Baker, who is shown presenting a commission to one of the successful student officers. They will all soon be assigned to active duty with the American military forces.

APPEAL TO LABOR TO DO ITS PART

Address to Organized Labor by President of United Mine Workers.

(By Associated Press.) Indianapolis, Ind., Aug. 18.—A call to laboring men to "play our part in the war manfully" with "unshaken loyalty to these United States" was issued here last night in a statement on "Labor Day 1917" by John P. White, international president of the United Mine Workers of America. "The government is demanding co-operation—organized effort between employer and employee—to meet the country's war requirements," Mr. White said. "The eyes of the world are focused to see how quickly and efficiently the government's demands will be met. We must keep pace with time. Go forward, not backward, ungrudgingly giving the best that is in us if we are to expect the best in return. Conditions are being transformed overnight; we must meet these new demands safely and sanely. "No matter how difficult it may seem or exacting the task, labor must strive to preserve intact during the war the principles of collective bargaining. When the curtain falls on the world's most deplorable slaughter in history; when the sound of shot and shell shall be heard no more, and reconstruction begins to rehabilitate the shattered areas of the world to a normal state, let it be said of organized labor that every measure of industrial democracy enjoyed when we started out to make the 'world safe for democracy' has been maintained. "There is no sound reason for pessimism in the ranks of labor, if we are awake to opportunities. The fearful and hesitant will find comfort giving their unbonded loyal support. So, on this labor day, 1917, let us cement our hopes out of mutual interest, and hope for world-wide uplift—world-wide peace, the expressed aim of the war."

GRAND DUKE MICHAEL REFUSES TO EMIGRATE

(By Associated Press.) Petrograd, Aug. 18.—Grand Duke Michael, according to The Bouras Gazette, has rejected the suggestion that he go to England to live, declaring he could not leave Russia until the constituent assembly has determined the future form of government. Grand Duke Michael, at the beginning of the revolution, made a provisional renunciation of his claim to imperial succession, declaring he will only accept the throne if called by the people. The Bouras Gazette says there were persistent rumors a few days before the transfer of Emperor Nicholas from Tsar to Emperor that Grand Duke Michael had departed for England. Investigation proved he had been given the option of going there but refused to do so until the question of regime was settled.

GENERAL PERSHING TALKS OF THE WAR

(By Associated Press.) Pershing, Aug. 18.—Major-General Pershing, the American commander, told the Associated Press today that the war can be won only by hard and forceful blows by a well-trained American army working in conjunction with the allied armies. Deplored the luke-warmness of the American people in regard to the war, General Pershing added: "Every man, woman and child should support the administration in its determination to arm and equip the American army and to keep up its morale and that of the allied armies. This war will not be won by talk or by subscribing to the Red Cross. The American people must come to a full realization of what the war means. It can be won only by striking hard and forceful blows, not otherwise." The General was very emphatic in the interview, which lasted but a few minutes.

RIFLE AND BAYONET BROUGHT INTO PLAY ON WESTERN FRONT

Desperate and Stubborn Resistance of British Troops Against Enemy Charges

CONTINUE FIGHTING WHILE SURROUNDED

Enemy Guns Silenced—Splendid Work of Engineers—Aircraft Play Important Part in Advance

(By Associated Press.) British Front in France and Belgium, Aug. 18.—The fighting Thursday at Polygon was unusually desperate. Wave after wave of the enemy came surging up against the London troops who held on determinedly with rifle and bayonet until two simultaneous counter attacks from different directions forced them to retreat. Gradually they withdrew, fighting all the way. Some of them indeed were surrounded and fought until forced to surrender. One young officer in command of 10 men found himself encircled by the enemy and his men being swept by machine gunfire. The last heard of him was contained in a message he signaled back to his division saying his men were facing death and that he saw no way but to surrender to save their lives. Along most of the French front it was comparatively quiet, although a hard local battle was continuing about a strong German redoubt known as Les Lilas which lies about 1,000 yards southwest of the St. Jansbeek river. In their advance the French surged forward on either side of this position, making a sort of pocket about it and it was expected that the small German garrison would be compelled to surrender shortly. The Germans delivered a counter attack on the French extreme right flank, but this was repulsed by artillery fire.

The contact between the French and British armies was excellent. The prisoners accounted for to date total more than 370 and this figure represents considerably more than the entire French casualties along their whole front in Thursday's offensive. The remarkably small number of casualties was due to the fine work of the French artillery. Preliminary bombardment of German positions was very effective and the advance was made under a perfect barrage. As was the case on the British front about Langemark, the German barrage was totally inadequate and the counter-battery work where so much depends gave no trouble. French counter-battery firing resulted in silencing a large number of enemy guns and as a result the French have been little troubled by gunfire in carrying out their operations.

The work of the French engineers in this difficult terrain which, as it approaches the river, is a veritable morass had been thrust forward swiftly and when it came to bridging the flooded Steenbeke for crossing at dawn Thursday, there was not the slightest delay in getting the numerous bridges over.

The French air service played an important part in the advance, going ahead of the infantry all along the line and keeping up the contact of the patrols at the height of two or three hundred metres. The German airmen who ventured in the French territory were driven back and the air was cleared of enemy machines. In addition to patrol work the French airmen did good execution with machine guns and bombs on enemy redoubts.

The enemy early today delivered another counter-attack against our recently captured positions immediately northwest of Lens. His troops were again completely repulsed after sharp fighting in which we secured a few prisoners. There was considerable hostile artillery activity during the night in this neighborhood and also northeast of Ypres.

AIR RAID ALARM IN PARIS

Paris, Aug. 18.—An air raid alarm was sounded at 3 o'clock this morning. The sky was clear and within a quarter of an hour the hum of defense airplanes could be heard as they circled over the city. At 4:05 bugles were sounded indicating the danger was over.

French Make Advance

Paris, Aug. 18.—The French last night made further progress in Belgium north of the road between Bixschote and Langemark. It is announced officially. They captured a strong point of support east of Steenbeke river. German attacks on the Aisne front were repulsed.

SENATOR KERN DIES IN ASHEVILLE

(By Associated Press.) Asheville, N. C., Aug. 18.—The body of John W. Kern, former Senator of Indiana, who died here last night, was sent today to Hollins, Va., the late Senator's summer home, where burial will take place. Funeral arrangements had not been completed today. Mr. Kern died of an Asheville hospital last night from uremic poisoning. Mrs. Kern and daughter, Mrs. George B. Lawson, of Roanoke, Va., were with him at his death.

KEEP ON POUNDING AWAY IN EFFORT TO DISLODGE ALLIES

THE CO-OPERATION OF ALL EMPLOYES

Urged in Educating Public to Necessity of Curtailment of of Passenger Service.

(By Associated Press.) Norfolk, Va., Aug. 18.—Southeastern railroads are urged to enlist the co-operation of all their employes in informing the public the necessity of curtailing service in the interest of the nation, in an open letter addressed to them today by W. J. Harahan, president of the Seaboard Air Line. Mr. Harahan wrote the letter as chairman of the special committee on National Defense of the American Railway Association. "If our employes are advised by us as to what we are seeking to accomplish and the reasons for doing these things that are necessary to be done," said Mr. Harahan, in his letter, "they will feel it incumbent upon themselves to explain to people who may criticize such actions. It is suggested that each railroad in some way post its men on the condition as it presents itself to the individual railroad so that these men may be prepared to talk conservation and explain the situation in an intelligent and convincing way. "It is known by all railroad men that under the present conditions in this country it is going to take almost superhuman effort to meet the demands, and out of necessity a great many of the luxuries and extra conveniences that have been afforded the traveling public must be sacrificed. Many railroads are taking off passenger trains which are really paying fuel, men, etc., and more of these trains will be taken off as time goes on. If instead of three passenger trains a day serving a community, it shall become necessary to have only one in order that the demands of the government may be met, how insignificant is a few hours delay when the very life of the nation is in the balance."

FIRST PHOTO OF GASTON DE LEVAL, THE DEFENDER OF EDITH CAVELL, NOW IN THE UNITED STATES.

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Aug. 18.—An official connection between the navy and the Navy League was severed today by order of Secretary Daniels as a result of the recent action of the league headquarters in charging that investigation of the recent fatal explosion at Mare Island navy yard was being blocked by influence of labor interests. Secretary Daniels announced today that women knitting woolen clothing and making other comforts for sailors may forward them direct through the bureau of supplies of the navy, inasmuch as they no longer will be accepted by the Navy Department when presented through the agency of the Navy League.

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OFFICIALS OPTIMISTIC OVER ALABAMA STRIKE

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Aug. 18.—Officials in close touch with the threatened miners' strike situation in Alabama were strongly optimistic early today regarding the outlook. It was thought likely the strike would be averted by developments within a few hours.

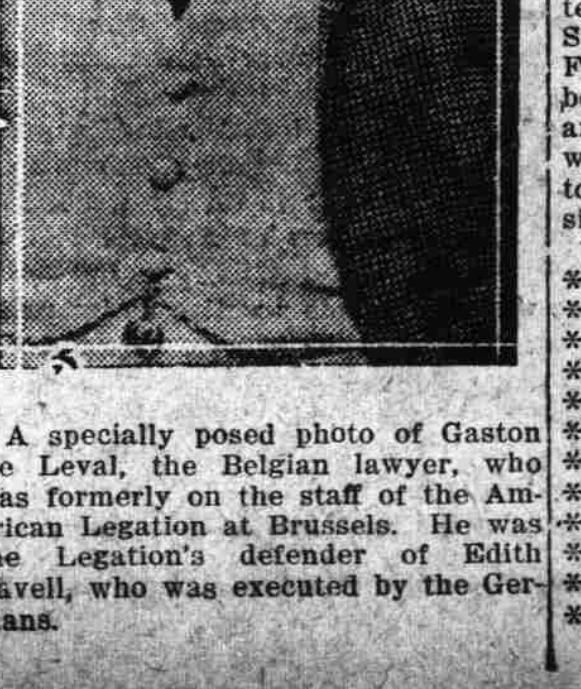
FOR PROTECTION OF HOSPITAL SHIPS

(By Associated Press.) Madrid, Aug. 18.—The German military attaché has handed to the Spanish government Emperor William's definite acceptance of conditions under which hospital ships are to be protected from attacks by submarines. Seven Spanish officers have gone to France to act as commissioners on board the hospital ships. Under the arrangement a neutral commissioner will be carried on each hospital ship to guarantee that it transports only sick and wounded.

RUSSIANS TAKE THE OFFENSIVE

(By Associated Press.) Petrograd, Aug. 18.—The Russians have taken the offensive on the Caucasus front and have occupied a series of villages, the war office announces.

A Specially posed photo of Gaston De Leval, the Belgian lawyer, who was formerly on the staff of the American Legation at Brussels. He was the Legation's defender of Edith Cavell, who was executed by the Germans.



GERMAN AND BRITISH WARSHIPS CLASH

Battle Between Light Sea Forces Reported—Occurred In German Waters—British Aviators Drop More Bombs.

Another effort was made early today by the Germans to recapture the ground taken by the British in their successful attack in the vicinity of Lens, giving them control of dominating positions. The British war office reports that sharp fighting occurred northwest of Lens and that once more the attack of the Germans was repulsed completely. The Germans continue to pound the British positions heavily with their artillery. In the vicinity of Ypres also the big German guns kept up a lively fire but no infantry attacks were reported. A naval battle in German waters between British and German light sea forces is reported by the British admiralty. While the British were scouting a German bay on Thursday, they sighted a German destroyer which was badly damaged. Two German mine sweepers also were damaged and two German submarine attacks were without result. No British ships were damaged. Another bombing raid was carried out Thursday night by British naval airplanes on the railway junction at Thourout in West Flanders 11 miles from Bruges. Fires were caused and the British admiralty announces an ammunition dump is believed to have been hit. The British aviators dropped many tons of bombs on their objectives, returning safely.

Another Futile German Attack

British Front in France and Belgium, Aug. 18.—German troops delivered another sharp but futile counter-attack against a section of the new Canadian positions northwest and west of Lens early this morning. The Germans succeeded in penetrating the British trenches but were immediately driven out as the result of strenuous hand-to-hand fighting which cost the attackers a considerable number of dead and a few prisoners.

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