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GASTONIA, N. C. FRIDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 7, 1917.

\$2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

EXPLOSION AND FIRE CLAIM MORE THAN 5,000 LIVES

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA. SCENE OF ONE OF THE GREATEST DISASTERS IN HISTORY

Collision Between French Transport Laden With Munitions and a Belgian Relief Ship in Halifax Harbor Yesterday Kills 5,000 or More Sets City Afire and Causes Property Damage Running into the Millions — Number of Wounded is Very Large Also—Every Available Building Being Used as Hospital.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7, Noon. —A report from the American Naval Commander today estimates the dead at Halifax at 5,000 as a result of the collision between the French munition ship Montblanc and the Belgian relief ship Ioma. The Montblanc carried 3,000 tons of munition and a deck load of benzine. The explosion was seen and heard for 52 miles at sea, the commander reported.

HALIFAX, N. S., Dec. 7.—With the toll of dead steadily mounting, it was believed early this morning that more than 2,000 persons perished in the explosion and fire which followed the collision yesterday morning in Halifax harbor between a munitions-laden French ship and another vessel, the Ioma, loaded with supplies for the Belgian relief commission.

The disaster, which has plunged the Dominion into mourning, probably will rank as the most fearful that ever occurred on the American continent. Residents of Halifax and thousands of volunteer relief workers who have come into the city have been almost dazed at the extent of the horror.

Temporary morgues have been established in many buildings to which a steady procession of vehicles of all kinds have been carrying for hours the bodies of men, women and children. Most of them were so charred that they were unrecognizable. Thousands of persons seeking trace of relatives and friends have passed by the long, silent rows, attempting, by the flickering light of lamps and lanterns, to identify the ones they sought.

Virtually every building in the city which could be converted into a hospital is filled with wounded, many of them so desperately injured that there is no hope of their recovery. Scores already have died in these temporary hospitals. An ever-increasing number is being taken from the completely devastated Richmond district to the relief station.

The city was in darkness tonight except for the flames from the fires still burning in the wrecked buildings in the north end. Kerosene lamps furnished the illumination by means of which surgeons and doctors toiled heroically throughout the night caring for the injured.

Soldiers, sailors and police patrolled the streets tonight, and upon them fell the major portion of the burden of searching among the ruins for the dead and wounded. The Canadians were assisted in this work by sailors from an American warship in the harbor.

The flame-swept area covers approximately two and one-half square miles. It begins at what is known as the North street bridge extending north to Pier 3 on the Richmond waterfront and back to a point running parallel with Gottingen street. Nothing has been left standing in this section of the city. Only a pile of smouldering ruins marks the spot where the great building of the American Sugar Refining Co. stood. The dry docks and all the buildings which surrounded it were destroyed. The Richmond school, which housed hundreds of children, was demolished and it is reported only three escaped.

Canadian officers who have seen long service in France characterize the catastrophe as "the most fearful which has befallen any city in the world."

Chief of Police Hanrahan late last night estimated the number of killed at 2,000 and other city officials expressed the belief that it would exceed that number.

RELIEF TRAINS TO HALIFAX

(By International News Service.)

VANCEBORO MAINE, Dec. 7.—A Massachusetts special relief train bearing eleven surgeons, ten nurses and twenty Red Cross workers, arrived at the Canadian border this morning. It will reach Halifax this afternoon.

An advertisement in The Gazette reaches more people for the cost than you can reach in any other possible way. Rates on application.

THE MAKING OF A SOLDIER OF THE SEAS

By DAVID M. CHURCH.
(The International News Service)

A Marine Corps Cantonment, Dec. 3.—Stretching up the side of a hill are parallel lines of squat buildings, all built of clean new boards and as like as peas in a pod. Running up from the railroad station near the river are hundreds of rutty roads with busy, efficient looking gray motor trucks running back and forth. Squads of khaki coated men with rifles slung over their shoulders are marching out to drill. Somewhere off the right rifles and machine guns are crackling.

It is still very early in the morning. The shadows are still long to the westward, but the Marine Corps cantonment here is teeming with life. Where this cantonment is, how many marines are training here, when they will go abroad, one is not permitted to say. Indeed, it is very difficult to find some of these things even when not for publication.

This cantonment is typical of several others throughout the country. It is located just outside a very small town, suddenly grown to a military metropolis. Work was begun on the cantonment only four months ago; today it is a marvel of completeness and efficiency.

The train coming down was filled with officers who had been home on week-end furloughs. As they left the station, many of them carrying heavy suit cases, they were forced to salute many times on meeting brother officers. Commissioned officers were met by their orderlies. The Commandant—a big man puffing a large black cigar—was met by a motor cycle rider. The commandant climbed into a large two seated side car and was whisked off over the rough road to his headquarters.

All the bridges coming down were heavily guarded. The railroad is the only line of communication out of the cantonment and nothing can be allowed to interfere with the free transportation of supplies. The first thing connected with the camp one comes upon is the "boiler room." Two great boilers with hot fires beneath them lie in a deep hollow near the railroad tracks. They are guarded by sentries who march back and forth with rifles slung over their shoulders. Power is almost as important a consideration as lines of communication.

The long low buildings on the hill now are deserted. They are the bunk houses. The companies quartered in them were up and at breakfast at 5 o'clock. Each building is roofed with tar paper and has two stovepipes stuck through the top. From the outside kitchens, bath houses and bunk houses all look alike. They were all built on the same plans. Which should be kitchens and which bath houses was decided afterward.

Outside the kitchen there are walled-in fireplaces with great pans of some black, pitch-like stuff cooking on top. They are the garbage incinerators—foul-smelling, but very necessary.

The bunk houses are not equipped with "bunks," but with individual iron cots painted black. Each building is large enough to house a company. Non-commissioned officers sleep with the men, each group of eight marines being in charge of a corporal.

Usually the men are in bed by 9 o'clock, although the lights are not turned off until 10:30. Early rising and hard days of work out of doors do not make for late hours. The men seem to have benefited greatly from their life in camp. The hospitals are empty. All the men are tanned and hardened. Democracy's soldiers are a healthy lot.

To get into the camp it is necessary first to go to an office in the little town and present credentials. Then a pass is issued and one has the freedom of the camp. At every bridge an every crossroads is stationed an inquisitive individual who wishes to see the pass. It is necessary to show the cardboard even when wishing to leave the camp.

Down below the cantonment a few miles is a National Army cantonment. Trains loaded with drafted men pull past the station almost hourly. The marines look upon them not unkindly, but with the air of professionals toward amateurs. The drafted men are wildly enthusiastic. All are tagged and each has a tin cup. The tin cup is usually used as a noise-making device. The sides of their trains always are chalked up with slogans such as "We're off to Berlin" or "Now for a look of the Kaiser's whiskers."

Draft trains do not stop here. Usually there is some man who hangs far out of a window with a letter in his hand. The marine on the station platform knows what that means. "Shoot it!" he yells. "And the other tosses the letter to him. Usually the letter is addressed

NORTH CAROLINA DAY

A SPECIAL PROGRAM ARRANGED

"Thrill, Conservation, Patriotism" Motto of Splendid Program Arranged for Friday, December 14th—Local City Schools Will Observe Day in Patriotic Manner—Event This Year Has a Special Significance.

Next Friday, December 14th, will be observed as North Carolina Day in the five city schools of Gastonia, as it will in all of the public schools of the State. For a number of years past the public schools have, at the request of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, observed North Carolina Day but the observation of it has, in many places, been in little more than a half-hearted way. Existing conditions today, however, are such that North Carolina Day of 1917 will be made a great patriotic occasion.

State Supt. Joyner and his assistants have outlined a splendid program for this year. Through it runs the patriotic strain—in fact patriotism is its chief element this year, as would naturally be expected. The title page of the printed program carries in colors the State flag and Old Glory, with the motto "Thrill, Conservation, Patriotism—Make, Save, Serve."

Supt. Wray of the city schools states that the program will occupy about two hours and will be given probably in sections, the high school pupils observing it at one hour and the intermediate pupils at another.

This program includes the following numbers:

Song, "The Star-Spangled Banner."
"The Meaning of the Flag," by President Wilson.

Song, "America."
An Invocation by Beatrice Barry.
"Lest We Forget," by Supt. J. Y. Joyner.

Liberty and Her Allies, tableaux given by girls representing each of the Allied Nations.

Poem, "Your Flag and My Flag," by W. D. Nesbit.
Responsive reading, "Why We Are at War," by R. D. W. Connor.
Song, "The Old North State."

Reading, "Thrift Month," an appeal by Governor Bickett.
Reading, "Conservation and Thrift for a Larger Service to the State, the Nation and Humanity," by State Food Administrator Henry A. Page.

Poem, "The Red, White and Blue," by David T. Shaw.
Reading, "What North Carolina is Doing," by D. H. Hill, chairman State Council of Defense.

"Why We Are Fighting Germany," by Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior.

Poem, "Old Glory Forever," by Frank L. Slanton.
Reading, "Our Country Accepts the Challenge," by Joseph Daniels, Secretary of the Navy.

Song, "Battle Hymn of the Republic," by Julia Ward Howe.
Benediction.

Personals and Locals.

—Her many friends will be delighted to know that Mrs. Frost Torrence has returned to her home from the City Hospital, where she was a patient for four weeks, following an operation. They will be glad to know that she is recovering nicely.

—In renewing his subscription to The Gazette Mr. John E. Ferguson, of Stamford, Texas, a native of Gaston county, says: "Everything looks gloomy here now. Crops were a complete failure this year in this neighborhood and very short all over West Texas. If it doesn't rain soon it will be too late to make wheat next year."

—Rev. E. B. Stabler, pastor of West End Methodist church, and family were the subjects Tuesday night of a most generous "pounding" at the hands of the West End congregation. A large quantity of good things to eat was placed in the parsonage larder, for which Pastor Stabler is very grateful to his parishioners.

—Mrs. D. W. Padgett returned Monday from a trip to Spartanburg and Greenville, S. C. At the former place she visited her son, Mr. T. R. Padgett, and family and at Greenville she visited another son, Mr. Ralph Padgett, who has been confined to the hospital at Camp Sevier for several weeks as the result of being injured in a football game.

AUTO BANDITS GET \$10,000.
(By International News Service.)
CHICAGO, Dec. 5.—Five auto bandits held up the Stockmen's bank here today, escaping with \$10,000.

Want ads bring results. Have you tried 'em? If not, now's the time. One cent a word each insertion, cash with order.

ed to a girl. The marine makes straight for the post box with it. Training to be a fighter in America's armies is not easy work. But the newly enlisted marines are taking to it with keen interest. As much of what they are doing and how they are doing it as the censor will permit will be told in this series of stories.

FAKIRS INFEST THE CITY

THEY POSE AS WORKERS FOR CHARITY

Recently an Army of Grafters, Posing as Authorized Agents for the Red Cross, the Y. M. C. A., Wounded Soldiers and Other Appealing Causes, Have Robbed Many Gastonians—Cannot Solicit Without Permit from Associated Charities—Public Should Co-Operate With Officers to Rid City of These Pests.

Gastonia has recently been infested with a small army of petty grafters. They have been working in the guise of solicitors for the Red Cross, the Y. M. C. A., the Belgian sufferers, the soldiers, army hospitals and various other things. Just a few days ago, so The Gazette is reliably informed, a man posing as a representative of the National Red Cross, solicited funds and secured quite a good deal of money in the residence sections of the town. A day or two later two children, claiming to be authorized to collect funds for the wounded soldiers in France, canvassed the town, selling chewing gum and other articles as they went.

All of these solicitors are fakirs pure and simple and should be dealt with severely by the law. They are always slick enough to stay away from the business section of the city. They work in the residence sections and around the mills in the suburbs. At this time they have no trouble to concoct a story that will appeal to the average person. As a result they reap a harvest of coins, not a dollar of which ever goes to the thing they claim to be representing.

Gastonians should always remember that there is a city ordinance which does not permit anyone, either a resident of the city or an outsider, to solicit funds for any charitable purpose whatever without first obtaining a permit from the Board of Associated Charities of the city. Mr. J. P. Reid is chairman of this association and Mr. H. B. Moore is secretary. The permits are only issued for one day. In order to secure one of these permits the person wishing to solicit funds here must show the officers of the association that the cause he represents is a genuine and a worthy one. As a matter of fact very few of these permits are issued at all.

Whenever any person presents himself or herself at your door soliciting assistance of any kind, you should demand to see a written permit signed by the officers of the Associated Charities. If such a permit is produced examine the date and see if it is for the current day. If the person has not a permit or is using an old permit, it is the duty of the person solicited to report the matter at once to the officers. Unless the citizens of the town co-operate with the officers in this matter it will be impossible to eliminate this evil. As previously stated these fakirs keep away from the business section of the city and hence it is very difficult for the police department to get track of them.

It is probably true that, in the course of a few months, as much money is given to these undeserving solicitors by Gastonians as is asked for by the local charities, which are deserving.

Urgently Needed.

A doctor sat in a front seat in a theater the other night. In the breathless silence, as the third act neared its climax, there was a commotion near the door, and then a grave voice said: "Is Doctor Blank in the audience?" Doctor Blank rose calmly. He passed down the aisle with the serious, self-contained air of one on whom the life of a fellow-creature depends. A young man awaited him at the door. "Well?" said the doctor. "Well, sir, what is it?"

"Doctor," said the young man, as he drew a large wallet from his breast pocket, "I'm Cash and Payup's new collector. Would it be convenient for you to settle that small account this evening?"

The Social Conscience.

The most important discovery of the present age is not the discovery of the telephone, or of wireless telegraphy, or of the antitoxins of disease, but the discovery of the social conscience. Never before in the history of the world have people been so touched by social sympathies, so moved by social passion, so eager for social amelioration. Wage-earners and capitalists, philosophers and plain people, wise and ignorant, are equally concerned for this application of social duty. When some philosophical historian recalls the character of the present age it may well be that he shall describe it as the age of the social question.—Rev. Francis G. Peabody, D. D.

Why She Got Mad.

Jess—She got mad and asked him what he meant by kissing her?
Bess—Not exactly. She asked him and he said he didn't mean anything—and then she got mad.—Judge.

Subscribe to The Gazette.

A MILLION FOR SCHOOLS

BAPTISTS MAKE GREAT FORWARD MOVE

To Launch Campaign for Securing in Four Years \$1,000,000 for Schools in This State—To Employ Only Baptist Teachers in Future—Governor Bickett Addresses Convention—To Retire Ministers at 68 on Allowance—Goes to Greensboro Next Year.

Durham, Dec. 6.—Governor Bickett gripped his great audience this afternoon with an address before the Baptist State Convention in which he impressed deeply upon the delegates the supreme necessity for, and the everlasting righteousness of, the present war.

With great enthusiasm, the convention committed itself today to the movement of launching a campaign to raise a million dollars within the next four years, beginning January 1, for the Baptist educational institutions of the State. This is considered the longest step forward the denomination has taken in many years.

The next convention will be held in Greensboro a year hence. Rev. J. A. Snow, of Newton, sprang a sensation on the brethren by introducing a resolution that the denominational schools employ Baptist teachers only in the future, except in cases of extreme emergencies. After a warm discussion, the resolution was finally passed with a qualifying amendment: This does not apply to teachers already employed or to negotiations now pending.

Christian education occupied the center of the stage at the morning session. The report of the board of education shows that there are now in the Baptist high schools of the state 1,301 boys and 1,258 girls. In three colleges, Wake Forest, Meredith and Chowan, there are 532 men and 550 women. The total endowment for these three schools is \$647,581.37. The total property value is \$1,138,006.

Ministerial relief plans in accordance with the general plan of the Southern Baptist convention was adopted by the state convention. This provides for the retirement of Baptist ministers at the age of 68 with an annuity for the minister or his family. Several million dollars will be raised, and each state will be allotted a certain sum in proportion to its Baptist strength.

A thrilling story of the Y. M. C. A. work among the boys of Camp Greene was told by director T. R. Thornburn, religious work director for the army association. The talk made a very deep impression on the convention.

New Hope News Notes.

Correspondence of The Gazette.
NEW HOPE, Dec. 6.—Mr. and Mrs. L. K. Ratchford and children and Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Faires and little girls, Lucy and Hattie Lee, went to Concord Saturday to visit Miss Floreid Faires.

Mr. Ernest Phillips, of Charlotte, and Master Lee Phillips, of Mount Holly, spent Thanksgiving day with Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Wilkinson.

Misses Alexander and Gibson, the New Hope teachers, went to Charlotte Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Mrs. Stringfellow is visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. D. B. McLean.

Rev. J. H. Henderlite, pastor of the First Presbyterian church, Gastonia, preached at McLean's chapel Sunday afternoon. Rev. G. A. Sparrow, of Union, preached at New Hope Sunday afternoon.

Messrs. W. L. and Gilreath Davis spent Tuesday with Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Davis.

TODAY'S COTTON MARKET.

(By International News Service.)
NEW YORK, Dec. 7.—The cotton market opened this morning with January contracts selling at 28.40; May 27.88.

NO WORD RECEIVED FROM U. S. CONSULATE.

(By International News Service.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—It is feared that the American consulate was destroyed in Halifax. Nothing has been heard from Consul General Watts since the explosion. Consul Freeman has been ordered to go there from Sidney to investigate.

Town and County.

—Christmas is coming.
—Do your Christmas shopping early.
—Pine wood is being quoted on the streets at \$5 per cord.
—Buy your Christmas goods from home merchants.
—Have you bought your Red Cross Seal?
—Wanted: Some sugar and salt for Christmas, by Gastonia housewives.

—Mrs. Forest Allen, of Cherryville, is spending a few days at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Stroup, at Rano.

—Mrs. Lloyd Bynum, of Greenville, S. C., is spending the week with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Saunders. She will leave for her home tomorrow.

—A party composed of Mrs. J. H. Henderlite, Mrs. W. Y. Warren, Miss Mary Ramsey, Miss Bessie Watkins and Miss Lillian Ferguson motored to Charlotte Wednesday.

100 AVATORS FLY TO ITALIAN FRONT

(By International News Service.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—One hundred British aviators have arrived at the Italian front. The men flew from the Western front, crossing at Pieve. This sets a new record in aerial achievement.

OPPOSITION TO GOV'T. CONTROL

(By International News Service.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—Opposition to the government taking over the railroads was manifested today in many quarters. Railroad managers and the unions are standing together in opposition to the move. The managers claim that it is unnecessary. The unions' opposition is based on the ground that military control would deprive them of a voice as to the working conditions. The hardest legislative fight in years is expected.

GASTONIANS AT SHRINE MEETING

Gastonia was well represented at the Shrine meeting in Charlotte yesterday. Among those who went from here were the following: Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Ford, Dr. and Mrs. D. A. Garrison, Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Babington, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Davis, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Todd, Mr. and Mrs. E. O. Jennings, Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Marvin, Mr. and Mrs. A. B. O'Neill, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Babington, Miss Floy Robinson and J. Sidney Winget, Messrs. W. Y. Warren, J. H. Henderlite, J. L. Adams, R. C. Adams, J. R. Craig, J. O. White, J. H. Separk, G. E. Marvin, A. F. Michael, D. R. LaFar, J. W. Carroll, A. K. Winget, Ben Gulon, J. D. B. McLean, Henry Rankin, W. T. Rankin, Grady Rankin, C. I. Lotin, R. H. Brison, A. G. Myers, W. B. Morris, T. R. McArthur, T. S. Trott, W. J. Roach, J. Holland Morrow, J. T. Sadler.

GERMANS INCREASE THEIR FIRE

(By International News Service.)
LONDON, Dec. 7.—South of Lens the Germans have increased their artillery fire to great violence, the war office announced at noon. Only raids have taken place in the Cambrai sector.

KERENSKY IN HIDING WORKS FOR RUSSIA.

(By International News Service.)
STOCKHOLM, Dec. 7.—From his secret hiding place in Russia Kerensky is trying to rally the loyal forces and overthrow the Bolsheviks, according to a dispatch from Hapaganda. Kerensky has written stirring letters calling the Bolshevik traitors for trying to make a separate peace.

TEN DAYS ARMISTICE ON THE EASTERN FRONT.

(By International News Service.)
AMSTERDAM, Dec. 7.—The armistice on the Eastern front went into effect today, according to a Berlin dispatch. It is assumed that the cessation of fighting extends to the Rumanian front. The armistice is to last for 10 days. In the meantime the Russian-German-Austrian commission will continue its sittings at Best Litzersk.

WAR RESOLUTION INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE.

(By International News Service.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—Senator Stone introduced a resolution declaring a state of war with Austria at noon today and asked for consideration immediately after routine business is completed.

ATLANTA POLICEMAN KILLED BY NEGRO.

(By International News Service.)
ATLANTA, Dec. 7.—Policeman H. T. Adams was killed and Policeman F. T. Roberts probably fatally wounded in a desperate battle with C. T. Thomas, a negro druggist on Peachtree street. Thomas was also fatally wounded. The negro opened fire when the officers tried to arrest him.

"CADETS" WILL CONTROL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

(By International News Service.)
PETROGRAD, Dec. 7.—The Cadets, a Russian political party, has been victorious in the general elections over the Bolsheviks, the newspaper Delo Nedroda announced today. This newspaper gave warning that the Cadets would probably control the Constitutional Assembly and that the Bolshevik leaders must prepare to "take the consequences of their action while in power."