

## SINGER SUFFERS TRIALS IN ITALY

Miss McVane Was Victim of Many Persecutions During the War.

### SCOFFED AT IN STREET

American Ambassador Puts Wheels in Motion and Her Blackmailer Is Sent to Prison—Puccini Planned an Opera for Her.

New York.—"If there was lack of artistic temperament in the original composition of Miss Dorothea Alastair McVane, her experiences as a professional singer in Italy would have made good the defect, for she so impressed the great Puccini that, at his instance, she made her operatic debut as Mimì, in his "La Bohème," carrying through the part with success when she was in the first stages of typhoid fever; she fell under official suspicion as a spy in Taranto, where there is an Italian naval station; she underwent a siege of blackmail that resulted in sending two oppressors to prison, and she became the betrothed of a young noble, who was killed in the war.

In addition, her progress toward a career was hampered by the stern opposition of her father, Silas Marcus McVane, formerly professor of history and international law in Harvard, retiring as emeritus professor. Afterward the family became so proud of the young singer that they established a home in Rome, where Professor McVane died at about the beginning of the war.

#### Scoffed and Hissed.

In connection with the spy and blackmail episodes it seems that Miss McVane unwittingly snapped her camera when the lens was pointed in the direction of masked batteries. Soon she became the object of scoffing in the street, she was hissed at the opera, she found herself unable to get letters to her friends or to hear from them. She became so nervous and dispirited that she wished to go away, regardless of her operatic contract, and was threatened with arrest if she tried to go. When, at last, men annoyed her with threats of publishing the spy story and thus ruining her career unless she paid money to them, she contrived to get word to the American ambassador in Rome, who put the wheels in motion for a blackmail trial, whereby Miss McVane was cleared and the men were punished.

She was led to adopt singing as a profession on the advice of artists and others who heard her voice in Paris, where she had gone merely to perfect her French. When her French instructors sent her to Milan, with letters to the composer Puccini, she knew the leading roles in 20 operas. It was reported that Puccini intended to write an opera for her, but the war absorbed him in other affairs.

#### Something of a Psychic.

Miss McVane is something of a psychic. The story is that both she and her titled lover believed firmly in the survival of personality after death and the ability of the disembodied spirit to communicate with the living; and that they exchanged vows that the one dying first would visit the survivor on earth. Ever since the lover died she is said to have been expecting such a visit.

Miss McVane's sisters are Miss Edith McVane, managing writer and novelist, and the Baroness Dodeman de Placy, whose husband is a French cavalry officer. The McVane home in Rome was long a favorite meeting place for social, literary and artistic celebrities.

### OWNERS OF FLORIDA BARRED

Copy of Ponce de Leon's Grant Fails to Qualify Colombian Women for Admission.

New York.—A copy of Ponce de Leon's grant of Florida, signed by the king of Spain, was shown to immigration officials by four Colombian women, but it failed to qualify them for admission to the United States.

Evidence of possible ownership of an entire commonwealth of the United States, acquired by inheritance from the seeker of the fountain of youth, was not sufficient for immigration inspectors, who ruled that the women and thirty-one other passengers must stay aboard the steamship La Touraine because they had not filed out "form 328."

An appeal has been made to the state department. The Colombians include Senora Teresa de Tanco, wife of the former Colombian minister to Peru and sister of the minister to England.

#### Volcano in Lake Kills Fish.

Klamath Falls, Ore.—Residents of Klamath county are at a loss to account for the unprecedented eruption which occurred last week in Diamond lake. Thousands of fish were killed and waters of the entire lake were discolored. Diamond lake is located about nine miles from Crater lake and is a favorite haunt of fishermen. News of the disturbance was brought to Klamath Falls by R. E. Clanton, state master fish warden, and H. D. Stout, deputy game warden. Mr. Clanton and Mr. Stout believe the destruction of the fish was caused by an under-water volcanic eruption.

### CAPT. GEOFFREY BLAKE



British naval attache at Washington.

## NOW TREAT SOLDIERS

Revel in Baths Once for Millionaire Huns.

Red Cross Refits Salsburg Watering Place for Rheumatic Roumanians.

Bucharest.—The famous salt baths of Salsburg, where the millionaires of Austria, Hungary and the Balkan states used to spend their summers, now are curing rheumatic Roumanian soldiers.

Stripped of all their luxurious furnishings during the war, the Salsburg baths have just been refitted with the aid of the American Red Cross for use as a military hospital for chronic rheumatism resulting from trench warfare. Five hundred soldiers are there, recovering from rheumatism and similar diseases contracted while undergoing the hardships of war.

In times of peace thousands of tourists visited Salsburg, high up in the Transylvanian Alps, southwest of Kronstadt. Many came for the dazzling social life. With its magnificent hotels and gay casinos, it was perhaps the chief showplace of eastern Europe. When the Germans pushed the Roumanians out of this district early in the war General Mackensen and his staff took possession of the town and staged luxurious revelry there. When the Germans left they looted the place, stripped the hotels of tapestries, furniture and brass fittings. Even the equipment for the medicinal baths was wrecked.

Under the direction of Maj. George C. Treadwell of Albany, N. Y., and several American physicians, the baths were refitted sufficiently to care for the soldiers.

### KILLS CAT; TROUBLE RESULTS

Policeman Shot Woman at Same Time and Court Gives Her \$1,150 Verdict.

Minneapolis.—A cat which more than a year ago perched on the back fence of Mrs. Carrie Miller's home, caused litigation which has been in the courts ever since and which resulted in a verdict of \$1,150 in favor of Mrs. Miller.

The cat was alleged to be an invalid. Its peculiar actions had caused neighbors to summon the police and Sgt. William F. Mealey was dispatched from the North Side precinct station to shoot the animal.

He took a shotgun and fired while the cat was perched on the Miller fence. He killed the cat, but stray shots hit Mrs. Miller, whom Mealey could not see on account of the fence, inflicting painful though not serious wounds. Suit was brought against Mealey and the Hartford Accident and Indemnity Co., his bondsmen.

### CONSCIENCE FUND GETS 40

New York Woman Sends Stamps for Theater Tax She Had Not Paid.

Albany.—A certain "Mrs. B." of New York city felt so badly over not paying the war tax of 4 cents on two moving picture show tickets last week that she sent two 2-cent stamps to State Treasurer Wells for the conscience fund.

He has turned the money over to the United States internal revenue collector at Albany.

#### Lightning's Pranks.

Marrietta, Pa.—During a heavy electrical storm a bolt struck the residence of Charles S. Spangler and knocked out a beam in the middle of his garret without tearing a hole in the roof. The outside was considerably damaged. Fire ensued, but the downpour of rain extinguished it. At the home of B. Renzing the house was struck and the kitchen "upset" without causing a fire.

### UNIVERSITY NEWS.

Correspondence of The Daily Gazette.

CHAPEL HILL, Dec. 31.—A total of more than 100,000 volumes is now in the library of the University of North Carolina, according to Dr. Lons R. Wilson, librarian. This makes the University library one of the three largest libraries in the South, the other two of virtually the same size being those at the Universities of Texas and Virginia.

In his annual report to President Chase of the University, Dr. Wilson announces the number of volumes on August 15, 1919, to be 88,316, which included 5,165 volumes acquired during the preceding year. Since August three important additions have been made, the Weeks collection and the Andrews and Zoeller gifts. These are at the University now and are being catalogued. When officially placed on the library lists, they will push the total above the hundred thousand mark. The Weeks collection is the largest and most complete single collection of literature on North Carolina history. It includes books, pamphlets, bound and unbound newspapers and periodicals, maps, and reports of State officers and State institutions. The Andrews gift was made by the family of the late Col. A. B. Andrews, of Raleigh, and contains much material on railroad matters, and on North Carolina and Southern history. The Zoeller gift, made by Mr. E. V. Zoeller, of Tarboro, relates almost entirely to pharmaceutical work.

In the annual report of the women's clubs' division of the Bureau of Extension, directed by Miss Nellie Roberson, figures show that during the past year 2,200 women in 124 clubs have studied courses prepared and published by the University. These courses of study include program outlines prepared by the University at the request of clubs and also outlines suggested by the University to clubs. Two outlines were prepared by Mrs. T. W. Lingle. Her course on the historical background and literature of the Great War has been studied by 806 women in 42 clubs. Her course on Americanization is now being studied by 1,316 women in 75 clubs. In October a course on Citizenship, prepared by Prof. O. D. Carroll, was issued and thus far 7 clubs with a total enrollment of 78 women have adopted it for their year's work. More than half of these clubs are

in North Carolina, but the others extend as far west as the Pacific Coast.

The winter quarter at the University will begin January 5 following the two weeks' holidays at Christmas. The scattering of the students to their homes and off many members of the faculty to professional meetings has reduced Chapel Hill to a small quiet village. Many new students are expected to enter the University at the opening of the new quarter. Under the quarter system adopted this year by the University many courses are repeated each quarter and students entering at this time of the year can arrange their work so that the late entrance will not be a serious disadvantage.

### Egyptian Corn Grown in Mecklenburg.

Confederate Veteran Thinks It's Same That Grew in Joseph's Day.

Corn said to be directly descended from that which Joseph hoarded against famine in Egypt and to buy which Jacob sent his eleven sons down into Egypt, is now growing in Mecklenburg county, according to W. Vance Turner, a Confederate veteran of Charlotte.

Mr. Turner said Saturday the corn was brought from Egypt by a tourist from South Carolina who was trailing down the Nile, and that this tourist gave several ears of corn to an Abbeville, S. C., friend of Mr. Turner's. The Charlotte man, not having the space in which to plant the corn of historic lineage, handed the three ears to his friend, George Williamson, living four miles northwest of the city.

"I expect to get a good report on that corn the next time I see Mr. Williamson," said Mr. Turner.

Describing the corn, Mr. Turner said there exists little doubt but that it is the same kind which was grown in Egypt in the times of the Pararaohs and of Jacob. He describes the corn as much like barley, and each grain is surrounded by a tiny sheaf, as if to protect it. For this reason, Mr. Turner does not believe that this variety of corn would be of value in the United States, except for feed for stock. The average size of the ears does not vary greatly from American grown corn.

A flexible steering wheel shaft for automobiles is a French invention.

### Did Smithfield Organize First? Greensboro News.

The correspondents of the Daily News are writing fascinating stories of progress and achievement in North Carolina towns during this year. Several of them appeared in yesterday's paper. This has been the banner business year in the United States, and these brief community sketches furnish indication of the extent to which North Carolina has participated in the wonderful expansion of enterprise.

Of the towns for which reports were made in the Sunday paper, Smithfield is unique in having a house building corporation in operation, with actual results in a dozen residences constructed and nine others begun. We believe that some other places in the state have also accomplished something in this old of enterprise, notably Gastonia; but little Smithfield, which apparently is not going to remain little, has at least the distinction of having organized the first company for this purpose. The provision of homes at reasonable price for sale or rent is of course the first essential, the bedrock fundamental, of any real economic or industrial expansion for any community. Everybody confesses a realization of the soundness of this proposition; but the principle is one that has had little more than lip service. The communities who have acknowledged conviction by their acts are strangely few. They must be considered, in important respects, as the more progressive ones.

### CARRANZA WINS IN BULL-FIGHT CONTEST.

MEXICO CITY, Tuesday, Dec. 30.—The spirited fight between congress and the executive department relative to bull fighting in the federal district ended today with a victory for President Carranza, government adherents absenting themselves from the senate and thus preventing a vote on the bill which would permit the conducting of fights.

Prohibited by presidential decree several years ago, bull fighting seemed likely to return when both houses recently voted to rescind the decree. President Carranza objected, however, and returned the measure to congress. The chamber of deputies again passed it, but the senate failed because of the lack of a quorum.

### CHINESE NOT TO BE EXPELLED.

MEXICO CITY, Tuesday, Dec. 30.—Chinese will not be expelled from the state of Sonora on January 1 under the state labor law, according to announcements this evening by the Chinese legation and the Mexican foreign office, which stated the federal government was preparing to send military forces to prevent deportation should such action become necessary.

The supreme court debated for hours today over the constitutionality of the Sonora labor law under which the deportations were to be carried out. It was reported that a vote taken by the court resulted in a decision that the law was constitutional, but formal announcement of this determination should be withheld until January 2.

### AIR SQUADRON JOINS IN PUNITIVE EXPEDITION.

CAIRO, Dec. 31.—An air squadron is joining in a punitive expedition against Dinka tribesmen who attacked a British column in the upper Nile region early this month.

### SENOR DID NOT EVEN KNOW MR. BUCKLEY.

MEXICO CITY, Tuesday, Dec. 30.—Testimony given before the Fall committee of the United States senate investigating Mexican affairs by W. F. Buckley, an American lawyer, formerly of Tampico, who said that Luis Cabrera, secretary of the treasury, had declared that the "menace of the American in Mexico must be removed," was called to the attention of Senator Cabrera today. The secretary, in answer, declared he did not even know Mr. Buckley.

### NO FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING U. S. SAILORS.


MEXICO CITY, Dec. 31.—Foreign office officials still declare they have nothing to make public regarding the two American sailors under arrest at Mazatlan. It is understood the sailors have the freedom of the city, but that they are still facing trial.

### GENERAL WOOD FILES ANNOUNCEMENT CANDIDACY.

PIERRE, S. D., Dec. 31.—Major General Leonard Wood today filed a formal announcement of his candidacy for the republican presidential nomination with the South Dakota secretary of state.

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