

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN MORNING DAILY

Morning Daily Founded 1891 Weekly (Now Evening Daily) 1897

CHARLOTTETOWN, CANADA, WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 27, 1916

\$3.50 Per Year (delivered) in advance \$2.50 Per Year (Mailed) in Advance in Canada and \$3.00 for U. S. A.

THE THIRD CHRISTMAS DAY ON FRENCH BATTLEFIELDS

Christmas Has Sent a Throb of Cheer to the British Forces. Every Soldier Ate His Christmas Dinner and His Individual Plum Pudding and Every Man Eager for the New Offensive to be Commenced in the Spring.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) With the British Armies in France, Dec. 25—(Via London)—From a staff correspondent of the A. P. Christmas has sent a throb of good cheer to all the British armies in the battle line of France and wherever a British soldier ate his Christmas dinner today, whether in the front fire trenches or in secluded security of reserve camps, enthusiastic toasts were offered to King and Empire and to the coming New Year which Britons confidently believe will bring victory to the Allied cause.

of fare having looked after by the London newspapers which raised in the neighborhood of £100,000 for their purchase. Where conditions permitted as many of the men as possible were relieved from front line duty for dinner, but in the mid-ditches of the Somme and in other sectors Christmas dinner steaming hot was carried up through communication trenches sometimes under the pelting of shells, to the men held by duty at the outposts of war. Some of the men serving the big guns chatted satirical greetings on the shells before firing them. "If it's a dud shell and doesn't explode," explained a gun-

ner, brother Boche can read what we think of him. On the other hand if it does its duty he'll know without reading." The third Christmas of the British armies in France was vastly different from its two predecessors, especially the first, when only a pitiful handful of the original expeditionary force was left to form a thin khaki line against the gray clad enemy. The field army was then so small that King George personally sent a Christmas package to everyone. The multiplication of that army of tens of thousands into the present force of so many millions has somewhat altered the situation.

RUSSIAN MINISTER ON THE WAR SITUATION

Russia's Relations With Her Allies Unchanged.

A Closer Military Alliance With Allies After the War.

The War Will Be Continued Till A Decisive Victory Has Been Won.

(Special to the Guardian.) LONDON, Dec. 26—Russian Foreign Minister, M. Pokroski, invited a representative of the press at Petrograd yesterday for an interview at which he outlined his programme and his ideas in regard to the present political situation. Reuters Petrograd correspondent says that in general the ministerial declarations which seem to have been made to take the place of the usual speech before parliament consisted of a few clear propositions: First, There has been no change in relations between Russia and her allies. Second, the minister declared with firm assurance that after the war, the military alliance of France, England and Russia would be consolidated into a close union. Third, the war will be continued according to this declaration until a decisive victory has been won. M. Pokroski then discussed the three great questions of the day: The German peace proposals, President Wilson's attitude, and the attitude of Greece. After recalling recent Duma declarations in regard to the German peace note, M. Pokroski passed to the action of President Wilson, saying Russia appreciated highly the goodwill and lofty human motives of the President's note but he declared it could alter in no way the political situation created by the false and hypocritical moves of the Berlin government. As the note coincided with the German proposals, he said, the ideas of the Russian government in regard to Mr. Wilson's action were almost analogous with those which had been reported by the Russian press, that is to say, the government's attitude in regard to both questions was one of complete refusal. Nevertheless, the Allied governments would reply with all possible fulness. They would reiterate, M. Pokroski said, that they would continue the war until the ravaged territories had been restored and until there had been created a state of affairs in which the safety of small nations would be secured, in which another world wide conflict would be impossible. Speaking of Greece, M. Pokroski asserted that the Entente Powers would not tolerate for a moment any attitude on the part of that country that would affect the military interests. Commenting on declaration of the Foreign Minister in the Novoe Vremya of Petrograd, he says it is very opportune and gives a faithful idea of the reply of the Allies to Germany and the United States.

"HEARTS UNDAUNTED AND DETERMINATION RESOLUTE"

The Prime Minister of Canada Replies to the Message of the Prime Minister of England Voicing Canada's Unalterable Determination to Carry the War to Such a Victory as will Assure the Future Peace of the World.

Following is Canada's reply, expressed by Sir Robert L. Borden, to the British message to Canada by Mr. Lloyd George: "On behalf of the Canadian people I send to our kinsmen of the Motherland the assurance that our hearts are as undaunted and our determination as resolute as when we ranged ourselves in the Empire's battle line two years ago. All our sacrifices would be worse than useless unless the purpose for which this was undertaken is achieved in such victory as

assures the future peace of the world. Your message reached me in the Western Provinces of Canada while engaged in commending and supporting proposals for better organization of our national service for more effectual utilization of our natural resources from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I have found everywhere the strongest determination that both the human energy and the national resources of the Dominion shall be utilized to such purpose as will throw the full strength of Canada in the

struggle. At Regina and at Brandon I read your words to two great gatherings, and the response which they evoked was splendid and inspiring. We shall indeed tread the path side by side in full realization that the sacrifice, however great, is for a cause transcending even the interests and destiny of our Empire, and in supreme confidence that this path can lead to the ultimate triumph of democracy liberty and civilization. "R. L. BORDEN."

STRANGE CRAFT REPORTED BY COASTWISE SKIPPERS

(Special to the Guardian.) NEW YORK, Dec. 26—For some days skippers of Atlantic and coastwise steamers have been bringing reports of strange appearing craft making their way westward. They made no reply to signals and could not be approached. They steered a vagrant course and were described variously as of the fashion of merchantmen, transports, light cruisers and even of submarines pieced together. These reports confirm what has long been a suspicion of shipping men that the British Admiralty has sent out a fleet of commerce protectors to make it impossible that there should ever be recurrence of activities similar to those of the U-53. They are also designed to meet German submarines and prevent any possibility of a raid on the Canadian coast.

SUCCESSFUL RAID ON ENEMY TRENCHES

British in a Daylight Charge Penetrated German Trenches on 400 Yard Front Gaining all Objectives and Capturing Number of Prisoners.

LONDON, Dec. 25—Further official details are given in the War Office statement issued under Sunday's date of the daylight raid recently conducted by British troops on the Franco-Belgian front, north of Arras. A successful raid carried out on Saturday night in the vicinity of Hebuterne also is reported. The statement reads: "We entered enemy trenches last night in the neighborhood of Hebuterne. Dugouts occupied by the enemy were bombed and prisoners were taken. Gas was successfully discharged by us yesterday evening against the enemy trenches west of Messines. Last night the enemy fired a cannon shot at Mount Sorrell. No damage is reported. "Intermittent artillery activity continued, particularly on the right of our line between the Somme and Hebuterne. Northeast of Morvall an enemy working party was caught by our fire. Our heavy artillery shelled battery positions opposite Neuve Chapelle and Festubert. "Further particulars regarding the raid by us north of Arras and reported in the communiques of the 20th and 21st show the operation was more successful than at first reported. The raid took place in the afternoon in broad daylight after careful preparation. Two lines of enemy trenches were penetrated on a 400 yard front and all the objectives aimed at were reached. Our troops remained in the enemy's trenches which were badly damaged for a period of one and a half hours. All his dugouts were methodically searched and blown in before returning. One German officer and 57 men of other ranks were made prisoners."

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CITIZENS DISCUSS FIRE INSURANCE

Resolutions Adopted Urging Council to Modernize Fire Fighting Equipment and Objecting to Proposed Raise in Rates.

A public meeting under the auspices of the Retail Merchants' Association was held in the Board of Trade Rooms last evening commencing at 8 o'clock to take into consideration the recent increase of 15 per cent. in fire insurance rates. There was a large attendance and the matter was discussed at considerable length, it being about 11 o'clock when the meeting concluded. Among those present were: Messrs. L. E. Prowse, G. E. Hughes, James Stewart, J. J. Hornby, S. McDonald, Geo. Peake, Seneca Prowse, J. A. Leod, J. P. Gordon, Harold Jenkins, H. Buntain, E. Bell, C. Chandler, Isaac Carter, J. B. McDonald, C. H. B. Longworth, Geo. Moore, H. Tidmarsh, W. Stewart, D. Gordon, A. Horne, C. McLure, S. McEllan, Mr. Black, (Act. Secy.) Henry Lathorne, R. McDonald, F. J. Nash, Robert Rattray, L. B. Miller, W. K. Rogers, J. O. Hyndman, R. Brow, E. H. Beer, E. T. Higgs, F. Ronaghan, Mr. VanBuskirk, C. L. Grant, Jas. Murley, F. J. Holman, E. Sellar, R. H. Sterns, Dr. Ross, M. Ross, A. A. Alley. Mr. S. A. MacDonald acted as Chairman, and on his suggestion it was moved and carried that Mr. C. H. Black be appointed Secretary of the meeting. Mr. J. O. Hyndman intimated that the views of the fire underwriters were already before the public in the letter which had appeared in the Press, and the letter was read by the Secretary. The Secretary also read a letter which had appeared in the Summerside "Pioneer" on the 23rd inst. in which strong exception was taken.

HALIFAX TO BE PORT OF CALL

For White Star and Cunard Liners Instead of New York.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) NEW YORK, Dec. 26—The New York Times says: "It is understood that under the new Lloyd George plan for controlling British shipping the White Star and Cunard liners will operate between Liverpool and Halifax instead of coming on to New York and will be armed with six inch guns, five and six inch guns, and in addition to the protection afforded by the guns there will be fast cruisers in certain positions, which will be known to the commanders of the liners who will be provided with special signals to enable them to call for assistance if they are attacked. "The cargoes will be taken from New York and Boston in small steamers to Halifax where the freight will be transhipped on board the big steamships waiting to convey it to Liverpool or London. Passengers will travel by train. The expense of the transhipping of freight and conveying it to Halifax will be very heavy, but it will have to be done in order to make certain that the government will get sufficient provisions for the people of Great Britain and the army of 2,000,000 men in France and Flanders."

Minard's Liniment cures colds &c. THE WEATHER, TEMPERATURE, TIDE, MOON, ETC. The tide will be high this afternoon at 1.05 and tomorrow at 1.52; it will be high tomorrow morning at 12.19 and Friday at 1.15. The sun sets this afternoon at 4.00 and tomorrow at 4.23; it rises tomorrow and Friday at 7.41. The moon sets tonight at 8.11. There was a new moon on Sunday Dec. 24th at 4.31 p. m. The last quarter of the moon was on Sunday, Dec. 31st, at 8.07 a. m. The length of today will be eight hours and forty minutes. Minard's Liniment cures gargle in cows

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HOLLAND NOT PLEASED WITH GERMAN NOTE

(Special to the Guardian.) AMSTERDAM, Dec. 26—The Telegram says it has reason to believe Germany's reply to the Holland note regarding the deportation of Belgian workmen is framed in such language that it is inadvisable to submit the communication to the Dutch parliament. The government has requested

Berlin to put it in such shape that it can be transmitted. The Dutch government last month instructed its Berlin representative to notify Germany that the Belgian deportations had created a painful impression in Holland and Germany's reply was tantamount to telling Holland to mind her own business.

GERMANS ANXIOUS TO DISCUSS PEACE

Conference of British Colonial Prisoners Called to Meet Probably in February.

(Special to the Guardian.) LONDON, Dec. 26—The Teutonic Allies are favorable to an immediate meeting of delegates from the belligerent states at some neutral point in order that an exchange of views with regard to peace may be carried out. This has been declared by the German government replying to the recent note from President Wilson suggesting that the belligerent nations make known their basis of peace. It is announced in the note that Germany is of the opinion that the work of preventing future wars can be begun only after the end of the present struggle but that then Germany will be ready to collaborate with the United States in this exalted task. Nothing has yet come through to indicate what will be the tenor of the reply of the Entente Allies to President Wilson's suggestion and as far as known none of them has yet given an answer to the announcement made to them in the note of the Teutonic Allies that Germany was ready to discuss peace. Meantime the French of the British colonies have been urged to attend at an early date, not later than the end of February, a series of special meetings of the War Cabinet. "At these meetings," says the British Colonial Secretary, "urgent questions affecting the prosecution of the war in agreement with our allies, we would then immediately arise are to be discussed." Rumania continues the theatre of greatest activities. In northern Wallachia, along the southern Moldavian border, and in Dobruja the Teutonic allies continue to make gains

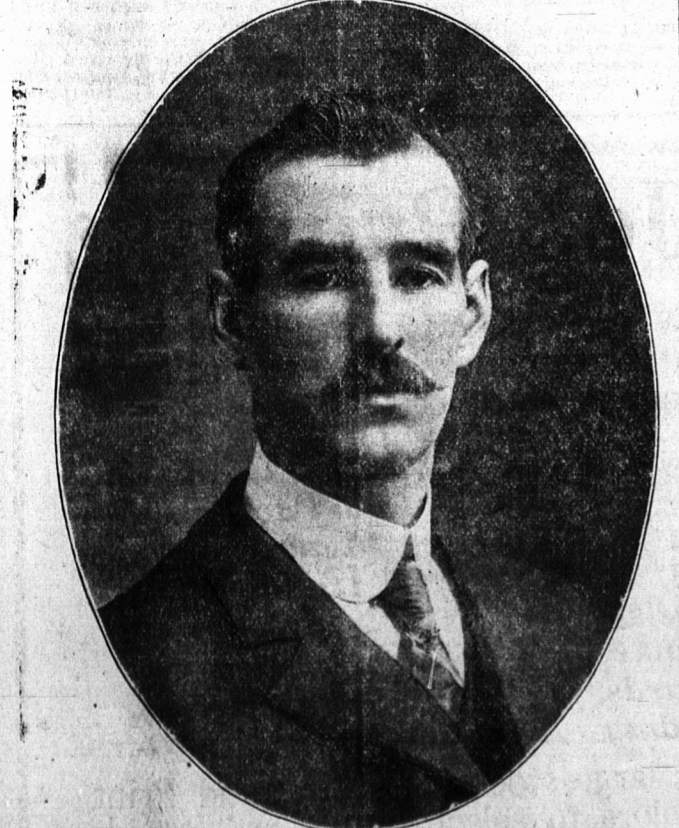
ANOTHER BRITISH SUCCESS OVER TURKS IN EGYPT

Captured 1,230 Prisoners, Guns and War Material.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) LONDON, Dec. 25—Following up their victory against the Turks in the capture of El Arish, 90 miles east of the Suez canal, the British forces in Egypt have captured a strong Turkish position at Maghdadah, twenty miles to the southeast of El Arish, taking some 1,100 prisoners, two guns and quantities of war material. The War Office announced today. The official statement reads: "On Friday afternoon British mounted troops carried a strong enemy position at Maghdadah, 20 miles south-southeast of El Arish, after an engagement beginning at nine o'clock in the morning. Five hundred prisoners were taken. Aircraft co-operated attacking with bombs and machine gun fire from a low altitude. "A later official statement says a full report from Maghdadah is not yet at

hand. The total captures are now 1,230 prisoners, at least two guns and a large quantity of arms and war material. Their enemy's casualties were considerable. Our aeroplanes continued to harass the enemy.

over the Russians and Roumanians. Thirty miles southwest of Beralla the invaders have captured the town of El Arish and west of Rinnik Sarat are on the offensive. In this latter region during the past few days 5,000 Russians have been made prisoners. In Mesopotamia British forces are still in quest of Kutlamara in which sector they made a further advance on the right bank of the Tigris where they consolidated and extended their positions southeast of the town. Gassabs, a fort twenty miles southeast of Kutbase from which hostile Arabs had been operating against the British has been destroyed. The British victory over the Turks at Maghdadah, ninety miles east of Suez Canal, was of considerable proportions. In addition to making prisoner 1,350 men of the Turkish forces about 207 guns a large number of rifles, much ammunition and large quantities of other war stores were captured. On the other fronts there have been only artillery engagements.



HON. J. A. MACDONALD, DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL SERVICE. The Hon. J. A. Macdonald, of Cardigan, came to the city yesterday to assume his duties as Director of National Service. For the present his office will be located at the headquarters of the Patriotic Fund, Royal Bank Building. One of the first messages received by the Director was the following greet-

(Special to the Guardian.) LONDON, Dec. 26—An official report from British headquarters in France tonight reads: "Some fifty Germans approached our lines Monday night in the neighborhood of Lesboueuils. Eighteen of them were taken prisoners; the remainder suffered heavy casualties from machine guns. Monday night we entered trenches north east of Armentieres and drove off enemy working parties. The enemy's positions east of Ploegstreet were also raided. Casualties were inflicted upon the enemy and prisoners were secured. In the neighborhood of Lesboueuils, Gusbecourt, we bombed enemy trenches during the day with satisfactory results."

Minard's Liniment Cures Diphtheria CONDENSED ADS. TOO LATE FOR CLASSIFICATION TWO CENTS per word, each insertion for advertising in this column. Cash must accompany order. SAUNSON SAUSAGES MADE fresh every day from selected young pork. Saunders, Newsome & Co., Market Building. 248-9-25M6m TO LET—COMFORTABLE ROOM with all modern conveniences. Centrally located. Apply at this office. 3182-11-21M6T. FOR SALE—SET OF TWELVE OF James Whitcomb Riley's works. Apply at Guardian office. 3391-12-13M6T. WANTED COMFORTABLE ROOM with board in North-east part of city. Apply X. Y. Z., Box 161. 3590-12-25M6Tpd. SALESMEN—EXCLUSIVE LINE for city, town or country. Big earnings, guaranteed. Permanent all year job. No experience necessary. Write Luke Brothers, Limited, Montreal. 3445-12-23M6T.

Minard's Liniment cures Diptemper.

"HEART SONGS" COUPON PRESENTED BY THIS PAPER TO YOU HOW TO GET IT ALMOST FREE Clip out and present five coupons like the above, bearing consecutive dates, together with our special price of 80c. The last quarter of the moon was on Sunday, Dec. 31st, at 8.07 a. m. The length of today will be eight hours and forty minutes. Minard's Liniment cures gargle in cows