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**Fires Beat Replevin Writ.**  
WALLA WALLA, Dec. 16.—A determined boarding-house keeper with plenty of fuel kept Deputy Sheriff Sam Bryan from taking two stoves Davis Kaser company sued Mrs. M. E. Chaffin on an account and secured a writ of replevin for \$350 worth of furniture, including two stoves.  
Bryan got the other articles but such hot fires were kept in the stoves that Bryan was forced to leave them, temporarily at least.

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## "ARE WE PREPARED TO FIGHT?" THIS IS BIG QUESTION AT CAPITAL

ANTI-MILITARISTS SAY FURTHER  
ARMAMENT WOULD BE  
UNDESIRABLE.

Advocates of Bigger and Better Army and Navy Declare United States Would Be in No Position to Strike Back if Attacked by One of the Bigger Powers of the World.

(By Burton K. Standish. Written for the United Press.)

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17.—"Are we prepared to fight?" This question, with interest stirred in it by the war abroad, promises to develop into one of the biggest issues before the country during the next year. The attention of congress during the present session will be centered on it much of the time.

While the advocates of a bigger and better army and navy are equipping themselves with heavy supplies of data to show that the United States would be hopelessly weak if attacked by one of the world powers, the anti-militarists are arming themselves with information to back up their contention that further preparedness for war would be undesirable and unnecessary.

The pacifists will admit that our preparedness is not to be compared with that of other great nations but they will argue that with the rest of the world embroiled in the greatest war of history all our rivals will be so exhausted by fighting that they would not dare to attack us for years to come. This fact, along with the natural defense constituted by our geographical isolation, gives us ample protection, the peace men will contend.

The case of the militarists was voiced in detail by General W. W. Wotherpoon, ex-chief of staff of the army, in his annual report just issued. He summarized our military situation thus: "We could not defend the Panama canal. We could not defend the Philippines, or Alaska, or Hawaii, or any other of our insular possessions. Our coast defenses are lamentably inadequate. We could not concentrate a sufficient force to repel an invasion by a first class fighting power."

Here is the remedy: Raise the regular or standing army from its present strength of 92,000 men to 295,000 men. Create a first line of reserves of 500,000, thoroughly equipped and trained. Establish a second reserve of 300,000 men.

General Wotherpoon does not go to the length of advocating compulsory military service but he says this: "In any scheme to create such a force of mobile troops, we cannot do better than to follow the example of the master minds in military organization for national defense. The policies developed in this direction all include, among others, the primary plan of using the standing army as a school for training men who, on graduation from that school, pass into the reserve and constitute the real national military strength."

Many anti-militarists, however, will agree with General Wotherpoon that there is urgent need for re-organization of the state militia. Agitation has been long under way for change in the laws governing the militia which will bring greater reliance upon and an increased control by the national government. Until this is done, authorities declare, the militia cannot be regarded as a dependable branch of our military strength.

The modification of the law proposed is to place the militia under pay of the national government and under binding obligation to serve at its call. This, it is thought, would produce a state of affairs where the militia would be much more thoroughly trained than under existing laws, and to that extent can be more thoroughly depended upon.

The actual number of men available in our coast defenses artillery is 14,000, or 10,000 less than the number estimated to be necessary to man the defenses. It is contended that the defenses are so few and far apart as to offer an invading army a large choice of landing places along our coast. Experts are now asserting that the latest type of super-dreadnaught with its armament of fifteen inch guns could stand off at sea and batter our coast forts to pieces while the shells from our fourteen inch defenses guns would fall harmlessly in the water 2000 yards short of their mark.

We have lagged far behind all our rivals in military aeronautics. It is also pointed out. The army has no armored autos, and no motor tractors for artillery. It is charged. All these things will be thoroughly threshed out if the congressional inquiry, advocated by Congressman Gardner, of Massachusetts, is ordered.

To the charge of weakness of our navy it will be answered that we have built, building or authorized, fifteen dreadnaughts, with at least two more likely to be authorized at the present session of congress. The last four dreadnaughts authorized will be the largest in the world. The small navy members of congress will point out that our program is ample enough while the navies of Germany and Great Britain, the only two larger than our own, are engaged in destroying each other.

**Kaiser Forges Fair Play**  
ZEVENNAAR, Holland, via London, Dec. 17.—Two German officers who had been war prisoners here and who had violated their parole by escaping across the border into Germany, returned under orders of their government to do so.

The officers reported to the commanding officer at the internment camp at Bergen, where they will be interned until the end of the war. Before the violation of their parole they had the privilege of free movement.

## Stories From the War Zone

LONDON, Nov. 11.—(By Mail to New York.)—The bravery of a 16-year old French girl, who was found wounded while acting as a vivandiere for stricken British soldiers on the firing line along the Aisne, is lauded by Corporal S. Healy, of the Royal Irish regiment, in a letter home.

It was after one of the hardest fights of the war, and dozens of wounded soldiers were left lying out in the open with little prospect of relief until the next day. Most of the poor fellows were nearly mad with thirst. Many were delirious, and others were just sensible enough to keep murmuring for water. "Then we heard a gentle footfall," the corporal added, "and looking up, we saw a charming girl of sixteen picking her way through the piles of dead and wounded. She had brought milk and wine to relieve our thirst."

"We learned that she was from a farm near by, just out of the line of fire, and she had risked her life in coming there to give us something to drink because she was grateful to the British troops for helping to drive the German invaders back. She seemed to be without fear, and tripped briskly along in spite of the shells and rifle fire."

"We were all stricken with grief when she was carried into hospital next day. She had been shot on the way back. It was a nasty wound, but after an operation the doctors hoped she would pull through. Every soldier who saw here prays for her every night."

The girls of St. Jude's School, Herne-Hill, have sacrificed their prizes in order to buy wool to knit garments for the soldiers. They have already knitted 150 pairs of socks, 100 helmets, 25 belts, and 12 scarves and hemmed 100 handkerchiefs.

MADRID, Nov. 9.—(By Mail to New York, via London.)—A women's league has been formed here for the purpose of furthering the proposition to secure a world wide peace Christmas day. The Kaiser, the Emperor of Austria, the Czar, King George and President Poincare are to be memorialized with a view to a cessation of fighting on that day.

PETROGRAD, Nov. 2.—(By Mail to New York.)—The army authorities are having their troubles discovering and sending back to their homes women who have volunteered in the ranks disguised as men. There have been numerous instances of the kind since the war started, especially among the masculine looking peasant women of the northern province.

One of these was Nadeshda Ornat-skiy, a muscular, well educated peasant woman from the province of Archangel. She had posed as a man through the second part of the Manchurian campaign, and was praised for

her courage by General Grippenberg. Early in the present war she re-enlisted, and fought in South Poland, and it was not until after the battle of Lublin-Krasnick that her sex was discovered and she was discharged.

A girl named Liuba Uglicki was present at four engagements in East Prussia and West Poland, and was wounded slightly. She says that during long range fighting she had no fear, but had a horror of crossing bayonets with the enemy.

Two daughters of a land proprietor at Kursk have been arrested on their way to join the colors, one of them posing as "Prince Adrianoff," and the other as her servant.

A peasant woman who was killed at Cumbinnen, had donned her husband's clothes and impersonated him when he shirked the summons. She did not want her family to be ashamed.

Two school girls of the capital, aged 14, wrote the Grand Duke Nicholas begging to be accepted as volunteers. The Grand Duke wrote them personally praising their patriotism, but recommending that they find scope for their services in caring for the wounded, adding: "I am convinced if ever you had the occasion you would uphold the glory and might of the Emperor and the honor of your country."

A young Russian woman, referred to in the local newspapers as Mile. B., has been recommended for the St. George's Cross, the V. C. of Russia. She is the daughter of a Russian captain of artillery, and accompanied her father's battery to the front as a private, after cutting her hair short. She took part in a number of battles near Augustoff, and now is lying wounded in a Petrograd hospital.

**Auto Hurts Two in Vehicle**  
WASCO, Or., Dec. 17.—Mr. and Mrs. Harry Van Gilder, who reside three miles east of Wasco, were struck by an automobile driven by William Andrews last Saturday. Both were thrown from their vehicle. Mrs. Van Gilder suffered a double fracture in the leg below the knee. Mr. Van Gilder was scratched about the face.

The accident occurred two miles west of Wasco while Mr. and Mrs. Van Gilder were on their way to pass Sunday with a relative. The horse was carried about 20 yards.

**Normal School Roll Now 230.**  
MONMOUTH, Ore., Dec. 17.—Two hundred and fifty students are enrolled at the Oregon Normal school. The student body is made up of teachers having considerable experience and those with only a few short summer terms. Many high school graduates are among the number. The normal school requires two years' work above the completion of a high school course for graduation.

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**Rear-Admiral Nicholson Retires.**  
WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—Rear-Admiral R. G. Nicholson closed his active career in the navy and goes on the retired list, having reached the age limit. When 12 years old he signed as a cabin boy on the warship State of Georgia, commanded by his father, and participated in the blockade of Wilmington. His last sea duty was as commander of the Asiatic fleet.



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