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THIS MAY MEAN WAR

If Germany Does Not Make Satisfactory Explanation

HAY ASKS WHAT SHE MEANS BY A PEACEFUL BLOCKADE

Dewey and His Fleet May Escort American Vessels Through the Line of European War Ships-

Washington, Dec. 17—Secretary Hay has cabled Ambassador Tower, at Berlin to ask the German government to define for this country exactly what is meant by "Peaceful blockade." If Germany insists on the right to blockade peacefully and to refuse to let American ships through, then Admiral Dewey's fleet will be sent to Venezuela to convoy the American ships through the German and English lines. Admiral Dewey has been told to keep his fleet together.

Washington, Dec. 17—The reason this government makes this demand of Germany is because it has in writing in black and white, a full statement of Germany's intentions regarding Venezuela.

It has no such statement from England. The diplomats of that country were shrewd enough to make only a verbal statement of its intent.

The administration is awaiting Germany's answer with some anxiety. The situation is now more critical than it has been since the trouble began.

Washington, Dec. 17—Minister Bowen cabled the State Department from Caracas this morning that the Italian minister had left. Bowen had assumed charge of the Italian legation affairs, according to instructions.

London, Dec. 17—Premier Balfour replying to questions in the House of Commons today repeated the assurance that England has no intention of landing troops or occupying any part of the

territory of Venezuela. Great Britain is most anxious there should be as little inconvenience as possible to neutral powers in the blockade.

Balfour said if the seizure of gunboats does not bring the desired result, it will be necessary to proceed to actual blockade. German and English ships act independently.

Balfour admitted the controversy as to whether there was such a thing as a Pacific blockade. He said he personally believed that a blockade involved a state of war.

There was considerable excitement at the conclusion of the speech, as it is taken to be Balfour's meaning that the blockade, if declared, would be against the ships of all nations.

The question then arises whether Secretary Hay will agree to this, although it is not apparent how he can disagree unless America denies the right of Europeans to declare war on any South American state.

It is believed the Germans have old grievances besides the financial claims.

BOSTON CO'S. BID ACCEPTED

Special to the Mail.
Washington, Dec. 18—Secretary Root announced this morning that he decided to accept the bid of the Boston Steamship Co., of Seattle, for the government military transport business from Seattle and Tacoma to the Philippines. He will now ask San Francisco concerns to bid on business going from San Francisco.

PURE FOOD BILL PASSES

Special to the Mail.
Washington, Dec. 18—By a vote of 72 to 21 the Senate passed the pure food bill, which prevents the adulteration of foods and drugs. The bill divides the country into territories, and regulates interstate traffic in all adulterated food-stuffs and medicines.

OREGON ENTRIES HELD UP

Patenting of Timber Lands Stopped

Entries and Proof May be Made

Secretary Hitchcock has ordered the suspension of action in the General Land Office on timber land entries in Oregon, Washington and California. He has also ordered an investigation of timber land entries in Oregon.

A Washington special says.—Under date of November 24, Secretary Hitchcock wrote a letter to Commissioner Hermann in relation to entries being made under the timber and stone act, in which the following language occurs: "I now direct until further order by the department you suspend action on all entries under said act now before your office, or that may hereafter come before it from the States of Oregon, California and Washington."

Further along in the letter the Secretary says: "You are also directed to have some of your most competent and trustworthy special agent properly investigate until further orders from the department all entries made or pending under the timber and stone act in the La Grande, Lake View, Oregon City and The Dalles Land Offices in the state of Oregon."

Binger Harmann explains that this suspension is not carried into the local Land Offices; that entries may still be made in Oregon under the timber and stone act, and that proof may be submitted, but that when those cases reach the General Land Office they are or will be suspended in compliance with the Secretary's order.

Machine and Rapid Fire Guns.

The difference between a rapid fire gun and a machine gun is that the former is loaded by hand.

Coal and Coke.

A net ton of coke of the quality suitable for domestic purposes runs about forty-eight to fifty bushels to the ton as against about thirty-six to thirty-eight bushels of hard coal to the ton.

Sleepy Grass.

Sleepy grass is found in New Mexico, Texas and Siberia. It has a most injurious effect on horses and sheep, being a strong narcotic or sedative and causing profound sleep or stupor lasting twenty-four to forty-eight hours.

OTHER SIDE TALKS

Wrongs Perpetrated By Unions

Wives of Unionists Testify.

Scranton, Dec. 18—Two more railroads filed statements when the Strike Commission met this morning. The recitation of injuries and wrongs received by non union men at the hands of the strikers continued.

Fireman Reynolds told of an attempt at assassination by the striker Francis who fired four ineffectual shots. When Francis was brought to trial he said he had authority from the local union to stop people on the streets. This fact was brought out by counsel. Reynolds said he worked to buy food for his family, consisting of wife and seven children. The commission was deeply moved by this testimony.

Mrs. McNamara, who appeared on the stand with an infant in her arms, said her husband worked for the Delaware Lackawana and was compelled to live in the colliery for fear of violence. She was unable to communicate with him. Eight times stones were thrown at her, once when she had an infant in her arms. She has four children, the oldest 9 year old. She was awakened one November night by the house being afire, and fortunately escaped. The house burned to the ground. There was no proof that strikers burned it.

Darrow asked that this testimony be stricken from the records. Gray refused to allow this. Mrs. Ethel Hoffman gave similar testimony.

Washington, Dec. 17—In the Senate the urgency deficiency bill was taken up and passed in five minutes. A motion was passed that when the Senate adjourned this afternoon it would be until Saturday.

Morgan gave notice that on Saturday he would ask for a bill to provide for acquiring the rights necessary to the construction of the Isthmian canal. The pension appropriation bill was passed without objection or amendment.

The House in committee of the whole reported without opposition the Hepburn amendment to the judiciary bill, appropriating half a million dollars to be immediately available with which the attorney general is to employ counsel for the enforcement of the anti-trust laws now on the statute books. The House bill as amended passed.

The bill prohibiting enlisted musicians in the army and navy from competing with civilians was lost.

Yona's Religion.

To his sovereign's question wherein their religions really differed William Penn is said to have replied: "The difference is the same as between thy hat and mine. Mine has no ornaments."

Malaria in Italy.

Two million persons are attacked by malaria every year in Italy.

PORTS BOTTLED UP Blockade of Venezuela Starts Today

ALLIES REFUSE OFFER TO ARBITRATE MATTER

Unless Impossible Conditions are Fulfilled, This Country's Friendly Offices

Caracas, Dec. 19—It has been learned from an official source that the allies have notified the Venezuela authorities that the La Guayra blockade will become effective Saturday, Dec. 20th., at 3 p. m. of the ports of La Guayra, Puerto Cabello, Coro, Maracaibo, Carupano and Barcelona.

Washington, Dec. 19—It was announced at the State Department this morning that answers had been received from the triple alliance to the proposal of arbitration by Castro through Minister Bowen.

The answers, while admitting the correctness of the principle of arbitration, is not regarded as satisfactory, on account of the conditions imposed. The answer of Great Britain, as made, is anything but a consent to arbitration. Italy, in as much as she is the youngest member of the alliance, is willing to abide by the disposition of the other two nations.

Even Great Britain's answer contains a number of stipulations which would require time for adjustment before arbitra-

tion had been entered into. The character of the objection to immediate arbitration interposed by Germany and Great Britain is not made public, further than that there be some guarantee that Venezuela will fulfill the judgment of the arbitrators.

It is semi-officially learned that one condition laid down by Germany is an apology from Venezuela for the arrest of the German consular officials, and the sack of the consulate at Caracas.

Secretary Hay immediately took the answers of the three powers to the cabinet meeting where they were discussed. It has been decided to make an effort to obtain President Castro's acquiescence to as many of the conditions as possible, while at the same time it will be diplomatically suggested to Germany and Great Britain that they recede from the more onerous stipulations.

Rome, Dec. 19—The foreign officials believe the acceptance of arbitration in the Venezuelan dispute through United States Minister Bowen will be accepted, and says this will end the matter so far as Italy is concerned.

SHOE TALK

In buying shoes DON'T get plucked. If you buy a \$3.50 or \$4.00 shoe at a store where \$6 to \$8 shoes are sold you do get plucked nearly every time.

Satisfactory shoes for Winter—shoes that please the people—shoes in which the shape will hold—won't "squash" out, or sag in the shank, or get shabby-looking in a little while.

Shoes that hold out because they're rightly built—not a skimp anywhere, inside or out—THAT'S the Walk-Over Shoe.

Must be right or wrong—no middle ground—or we couldn't everlastingly preach Money-Back Shoes—good wear or a new pair.

Why pay \$5 and \$6 for let-well-enough-alone shoes—Tom, Dick and Harry make—that have been foisted on a long suffering public with scarcely a change—in quality \$3.50 and \$4.00 never less

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