

REVIEW OF EUROPEAN WAR AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1916

Great Conflict Rages With Increased Intensity—Roumania, Fifteenth Nation to Enter Struggle, Overrun by Central Powers—Tautonic Allies Make First Peace Proposals—United States Faces Several Crises.

THE EUROPEAN WAR

Those who are engaged in or are viewing at close range the titanic conflict in which all Europe is involved can with difficulty appreciate the magnitude of the events which have transpired during the past 12 months. Generations to come, however, looking back upon this period with a clearer vision, will recognize the year 1916 as one of the most tremendous, from a history-making standpoint, since the world began.

Europe continued its blood-letting throughout the year with even greater ferocity than marked the first 18 months following the breaking of the storm. The great war rounded out its second and entered upon its third year, with little promise of an early conclusion of peace. During the year new nations entered into the war, one of them, Roumania, to become the scene of some of the most ferocious fighting of the year, one new nation was created, another tottered to its fall, while on a dozen fronts millions of men were fed as human sacrifices to the insatiable war monster.

There were seven outstanding phases of the great war during the year 1916. These comprised the great offensive of the Russians in Galicia, which was finally checked by the Teutonic allies; the superhuman efforts of the Germans to capture Verdun, which were thwarted by the equally superhuman defense offered by the French; the long-awaited grand offensive of the British and the French on the western front, resulting in the recovery of considerable area in the Somme region, but not definitely breaking the deadlock in northern France; the checking of an Austrian offensive by the Italians and the launching of a counter-offensive by which the Italians made big strides in their campaign against Trieste; the conquest of Roumania by the Teutonic allies; the drive of the Serbs, aided by French, Italian and British troops, in an effort to regain their lost kingdom, and the final abandonment by the entente allies of their disastrous Gallipoli campaign.

The Russians launched their offensive in Galicia on the first day of the year. On January 9, the effort of the entente allies to force the Dardanelles was definitely abandoned, and the forces of the allies entirely evacuated the Gallipoli peninsula.

Verdun Attack Launched.

Early in February, the Russians, after a lull in the fighting, resumed their offensive in Galicia and on February 10 they crossed the Dniester and threatened Czernowitz. The Russians, under Grand Duke Nicholas, also continued their drive in the Caucasus and on February 14 they captured the important town of Erzerum. February 21, the Germans, led by the crown prince, launched their attack on Verdun, and during the next few days they smashed their way through the outer defenses until they came within big-gun range of the French stronghold. The French, taken by surprise, were forced to give ground, but by the last of the month they had strengthened their shattered lines and had checked the German drive. In the Verdun sector, for the next few months, occurred some of the most sanguinary fighting of the entire war. The Austrians had considerable success on the Italian front during the month, entering Durazzo on February 26 and driving the Italians before them. Portugal signalled its entry into the great conflict February 29 by seizing 34 German steamers interned in Portuguese ports. Germany demanded the release of the ships and on March 9 declared war on Portugal, the thirteenth nation to enter the conflict.

The month of March was marked chiefly by the continued determined attacks of the Germans upon Verdun. The assault entered its third stage in this month with repeated attacks on Vaux, Douaumont and other outlying towns, most of which were repulsed with terrific losses. During the month the Italians finally checked the Austrian drive and launched a big offensive along the entire Austrian front. The Russians continued their victorious drive against the Turks in Armenia, capturing Bitlis on March 3, and other important towns later in the month.

The early days of April saw a slowing up of the Russian offensive in Galicia. The Germans launched a counter offensive all along the Russian front but gained little headway. The following months saw terrific fighting along this front. April 23, the British admitted a defeat at the hands of the Turks in Mesopotamia and on April 29, General Townshend and 10,000 British soldiers, who had been besieged by the Turks at Kut-el-Amara, were forced to surrender after repeated efforts to relieve them had failed.

Great Sea Battle Fought.

The first great naval battle of the war was fought by the German and British high seas fleets off the coast of Jutland, Denmark, May 31. The British admit the loss of six large cruisers and eight destroyers, the Germans one battleship, one battle cruiser and a

number of light cruisers and destroyers. More than 9,000 lives were lost. Both sides claim the victory. Five days later Great Britain received a staggering blow when the British cruiser Hampshire was blown up in the North sea by a mine and Earl Kitchener, British secretary of war, and his entire staff, were lost. During the early part of June the Russians broadened their offensive in Galicia and along the lines further north and on June 7 they announced the recapture of the fortress of Lusk in Volhynia and the crossing of the Ikwa and Styr rivers at several points.

On July 1, the British and French launched their great drive on the west front. A concerted attack was made on a 25-mile front north and south of the Somme river. July 11, after ten days and nights of continuous fighting, the British claimed the capture of the whole of the enemy's first line of defense on a front of 14,000 yards. During the remainder of the month the British and French continued their advance, the British occupying the entire village of Pozieres July 26 and the French advancing close to Peronne, an important railroad center.

During the month of August the Russians, after terrific fighting, pierced the Teutonic lines on the Lemberg and Kovel fronts and advanced in the Carpathians. The Italians continued their drive on Trieste. August 9, after days of terrific fighting, they captured Goritz and pushed forward, pursuing the retreating Austrians.

Roumania Enters War.

Roumania, after months of wavering, entered the war on the side of the entente allies with a declaration of war on Austria-Hungary. Roumania was the fifteenth nation to enter the war. On the same day Italy declared war on Germany and the following day Germany declared war on Roumania. With the declaration of war fighting began between the Roumanians and Austrians on the Transylvanian frontier. August 30, the Roumanians occupied Kronstadt and Hermannstadt, the two chief cities of Transylvania. Field Marshal von Hindenburg, whose successes had made him the idol of the German people, succeeded General von Falkenhayn as chief of the general staff of the German army August 29.

During the month of September, the Roumanians, co-operating with the Russians, advanced in northern Transylvania and Bukovina, but suffered severe reverses at the hands of the Bulgarians and Austrians in Dobruja. The allied troops made decided gains in the Somme sector, occupying Comblès and other important towns on September 26.

Early in October the tide turned against the Roumanians and Russians in Transylvania and the latter were forced to retire before a strong Austro-German force under command of General von Falkenhayn. On October 11, the Teutons began an invasion of Roumania. On the Verdun front, the French smashed the German lines October 24, retaking Douaumont fort and village.

The struggle between the Roumanian and Russian forces on the one side and the Teuton and Bulgarian armies on the other held the center of attention in November. Taking advantage of the plight in which the Roumanians on the Transylvanian front found themselves Von Mackensen held his lines in Dobruja and, attacking the Danube line, forced the river barrier at several points. Effecting a juncture of their forces, the Teuton commanders drove the Roumanians back upon Bucharest. The Roumanians retreated rapidly toward the capital, burning villages and all stores of grain and munitions in the district through which they passed. November 28, the seat of the Roumanian government was moved from Bucharest to Jassy, near the Russian frontier. The Roumanians evacuated Bucharest December 6 in order to save their army.

The Serbians, aided by French and Italian troops, made a start toward winning back their country during November. Their big drive resulted in the capture of Monstir on November 19. On the Somme front the battle of the Ancre opened November 13 with the capture by the British of five miles of the German positions, together with three strong towns.

An announcement of far-reaching significance was made in the Russian duma December 2 by Premier Treppoff, who read a proclamation announcing officially that an agreement concluded by Russia, France and Great Britain in 1915, and later approved by Italy, "establishes in definite manner the rights of Russia to the straits and Constantinople."

The fall of the British cabinet early in December furnished one of the most sensational features of the year's war developments. Demands of David Lloyd-George for the formation of a smaller war council to obtain greater efficiency forced the resignation of Premier Asquith. Lloyd-George was made premier and selected a new cabinet, the prosecution of the war being placed in the hands of five men, including the premier.

The first direct overtures for peace came on December 13, when Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey

sent identical notes to the entente allies through the United States, Spain and Switzerland, proposing that the belligerents arrange a conference for the discussion of peace terms. The notes were transmitted to the allied governments by President Wilson without comment. The peace proposals were received coldly. Premier Briand, in the French house of deputies, issued a warning against a premature peace, and the Russian duma, according to announcement made December 16, passed a resolution favoring a refusal on the part of the allied governments to enter into any peace negotiations whatever under present conditions.

As if in answer to the peace proposals, the French in the Verdun sector delivered a crushing attack on the German forces December 15, winning 12 square miles of territory north of Verdun and driving the Germans back close to the line from which they started their great offensive against Verdun in February. General Nivelle, who directed this attack, had been a few days before placed in supreme command of the French armies in the west, succeeding General Joffre, who was made commander in chief of the French armies, but with little more than advisory powers.

WAR AND THE UNITED STATES

Diplomatic difficulties growing out of the war in Europe continued to confront the United States government throughout the past year. The submarine controversy with Germany, which had been more or less acute since the sinking of the Lusitania, was intensified March 2, when the British Channel steamer Sussex and the British steamer Englishman, both of which carried Americans, were torpedoed and sunk without warning. This occurred about two weeks after congress, at the urging of the president, had refused to adopt a resolution warning Americans to remain off armed merchant ships of the belligerents. The German government at first denied any responsibility for the attack on the Sussex, and on April 18 President Wilson addressed a note which amounted practically to an ultimatum to the German government. In this note the president declared that unless Germany immediately declared and effected an abandonment of its methods of submarine warfare against passenger and freight-carrying vessels, the United States could "have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the German empire altogether."

Germany's reply to this note, received in Washington May 5, promised compliance in the future with the laws of warfare in its submarine operations. A supplementary note from Berlin, received May 10, admitted that the Sussex was torpedoed, expressed regret, offered indemnity and declared that the submarine commander had been punished. No further serious controversy occurred with Germany until after the sinking of the Marina, with Americans aboard, October 28. It was charged that the vessel was torpedoed without warning. After an investigation Germany assumed responsibility for the sinking of the boat, declaring that the captain of the submarine thought the Marina an armed transport.

An interchange of notes between the United States and the entente governments, regarding the seizure and examination of American mails, was productive of little result. In several communications Great Britain and France insisted upon their rights to examine neutral mails, but on October 12 they made some slight concessions, promising to improve the mail service between America and neutral countries.

A blacklist against American firms and individuals, charged with dealing with Germany, which was published by Great Britain July 18, and by France August 6, brought emphatic protests from the United States government, but on November 14 Great Britain formally rejected the blacklist was not aimed at neutrals.

The relations of the United States with Mexico became more strained during 1916 than at any previous time during the years of civil war that followed the retirement of President Porfirio Diaz. They approached a crisis early in the year when, on January 10, nineteen men, nearly all of them Americans, were taken from a train near Chihuahua and killed by a band of bandits.

Conditions became still more tense when, on March 9, several hundred bandits led by Villa raided and burned the town of Columbus, N. M., killing nine American civilians and eight United States soldiers. March 10, President Wilson ordered 5,000 United States troops into Mexico to catch Villa.

General Carranza, head of the de facto government in Mexico, began soon to display antagonism toward the American expedition and on March 17 he issued orders forbidding American troops from entering Mexican towns. He also refused to grant permission for the American forces to use the Mexican railroads for the transportation of supplies.

April 12, a detachment of United States troops was attacked by Carranza troops and citizens of Parral. Two Americans and 40 Mexicans were killed in the encounter. The following day Carranza demanded the withdrawal of the American troops from Mexico, but his demand was ignored. The pursuit of Villa came to a standstill, however, because of the hostility of Carranza.

May 31, General Carranza again demanded the withdrawal of the United States troops from Mexico on peril of

"recourse to arms," and followed this up on June 16 with a definite threat of attack unless the troops were withdrawn northward. The following day re-enforcements were rushed to the United States troops in Mexico and within a short time the expeditionary force aggregated about 12,000 men. June 18, the war department ordered all the state militia mobilized and within the next two weeks 50,000 of the state soldiers had been rushed to the border.

A detachment of American troops was attacked by Carranza troops at Carrizal, June 21, and twelve Americans were killed and 17 captured.

A short time later Carranza abandoned his hostile attitude and in a conciliatory note to President Wilson suggested the appointment of a joint commission to settle the dispute between the two countries. July 28, President Wilson accepted this proposal.

President Wilson named Secretary of the Interior Lane, Judge George Gray and Dr. J. R. Mott as members of the American commission on August 22 and on September 6, the joint commission began its sessions at New London, Conn. The sessions continued until November 24, when a protocol was signed providing for the withdrawal of the United States troops from Mexico in 40 days, conditional upon the Carranza government showing within that time that it could protect the border and prevent raids by bandits upon American territory.

Two days before the signing of this protocol, Villa, at the head of a strong force, attacked Chihuahua City and after a battle lasting several days he captured that city.

Carranza forces regained control of Chihuahua City December 3 and Villa's forces fled to the mountains west of that city, where they were later reported to be gathering new recruits in preparation for more extensive operations.

INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC

The outstanding feature of the year in the industrial world was the threatened strike of the 400,000 members of the four great railway brotherhoods, which was prevented only by the passage by congress of the Adamson bill.

The demands of the four brotherhoods, representing the engineers, firemen, conductors and trainmen, were made upon the railroads early in the year and after fruitless conferences between the representatives of the brotherhoods and the committee of general managers representing practically every railroad in the United States, a strike vote was taken among the members of the brotherhoods. On July 26 it was announced that the vote had been overwhelmingly in favor of a strike unless the demands of the men were granted by the railroads.

The federal board of mediation immediately offered its services in an effort to prevent a strike but on August 12 the board announced that it had been unable to bring about an agreement and on the following day President Wilson summoned the general managers' committee and the brotherhoods' representatives to the White House for a conference. This conference produced no result, the railroad managers offering to submit the whole controversy to arbitration but the brotherhood representatives refusing to agree to arbitration of their eight-hour day demands. August 29, President Wilson, with a promise from the brotherhood leaders that they could rescind their strike order, already issued, if a law were passed providing for the placing of their wage scales on an eight-hour basis, went before congress and asked the passage of three bills which he deemed necessary to meet the situation. One of these bills provided that "eight hours shall be deemed the measure or standard of a day's work for the purpose of reckoning the compensation for services of all employees" operating trains in interstate traffic.

Other bills proposed by the president provided for the compulsory submission of rail labor disputes to a board of mediation to be appointed by the president before a strike could be declared and for government operation of the railroads in case of military necessity.

The bill embodying the provision for the eight-hour basis for wages, known as the Adamson bill, was rushed through the house September 1 and was passed by the senate September 2. The order for a strike which was to have gone into effect September 4 was rescinded. The session of congress ended shortly afterwards and consideration of the other measures proposed by the president was postponed until the next session.

Strikes were in progress in a number of industries during the early part of the year and some were marked by scenes of violence. April 24, striking employees of the Westinghouse company, led by a masked woman, rioted in East Pittsburgh. Fatal strike riots occurred at the Carnegie Steel works in Braddock, Pa., May 2. A big strike was started by the Chicago garment workers May 9. Express drivers in Chicago struck May 16 and considerable violence marked the strike, express wagons being operated under police protection. July 13, state troops were sent to La Salle, Ill., to quell riots of cement works strikers.

A strike of street railway men stopped all surface cars in the boroughs of Manhattan, Bronx and Richmond, New York, August 5, but the strike ended two days later temporarily. September 6, a strike of all men on the subway, elevated and surface lines in New York was called. Serious riots marked the street car strike in New York, particularly on October 5.

November 5, a large party of I. W. W. members from Seattle engaged in a battle with a sheriff's posse at Everett, Wash. Seven men were killed during the fighting.

November 22, Judge Hook of the United States district court at Kansas City, Mo., held the Adamson eight-hour law unconstitutional and an agreement was reached between the representatives of the government and of the railroads for an appeal to the United States Supreme court in an effort to obtain a final decision on the validity of the law as soon as possible.

The year was one of great prosperity in all manufacturing and agricultural industries. Foreign trade of the United States, as shown by reports of the department of commerce, reached a total of \$7,463,000,000 in the year ending November 1, an increase of \$1,500,000,000 over 1915, and \$2,500,000,000 over 1914.

The total wheat yield of the United States in 1916 was only 547,000,000 bushels, as compared with 1,011,000,000 bushels in 1915 and at the same time there was almost a proportionate falling off in all other grain crops. While the crops decreased enormously in quantity, they also increased enormously in price. The value of 19 staple crops, as based on the November 1 estimate of the department of agriculture, was \$7,099,338,031, as compared with the estimated value on November 1, 1915, of the same crops of that year of \$5,983,306,817. The aggregate value of all farm products, including live stock, was estimated at \$12,000,000,000.

POLITICS IN OTHER LANDS

The Sinn Fein revolt in Ireland, the establishment of a revolutionary government in Greece, the proclamation of Poland as an independent nation by its Teutonic conquerors and the restoration of the republic in China, constituted the most important developments of a political nature in countries outside of the United States in 1916.

An official mandate, issued March 22, announced the abandonment of the Chinese monarchy and the restoration of the republic which had been displaced by the monarchy during the latter part of 1915. Yuan Shi Kai announced his rejection of the emperorship and resumed the presidency of the republic. June 6, Yuan Shi Kai died suddenly and Yuan Li Heng became president.

The Sinn Fein rebellion in Ireland was precipitated on April 18, when Sir Roger Casement, former consul officer of the United Kingdom, was captured while attempting to land in Ireland from Germany and a German ship loaded with arms to be used in an Irish uprising was sunk while attempting to land the arms. April 24, the Sinn Fein rebels seized parts of Dublin and serious fighting in the streets followed. The revolt spread, and on April 27 martial law was declared over the entire island. April 28, loyal troops took St. Stephens green in Dublin from the rebels, capturing 400 of them, and the following day, Peter Pearse, "president of the Irish Republic," surrendered. The next day the main body of the rebels surrendered. May 3, Pearse, Thomas J. Clark and Thomas McDonagh, leaders of the revolt, were executed in the Tower of London, after being found guilty of sedition at a military trial. Ten other leaders of the rebels were executed during the next few days. June 26, Sir Roger Casement was placed on trial for treason in London. He was convicted and sentenced to death June 29 and the sentence was executed by hanging in Pentonville prison, August 3. Following the Sinn Fein revolt, an effort was made by the government to bring about a compromise which would result in the granting of home rule to Ireland at once, but the effort was fruitless.

The revolutionary movement in Greece, which resulted in the formation of a provisional government by former Premier Venizelos, grew out of the refusal of King Constantine to be drawn into the war on the side of the entente allies. September 21, the island of Crete seceded from Greece, and on September 28, former Premier Venizelos and Admiral Coundouriotis issued a proclamation declaring the establishment of a provisional government for Greece.

The independence of Poland, which had been wrested from Russia by Teutonic arms, was proclaimed by Germany and Austria, November 5.

The death of Franz Josef, emperor of Austria-Hungary, which occurred November 21, was expected in some quarters to be productive of events of far-reaching importance from a political viewpoint in the dual monarchy.

POLITICS IN UNITED STATES

The presidential election and the campaign which preceded it occupied a large part of the attention of the people of the United States throughout the year 1916. June 5, the Woman's party was organized and opened its first convention in Chicago. Two days later both the Republican and Progressive national conventions opened in Chicago. June 10, former President Theodore Roosevelt was nominated for president by the Progressives and Charles Evans Hughes, associate justice of the United States Supreme court and former governor of New York, was nominated by the Republicans. The Republicans nominated Charles W. Fairbanks of Indiana for vice president and the Progressives named John M. Parker of Louisiana as Roosevelt's running mate. June 16, the Democratic national convention convened in St. Louis and the following day President Wilson and Vice President Marshall were renominated without opposition. June 20, Colonel Roosevelt declined the Progressive

nomination and the majority of the members of the Progressive national committee, meeting in Chicago, endorsed the candidacy of Mr. Hughes.

The election on November 7 was one of the most unusual ever held in the United States, the result not being definitely known until three days after the election, when the final count in California gave the 13 electoral votes of that state to President Wilson and gave him victory. President Wilson won 276 votes in the electoral college and Mr. Hughes 255. The vote cast in the election was larger by several million than any ever cast before in the United States, President Wilson receiving a plurality of about 400,000 in the popular vote. The great increase in the size of the vote was due partly to the fact that women voted for president in this election in 12 states.

Four more states voted to adopt state-wide prohibition in this election. They were Michigan, Montana, Nebraska and South Dakota. The Democrats retained control of the United States senate, but as a result of the close election, neither of the two major parties has a majority in the lower house of the next congress. The balance of power is held by five members not elected as members of either party—1 Socialist, 1 Progressive, 1 Prohibitionist, 1 Protectionist and 1 Independent.

DISASTERS ON LAND AND SEA

Thousands of lives were lost during the year by the sinking of merchant vessels and warships as a result of their being torpedoed by submarines or blown up by mines. The greatest loss of life in accidents or attacks of this kind occurred February 26, when the French cruiser Provence was sunk in the Mediterranean sea, and 3,130 persons were drowned. April 23, more than 1,000 lives were lost in a collision between a Chinese cruiser and a transport.

February 2, the Japanese liner Paljin was sunk in a collision and 160 lives were lost.

February 9, the French cruiser Admiral Charrier was torpedoed and sunk with a loss of 374 lives. February 16, nine persons were killed when the opera house at Mexia, Tex., was destroyed by fire. February 20, great snowslides in the Salzburg Alps killed nearly 100 persons. February 22, ten persons were killed in a triple collision on the New York, New Haven & Hartford railroad, near Bridgeport, Conn. February 29, an explosion in a mine at Kempton, W. Va., killed 15 men.

March 5, the Spanish steamer Principe de Asturias struck a rock and sank off the coast of Brazil, with a loss of 300 lives.

March 28, 25 persons were killed and many were injured in a collision on the New York Central railroad near Cleveland, O.

April 19, Kansas and Missouri were swept by tornadoes which killed 17 persons. June 5, tornadoes killed 57 persons in Arkansas and 49 in other middle western states. May 8, the steamer Kirby sank in Lake Superior and 20 lives were lost. May 15, an explosion in the Du Pont powder plant at Glibstown, N. J., killed 13 men.

Hundreds of fishermen were lost in a monsoon off the Ceylon coast. July 20, July 24, 23 men were killed by an explosion of gas in a water tunnel at Cleveland, O. A trolley wreck at Johnstown, Pa., took a toll of 25 lives. August 12, August 29, the United States cruiser Memphis was wrecked by a storm in the harbor at Santo Domingo and 41 lives were lost.

Twenty-seven men were killed September 12, when the central span of a great bridge being built over the St. Lawrence river at Quebec, collapsed and fell. September 18, a great dam near Hannwald, Bohemia, burst and 300 persons were drowned. A fire in the Christian Brothers college at St. Louis, Mo., killed nine men, October 5, and 19 persons lost their lives in a fire which destroyed a hospital at Farnham, Que., October 26. November 3, the steamers Connemara and Retriever were sunk by a collision in the Irish sea and 92 were lost. On November 7, 50 lives were lost when a Boston "L" car plunged off a bridge. An explosion at Bakurizta, Russia, November 21, resulted in the death of 341 persons.

THE LAWMAKERS

Congress was in session continuously from January 4, when it reassembled after the Christmas holidays, until September 8. Early in the session a hot fight developed over the Philippine bill passed by the house. The senate adopted the Clarke amendment providing for the granting of full independence to the Philippines within from two to four years. May 1, the house rejected the Clarke amendment and on August 16 the senate accepted a compromise pledging independence to the Philippines when the Filipinos are fit for self-government.

February 2, the house passed a bill prohibiting child labor in the manufacture of products for interstate commerce, and late in the session the bill was passed by the senate and signed by the president. February 18, the senate ratified the Haitian treaty, providing for American supervision of the finances and police regulation of the republic.

Legislation providing for large increases in the strength of the army and navy received much attention. The navy appropriation bill, as finally passed, provided for the building of 157 ships during the next three years. The army bill, as passed, carried appropriations of \$313,970,447 for the ensuing fiscal year, an increase of \$131,067,091 over the amount carried by the bill as it first passed the house. Copyright, 1916, by the McClure Newspaper Syndicate.