ands are injured and homeless because of a frightful explosion, and the fire which followed it to-day. All the extreme north end of the city is devastated. The city is cut off from telesraphis communication with the world, and this message is being sent by special train to Truro, there to be put on the wire.

simple

5 AND

The disaster was caused primarily by the Beigian relief steamer, the loma, going out and a French munition steamer, the Mount Blanc, entering the harbor coming into collision. | are a mere heap of shattered, flattened Then the munitions ship took fire and the crew left her. They landed on the Dartmouth shore, and soon after the ship flew up, with 5,000 tons of high explosives. The Belgian ship told only too plainly of serious injurwas beached on the shore of the har- les or in many cases death. bor opposite Halifax. Fragments of the ship and her munitions were scatthat part of the city.

HUNDREDS OF DEAD.

Great structures were unroofed and demolished. The water-front was wrecked from the C. G. R. terminals northward to Fairview, two miles distance; and westward half a mile almost to the Northwest Arm, which bounds thereby on that side. The people were killed as they stood in their houses along the water-front and others met death by the crashing structures which made escape impossible. In a few minutes fires broke out in scores of places, and k soon the northeastern portion of the city was in flames. This included the drydock buildings, the railway stations, the dockyard and every structure on the water-front northwards, while west of that strata for half a mile there is complete destruction by fire. youd that area the buildings are wrocked and twisted out of shape, one theusand houses at least being burned or wrecked. The houses not completely wrecked in the north end are absolutely windowless and uninhabitable. No house in the entire city escaped the destruction of its glass, some of the dwellings in the distant south end even losing all their glass and all of them a large portion of it. No man can yet tell the number of dead. Your correspondent counted 200 dead, and it is not likely that one- with enquiries as to whether they

lief steamer, whose name is Wiliam their gaze once more to the funeral tabilisized by formal investigation by the authorities. Pilot Hayes has not een seen since the entastrophe either at the office of the pilot commission

or his home.

DETAILS OF DISASTER. Halifax, N. S., Report - As the resuit of a terrific explosion aboard the French munition ship Mont Blanc in Metifax harbor this morning a large part of the north end of the city and slong the water-front is in ruins and the loss of life is appailing. Conservative estimates place the death list at 800, aithough Chief of Police Hanrahan to-night estimated that the dead may reach two thousand. Twenty- five teams loaded with bodies have arrived at one of the morgues. On one ship alone 40 persons were killed. Thousands have been injured. The property damage is enormous, and there is scarcely a window left in a building

in the city. Among the dead are the fire chief death when a fire engine exploded. I on of whistles sounded by the Bel-Fire followed the explosion and this gian relief steamer. added to the greatest catastrophe in the history of the city.
Two members of the crew

H. M. C. Niobe were killed and a number injured. All business has been suspended

and armed guards of soldiers and sailors are patrolling the city. Not a street car is moving, and part

of the city is in darkness. All the hospitals and many private houses are filled with injured The offices of the rallway station.

Arena Rink, Military gymnasium, susar refinery and efevator collapsed and injured scores of pecule.

New York for Bedford Basin when she collided with a Belgian relief ship bound for sea. The erew of the munition ship were all saved. The pilot claims the collision was due to con- The magazine was flooded, and by fusion of signal whistles.

Following the collision the explosion occurred, and in an instant the whole city was shaken from its foundation. Thousands rushed for the open, and some of the little children in the schools became panie stricken. on every street dould be seen adults from their wounds rushing to the hearest doctor's office. The work of rescue was greatly impeded by the plies of debris in the devostated & da.

is also in ruins. Nearly all the buildings in the dock-

rard are in ruins.

Practically all the north end of the eity has been laid in waste. TWO SQUARE MILES LEVELLED. The destruction extends from North

street railway station, north, as far north as Africville to Bedford Basin, and covers about two square miles. The buildings which were not destroyed by the explosion were laid waste by the fire which followed. Thousands of people have been rendered homeless. The Academy of

Music and many other public buildings have been thrown open to house

the home Five hundred tents have been erect. ed on the common, and these will be occupied by the troops, who have given up their barracks to house the homeless women and children. Temperary hospitals and morgues

have been opened in the school-

Hailfax, N. S., Report -Many hun- | houses in the western section of the drens of people are dead and thous- city. The doctors and nurses worked heroically in rendering aid to the injured.

STREET AFTER STREET IN RUINS The main damage, however, was done in the north end of the city, known as Richmond, which was opposite the point of the vessels' colli-

The damage is so extensive as to be totally beyond the field of description. Street after street is in ruins and flames swept over the district.

In this section many of the larger buildings are a smouldering heap of ruins and the ordinary frame houses ruins.

Automobiles scurried here there in this section of the city, each bearing a blanket-clad burden which The hospitals, each and every one

with admirable order, were rendertered all over the northern part of ing aid, and in the military hospitals the city, and the violence of the ex- the soldiers who were on guard duty plosion wrecked all the buildings in were being hurried into the wards to aid in the relief. Five minutes after the explosion

occurred the streets were filled with a terror-stricken mob of people, each one trying to make his way as best he might to the outskirts in order to be out of the range of what they thought was a German raid.

"Women rushed in terror-striken mobs through the streets, many of them with children clasped to their breasts. In their eyes was a look of terror as they struggled in mobs through the streets with blood-stained faces and endeavored to get away anywhere from the falling masonry and crumbling walls.

Py the wire and lath-littered roadsides as they were passed there could be seen the remains of what once had been human being; row sadly torn

Here and there by a cracked and shattered telegraph pole was the cloth-wrapped body of a tiny tot scarred and twisted in the force of the horrible explosion which had withered all in its path.

By the side of many of the burning ruins were women, who watched with horror the flames as they consumed the houses, which in many cases held the bodies of loved ones. With dry eyes they watched their homes perish in the flames, and as others passed The -blame for the collision is could render any aid they shook their placed on the pilot of the Belgian re- heads in a dazed manner, and turned this will have to be es pyre of those whom they held dear.

WHOLE FAMILIES WIPED OUT. Among the hundreds who were killed by the explosion was one partieularly sad case of a Canadian Government employe named Macdonald, who, on rushing to his home after the explosion, found that all his family, consisting of his wife and four children, had perished. Before him on the roadway was the mangled remains of his two-year-old child, who had met death while playing on the roadside. Many of those composing the crews of ships in the harbor were killed and

injured. The damage along the water front is very serious. On one steamer, the Picton, it is reported that 33 of the crew of 42 have been killed. Many bodies of seamen have been picked up in the harbor and rescue parties are at work among the ruins of buildings removing the

bodies of the dead. Pilot Frank Mackie, who was on the French munition ship. declares and his deputy. They were hurled to that the accident was due to a con-

CITY COMPLETELY ISOLATED All the telegraph wires were destroyed, and when the explosion occurred the operators jumped from their keys and raced for the open. All the telephones were also put out of order. For a time Halifax was completely isolated from the outside world.

After the explosion the whole population was thrown into a state of excitement by the report that a second munition ship, or the magazine at the dockyard, might blow up. Automobiles rushed through the streets warning the people to rush to The Mont Blane was bound from the open spaces in the south end of the city. In less than half an hour 5000 people, lightly clad, had gathered on the common, and hundreds of others sought refuge in the fields. moon all the danger was passed. Scores of people are reported miss-

ing, and it is not known whether they are dead or at the homes of friends. The concussion shattered the big gasometer, and thousands of feet of gas escaped. All the power plants in the city are cut of business and the and children with blood streaming newspaper offices have een so badly wrecked that publication of the

papers is impossible. Bluejackets from an American warship are assisting in patrolling the A part of the town of Dartmouth streets to-night. Among the dead is Lebaron Cole-

man ,manager of the Canadian Express Company. He was killed at North street station when the roof collapsed.

AT THE HOSPITALS It was a day of suffering at the Victoria General Hospital. Suffering

for the unfortunate women, men and ehildren who had been so grievously injured, suffering for the unhurt, who waited within awaiting news of the condition of their loved ones, in many cases to hear later that they had passed to the great beyond. Suffering for the doctors, nurses and volunteer workers, who so nobly administered aid to the wounded and

dving. Every available nook and cranny of the spactous building was made ready for those who had been injured. It was very shortly after the explesion occurred that the first cases were brought in, and from then dur-

ing the day and evening, in fact, all night, the hospital worners were con-tinually working their uttermost, showing the most devoted attention to all the serious cases which came in at all hours.

The slight casualties, those who suffered slight cuts from the falling glass in or out of the houses and buildings, received prompt aid, and were sent to their homes. But there were many very serious cases. Some of the women were seized with hemorrhages and others were frightfully gashed, and among them people who were practically beyond recognition.

In conversation with one of the rescuers, the Canadian Press was informed that the suffering of the badlywounded victims was intense. One man had been brought in who had no race on his person of having been cut by glass, and in her opinion he was suffering from shock alone,

MANY DIED IN HOSPITAL. For some who were brought in early no hopes of recovery were emtertained, and before long the deathroll received its first victims. Toward evening 25 citizens had passed away and had been brought to one of the morgues, and then there were other cases who, it was feared, would

breathe their last before morning. Despite the fact that many of the devoted workers, both ladies and gentlemen, had relations of whose fortunes they knew nothing, they bravely responded to the call of duty and stood to their guns, day and night. There will be many men and women in Halifax who will speak from experience of the wonderful care and attention which they received at the Victoria Ceneral Hospital.

SAW THE COLLISION. Charles Prest, gasoline engineer on the steamer Wasper B., at the drydock, tells the following story:

"We had 80 gallons of gasoline in both tanks, which exploded when a shell from the munition ship struck the Wasper B. The latter had just left the drydock to go to Redford Basin to get some plates from one of the troopers, and as the ship was opposite the Lorne Club, we saw the Belgian relief ship, the Ioma, coming down from the basin, and the Mont Blane going up.

"I heard the Belgian steamer's whistle blowing, and the only thing I remember after was No. 1 hold of the munition ship on fire on the star-

board side. "We made an attempt to turn back toward the officials at the drydock. but before reaching there a shell struck us. I think that I was the only one of the five on board the Wasper B. to escape, as the ship was blown up. My son, Harold Prest, who worked at the drydock, was killed." Colonel Mackenzie Bell, who was

over two years on the firing line in Flanders, says that he never saw anything on the battle-front to equal the scenes in Halifax to-day.

AID FROM BOSTON. Boston Report -Governor McCall, on learning of the disaster at Halifax Mayor of Halifax, to be delivered in person by Mr. Ratshesky: "I am sending A. C. Ratshesky, of the Massachusetts Public Safety Commission, immediatery to your city, with a corps of our best state surgeons and nurses in the belief that they may be of service to you in this hour of need. I need hardly say to you that we have the strongest affection for the people of your city, and that we are anxious to do everything possible for their assistance at this time. Kindly express to the people of your city the very deep sympathy of the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and assure them that we are ready to answer any call that they may make upon us. Massachusetts stands ready to go the limit in rendering every assistance you may be in need of.

"Won't you please call upon Mr. Ratshesky for every help you need? The Commonwealth of Massachusetts will stand back of Mr. Ratshesky in

"Realizing that time is of the utmost importance we have despatched the train.

Lieut.-Col. William A. Brooks, acting chief surgeon of the State Guard. was placed in charge of the unit of surgeons and nurses. Officials of the Boston and Maine, the Maine Central and the Canadian railroads promptly made all arrangements to put the train through in record time.

The War Department was asked to use its wireless to inform Mayor of Halifax that the relief train was coming. The train consists of two baggage cars, two sleepers, and a buffet

The decision to send the relief party was made at the meeting of the Public Safety Commission and officers of the State Guard, called by Governor McCall. President James H. Hustis, of the Beston and Maine Railroad, told the committee that he would have the train ready by 10 p.m. Chairman Victor Heath, of the Boston Public Safety Committee. promised the co-operation of the city authori-He said the Boston committee had funds which cou'd be drawn

On motion by Bernard J. Rothwell. former president of the Chamber of Commerce, the meeting went on record as ready to back by popular subscription any expenses that might be found necessary in the relief work.

MAINE ALSO IN LINE. Augusta, Maine, Report- Governor Milliken to-day sent the following telegram to the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia and the Mayor of Hali-

"I extend to you the deepest sympathy of the people of Maine in the terrible disaster that has stricken Halifax. Any help Main can give is vours."

Five carlcads of supplies, including additional telegraph material, groceries, and dry goods, left Portland to-night by special train for Halifax. OCCURRED NEAR PIER EIGHT.

The collision, which occurred between the two steamers, took place rear Pier Eight, and was between a Trench munition ship, the Mont Plane, and an unnamed Belgian relief ship.

The Mont Blane lies in the narrows a shattered wreck, while the statement here to-night by Lieut. Beigian relief boat is beached on the Frank Conner, interpreter for the Dartmouth side of the harbor, near mission.

what is known as Tuft's Cove. At 9 o'clock the city was enjoying its usual period of calm, and the streets were crowded with people wending their way, little thinking of

what was in a few minutes to befall

Suddenly, like a bolt from the blue; there came an explosion. From one end of the city to the other glas fell and people were lifted from the sidewalks and thrown flat into the streets. In the downtown offices, just beginning to hum with the usual day's activities, clerks and heads alike were covered under the shower of falling glass and plaster which fell about them.

The collision was a terrific one, the munition boat being pierced on the port side practically to the engine-

The relief vessel, which was practically uninjured, kept going ahead with the wounded craft, and when the fire was seen to break aboard her. backed away, and the crew started to abandon her.

The Mont Blanc drifted away, a burning wreck, while the relief boat beached near Tuft's Cove, on the Dartmouth side of the harbor, Seventeen minutes after the collision the explosion occurred. Under the force of the explosion houses crumpled like decks of cards, while the unfortunate residents were swept to death in the

In the main portion of the city. where the buildings are more or less of stone or concrete, the damage was confined to the blowing in of windows, and the injuries sustained by the citizens were in the main due to the cuts from flying glass. Proceeding south to the extreme end of the city. the same thing was observed.

In the west end, and abrthwest end, the damage was more extensive, and the walls of the houses were in places blown to atoms and the plaster and laths strewn on the streets more like a small section of Flanders than a town or city of Canada.

CREW ESCAPED IN BOATS. In addition to her cargo of munitions the Mont Blanc carried a deckload of benzine, and this caught fire following the expiosion. The captain of the Mont Blanc ordered his crew to take to the boats. The men hastily left the ship in two boats and rowed for the Halifax side of the harbor, which they reached in safety.

The men ran for safety as they felt that an explosion was inevitable. Less than 20 minutes later the explosion occurred and the men were hur! ed flat on the ground. The munition ship after the crew

left her veered in towards the Halifax side of the harbor, and the city received the full force of the explos-The rescuers, who were early on

the scene, say that the sights in the Public schools at the north end of the city were pitiable. They found the bodies of dozens of little children and scores of others with broken limbs and covered with blood.

### ADMIT GUILT

#### German Agents in 'Frisco Would Prevent Exposure.

San Francisco Wite -Three of the most prominent of the thirty-four defendants on trial, charged with conspiracy to foment revolution against British rule in India, pleaded guilty in the United States District Court. They were Lieut. von Brincken, former military attache of the German Consulate-General here; Geo. Rodiek, former German Consul at Honolulu, and H. A. Schroeder, who succeeded Rodiek as Consul at Honolulu.

Lieut. von Brincken furnished the reason for the sudden change in the plans of the former German consular agents, which came to a dramatic opening to court to-day.

"I think we can serve our country best by pleading guilty, and avoiding further exposures in court proceed-ings," he said. "The less said about the cases the better it will be for Ger-

# many. NOT NEGOTIATING

Official Denial of Lies by Teutons.

### 'No Truth in the Shameful Statement."

London Cable - Quoting Austrian and German official statements concerning a Roumanian proposal for the negotiation of an armistice, a British official announcement to-night says: There is no truth whatever in this shameful 'statement.' The Berlin War Office statement

reads: "The negotiations between the Germans and Russians for an armistice are extending to the Roumanian

The following official statement has been issued from Austrian general headquarters: "The commander-inchief of the Russian-Roumanian And Takes Him From Sutroops between the Dneister and the Black Sea yesterday afternoon approached Archduke Joseph and Field Marshal von Mackensen with a proposal for introducing negotiations re-garding an armistice. Our army leaders answered in the affirmative leaders answered in the affirmative

ried to President Wilson by members of the American Red Cross Mission to Roumania, which landed at a Pacific port yesterday, according to a

# ENEMY UNAWARE SUPPING LOSS

Of British Troops From 16 of These Were Over the Bourlen Wood Salient.

# Greatest Quality.

London Cable - The withdrawal of the British from a small Cambrai salient, foreshadowed by Gen. Maurice: Chief Director of Military Operations at the Britsh War Offce, has been successfully carried out withcut the Germans appearing to be aware of the movement until the foilowing morning.

The text of Sir Douglas Haig's statement from headquarters reads: "On the night of Tuesday our troops holding the salient formed by our positions in the neighborhood of Noyelles-Sur-L'Escaut and Bourion Wood. were withdrawn a short distance to a position southwest of these localities. The withdrawal was made successfully without interference from the enemy, who, until a late hour yesterday, appeared not to be aware of the movement.

"Prior to the withdrawal the enemy's field works in the abandoned area were systematically destroyed. "Further hostile attacks yesterday evening in the neighborhood of La small smiling vessels, it was officially Vacquerie were repulsed. Local fighting continued in this locality during the night. Southwest of the village our line has been advanced slightly." The night report from Field Marshal Haig's headquarters says: "Local fighting has taken place again to-day in the neighborhood of a Vacquerie without any change in the situation. In the area south of Bourlon Wood, minor hostile attacks were repulsed with severe loss to the enemy from the fire of our artillery and infantry. "The hostile infant:y has been active at a number of points south of the Scarpe and also in the neighbor-

hood of Armentieres." The Reuter correspondent at British deadquarters in France sends the Epilowing:

'General Byng has realized Napoleon's definition of a general's greatest quality, 'to know when to

retreat and to do it.' "We have fallen back deliberately and successfully on a well-chosen fire, which rules out the salient made by Bourion Wood, and should enable us to maintain our hold upon the captured length of the Hindenburg line against any pressure."

THE GERMAN VERSION In their retirement in the Cambral sector the War Office says the British destroyed villages, leaving traces there and in the city of Cambrat previously damaged, which will long be

visible on French soil. The British are reported to have withdrawn to the heights north and east of Flasquires.

The losses suffered by the British in the Cambrai region are said to have been heavy. The number of prisoners taken has been increased to more than 9,000, and the number of guns captured to 148.

## BRITISH GAINS IN MESOPOTAMIA

Flood Caused by Turks Failed to Stop Allies

Who Were Aided by Russian Force.

London, Cable,-The British official (north of Bagdad) and on the left bank of the Diala River, the Turks continued to hold a position in the hills and on the right bank of that river north of Balyablas. General Marshall resorts that this position was attacked on the morning of Menday by conversing educates are of which successfully bridges the Diala far Kizil Robat.

The Asy attempted to delay our advance by flooding the srea between Nahrin and the Diala River close to their function, but the morning of Tuesday our

function, but the morning of Tuesday our troops had driven back the Turks and were in possession of the Sakal Tutan Pass, through which the road from Dely Abbas leads north.

"A force of Pussians under command of Col. Bicharakov operated on our right "Prisoners to the number of he and two ffeld guns were captured."

# WAR COUNCIL

French Premier Wants Foch Near Himself

preme Body.

Paris, Cable.-General Fech leaders answered in the affirmative and deputations will proceed with peace negotiations."

KINGS DECLARATION.

A Facific Port, Cable —A. message from King Ferdinand, of Roumania.

Roumania.

Roumania.

A facific Port, Cable —A. message from king Ferdinand, of Roumania.

A facific Port, Cable —A. message from king ferdinand, of Roumania.

declaring his country would never and have agreed with him to replace him at Weygand, who was recently promoted to General of Division." Questioned as to what was being accomplished at the Versailles council, M.

Clemenceau said; "What is being realized at Versailles: What is being realized at versalities.
Why, united military action of the allies.
The committee has to draw up plans and replies to a whole series of questions concerning ali the allied fronts, and it will develo itself to this with zeal."

1.600 Ton Limit.

#### Byng Showed General's Two Italian Vessels Sunk in Same Time.

London Cable - Sixteen British merchantmen of more than 1,600 tons were sunk by mines or submarines in the past week, according to the admiralty statement to-night. One vessel under 1,600 tons and four fishing vessels also were sunk

The admiralty summary follows: Arrivals, 2174; sailings, 1133. British merchantmen over 1,600 tons sunk by mine or submarine, 16; under 1,606 tons, 1. Fishing craft, 4. British vessels unsuccessfully attacked, including one previously,

eight The losses to British shipping by mine or submarine the previous week comprised fourteen merchant-

men of 1,600 tons or over, and seven of less than that tonnage. TWO ITALIAN SHIPS SUNK.

Rome Cable - Rosses of Italian shipping from submarine activity during the week ended December 2 were one steamer of more than 1,500 tons, one under that tonnage and three announced to-day.

# REACHED DEPTH OF 6,000 YARDS

Late Hun Thrust Through Haig's Gun Positions.

#### Some Adjustment of British Line Necessary.

London Cable - Speaking of the German attacks on the British salient in the Cambrai area, Gen. Maurice. Chief Director of Military Operations

at the War Office, said to-day: "The enemy has to a certain extent got us into an awkward position, and some adjustment of our line may be necessary. We may have to make slight withdrawals on the north of the

salient. "There is little doubt," continued Gen. Maurice, "that the latest German attacks have been planned and superintends by Gen. von Ludendorff himself. Von Ludendorff's plan was a thoroughly good one, as most of the German

plans are. "It was an attack on both flanks of our salient followed by an attack in

force on the centre. "His attacks on our north and centre failed completely, but en his left the enemy succeeded in breaking through a part of our front. He attacked not only our new front, but on a part of the line as it existed before. to the south. He succeeded in effecting a surprise and broke through to a depth of nearly 6,000 yards-clear through our gun positions. But we promptly drove him back two-thirds

of the distance covered. "One cannot say the Germans have not made substantial gains as a result of this effort. When you are in a narrow salient, even a small inroad on one's flanks increases greatly the difficulty of holding the salient and supplying the men in it. The supply to the men on certain portions of our front has now become a matter of

considerable difficulty." After alluding to the readjustment of the line that might be necessary to communication desting with the operations in Mesopotamia says: "After the action of Oct. 20, in which we established on the Jobet Hamrin range (north of Bagdad) and on the left bank. British guns. The last British guns he captured were four from a territorial battery behind the French lines in the battle of Ypres, in May, 1915, during the first gas attack. then we had not lost a single gun on the western front and have captured 650 of the enemy's, of which 510 were captured in 1917.

The number of guns we captured at Cambrai is 138. The Germans claim 100 of ours, and I am not yet able to tell exactly how far this claim is true, as complete returns, from the hatteries, are not yet in, but the prompt!tude of the announcement and the round number used leads to suspicion. I believe the Germans have ncluded in the count numbers of trench mortars, and, therefore this number would be subject to a large discount. The same probably is true of the 6,000 prisoners which is claim-

\$35,000 of Ambergris in a Lump. A prize lump of ambergris secured by the whaling brig Viola is reported

by Capt. John A. Cook, of Provinceton, owner of the vessel. The chunk of ambergris taken from a sperm whale captured just south of Cape Hatteras, weighed 121 pounds, and was valued at \$35,000. Each man of a crew of sixteen will have a share in the prize. Another old whaling barque of the New Bedford fleet returned to port recently after a four-years' cruise.

This was the Wanderer, built at Mattapoisett in 1878 and still apparently as sound as the day she was launched. The Wanderer had pretty good luck on her return cruise. In all she took 6.200 barrels of sperm oil, valued at \$160,000. Most of this was sent home via the Azores and Barbadoes. Capt. Antoine

Edwards, commander of the vessel. Hr. ured that an average catch of \$10.000 year was not so bad these days.

A square deal is as broad -