

DECISION TENDS TOWARDS PEACE

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the prey of desolation, misery and death. A Bulgarian delegate observed that the Turks were much mistaken if they delayed the conference hoping to strengthen their army with troops from Asia. These reinforcements were chiefly composed of undisciplined Hashi-Babouks, who would prove a serious danger to the Turks.

Prepare for Resumption.
In the meantime the allies are concentrating greater forces along the Thracian front to enable them, if war is resumed, to arrive at Constantinople within a few days.

The prevailing opinion is that the various postponements are aiming at intervention by the powers. Turkey hopes to obtain better terms through the powers, some of whom have predominant interests in the Ottoman Empire.

The Balkan delegates, especially the Serbians and Montenegrins, expressed dissatisfaction with the statement made Wednesday by Marquis Di Sola, Italian Foreign Minister, concerning the aims of the triple alliance and remark that Italy had a unique position in the Balkans, being herself a nation, not a nationality through the union of kingdoms. They expected her support in a similar movement by the Balkans.

In voicing their objections these delegates point out that the Italian government has followed a policy strongly favorable to Austria, receiving the triple alliance seven months before the date of its expiration. The Greek proposals will be more complicated than those of the other allies, because they include the question of capitulations, which Greece has long among the Balkan states, as a Turkey with the great powers. The capitulations, originally granted on Turkey by the republic of Venice in 1453, include exemption from taxation or foreign subjects, appointment of other privileges. Greece is anxious to accept a clause in the treaty with Turkey, promising to reduce the right to capitulations when the other powers do the same.

CASE GOES TO JURY

Chicago, December 19.—The case of George W. Fitzgerald, former teller in the United States Subtreasury here, accused of embezzling \$173,000, went to the jury to-day, after being on trial five weeks.

The government attorneys charge that investigation of Fitzgerald's affairs shows that he suddenly became into possession of big sums of money after the disappearance of the package of large bills from the Subtreasury. Fitzgerald has offered evidence to show that he obtained the money legitimately. He asserted many other persons besides himself had access to the safe in the money vault.

It is estimated it has cost the Federal government about \$100,000 to prosecute Fitzgerald. This includes the six years' preliminary investigation made by the government before Fitzgerald was placed on trial.

Because of the illness of Harold C. Russell, a juror from Oswego, Ill., the jurors were ordered to their hotel to-night. Deliberations will be resumed

tomorrow morning if Russell's condition permits. He is not thought to be seriously ill.

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During this confinement Davis confessed to having been guilty of grafting, and it is said implicated other stewards. This confession is said also to have been the basis of revelations which brought certain contractors at several ports from Boston to Norfolk under suspicion.

SHOT BY MEMBER OF LEGISLATURE

T. O. Ranier and W. H. Y. Hudgins Wounded After Encounter With J. T. Christian.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]
Mathews, Va., December 19.—As the result of an altercation which is alleged to have occurred at Blakes, in this county, on last Friday night, T. O. Ranier and W. H. Y. Hudgins were shot and injured by J. T. Christian, representative in the last General Assembly from the counties of Mathews and Middlesex. Ranier is said to be in a serious condition, with a bullet in his groin, close to his abdomen. Hudgins' injury consists of a slight flesh wound.

The shooting is understood to have been the result of an encounter between Ranier and Christian, which took place in Hudgins' store, at Blakes. Ranier, it is alleged, at-

tempted to shoot Christian, but Hudgins took the gun away from him, and he left the store. Within a few minutes Christian is said to have obtained possession of the pistol and he ran after Ranier and shot him, the first ball taking effect. In the scuffle to take the gun away from Christian after he had shot Ranier, Hudgins received a flesh wound.

Immediately after the shooting Christian, it is asserted, disappeared from the scene, and he has not yet returned to this neighborhood.

There have been no warrants issued in the case, but some action is likely when it is known what the result of Ranier's wound will be.

HEAVY SALE OF SEALS

New York, December 19.—The sale of Red Cross Christmas seals throughout the United States this season will bring between \$100,000 and \$200,000 to aid in the fight against tuberculosis, according to reports received here to-day from all over the United States by the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis. More than 100,000,000 seals have been distributed for the campaign among 100,000 agents. This year's sales, it is expected, will surpass those of last year by from \$500,000 to 1,000,000 seals.

FEDERAL GRAND JURY MAY TAKE UP CHARGES

Question of Criminal Proceedings in Hands of District Attorney.

GRONER MAKES STATEMENT

Court of Inquiry Will Resume Commissary Investigation To-Day.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Norfolk, Va., December 19.—District Attorney D. Lawrence Groner to-day intimated that criminal proceedings may be instituted at the January term of the Federal grand jury in Alexandria against contractors alleged to have conspired with and bribed commissary stewards to defraud the government in the purchase of food supplies for battleships of the Atlantic fleet. Mr. Groner, representing the Department of Justice, has attended every session of the naval court of inquiry, which was convened about three weeks on board the battleship Vermont to investigate alleged graft in the commissaries.

When asked to discuss the commissary affairs, the district attorney declined to state his plans, likewise refusing to say whether he considered the evidence secured so far sufficient to get convictions. He explained that, though attending the court of inquiry as district attorney, he was hardly more than a spectator, the matter being thus far entirely in the hands of the court of inquiry. However, the district attorney gave the following written statement:

"Developments to this date do not warrant a statement from the district attorney as to his intentions with regard to the question of criminal prosecution of government contractors.

There will be no regular grand jury term of Federal court here before May, but if the district attorney is of the opinion that he has sufficient evidence to secure convictions he may decide to present the cases of the contractors alleged to be implicated in grafting to the Federal grand jury in Alexandria which will be in session there after January 6.

Mr. Groner declined absolutely to say positively whether he would take this action or not, but it is generally understood in Norfolk that he will do so, if after reviewing the great mass of testimony taken by the court of inquiry he considers it sufficient upon which to ask for convictions.

The court of inquiry did not meet either Wednesday or to-day, but will resume the hearing of testimony tomorrow. Captain Arthur T. Marix, judge advocate general, has been away since Tuesday night, and it is said that besides conferring with officials of the Navy Department and the Department of Justice he has learned important new evidence during his absence. He is expected in Norfolk tomorrow morning.

Officers of the court of inquiry are extremely reticent concerning the investigation, but it is diffused here on good authority that the principal efforts of the government at present are directed at the contractors, and that stewards of the battleships are being given immunity in exchange for valuable evidence against contractors.

Since the discovery of irregularity on the part of George T. Davis, commissary steward on board the battleship Louisiana, the duties of the commissary steward have been temporarily in charge of Charles Benight, a seaman. So sharp has been the contrast between the fare given by Benight and short rations said to have been furnished by Davis that the crew has appointed committees to wait on Captain

Welles in the interest of having the seaman appointed steward permanently. Davis has been reduced to rank of yeoman.

The men say they are getting better fare than for a long time preceding removal of Davis, who was confined in the brig of the ship last September under suspicion by Captain Welles.

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