



Wednesday

10 September, 1919.

3 roubles.

TIFLIS. No. 6.

Editorial Office: Solotaky street, No 1, International Hotel.

THE GEORGIAN MAIL

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GEORGIA'S FAREWELL MESSAGE TO THE BRITISH TROOPS.

When you came to Georgia nine months ago you found us "putting our house in order" after the storms of war and revolution and aftermath of rebellion.

We, like you, had been fighting since 1914. The Black Sea was closed to traffic from the outer world. The mountain roads were difficult to traverse. The solitary railway line that ran to Baku and up the Caspian coast and then across and up to Rostov, joining us to the rest of the world, was occupied by military trains almost to the exclusion of all other traffic. We in Georgia were isolated. We had to carry on as best we could.

In 1917 came the Russian Revolution. It was an excellent event, one who knows of all the corruption of the old regime can look upon the revolution as anything but a blessing. The Russian Empire, being sold to the Germans. We who fought in the ranks of the Russian army were being sent to fight a losing fight. The old time strategy saw to it that we were not well equipped for war. When it realised that Sukhomlinov, the Russian War Minister for the first months of the war, was in German pay all the time; when one sees that Sturmer and Protopopov and the arch-fiend Rasputin all on Germany's side; then one can understand how impossible it was to think of victory. The Russian Army was sacrificed to German gold.

Then came the counter-revolution and all the promise of the revolution was cancelled. Bolshevism raised its head. The simple Russian soldiers were promised a Utopia. They left the front in droves. Fighting against the Germans ceased; civil war reigned in Georgia. Russians fought Russians.

There resulted for us a Turkish invasion. Then a German occupation. Bolshevism was at our doors. We fought against it. We defended our independence, and we proceeded to establish order out of the chaos that the break-up of the Russian army had caused.

Then came the Armistice. Germans and Turks alike were sent from our territory. And you British came instead.

Were we suspicious?... Yes. A year's anti-British propaganda had entered our people's minds. We had gone through so much. We were establishing firmly our independence. We were breathing freely

after a hard struggle. We did not know what the new arrivals would mean for us.

Soon we knew that the British were indeed our friends. We liked the British soldier. We admired his smartness and his health and strength. We admired his discipline and his splendid behaviour. He was a living propaganda for Great Britain. The excellence of his boots and uniform; his entire equipment, indeed,—all spoke of Britain's strength and thoroughness and of the value of British goods.

With the passing of the weeks our admiration and affection have increased. We got to know officers and men personally. We visited them and they visited us. We formed ties of friendship that will never be broken.

The British in the Caucasus have taught us that Great Britain is great indeed.

Now you are going away. We refused to believe that you would go. We buoyed ourselves up with the hope that the orders to evacuate the Caucasus would be cancelled. We knew that many of you had fought for years in Mesopotamia and in the Balkans; yet we were almost selfish enough to hope that you would stay.

We know how you have earned the thanks of all the world for your wonderful work on many fronts. Let us assure you that we also appreciate your work. We also are grateful to you. Your very presence here in Georgia has been sufficient to calm the troubled people. You have inspired us with something of your own great confidence and faith.

Georgia will never forget you. We Georgians hope that you will never forget us. Misunderstandings have occurred. They no longer exist. Doubts have been. There is belief now. Agitators have slandered you to us; we know that they have slandered us to you.

We have only a few farewell words to say, but we say them with all our hearts. They are words that you British know so well. They form an English phrase. So we say with all affection and sincerity—God bless you and keep you! God grant that all your future life be smooth!

AZERBAIDJAN.

The Volunteer Army's Wishes.

According to the Baku papers, General Baratoff has expressed to the Azerbaïdjan government the following wishes of the Volunteer Army.

The Volunteer Army Commanders would like to have Azerbaïdjan as an ally against Bolshevism.

It is desired to arrange a goods exchange between the regions of the Volunteer Army and Azerbaïdjan.

The permission of the Azerbaïdjan government to allow ships of the Volunteer Army to be repaired in the ports at Baku is requested.

On their part, the Volunteer Army will acknowledge the independence of Azerbaïdjan until the matter is settled at the Russian Constituent Assembly.

The opinion in Azerbaïdjan political circles is that an agreement can only be arrived at when the Volunteers withdraw their forces from Daghestan. It is also stated that this agreement is only possible if Georgia also participates in it.

An agreement has been made between representatives of industrial circles in Azerbaïdjan and the Kuban on the question of an interchange of goods.

Georgian Mussulmans on the Question of the Batoum Region.

The meeting of the representatives of Georgian Mussulmans in Batoum and the district has passed the following resolution unanimously:

"We representatives of the Georgian Mussulmans of the Batoum district (100 men) declare unanimously before

God and the whole world: We natives of the Batoum region are of the Mussulman religion but we are Georgians according to our language, culture and customs. We are Georgian Mussulmans. Territorially and economically, our country has always been included in our native-land—Georgia.

The present situation in the Batoum region is insupportable for the population. The people are deprived of their rights and are given no opportunity of participating in the administration. This encourages the irresponsible elements and makes the task of the transgressors of peace and order easier. The above hinder the peaceful development of the country.

The political, cultural and economic claims of the country, as well as the interests of all the people of Trans-Caucasia; the securing of mutual friendly relations and the prestige of the Great Powers demand the modification of the present situation of the re-

gion. Order must be settled and peaceful life secured for the people.

Realising that this is only possible if Mussulman Georgia is liberated and included in the Georgian Republic, we state our unalterable will and firm decision. Now and ever let Batoum and the Batoum region be united with their native land, Georgia, on the principle of wide autonomy and that the rights of small nations be acknowledged equal to ours within the limits of this autonomy.

This decision is to be stated to the Peace Conference and we ask the Georgian Government to take measures for the fulfilment of the same.

Before leaving Azerbaïdjan, General Shuttleworth sent a farewell message to the Azerbaïdjan Prime Minister, Ussubekov, thanking both the Government and the people for their expressions of friendship and for their warm leave-taking.

EDITORIAL.

Mr. Oliver Wardrop.

The arrival of Mr. Oliver Wardrop, C. M. G., Chief British Commissioner in Trans-Caucasia, is the outstanding event of the past week. If Mr. Wardrop had been King George himself he could not have had a greater reception. Tiflis streets were decorated with flags. Guards of honour were at the station. Music also. Georgian ministers as well as General Cory and British officers all turned up to receive him. The press has been unanimous in its praise of Mr. Wardrop, who not only knows Russia and the Caucasus intimately, but also has the very great advantage of being able to speak both Russian and Georgian languages.

Compensation.

Mr. Wardrop certainly had a great reception. Georgians did all they could to see that nothing was wanting in the warmth of their greeting. But one well-known diplomat was a little disappointed about one thing. He complained to another politician that no Union Jack had been placed on Mr. Wardrop's residence. The other politician admitted that this was a serious mistake. But suddenly he brightened up. "Well, never mind," he said consolingly. "We played the British National Anthem twice!"

Mis-representations.

To have a speech reported incorrectly is the nightmare of many public men. (There are some, of course, who dread still more that their utterances may not be mentioned at all.) We ourselves, in a humble way, have given many public lectures and have been represented in the newspapers as having said some very extraordinary things which called for urgent denials. There is a classic story, too, of the reporter who rang up a famous clergyman asking him for the text of his next day's sermon. "Wise as serpents, harmless as doves," was the reply. This appeared in the paper as "Why is a serpent as harmless as a dove?"

Colonel Haskell's Speech.

Colonel Haskell has just suffered from mis-interpretation. His speech before the Armenian Parliament was delivered in English. This was first translated into Russian and then into Armenian. The Armenian newspapers published the speech in Armenian. This was translated back into Russian and duly appeared in the local newspapers. But both Armenian and Russian versions were so far

wrong that Colonel Haskell had to write an immediate denial. He also stated that unless a correction appeared he would not again make any public utterance in Armenia.

The Y. M. C. A.

On September 1 the last dance took place in the Y. M. C. A. and the institute was closed. The evacuation of the Y. M. C. A. from Tiflis has already taken place. A special word of thanks is due to Mr. Phelps for the excellent work he has done here. In addition to the dances which were held regularly, there were cinema shows and concerts given in the Y. M. C. A. hall. The work of the Y. M. C. A. in Tiflis, like the work of the Y. M. C. A. in France and on every other front, has been invaluable. There was none of the old "hell-fire" preaching. Rather the Y. M. C. A. looked after the physical well-being of the men, which is very much more important to a tired soldier than a gloomy prayer meeting would have been.

Spiritual Welfare.

When we were in another town in the Caucasus we had a long argument with a certain chaplain. It was on Christmas Eve and a bleak chilly Christmas Eve it was. We lamented the fact that no concerts had been arranged for the troops on Christmas day. The chaplain exclaimed with heat that he had nothing to do with concerts or such entertainments. Men's "spiritual welfare" was his job, he said. And all our arguments that it was no use talking to a man about his spiritual welfare if he were cold and home-sick and had nowhere to go to at nights but had to wander about the damp streets, were in vain. Make him comfortable, we declared. See to it that he has some warm room to go to; see to it that he has games to play and books to read and tobacco to smoke, then his spiritual welfare will be insured. And this is precisely what the Y. M. C. A. had done throughout the war.

Chocolate Feeneesh.

As we write, the evacuation is going on. By the time this article is in print there will be very few soldiers left in Tiflis. On another page we publish a farewell message from Georgians to British troops. And now what will the children do? There will be no one to call "Johnny". There will be no one to greet as "Meester". There will be no one from whom a "ceegarette" can be cadged. In

fact, we might well describe the British withdrawal in two classic words—"Choc-o-lat Feeneesh". It is an epitaph that might be written over our departed bodies.

The English Language.

It is to be hoped that the many young people who have been picking up English since the arrival here of the British troops will continue their study of the language. There are a surprisingly large number of English-speaking Georgians. Some of them, of course, make mistakes: others speak perfectly good English, but of an unusual sort. For instance, one young lady of our (official) acquaintance referred to detachments of "equestrian and pedestrian troops". We also remember a Georgian colonel who told us how his horse had on one occasion been wounded at the front. "My boot", said he, "was filled with the gore of my steed". At first this remark struck us as being wrong. Then we realised that it was perfectly good—if strange—English. He told us subsequently that he had learned most of his English from the books of Sir Walter Scott.

Literature and Art.

Last Sunday, Mr. David Gham-bashidze, the genial representative of the Georgian Republic in London, took a party of us to see the Georgian Museum. The exhibits were most interesting. We saw *objets d'Art* of many kinds and some particularly interesting old Georgian manuscripts, including the famous "The Man in the Panther's Skin" by Shota Rustaveli. The Georgian Museum shows that Georgia has an independent history of her own, with her own independent arts and crafts. We British are, we must admit, not altogether an artistic people. Northern people seldom are. To us, who are ourselves a writer, it will ever be a matter of shame that the average well-educated Georgian knows more about our English literature than we ourselves do. And he knows the literature of his own country. Shakespeare and Scott are read in the schools here, and even modern authors are also widely known and read.

Fresh Air Fund.

We acknowledge with thanks donations of 1070 roubles from N. C. O.'s and men attached to Intelligence, and 1050 roubles from the 27th. Div. Signal Coy. R. E. By an error we stated that the amounts subscribed up to last week were fourteen pounds ten shillings. This should have been thirteen pounds ten shillings. The

total amount now subscribed is twenty pounds twelve shillings.

The "Georgian Mail".

The "Georgian Mail" will appear as usual next week. We will see that copies are sent immediately to Batoum.

Colonel Haskell's Speech: a Denial.

Tiflis, August 27, 1919.

Colonel Haskell, Allied Commissioner, wishes to announce that the remarks addressed by him to the Armenian Parliament have been so badly translated that the accounts which appeared in newspapers recently have not conveyed the true significance of his statements. This no doubt is due from the fact that Colonel Haskell spoke in English through an interpreter, who delivered the address in Russian, and after the accounts first published appeared in the Armenian language.

Georgian Workmen's Patriotism.

In order to support the young of the Georgian Republic, Georgian workmen consecrated August 1st labour on their behalf. All that they received for that day was to the army. Such patriotism is a part of Georgian workmen is a proof that Georgians of all classes are unanimous in the matter of the desire of their independence.

Taking Over German Ships.

SINGAPORE, JULY 27.

The German ships interned at Dutch Indies are being handed over at Batavia. The Freiberg, which was handed over on the 22nd inst., is to-day at Singapore, where she will be dry docked for examination. She will follow.

British officers and men are arriving from England for the purpose of manning the vessels.

Henry Ford's Libel Case.

A jury has awarded Mr. Henry Ford six cents damage in addition to costs against the *Chicago Tribune* for libelling him an anarchist. Mr. Ford sued for a million dollars. The Foreman of the Jury, Halett, when asked if the award of six cents expressed the feeling of the jury as to the case, replied: "It just about does. That certainly expresses our judgement".

A monument is shortly to be erected at Arlon, Belgium, in memory of the first French soldiers who fell in the Belgian soil.



RE-FITTING THE FLEET.

High-speed repairs for 27,856 ships.

details of the way in which warships damaged at the Dogger Bank and returned whole to the Fleet in record time were reported at the final meeting of the North-East Coast Institution of Engineers Shipbuilders at Newcastle, when a paper describing the ship repairs done on the North-East Coast during the war was presented by Mr. C. James and Mr. Launcelot E. Thorneycroft.

It was stated that 7,856 war vessels and merchantmen were dry-docked, repaired and over 20,000 repair-floats. Women nobly and effectively responded to the call made upon them, and some of the large battleships, for example, had been painted and coated by the women on the Admiralty floating dock. Women had even bravely undertaken such disagreeable dirty work as the chipping and sanding of the interiors of marine engines.

In a period of just under four years, during which the Admiralty pontoon was stationed at Jarrow Slake, upwards of 145 vessels, ranging from small minelayers to the very largest battleships, had been safely docked, repaired, and undocked. Many of these vessels were accommodated in the pontoon dock, and the Tyne became the natural refuge for the larger class of "lame ducks" from the Fleet. The *Lion*, after the Dogger Bank, 1,500 square feet of her outer bottom plating damaged, and arrived on the river drawing 37ft. forward, a vessel was heeled over 8deg. to enable four coffer dams to be fitted, the latter were then pumped dry, and a hundred and fifty tons of concrete with which the damaged parts had been filled had to be blasted out. Repairs to *Lion* occupied seven weeks. In the case of the super-dreadnought *Marlborough*, badly torpedoed at Jutland, time was of the greatest possible importance at that critical period. The firm entrusted with the work undertook to finish repairs in six weeks, and the proposition was ridiculed by many. The firm, however, agreed practically to do the job until it was finished, messing and sleeping arrangements were provided on a vessel alongside. The men worked from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., with intervals only for meals; a small night shift carrying special boat service was run between the firm's yard and the dock, and the expeditious transport of materials and the vessel undocked in the shortest time. It was a great performance.

Proposed bills of members of the Shipbuilders' Federation trebled during the war, increasing in four years by £50,000 per annum. Heavy de-

mands were still being made on them by the work of reconditioning enemy ships, captured or handed over, and released British ships, but it was hoped, with loyal support from the men, speedily to overtake arrears.

Rear-Admiral Slayter, Admiral-Superintendent at the Tyne, spoke of the absence of repair facilities at Scapa Flow when war broke out, and said that although ultimately Rosyth was completed and floating docks were brought north, it was on the great mother ports of the Tyne, Clyde, Barrow, and Liverpool that the Navy chiefs depended. The engineer officers of the Fleet worked magnificently in keeping ready to raise steam at four-hours' notice throughout four-and-a-half years of war, and it was a great moment after the enemy's surrender when the signal came to let fires out. By its repair work the Tyne earned the gratitude not only of the Navy, but the whole Empire.

Mr. R. F. Hindmarsh, Engineer to the Tyne Improvement Commission, said that to accommodate the Admiralty pontoon dock a berth had to be dredged to a depth of 55ft. at low water, 1,368,000 tons of soil were removed, the bulk of it in three months, which was about "a record" in dredging.

Commander Tabuteau, speaking of the defensive arming of merchant shipping, said that during the war 8,400 wessels were fitted with over 17,000 guns and howitzers. On the North-East Coast 1,764 vessels were fitted with 2,490 guns, the figure including the operation of transferring guns from ship to ship, rendered necessary by the fact that at one time there was only one gun to five ships. At one period 13,000 men from the Fleet were manning the guns on merchant ships.

Referring to the success of the artificers resorted to in order to disguise guns, he mentioned that Captain Thomson, aged over 70, of the steamship *Dunrobin*, was able to sink three submarines.

An editor named Ardasjev, from Moscow, who formerly had some connections with the Bolshevik, has been strangled in Stockholm by a party of Russians. The body was thrown into a lake.

A Bolshevik wireless message implies that one cause of the Afghan war was the Ameer's desire to be recognized as Caliph of the Muslims, a title which "formerly belonged to the Sultans of Turkey".

THE REORGANISATION OF RUSSIA.

A ROUMANIAN OPINION.

(From the "Near East").

Bucharest.

A distinguished Roumanian officer, who has recently returned from Bessarabia, where he held a high military command, has made some interesting statements for the benefit of readers of *The Near East*. Regarding the present state of Bessarabia, he remarked that the presence on its soil of a highly disciplined army was producing an excellent effect so far as the maintenance of order was concerned, providing as it did an efficient barrier to the encroachments of Bolshevism. The absence of trained officials in the province had entailed a heavy drainage on the resources of the Kingdom in this respect; but this lack of officials and functionaries, as he pointed out, is not limited to Bessarabia. Russia, as a whole, is suffering from the lack of trained functionaries, as well as trained officers. These two classes, which are essential for the successful reorganisation of the country, have been completely exterminated as a result of the Bolshevik movement. Great armies led by efficient officers would be necessary for the establishment of some semblance of order, and these would have to be seconded by a no less important army of trained officials if there were to be any prospect of maintaining the order once established. Military operations would take the form of a war of manoeuvres, presenting insurmountable difficulties in a country as vast as that of Russia. Nor are the immense masses of men essential for this purpose available; indeed, the forces of which Admiral Koltchak disposes are totally insufficient.

A Russian soldier refuses to serve unless paid something like 50 roubles a day, and the pay of an amateur officer, devoid of military training and even of elementary education, runs into hundreds. There was no reason for assuming that there were two types or categories of soldier in Russia. Bolshevik or not, the Russian soldier is the same everywhere. (The French mission in Roumania committed this mistake in the winter of 1917-18, when they endeavoured to convince the Roumanian military commanders that they could raise and equip 60 divisions in Ukraine, under the illusion that the Russians of Ukraine were more trustworthy or less susceptible to Bolshevik contamination than Russians elsewhere.) Without efficient leaders the Russian soldier is valueless. It is the military inefficiency of the Bolshevik armies which enables Roumania to hold her own on two fronts with a handful of men, and there is no reason for believing that Admiral Koltchak's forces are made of material

different from that of the Bolshevik troops.

My informant declared himself very pessimistic regarding Admiral Koltchak's qualifications for bringing the task he had undertaken to a successful conclusion, even granting him to be seconded by the right men and to have the necessary elements at his disposal, which is not the case. (It is interesting to note that the Admiral is of Roumanian origin, his name being spelt here Colceag.) Of General Denikin, with whom he is personally acquainted, he appears to have a very poor opinion.

Asked if the re-establishment of order in Russia would present any danger to Roumania, in view of Admiral Koltchak's refusal to recognise Bessarabia's union with the Mother Country, my informant assured me that all fears on this ground were unfounded, as there was no prospect of Russia becoming a homogeneous unified state for many years to come. On the other hand, a strong unified Russia would present a very real danger to Europe from the fact that her German sympathies are as widespread and as deeply rooted to-day as they were at any time.

Canadian Woman M. P.

Mrs. M. O. Ramsden has been elected to represent the district of Pelly in the Saskatchewan Legislature. This is the first woman to be elected in Saskatchewan, and the second to contest a constituency.

Mrs. Ramsden is a Liberal, and her opponent was a returned soldier who ran as an Independent. She succeeds her husband, who died a few weeks ago.

German Invitation to Poland.

The Polish Information Committee learns from Warsaw that the German Delegation informed the Allies that Germany wishes to open direct negotiations with Poland regarding the evacuation of territories allotted to Poland by the Peace Treaty. These negotiations would aim at assuring an orderly transfer of Prussian Administration and at working out a plan for the withdrawal of officials. The Germans suggest Berlin as the place for negotiations, assuring the Polish Delegates of every consideration, and ask for a reply as to whether Poland will accede to their proposal.

New York ladies have started wearing as earrings copies of their admirers' decorations.

MASSACRE IN A RAVINE.

RAISULI'S POISON GAS BOMBS.

(From the "Times" correspondent.)

TANGIER, JULY 24.

I am able to send you an eyewitness's account of the disaster to a Spanish column at the hands of Raisuli's tribesmen, of which I informed you in my telegram dated the 16th. The object of this column was the establishing of new posts on the slopes of the Wad Ras mountains, about 20 miles from Tangier.

A column of mixed Spanish and native soldiers, about 170 strong, with three officers a major, a captain, and a lieutenant, left Melusa at dawn and a few hours later entered the deep ravine of Benian. This movement of troops had been treacherously disclosed to Raisuli, who had taken his precautions. While still in the ravine another column, ostensibly Spanish troops, appeared on the hills above. They were Raisuli's men in disguise. The officers and men in correct Spanish uniforms, and, to complete the deception, many had, contrary to the native custom, shaved their beards, leaving only moustaches.

The commander of the Spanish column, having assured himself by observation that they were friendly troops, confined his march through the ravine. Suspecting nothing, the column was easily surrounded, and suddenly a volley was fired into it from the hills above. The Spanish commander, realizing the hopeless ambush into which he and his troops had fallen, immediately shot himself with a revolver.

Meanwhile Raisuli's men rushed down the hillside and hurled bombs of poison gas amongst the soldiers. These bombs consist of black balls a little smaller than billiard balls. They do not explode, or apparently burn, but either on leaving the hand or on reaching the ground chemical action is set up, and their material, not unlike unslaked lime, disintegrates, emitting an invisible penetrating gas. Many Spanish soldiers ran only a few yards, and fell overpowered. My informant himself was gassed at a distance, and, after violent vomiting, recovered.

Raisuli's men, on reaching the bottom of the ravine, had their faces covered as a precaution against this gas. They massacred the Spanish and native troops, mostly by cutting their throats with their daggers. Of the 170 men and three officers, fewer than 10 men are believed to have escaped. The rest are all reported killed.

Vain Warnings.

These bombs were no doubt introduced into the Spanish zone during the war for Abdul Malek's forces, which were fighting the French near Taza. The Times often pointed out dur-

ing the war the certainty that every machination of the Germans in the Spanish zone would eventually be used against the Spaniards themselves, and these last 10 days' fighting with Raisuli has fully confirmed my repeated warnings. All the arms, ammunition, money, and stores which Raisuli was obtaining, largely through German influence and pro-German connivance, are now being turned against Spain, and this unfortunate column of Spanish troops was exterminated by the diabolical employment of poison gas bombs introduced into the Spanish zone for the purpose of being used against the French.

The following day a column of 600 Spanish and native troops, drawn mostly from the Alcazar regiments left Ergaya to attack the village of Ben Haman, one of the Wad Ras chiefs. The village was bombarded and part of Ben Haman's house destroyed, but Raisuli's tribesmen counter-attacked, and the Spanish column was driven back, losing transport and material, and suffering very heavy casualties. It was able, however, to withdraw many of its dead and wounded, who were conveyed to Ergaya. The dead, too numerous to be buried in single graves, were thrown into pits, and as many wounded as possible were evacuated to Tangier and Arzeila, for the Ergaya hospital was over-full. This hospital at Ergaya consists of a long wooden shed, covered with galvanized iron, is said to contain no beds, and is insupportably hot. The sufferings of the wounded are reported as piteous.

On the arrival of ambulances at the Spanish hospital at Tangier the doctors in charge of the hospital refused to receive the wounded, as they stated that they had no vacant beds, and they were sent on to Arzeila. No notification of this want of room seems to have been made and no precautions taken, for the wounded continued during several days to arrive, only to be sent back to Arzeila, where there is a good hospital. The result of this want of organization added many unnecessary hours of travel in great heat over abominable tracks to the sufferings of the wounded.

General Barrera had meanwhile arrived at Ergaya from Larache with tribal reinforcements under Kaid Ermiki. Unfortunately on arrival immediate differences of opinion arose between him and the general commanding the Ceuta district, and General Barrera and his tribal forces withdrew, returning to Larache without a single attempt being made to wipe out the disaster.

On July 16 the Madrid Press announced:—"Glorious and fruitful victory" and "Complete rout of Raisuli".

GOLD SMUGGLING TO GERMANY.

French Police Discovery.

The French police have discovered that for some time past a gang has been smuggling gold across the Franco-Italian frontier, as much as L 8,000 in gold being thus spirited into Italy in return for Italian banknotes. The *Matin* states that this gold is passed on into Germany.

A man named Grassi is one of the chief ringleaders in this illicit traffic. He had under him a small army of collectors, who in their turn employed café and hotel waiters, horse dealers, and men whose ordinary vocation takes them through country districts, to tout for gold. Peasant hoarders were offered as much as 50 per cent. gain if they would hand over their gold for French banknotes. Bordeaux, Biarritz, Toulouse, Avignon, and Marseilles were regularly worked, the intermediaries in the case of towns being generally second-hand art and jewelry dealers. The centre on the Italian side is in Turin, and it is reckoned to have received since the Armistice about L 20,000 in gold.

All sorts of tricks are employed to get money over the frontier. Grassi did not despise the methods of the old cargo runners, and owes his arrest to the fact that an Englishman had his suspicions aroused by witnessing a mysterious meeting between two men on the shore, one of whom had arrived from the Italian side by boat. As for the railway, which is also largely used, the Customs officials have not time to search every traveller. The gold traffickers get across wearing buttons like ordinary people, but the buttons are 20f. or 10f. pieces, covered with cloth. Others wear broad *scapulaires* doubled, in which are sewn several hundred francs in gold. Others are women, with their dresses, their hair, and their hats lined with the precious metal. Gold is also secreted inside the outer or inner handband. A railway guard has been arrested who made use of his comparative immunity to take gold across the frontier.

Another trick employed was the following. Gold pieces were laid out in a box which had the appearance of a book. The bearer, on arriving at Mentone at the French Customs, hid the book under one of the cushions, and then got out for his luggage to be examined. A moment after, a confederate who had been waiting on the platform, and had already passed the Customs, entered the compartment and took possession of the book, and went on to the Italian side, where he had only to hand over the gold.

Bolshevist Army pay is being increased as follows:—For men in the rear from 250 roubles per month to 300; for those on the front from 350 roubles to 400 roubles monthly.

HARNESSING THE RHONE.

Gigantic French Scheme.

In an interview accorded to a representative of the *Petit Parisien*, Cels, the Under-Secretary of State for Public Works, unfolded the scheme for the canalization and utilization of water-power of the Rhone. A derivate canal will be constructed, which will make the river navigable for ships 1,200 tons from the sea to Switzerland, and power stations will be erected along the whole length of the river. By means of improved electric power the navigation and irrigation of the whole district will be transformed.

The concession for this gigantic scheme will be given to one company to be formed by the departments of the Rhone and the Department of the Seine. The capital will be 200,000,000f. to be raised by debentures. The burden of the interest will be reduced by an arrangement which the power stations, as soon as they are completed, will be taken by the subscribers. Thus the city of Paris, which is expected to subscribe 100,000,000f. is ready to take 200,000 kilowatts of power supplied by the Rhone power station.

The Minister of Finance is examining the plans, and when investigation is completed a Bill carrying out the scheme will be introduced in the Chamber.

The Salvage Work at Scapa

Twenty-one ships of the so-called German fleet in Scapa Flow have been raised and are awaiting overhaul in dry dock. They are the battleships *Baden*, the light cruisers *Eschschmann* and *Nurnberg*, and a destroyer.

The only other ship it is possible to save is the *Hindenburg*, the masts and masts of which are showing above the water. To raise her will be a big undertaking, an decision whether it will be undertaken will rest with the Peace Conference. All the other ships lie in the water and it is hopeless to attempt to salvage them. Altogether 53 ships were sunk.

The Jews and Conscription.

The efforts made for some time by the Jewish authorities in Turkey with a view to exempting them from conscription appear to have finally been crowned with success. It is now stated that the Turkish Government has decided to place the Jews on the same footing as the Armenians whose exemption from conscription had been previously decided upon.