

CARDINAL MERCIER REFUSES TO DISOWN PASTORAL

Letter to Governor General von Bissing Says Act Was Fully Deliberate and He Will Not Withdraw It—Promises to Remain in His Diocese

Explanatory Comment

IN TAKING his courageous stand on the reading of the pastoral letter, "Patriotism and Endurance," the Cardinal by no means found exclusive refuge in an accomplished fact.

Hearing that the letter had been read in the Belgian churches, Baron von der Lancken, head of the German political department in Brussels, had cried "Too late!"

It was not, however, too late to prevent the reading of the second part of the letter containing the impressive statement that "the sole lawful authority in Belgium is that of our king, of our government and of the elected representatives of the nation."

But the baron was a realist, one of a type far from common in the preposterous and terrible era of Hun madness. He was perfectly well aware that what the Cardinal had resolved upon he would finish or perish in the attempt.

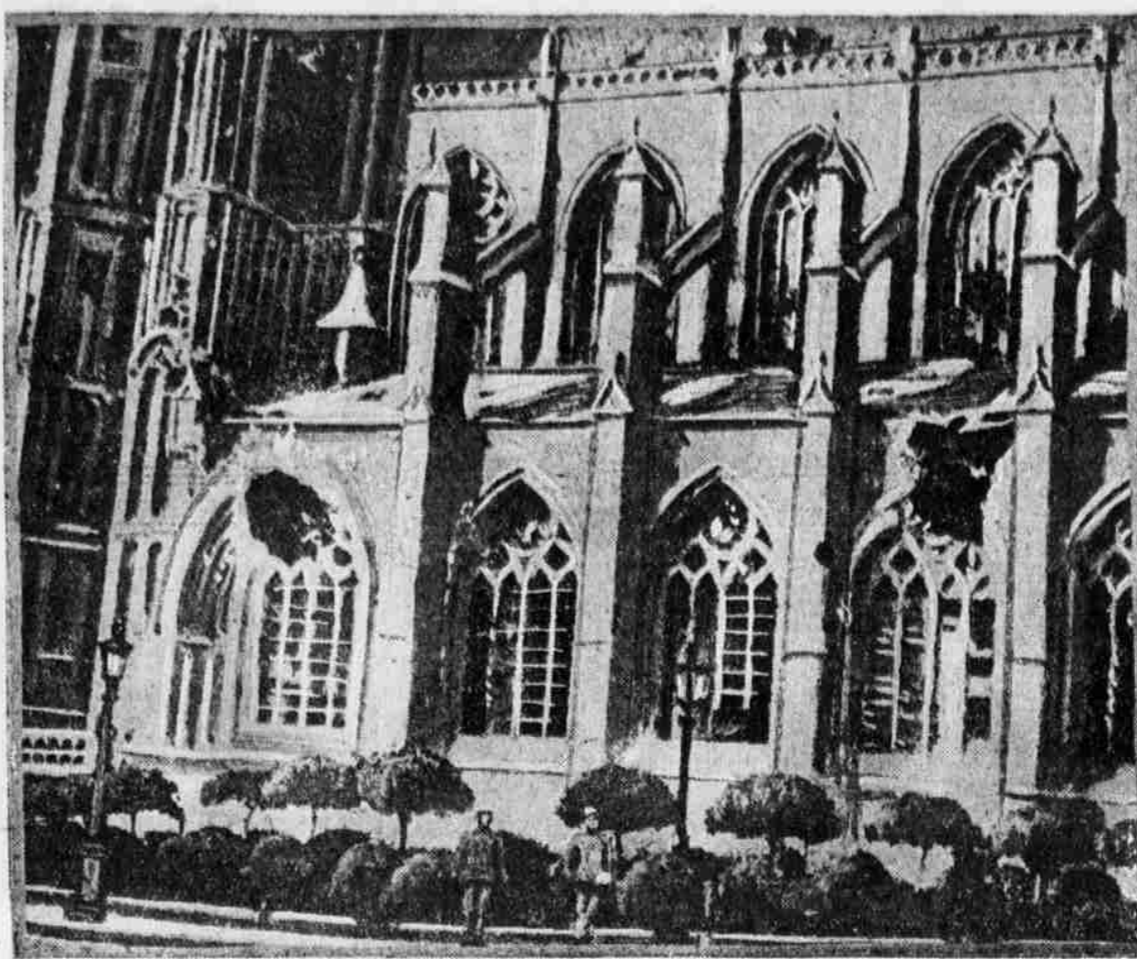
All the official blustering, all the delegations and emissaries and the mass of correspondence emanating from the headquarters in Brussels were powerless to deter the priests from publicly concluding the pastoral on Sunday of January 3, 1915.

Every Belgian in the Cardinal's diocese was stimulated and patriotically refreshed with the clear and logical definition of the limitations of the German power in the occupied nation. Every Belgian realized the superb coordination of Christianity with love of country.

Von Bissing itched to lay hands upon the Cardinal. But if he spoke daggers he used none. The sum of his efforts in addition to his pronouncements and misrepresentations of the primate's position was the issuance of an order limiting the Cardinal's movements to his diocese and an urgent request, which was observed, that a projected visit to Antwerp for a religious function of the first Sunday in the new year be abandoned.

Of course, the night of German resentment was visited upon the printer of the pastoral. The censorship was the pride of the invaders' administration, which is one reason why the Belgians took such exquisite delight in supplying von Bissing with every copy of the secretly printed little paper, "Libre Belgique." It spoiled many a breakfast of the governor general and was a persistent symbol of the fatality of despotism. Neither von der Goltz, von Bissing nor Falkenhausem was ever able to suppress the journal, the publication offices of which were itinerant, mysterious, but exceedingly lively.

There was no doubt, however, about the printer of the pastoral. The type was set in the Dessain shop in Malines. The oldest Dessain was already a prisoner in Germany. Another brother was safe in England. A third, Francis, printed the letter, was arrested and fined 600 marks. He was soon released and when the German power was crumpled into dust he had the pleasure of accompanying the Cardinal as private secretary on the prelate's American tour.



Cardinal Mercier's bullet-pierced cathedral in Malines

Cardinal Mercier's Story

Including his correspondence with the German authorities in Belgium during the war, 1914 to 1918, edited by Professor Fernand Mayence of Louvain University and translated by the Benedictine Monks of St. Augustine's, Ramsgate, England.

AFTER taking counsel of his immediate entourage, the Cardinal took time to reflect alone. He went to his private oratory to meditate and pray; then came back and drew up the following letter in which he declares that his act was fully deliberate and that he refuses either to disown or withdraw it:

Archbishop's House, Malines, January 4th, 1915, 6 p. m.

To Baron von Bissing, Governor General, Brussels.

Your Excellency—The letters with which your Excellency has honored me dated December 31st, 1914, and January 3rd, 1915, embrace three parts.

The first part refers to my correspondence of December 28th last, both with your Excellency and his Eminence Cardinal von Hartmann. Your Excellency was kind enough to appreciate the mark of esteem which I had the opportunity of showing you. You remind me that you had expressed a desire to further the religious and moral interest with which I have been entrusted, also to relieve the sufferings of our people; and yet your Excellency seems persuaded that instead of falling in with your views I have taken up an attitude toward the German Government which to you is incompatible with this praiseworthy ideal.

Your Excellency is of the opinion that past events with their sad echoes still resounding within the soul of Belgium ought not to form the subject of either oral or written communications between us, and it seems you are surprised that even in private let-

ters I have recalled these events and have also passed judgment upon them.

"I Bow to Your Decision"

I appreciate fully your Excellency's anxiety to ward off further strife from our country, already so sorely tried, and no one acquiesces in this wish of yours more heartily than myself. Still, if by mutual co-operation we desire our work to have a durable character, our joint efforts must not rest on an equivocal basis. I am deeply impressed by the need of candor, I made a point of drawing a distinction between the personal relations of courtesy and mutual good-will I had the honor of cultivating with Baron von Bissing and those other relations which were demanded by my position toward the representative of a nation with whom we have the misfortune to be at war. I was encouraged by the hope that the clearness of my words would be welcomed, and I was certainly far from anticipating that it would involve the withdrawal of the general pass you granted me. Nevertheless, I bow to your decision. Hitherto, as a matter of fact, I have not gone beyond the limits of my diocese; nor shall I go beyond them in future.

The second part of your Excellency's dispatch refers to my pastoral letter. First of all, I am grateful to your Excellency for your decision to withdraw the prosecution of those priests who have read my letter from the pulpit as they were instructed to do. In doing this they acted in obedience to their bishop. He alone is responsible for the orders he gives to his clergy. You seem, sir, apprehensive of a possible disturbance resulting from the public reading of my pastoral and you draw my attention to possible unpleasant consequences among the people. Allow me to inform you that you little understand the devotedness of my people. If in addressing them I had in any way concealed my views or had tried to force them into submission, they might have kicked against my orders. But my words to them were those of a father who trusts his children.

I told them that I realized their sufferings and by virtue of this very knowledge was able to sympathize with them. I expounded to them in its entirety the gospel teaching on their relations with that power which for the time being was in occupation of a part of their country. I told them this: "Whatever feelings you may harbor within your inmost souls, you are bound, as far as your conscience and noble patriotism will allow, to comply in your external conduct with the regulations of the Government in occupation. Outwardly you are to obey the aforementioned decrees; my more, it is the legitimate authority of your own government, in tacitly approving of them out of regard it has for the interests of public order, that obliges you to respect them."

"Peace Will Not Be Disturbed"

As a Belgian, I understand my fellow countrymen, and as a bishop I am well acquainted with my children; and I can therefore guarantee, sir, that the public peace will not be disturbed if you forbid your subordinates to indulge in any further noisy demonstrations such as occurred in a considerable number of peaceful villages during the night of January 3rd.

If, on the other hand, you cannot see your way to allow me full freedom to influence my clergy and people by moral suasion alone; if, yielding to your personal fears, you have recourse to methods of intimidation, I shall no longer be able to answer, with the same assurance, for the maintenance of public order, and in that case I shall not require my clergy to resume the reading and the dissemination of my pastoral in defiance of your interdiction.

Lastly, in the third part of your letter, your Excellency asks me about my relations with my own king and the King of England, and desires to be informed why, in conformity with the wish expressed by the King of England, I should have exhorted the faithful of my diocese to make January 3rd a special day of prayer. Frankly, your Excellency, these questions astonish me. The acts of one's private life, unless

I am mistaken, are outside the jurisdiction of all governments, and consequently I feel justified in requesting your Excellency to assure me of the exact purport of your question. Does your Excellency claim the right to interfere with my private intercourse with my own sovereign, or with foreign rulers? This is not the first time I have ordered a day of prayer. My venerable episcopal colleagues in Austria, France and Germany have all acted in like manner. We have each and all been fired by the same desire to call down the blessing of God on our countries. This also I may add: That I have had no difficulty in becoming acquainted with the King of England's wish in this matter. A circular published by his Eminence Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, was sent to thousands of our Belgian refugees living at present in the United Kingdom. Many copies have reached me, but at the present moment I cannot put my hand on one of these circulars. I hope shortly to be able to find one and to forward it to your Excellency.

Accept, Excellency, the expression of my high esteem.
(Signed) D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, Archbishop of Malines.

"I Have Taken Responsibility"

The next day, January 5th, the Cardinal sent to Von Bissing the following supplementary note:
Archbishop's House, Malines, January 5th, 1915.

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing, Governor General, Brussels.

Your Excellency—I have the honor to inclose the pamphlet to which I referred in my letter of yesterday evening.

An error of date has crept into my letter. You must read, "During the night of January 2d—January 3rd."

I said yesterday that I could hardly see the drift of the question your Excellency put me in the third part of your letter. I think, on reflection,

YSAYE APPEARS AS ORCHESTRA LEADER

Cincinnati Orchestra, Under Baton of Great Belgian Violinist, Makes Favorable Impression

PROGRAM: Marche Heroique, Saint-Saens; Symphony in D Minor, Cesar Franck; Fantaisie-Wallonne, Ysaye; Ballet, "Sylvia," Delibes.

Eugene Ysaye, long known as one of the great modern masters of the violin, made his first appearance in Philadelphia as an orchestra conductor, at the head of the Cincinnati Orchestra, at the Metropolitan Opera House last evening. The orchestra is a body of about eighty men containing some excellent players among the solo instruments, especially in the woodwinds, the flute, oboe, English horn and clarinet being excellent.

So much cannot be said for the French horns, although their union in the first movement of Delibes Suite was sonorous and rich in tone quality. The brass is fairly good. Being a violinist, one would naturally suppose that Mr. Ysaye's string section would be far the best of the orchestra. Such, however, is not the case, for the strings seemed to lack both power and sonority and to be only fair in tone quality. This cannot be held to singleness in number, for the orchestra is large and well balanced as to instruments. This same thing was noticed in the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra last season and it may be that the Metropolitan Opera House, which is a decidedly hard place in which to make an orchestra sound well from the stage, had something to do with this effect. There was little slacking in any of the numbers and the orchestra sounded better by far in the loud passages than in the more delicate ones.

Mr. Ysaye is a much greater violinist than a conductor. His orchestra seems to be well disciplined, but there were a number of false entrances and the attack was not always made with absolute union. The leader's interpretation of the Cesar Franck symphony was not in any way unusual, although he knew

the composer well and, in fact, the French violin sonata is dedicated to the great Belgian player. In the other numbers of the program there was little chance for interpretation.

At the last moment the program had to be changed. Leo Craxford, the pianist, was to have played the Rubinstein concerto, but was taken ill on the train between Indianapolis and New York and was unable to fill the engagement. Accordingly, the orchestra played a Fantaisie Wallone, by T. Ysaye, a brother of the conductor. The program opened with Saint-

Sarna's Marche Heroique, which was well done, and then came the symphony. Mr. Ysaye took the introductory lento at a tremendously slow pace, more than doubling the tempo in the allegro, which, by the way, is "non troppo." The slow movement was read evidently for beauty of tone and the last Allegro was the best-performed movement of the symphony, the full orchestral tone in the climaxes being round and sonorous.

The Fantaisie Wallone of Mr. T. Ysaye is evidently built on Walloon melodies, but the composer has followed

the customary but doubtful precedent of developing folk song in a highly modern style. It was rather well played, but is not a composition of very great merit. The concert closed with the light but graceful ballet "Sylvia" of Delibes, and in it the orchestra did the best work of the evening.

As a conductor Mr. Ysaye has none of the mannerisms that his style of violin playing would lead one to expect. His beat is firm and certain and his interpretations are solid rather than temperamental. He received a great ovation on each of his appearances on the stage.

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rents, \$7,108.28; insurance, deposits and premiums unearned, \$54,211.90; accounts receivable, \$153,170.95.

Dr. George P. Merrill, head curator of the department of geology in the U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C., will address the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society tonight in the lecture hall of the Wagner Institute. The subject of the address will be "Meteorites."

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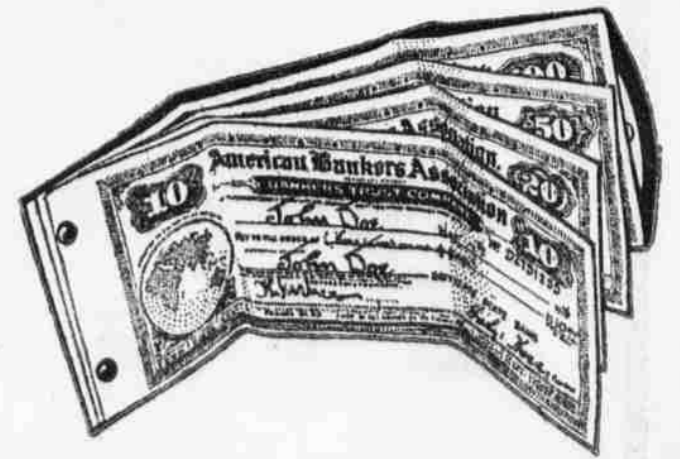
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