

VON BISSING "UNWILLING" TO PUNISH MERCIER

"It Is Useless to Inquire by What Means I Correspond," Cardinal Tells German Chaplain Who Calls at Primate's Palace in Malines as Governor General's Envoy

Explanatory Comment

EARLY in the war German brutality was compared to the savagery of the Red Indian of American Colonial days, to the frenzy of Attila and his hordes, to the madness of insensate Zulus. The estimate did not square with facts. Barbarians of the past made no pretensions to having a conscience. They were, at least, not hypocrites. Sitting Bull at the battle of Little Horn was cruel and merciless. He was, however, quite incapable of assuming a virtuous pose and was altogether untroubled by any doubts concerning justification for his remorseless behavior.

But their veneer of civilization constantly embarrassed the Germans. Their ideal was to execute a policy of frightfulness and at the same time to assume a mask of humanity. Such purposes were always involving the government in moral hot water. It was not easy to be ruthless and almost simultaneously to convince the world that it was misjudging Teutonic conduct. Dread of the crime of being found out became a German obsession. Whenever a Hun was accused of outrages he squealed that he was misjudged and went through the motions of demanding proof of perfectly well-established facts.

Von Bissing played the game precisely this way, and in the correspondence given below his procedure hurled him swiftly into the pit of discomfiture. In his rage over the damaging disclosures of German cruelty made by Mgr. de Waechter, formerly of Malines, he was so foolish as to ask the Cardinal of the priest's present whereabouts.

The intimation was that if Mgr. Waechter could be found he would be severely punished. But the offending charges had been made in Willesden, a suburb of London. Had the Governor General not been so excited he would have realized that the priest would be unlikely to return to Belgium and furthermore, that if he had come back the German Government would have duly registered his residence.

And so Von Bissing's letter enabled the Cardinal to taste the sweets of triumph. The satisfaction with which the primate hastens to give De Waechter's address is deliciously apparent, since the auxiliary bishop of Malines was quite safe in England. As usual Von Bissing's bluff had been exposed.

It was the Cardinal's privilege, now becoming quite common, courteously to inform the Governor General of his helplessness.



Francis Dessain, the printer of Malines, who was arrested for publishing Cardinal Mercier's pastoral letter January 1, 1915.

Germany, declared that they had been compelled to perform the vilest tasks and had suffered every kind of outrage. One day they had been placed against the wall at the same time as the English and French prisoners and informed that they were about to be shot and rifles had then been leveled at them. After the lapse of an hour they were told that their execution had been deferred. These scenes had been repeated for several days in succession. Among those who had been subjected to these frightful torments, many had completely lost their reason.

I ask your Eminence to inform me where Mgr. de Waechter now resides in order that he may be heard in regard to these monstrous accusations.

(Signed) BARON VON BISSING, Major General.

Archbishop's House, Malines, April 18th, 1915.

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

Sir—I hasten to give your Excellency the address of Mgr. De Waechter, auxiliary bishop of the diocese of Malines. For over six months he has been residing in London with Mgr. Amigo, Bishop of Southwark. His address is:

Bishop's House, St. George's road, Southwark, S. E. London.

I am ignorant alike of the subject matter of this discourse and its delivery, of which your Excellency speaks on the authority of the Courier, of Dundee.

Accept, dear Governor General, the assurance of my sincere esteem.

(Signed) D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, Archbishop of Malines.

CHAPTER XIII

The Cardinal's Interview With Mgr. Mittendorf

ON April 14th, 1915, Mgr. Mittendorf, Catholic, chaplain general of the German armies of the west, presented himself at the archiepiscopal palace. Admitted to the Cardinal's presence, he declared that he was charged with a mission from the Governor General; he took a letter from his pocket and proceeded to read it. When he had finished, the Cardinal, with a

natural gesture, put out his hand to receive the letter, imagining that it was meant for him. But Mgr. Mittendorf was unwilling to give it up. He even went so far as to refuse, no one knows for what reason, to allow the Cardinal to glance at the document which he had just read.

Here, in substance, is the communication from Von Bissing:

The newspapers have published a letter from your Eminence to Cardinal Amette. Now there is a regulation which forbids any Belgian to correspond with any one whatever without first submitting his letter to the German censorship. Moreover, your Eminence has recognized in your Christmas pastoral the necessity of obedience to the authorities in occupation.

If any other citizen whatever had committed the breach of which your Eminence has rendered yourself guilty, we should have to punish him. But out of love of peace and through respect for the Holy See and the sacred purple which your Eminence wears, we are unwilling to inflict punishment on you. We should prefer, should your Eminence force us to take such a step, to lay the matter before the Holy See.

Defends Right to Correspond

The Cardinal did not hesitate to acknowledge that he had written to the Archbishop of Paris.

"And even," he added, "I received yesterday a French newspaper, the *Matin*, which publishes extracts of my letter. This publication is preceded by some lines of introduction in which it is stated that this letter is private, and the paper puts some extracts only before its readers."

"Private or not, it is none the less the revelation of a fact, namely, that your Eminence has set at naught the regulation which obliges every Belgian in the occupied territory to submit his correspondence to the German censorship."

"I am aware of this regulation, and the Governor General will recollect that it has already been the subject of an exchange of views between us. Indeed, in answer to the question which he addressed to me in his letter of January 3rd, regarding the means by which I learned that the King of England had ordered a day of intercession, I replied that even a lawful government would not consider itself entitled to set on foot an inquiry regarding my private intercourse, and I could not therefore believe that it could enter into the plans of the Governor General to ask me how I had been able to correspond either with my own sovereign or with the King of England. This regulation does indeed exist, but it must be interpreted according to the rules of common sense. The Governor General has himself placed in my hands a letter which Cardinal von Hartmann had written to him in which he asked permission for the Belgian bishops to correspond freely with the Holy See. I thought I might count on the tacit consent of the German authorities for acts rendered necessary by my situation. You are a priest,

Monsignor; you should inform the Governor General regarding the working of a diocesan administration."

"I do not speak as a priest," brusquely interrupted Mgr. Mittendorf, "I am here only as the envoy of His Excellency Von Bissing."

"Suitable Means Never Lacking"

"Quite so, I am aware of it; but I know also that you are a Catholic priest, and as such, in a position to enlighten your government regarding Catholic life. Now, can any one who has the least idea of the needs of Catholic diocesan administration, imagine that I could remain for whole months without intercourse with Rome? I have written, and that, too, several times, to the Holy See, to the Roman congregations, to my colleagues of the Sacred College in Italy, England, the United States and elsewhere; the obligations of my pastoral charge render it a duty for me to declare that I could not refrain in the future also from corresponding with those abroad. It is useless to inquire by what means I correspond. Have we not every day friends from the United States, from Italy, from Holland, who come to see me and offer their services? Do not the United States legation, the Spanish legation, the Nunciature correspond freely with those abroad? I do not, mark well, indicate any of these ways to insinuate that I have actually availed myself of any of them, but I wish to prove that to put myself in communication, when needful, with other countries, suitable means are never lacking."

"What especially annoys the Governor General is the fact that your Eminence's letter to Cardinal Amette has been made public."

"Oh, but many of my letters sent abroad have likewise become public, among others the letter of thanks addressed to the United States, to Canada, to England, to Ireland, in return for the generous acts of those nations toward the Belgian people, on which occasions no complaint was made to me. Be sure of this: no Belgian will take advantage of my correspondence with foreign nations to maintain that every one has the right to the same freedom as I lay claim to. The Belgians are endowed with good sense."

"Could not your Eminence have submitted your letter to Cardinal Amette to censorship?"

"Haven't Yet Got to Know Us"

"This letter conveyed my thanks to the French bishops for the sympathy which they kindly wished to testify when I published my Christmas pastoral. I waited two months before showing my gratitude, a proof that I was no agitator. I had to answer under penalty of passing for a man without manners. Now suppose, Monsignor, that I had submitted to the Governor General a letter of thanks to those who publicly took my side at the moment of the controversy which had arisen between him and me, what would his Excellency have said? What could he have said? That I was ridiculing him. Very well, I did not wish to ridicule his Excellency. Behold the whole of my wrong-doing, if wrong-doing there was. Our interview is coming to an end, Monsignor; let me draw from it one conclusion. You German, after many months of occupation, have not yet got to know the Belgians. Among you a general command and automatically every one obeys. Here with us, good sense, regard for higher interests, interprets the order and dictates our conduct. External regulations are meant, no doubt, for every one; and it is in this sense that I have acknowledged them as the Governor General reminds me in his letter. But every one applies them with a due regard for different contingencies and the obligations which they entail."

At the end of the conversation Mgr. Mittendorf seemed to wish the Cardinal to state what his future attitude would be. To this request the Cardinal made no reply, and after a few minutes' silence bade his visitor a kindly adieu.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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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.

CHAPTER XI

The Muster-Roll of Young Men Clashing With Religious Services on Sundays

IN CERTAIN communes the muster-roll of young men of military age took place at the same time as divine service on Sundays. The Cardinal had complained of this to the German authorities. Von Bissing informed him that he had just published an order commanding his subordinates to take care that the young men liable to rollcall should be able to fulfill their religious obligations. The Cardinal thanked him for this measure.

Governor General's Office, Brussels, April 1st, 1915.

To His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, Malines.

I have the honor of informing your Eminence that in consequence of the complaints which have been brought to my notice regarding the clashing of the young men's muster-roll with the church services, I have published an order of which I inclose a copy.

(Signed) BARON VON BISSING, Major General.

Governor General's Office, Brussels, April 1st, 1915.

Sect. Ic. No. 2564.

Whenever the day appointed for the muster-roll

falls on a Sunday or feast day the authorities of the several districts are requested to take care that those who have to present themselves shall be able to fulfill their religious duties. To effect this, it will be sufficient in most cases to advance or delay the opening of the muster parade by one or two hours.

(Signed) BARON VON BISSING, Major General.

Archbishop's House, Malines, April 6th, 1915.

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

Sir—Your Excellency has been so kind as to let me know that, in deference to an expressed wish of mine, you have been willing to fix the rollcall of young men of military age at hours which do not coincide with those for religious worship.

I deem it my duty to express to you my thankfulness for this benevolent action and would ask you to accept the assurance of my sincere esteem.

(Signed) D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, Archbishop of Malines.

CHAPTER XII

Von Bissing Complains of a Discourse of Mgr. de Waechter's

Governor General's Office, Brussels, April 14th, 1915.

To His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines.

According to the newspaper *The Courier*, of Dundee, of February 15th, Mgr. de Waechter, of Malines, delivered a discourse on February 14th at Willesden, in which he is stated to have said that four ecclesiastics who had the preceding week returned from

CAN WOMAN KEEP A SECRET? CITY CLUB PLAY WILL TELL

Production Next Thursday Night, Which Attempts Solution of Question, Will Begin Christmas Festivities at Association House

"How a Woman Keeps a Secret" is the title of a little play to be given by members of the City Club of the Pennsylvania Association of Women Workers, 1525 Locust street, next Thursday evening.

That will begin the Christmas festivities at the association house, which is headquarters for the state and the city organization.

The City Club, formed two months ago, has 175 members. Seventy-five of them came in as a unit from the Woman's Land Army when the organization disbanded. The clubhouse is open twice a week to the city members. There are classes in English, dramatics, gymnasium, choral work, dancing, domestic arts, home hygiene, current events, story telling, and in the making of Christmas presents. Then there are Sunday afternoon teas, hikes during the week and frequent parties.

"The Association of Women Workers," explained Miss Anne L. Flandert, executive secretary, "is a state association of self-governing clubs. It develops complete self-government in local and state activities; absolute non-sectarianism with an effort toward tolerance and breadth of vision essential to true Americanism and self-support, which is essential to self-respect, development and independence. "It supplies recreation, education and

democratic ideals and opportunity for practical service for its members. The Philadelphia club is growing rapidly and is an sure will soon be an influential force among the women of the city."

Fire Damages Woman's Store
The haberdashery store and dwelling of Mrs. E. Safford, at Seventh and Oregon streets, was damaged by fire last night. No estimate of the loss has been made, but it was serious. Mrs. Safford was away from home when the fire started.

Merry Christmas for Horses
Needy and deserving horses will be given blankets and Christmas dinners next week by the Women's Pennsylvania S. P. C. A., in the dispensary building at 315 South Chadwick street. The horses will get two apples and sixin's of oats.

WOMEN WRITE LADY ASTOR

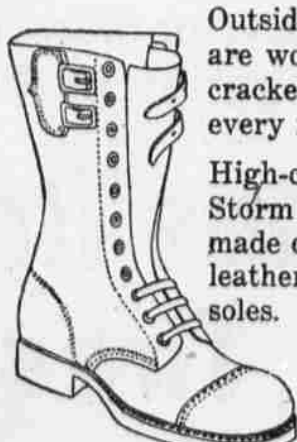
Philadelphia Organization Praises Her for Blazing Path

A letter of congratulation has been sent to Lady Nancy Astor, M. P., by the Philadelphia League of Women Citizens. The letter, written by Mrs. Emily Q. A. Mills, of 4106 Locust street, secretary of the league, says:

"At the first annual convention of the Philadelphia League of Women Citizens, held on December 6, it was unanimously resolved that a letter of congratulation be sent to you expressing our pleasure and pride in that an American-born woman has chosen to 'blaze the path' in Parliament."

Merry Christmas for Horses
Needy and deserving horses will be given blankets and Christmas dinners next week by the Women's Pennsylvania S. P. C. A., in the dispensary building at 315 South Chadwick street. The horses will get two apples and sixin's of oats.

Give That Boy of Yours a Pair of Storm Shoes for Christmas



Outside of the fact that these shoes are wonderful value, they make a crackerjack Christmas gift, for every real boy wants a pair.

High-cut, 2 buckles, weather-proof Storm Shoes, just like the picture, made of tan, oil-finished veal grain leather, with double welted oak soles.

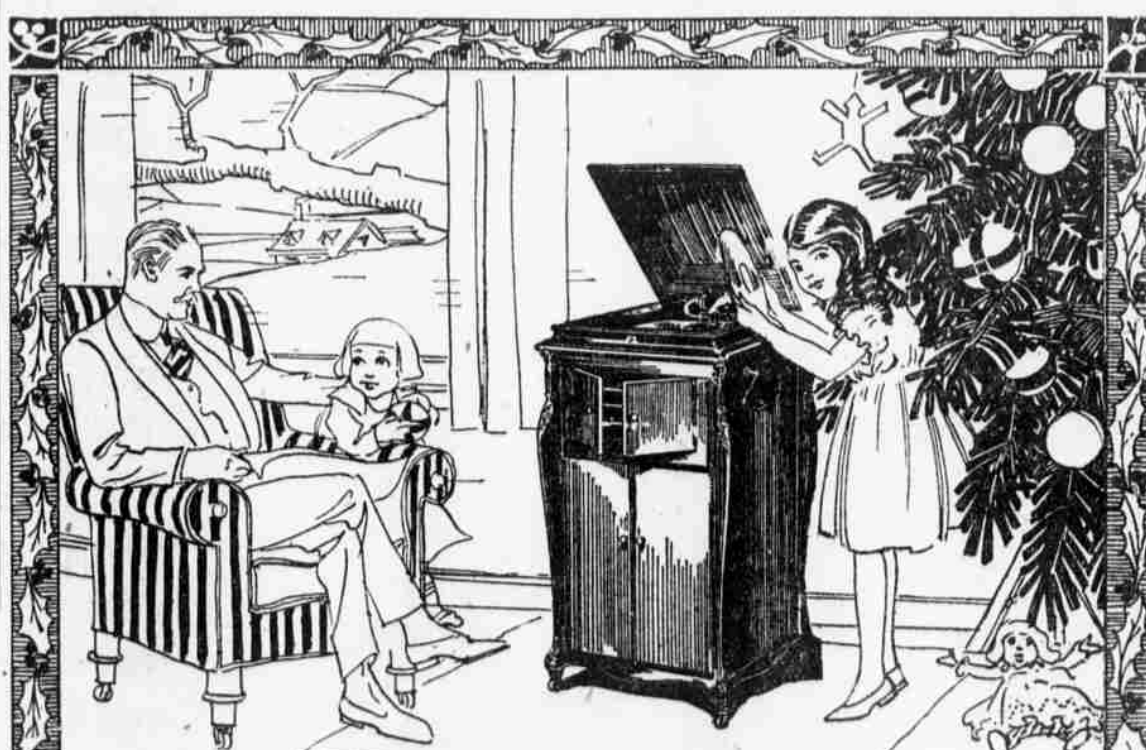
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Sizes 2 1/2 to 6 **6.85** Worth 8.00
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APOLLO 52D & THOMPSON STS. "A TEMPERAMENTAL WIFE"	PRINCESS 1018 MARKET STREET MADELAINE TRAVELER IN "LOST MONEY"
ARCADIA CHESTNUT Below 16TH 10 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. CONSTANTINE BINNEY in "GENTLEMAN'S REVERENCE"	REGENT MARKET ST. Below 17TH LUCY COTTON in "THE MIRACLE OF LOVE"
BLUEBIRD BROAD STREET AND SUSQUEHANNA AVE. TOM MOORE in "LORI AND JACK ALGY"	RIALTO GERMANTOWN AVE. AT TULPEHOCKEN ST. "ROUGH RIDING RIFLEMAN"
BROADWAY Broad & Snyder Aves. BREYAN WARRIERS in "IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE"	RUBY MARKET ST. BELOW 7TH DOROTHY DALTON in "THE WAGNER MEN"
CAPITOL 722 MARKET STREET 10 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. ELISE PERRET in "COUNTERFEIT"	SAVOY 1211 MARKET STREET D. W. GIBBS in "SCARLET MAY"
COLONIAL 616 & Maplewood Aves. 10 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. BRYAN WARRIERS in "IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE"	STANLEY MARKET ABOVE 16TH NORMA TAYLOR in "THE ISLE OF CONQUERS"
EMPRESS MAIN ST. MANAYUNK MATINEE DAILY "PLEASE GET MARRIED"	VICTORIA MARKET ST. AT 9TH "THE SPED MANTAL"
FAIRMOUNT 20th & Girard Aves. FRANK KENNAN in "BROTHERS DIVIDED"	THE NIXON-NIRDLINGER THEATRES
FAMILY THEATRE—1311 Market St. ENID BENNETT in "WHAT EVERY WOMAN LEARNS"	BELMONT 52D ABOVE MARKET BERT LYELL in "LOMBARDI, LTD."
56TH ST. THEATRE—Below Spruce ALICE JOYCE in "VENGEANCE OF DULAND"	CEDAR 6TH AND CEDAR AVE. DOROTHY GISH in "TURNING THE TABLES"
FRANKLIN THIRD & FITZWATER ORGAN MUSIC FLORENCE VIDOR in "SWEET RELATIONS"	FRANKFORD 4715 Frankford Ave. DOUGLAS MacLEAN in "28th STREET LEAVE"
GREAT NORTHERN Broad St. at Erie 9 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. GERALDINE FABRICE in "FLAME OF THE DESERT"	JUMBO FRONT ST. & GIRARD AVE. Jumbo Junction in Frankford "L. FOR BETTER, FOR WORSE"
IMPERIAL 60TH & WALNUT STS. MATINEE DAILY "PLEASE GET MARRIED"	LOCUST 52D AND LOCUST STREETS MRS. T. J. B. in "COUNTERFEIT"
LEADER 41ST & LANCASTER AVE MATINEE DAILY "THE MIRACLE MAN"	NIXON 52D AND MARKET STS. RILEY RIDDER in "THE BLUE BONNET"
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333 MARKET STREET THEATRE ENID BENNETT in "PLEASE GET MARRIED"	STRAND GERMANTOWN AVE. ELISE PERRET in "COUNTERFEIT"
MODEL 425 SOUTH ST. Orchestra. FLORENCE VIDOR in "HIGH GAME"	WEST ALLEGHENY 25th and Allegheny MARY PICKFORD in "LAPACHE"
OVERBROOK 63rd & Haverford Av. STAR CAST in "THE OPEN DOOR"	EUREKA 40TH & MARKET STS. DOROTHY DALTON in "LAPACHE"
BROAD ST. AUDITORIUM Broad & Rockland "THE MIRACLE MAN"	JEFFERSON 29TH AND DAUPHIN STS. MAT. DAILY IRVING CASTLE in "THE INVINCIBLE BOND"
COLISEUM MARKET BETWEEN 9TH AND 10TH ENID BENNETT in "WHAT EVERY WOMAN LEARNS"	PARK RIDGE AVE. & DAUPHIN ST. WILMA LINDA in "THE LAST OF THE DUANE"

Complete chart showing programs for the week appear Saturday evening and Sunday.