

MERCIER'S "HOUR OF DELIVERANCE" SERMON STIRS GERMAN ANGER

"In Spite of Subtle Qualifications, These Phrases Stick in Public Memory," Says Lancken—"Your Report Is Incorrect," Replies Cardinal in Denouncing Spies Who Heard Discourse

Explanatory Comment

IT WAS not merely the boldness and fervor of the Cardinal's sermon in St. Gudule on the Belgian national holiday which exasperated Von Bissing. It was the uncomfortable truth which seemed to support the ringing words.

"The hour of deliverance," declared the primate, "draws nigh, but it has not struck." The qualifying clause was plainly added to soften the pangs of disappointment should hopes again be dashed. Nevertheless a note of optimism is sounded.

It reflects the sentiment in the principal allied countries during a season bright with achievement and promise. Indeed the summer of 1916 appeared to forecast a series of steady victories for the cause of civilization.

The siege of Verdun was raised in one of the many epic chapters in the history of France. Britain had begun the great battle of the Somme, which by the end of July had already yielded most encouraging results. The Russian armies were still victorious. Under pressure, arising out of the Sussex case, the savagery of submarine warfare had been considerably modified.

On July 14 Paris celebrated Bastille Day with the first gala procession organized since hostilities had begun. It was regarded as a foretaste of a victory parade, now not long to be delayed.

Even so late as the mid-course of the war the magnitude of Armageddon was insufficiently realized. Not for another year would the tragedy of the Nivelle's offensive be recorded, while the terrific blow struck by Ludendorff in his monumental drive was still two years in the future. The summer of 1914 was the surprise end of the war; 1915, the static summer; 1917, the dark summer, and 1918, the summer of contrasted despair and victorious ecstasy. The summer of 1916 was unlike any of these. It was the season of steady nerves and of faith in systematic progress.

That Mercier should imbibe something of the flavor of the times was inevitable, and naturally his discourse echoed his convictions. What Von Bissing knew of the situation must, of course, have depressed him. When fearful of German success, he was quick to exert the force of German tyranny. Hence his indignation at the Cardinal's address and the new fine imposed upon the city of Brussels.

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.

Brussels, July 23, 1916.

POLITICAL Department of the Government General of Belgium.

The Governor General commissions me to convey his thanks to your Eminence in reply to your esteemed letter of the 25th inst. for the care and the promptness which you took to clear up all misunderstandings. The Governor General recognizes with pleasure that your Eminence had no intention to add to the agitation discernible among the Belgian population.

Nevertheless, his Excellency must protest against your Eminence's insinuation that the reports of the sermon preached at St. Gudule are the handiwork of spies. Not one of these reports comes from any one in our service. All come from believing Catholics, who had noted with painful surprise the impression it made on the audience. Even Belgians disapproved of your Eminence's words, for they said they must undoubtedly have excited men's minds and exercised an influence on their conduct outside the church.

Without doubt your Eminence wishes now to foster the belief that the words which you employed have been misunderstood. But simple people noticed in a special manner such phrases as "The hour of deliverance approaches, but has not yet struck." In spite of all the subtle qualifications with which your Eminence enveloped them, these phrases stick in the memory. The fact that the words spoken by your Eminence have been misconstrued is at any rate a proof that you did not clearly take into account the possible effect of your discourse.

Victory Forecast Worries Lancken

In spite of all your good intentions, your Eminence hinders people from forming a true idea of the actual situation. Your Eminence wrote that not one of the commanders-in-chief of the armies in the field could predict the end of hostilities. Accordingly, the Governor General is at a loss to understand how your Eminence can on your own account foretell the issue of the war. In any case, the Governor General earnestly entreats your Eminence to be on your guard for the future and to avoid all misunderstandings and for this purpose to refrain from uttering in public statements liable to mislead the people. Your Eminence has declared over and over again that you knew well the temper of the Belgian people, but you must not lose sight of the fact that declarations made by an orator easily and very often produce effects quite opposite to those intended.

In conclusion I should like to rectify a mistake made by your Eminence. In his letter of July 24 the Governor General says: "This demonstration began with your Eminence." The words "this demonstration" referred solely to the sermon preached at St. Gudule. The Governor General had no intention of discussing with your Eminence the incidents which took place during the evening. These have already been examined by another authority. Hence the consequences which your Eminence deduces from this misunderstanding fall to the ground.

I shall shortly have the honor of answering in detail the letter which your Eminence has addressed to the Governor General dated July 12, and shall have an opportunity also of touching on another question, which, because of the agitation that it constantly keeps alive among the Belgian people, calls for a definite solution.

Please accept the expression of my sincere esteem. (Signed) LANCKEN.

July 30, 1916. Archbishop's House, Malines.

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

I have the honor of acknowledging the receipt of your Excellency's letter No. 6827, which you commissioned Baron von der Lancken to write in your name.

In its general purport it recognizes—and I am glad of it—that my discourse of July 21 had been wrongly denounced. The report made to your Excellency was incorrect, and thus the fundamental misunderstanding is removed.

Yet, on two points of detail, the author of the letter declares that he is not satisfied. He finds that I have assumed the role of prophet because I have said, "The hour of deliverance draws nigh." Next, that I falsely boast of knowing the temper of the Belgian people; the demonstration of the 21st proves me lacking in foresight.

But I did not say, "The hour of deliverance draws nigh" but, "The hour of deliverance draws nigh, but has not struck. Let us persevere in patience. Do not let our courage falter. Let us commit to Divine Providence the care of perfecting our national education." The first clause taken by itself is as vague as its meaning is clear when read joined to its context. This proves once more that any two lines taken from an author are enough to hang him.

Imagine you have before you a prisoner sentenced to a year's imprisonment. After eight months of duration you say to him, "Courage, my friend, the hour of deliverance draws nigh." Do you think he does not understand? The prisoner is Belgium—she, too, understands. But you say, if she understands, how is it that

"CINDERELLA'S DAUGHTER"

By HAZEL DEYO BATCHELOR Copyright, 1919, by the Public Ledger Company

SYNOPSIS

At boarding school Virginia West and Kathleen Foster were the closest friends, but after Virginia had married Jimmy Anderson, who was poor and unimportant, there was not much that the girls had in common. Kathleen had been engaged to a friend of Jimmy's, but she did not consider it serious and broke the engagement. Virginia, who had always had what ever she wanted, discovered unexpectedly that her mother had spent all their available money and that she and Jimmy would have to live on fifty dollars a week. In the meantime Mrs. West marries unexpectedly and goes to Japan.

A GREATER contrast could not be imagined than that existing between Kathleen and Virginia as they sat facing each other in the little living room. Virginia's highbred little face was pale and unhappy, she wore an apron known as the bungalow type which was stiff and unbecoming. Kathleen was dressed in a smart light-fitting blue suit with a close little hat. A heavily meshed veil was tied over her face and her beautiful skin looked like polished ivory under the silky material.

As she sat facing Virginia her thoughts were all of the fact that Virginia had made a mess of her life. She had been stubborn and full of illusions, she had been determined to marry Jimmy Anderson and to be poor and now she had been married only a few days and here she was settled for life in this dreadful little place.

"Well, dear," she said finally, "are you happy?" "Oh, yes, Jimmy is a darling, but I hate housework, and I'm so stupid about it. I don't blame him for thinking me a perfect idiot."

"Good heavens, could any one like housework? I don't think so." "Jimmy's mother does." "And Jimmy thinks that little Virginia ought to be as good as Jimmy's mother," laughed Kathleen.

Virginia laughed and flushed a little. "Well, I'll tell you what I'll do," said Kathleen briskly. "You get dressed and we'll go downtown for lunch and forget all about the fact that you're married. It's my treat. Come on now, I'll talk to you while you scramble into some clothes."

Virginia forgot all about the dishes piled on the little shelf in the kitchen, and hurried into the bedroom, her spirits rising as she pulled out fresh underwear, stockings, her long narrow shoes which fitted her slender feet like sheaths, and one of her characteristic frocks of tan wool bordered with fur. She laughed and talked while she dressed and finally went out with Kathleen leaving the

places behind her in a perfect cyclone of disorder.

The girls had a wonderful time. They lunched at one of the big hotels and Kathleen shocked Virginia by smoking, with perfect sophistication, a cigarette. There was something exhilarating about being in this well-dressed crowd, actually a part of it, eating and drinking merrily and enjoying all the pleasures of perfect catering, delicious food, spotless linen and sparkling crystal. Virginia was her old self, she was the Virginia of the Palmerston vivacious, she was the naughty elfish Virginia. Laughing and flushed she responded vivaciously to Kathleen. This was Virginia's world, where she belonged, where she had been brought up. It was all as natural to her as the beautiful clothes she wore, and this was what money brought, money which she had never appreciated until she understood what it meant to do without it. All of the old adoration that Virginia had felt for Kathleen at boarding school returned now. Virginia was ready to forgive Kathleen everything and she shuddered a little as she thought of the possibility of Kathleen's being married to Bill, of Kathleen washing dirty dishes. Kathleen was so different, so different from the sordid things of life. Kathleen was different.

Her brief sojourn in the world of wealth and fashion brought back to Virginia the beauty-loving soul all of her love and enthusiasm. She was ashamed of her gloomy thoughts of the morning and she blew into her little apartment all her love and life. She had forgotten the disordered bedroom and messy kitchen. The fact that she had not stopped to do anything, so anxious had she been to get out, did not occur to her until, whirling into the living room, she came upon Jimmy sitting very quietly in a big chair. His face was grave and displeased, it acted like a damper on Virginia's radiant spirits, but she flung her warm young arms around his neck as he rose to greet her, and kissed him eagerly.

"Where have you been?" he asked putting her arms gently away from him. "The place looks as if a cyclone had struck it and no dinner. I suppose you never thought of that, did you?" His tone and manner were exactly those of his mother and Virginia shivered.

Tomorrow, the Result of the Lunch con.

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