

# "GERMANY HAS VIOLATED AN OATH," MERCIER TELLS LANCKEN

### "It Is No Use to Argue; it Is No Use to Twist and Turn," Cardinal Informs Visitor in Argument Over Pastoral, and Says, "I Do Not Want to Quarrel Any More With You"

#### Explanatory Comment

THE usual German melodrama accompanied the publication of the Cardinal's fourth pastoral letter, "The Voice of God," dated Sunday, October 1, 1916. The printers were arrested. The police seized copies of the work. Von der Lancken duly appeared for a personal interview with the primate, and, as so often happened, was outmatched in the verbal duel.

The following passage from the pastoral proved especially wounding to the sensibilities of the dapper diplomat and the brusque Governor General:

"Be then grateful to God. The independence of our country is today not to be doubted. Let us thank God for having assured us of its preservation. Let us thank God for having preserved for our affection our King, the glory of the Belgian nation; our Queen, tender and strong; the royal children. Let us thank Him for having given us the patience to support without flinching or murmuring our long and hard trial; for having vouchsafed to us the first benediction of our Holy Father, the Pope Benedict XV, and for having inspired him to declare to us that his warmest paternal affection is for Belgium; for having instilled in the hearts of the foreign nations regard for our misfortunes. We must raise to them after the war a monument of gratitude. Let us give to them today a place of honor in our grateful piety.

"Finally, as we are not at the end of our term of Calvary may our devotions in the mass be an assiduous prayer for our dear native land, for those present and those absent, for our vallant prisoners and our dear refugees.

"The more the war lasts, the more ardent becomes our commiseration for all those men of energy who burn to give their all for us, for us whom inaction tortures daily."

#### 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.

[Continuation of the interview between Cardinal Mercier and Baron von der Lancken.]

"Yet we must find some means of coming to an understanding."

"For myself I see but one," answered the Cardinal, "that you affect not to notice what is going on and leave me with a free hand. I had understood, or, if you like that better, conjectured that such was your intention. Accordingly I was not a little surprised to learn that the works of my printer had been raided by the German police."

"It was not with the intention of seizing your letter; Smeesters was implicated in another affair."

"As I was unaware of that, I was greatly surprised. I had intended to send you a copy of my letter as soon as it was in the hands of the various deans in Brussels, and I considered I had a right to expect from you its circulation without let or hindrance, for, after all, there is absolutely nothing in the letter to which you could take exception."

#### Von Bissing "Displeased"

"Nothing to offend me, perhaps, but the Governor General, a soldier among soldiers, who, being obliged to consider the effect your writings may produce in Germany, thinks otherwise. He knows I have come to Malines; in fact, we had a twenty minutes' conversation about this very letter and I can assure you he is greatly displeased."

"But what has he to complain of?"

"First of all, he takes exception to the phrase in which you affirm that 'nobody today calls the independence of Belgium into question.'"

"But there is nothing mysterious in this assertion. Only this morning I read in the Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant a declaration made by the Socialist deputy Haase to Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg. You speak of peace in vague terms which fall upon deaf ears. Begin by declaring that you agree to the autonomy of small states, such as Belgium and Serbia, and then your words will be listened to. I do not take my stand on your feelings nor on those of the German empire when asserting my belief in the independence of my country. My words were based principally on the solemn undertaking repeated over and over again by our allies that they will not consent to discuss peace until Belgium has been liberated. The Holy Father, whose name I mention with reluctance, said the same thing to me in Rome last January."

"Again," replied the Baron, "you say at the end of your letter: 'Let us hasten the hour of our deliverance.' It is this last phrase especially that irritated the Governor General."

"Well then, Baron, the Governor General does not understand French. It lies with you, who understand and speak it, to explain fully to him the meaning this fragment of a phrase has when read in connection with its context. You have only to read the whole paragraph to perceive its real sense.

"Oh, I have perused the letter four times."

"Then read the paragraph again. Do you not see that these words were inserted therein to introduce the liturgical invocation, 'O Lord, make haste to help us?' They merely imply that by means of prayer and penance we are to merit the help and deliverance of Almighty God. Are my words susceptible of any other interpretation?"

"When I had read it over again I saw that the phrase could be understood in the sense your Eminence attaches to it, but the Governor General placed quite a different construction upon it."

"For example?"

"He took it to mean, 'Let us hasten to expel the Germans.'"

"Well," replied the Cardinal, "what is one to do? It is not my fault if he is not sensitive to the delicate shades of meaning in our language. And what else was there?"

"Several allusions to current politics."

"As for instance?"

#### Resents Reference to Poland

"First of all a reference to Poland, which in the eyes of the Governor General is political, though, personally, I must confess that this particular passage appeared to me quite inoffensive."

"Obviously if Poland is to recover her independence just as many concessions must be made by Russia as by Germany. Then I say distinctly that the country has been laid waste by the advance or retirement of the armies."

"What about the attack you made on the Turks?"

"Pardon me," replied the Cardinal, "I did not attack the Turks, but I take up the cudgels for the Armenians. I have great compassion for their suffering, and as I am suffering with my fellow countrymen, I can sympathize with others in their trials. Is it not natural?"

"But in your letter, your Eminence inveighs against the allies of Germany, and it is this which displeases the Governor General. Moreover, in a subsequent passage your Eminence asks prayers for your allies. Doubtless you refer to the British?"

"The British, the French and all those who defend the same cause as ourselves. Can you imagine that there is a single Belgian Catholic who does not pray for them? But we pray also, I say, for our enemies. Do you wish that I should say for: 'Our armies on the western front?'"

"Yes, that would do excellently."

"Frankly, that borders on sophistry. If I did not fear to wound you, Baron, I should say that you wish to pick a quarrel with me (une querelle d'Allemand)."

"But, come, tell me what your intention was in paying me this visit."

"Oh, above all, to explain to your Eminence the difficult position I am in."

"Did you come on behalf of the Governor General with some order in your pocket or merely to ask me for an explanation?"

"I have come with no order whatever. I fear complications and that Smeesters will be punished for printing your pastoral."

#### "Game Not Worth the Candle"

"But that disgusts me! If my letter is criminal, I am the first person who should be punished. And if you do not punish me, it is unreasonable to punish an inferior, who has merely executed my orders. But since you leave me free to say what I think, I am quite willing to tell you that I do not consider the passage, which you condemn of sufficient importance to provoke a public dispute and it would be painful to me to ex-

pose my printer to additional punishment. The game is not worth the candle. Let me consider the changes I can make. In a word, it is enough to cut out the words: 'the independence of Belgium is not doubted by any one' and 'let us hasten our deliverance' and substitute for: 'the armies of our allies' 'our armies.' I could make these alterations and it would cost me nothing, but then you would claim victory over me in your press."

"Oh no, certainly not."

"The country clergy could not be warned in time, but I could inform the deans in the bigger towns, before the reading of the second part of the letter."

This question being settled, the Baron asked the Cardinal to apply to him whenever he had any cause for complaint. "Is it not better," he said, "to avoid disagreements?"

"Doubtless," replied the Cardinal. "I do not want to quarrel any more than you, for the mere pleasure of it, but I believe that in spite of my good-will and yours a dispute is unavoidable."

"Is your Eminence persuaded of that?"

"Yes. Because the military authorities have a natural tendency to abuse their power against which my conscience must protest. You place a political construction on all our protests and so create discord."

"But is it not better, in the interest of your country, to avoid protests which lead to no result?"

"That is absolutely the fundamental question. You imagine that in our ministry we have no other ambition than to spare ourselves momentary worry and anxiety, or to win some immediate success. A thousand times no! Utilitarianism, even socially, is not our ideal. If St. Paul had spoken like you, we should never have had St. Paul. We should possess neither his epistles nor his example. If the theory, 'What is the good of that,' i. e., 'what practical advantage do you hope to gain by that—if this theory, I say, had always prevailed we should not have had the Catholic Church. It required three centuries of martyrs to consolidate and propagate the idea that there is something higher than individual and national interests."

"Oh, the martyrs! that is another matter."

"By no means, fundamentally it is the same thing. A martyr is not one who gives his life just for the pleasure of sacrifice; he is one who upholds and, incontrovertible truth and makes himself its bond slave, even to offering his liberty and his life in its defense. It would have been easy for the martyrs to burn perchance secretly a few grains of incense before an idol. But this act, materially insignificant, yet for the moment very profitable to the ocer, would have been an avowal that he had no absolute belief in the truth which he professed and at once the eternal would have been reduced to the level of the transitory. When the Church was founded, the truth preached was religious truth: the Gospel of Christ. Truth, today, is right and the superiority of its kingdom over passing interests. In either case, there is antagonism between utilitarianism and the necessary triumph of absolute right—of truth. Thus I have nothing but contempt for those sophisms to which you, in your recent correspondence and with you certain theologians in their utterances, have had recourse, sheltering themselves behind the 'notwehr' for the purpose of justifying the invasion of our country. It is no use to argue; it is no use to twist and turn. Germany has violated an oath and it would be simpler to confess and regret it than to strive by might and main to hide the truth."

With these words the interview ended. Baron von der Lancken took his leave, thanking the Cardinal for the changes he had agreed to make in the text of his pastoral.

"The Cardinal requested Mr. Evarad, dean of St. Gaudule, to give notice of these changes before the reading of the second part of the letter, ordered for the following Sunday, to the deans of Brussels and district, including Louvain and Uccle, as well as the deans of Wavre, Nivelles, Braine-l'Alleux, Tubize, Hale and Vilvorde. He also advised the dean of Antwerp of the alterations and asked him to communicate them to the neighboring clergy."

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)  
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#### Cable Briefs

Berlin newspapers show great concern over the food situation, predicting a crisis in Berlin by February.

General demand for higher wages by railroad employes, with threats of strikes, has precipitated another serious situation in Germany. Radicals among the men are agitating for a revolutionary council of government. The government fears seizure of the rail ministry and a new revolution.

A group of London bankers has laid before the British government a plan by which they will enter partnership with the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for advancing credits to finance trade and get business back into normal channels. The plan gives Britain a firm grip on Baltic markets, defeating Germany's aspirations.

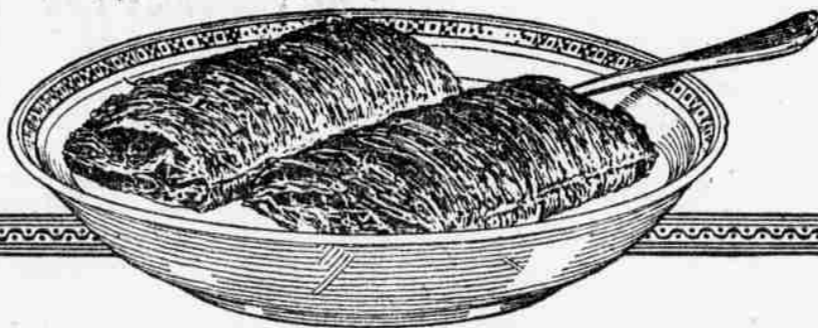
Lord Sydenham, authority on eastern questions, expresses in a letter to the London Times grave anxiety for the situation in the Far East. He declares that bolshevism will exhaust itself in Europe, but Central Asia may remain a source of danger for many years.

University, declares the war was won by the superiority of French artillery, and that the Germans learned from the enemy nearly everything of importance that they acquired.

Professor Ehrenberg, of Heidelberg

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<b>APOLLO</b> 522 & THOMPSON STS. 10 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. MATINEE DAILY "PLEASE GET MARRIED" VIOLA DANA in	<b>PRINCESS</b> 1018 MARKET STREET Mat. 2:30. Evng. 8:15 to 11:15 P. M. DOROTHY DALTON in "FLAME OF THE YUKON"
<b>ARCADIA</b> CHESTNUT Below 16TH 10 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. TOM MOORE in "TOBY'S BOW"	<b>REGENT</b> MARKET ST. Below 17TH Mat. 2:30. Evng. 8:15 to 11:15 P. M. JACK PICKERELL in "IN WRONG"
<b>BLUEBIRD</b> BROAD STREET AND AT SUBURBAN AVE. PAULINE FREDERICK in "BONDS OF LOVE"	<b>RIALTO</b> GERMANTOWN AVE. AT TULPHOCKEN ST. WILL ROGERS in "ALMOST A HUSBAND"
<b>BROADWAY</b> Broad & Snyder Aves. 10 A. M. to 9 P. M. ANITA STEWART in "MIND THE PAINT GIRL"	<b>RUBY</b> MARKET ST. BELOW 17TH Mat. 2:30. Evng. 8:15 to 11:15 P. M. ALBERT RAY in "TINE ALEX"
<b>CAPITOL</b> 722 MARKET STREET 10 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. ELAINE HAMMERSTEIN in "THE COUNTRY COUSIN"	<b>SAVOY</b> 1211 MARKET STREET 8 A. M. to MIDNIGHT NORMA TALMADGE in "THE LOST BRIDEGROOM"
<b>COLONIAL</b> 6th & Maplewood Aves. 2:30, 7 and 9 P. M. ELAINE HAMMERSTEIN in "THE COUNTRY COUSIN"	<b>STANLEY</b> MARKET ABOVE 18TH 10 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. CLARA K. YOUNG in "EYES OF YOUR MOTHER"
<b>EMPRESS</b> MAIN ST. MANAYUNK Mat. 2:30. Evng. 8:15 to 11:15 P. M. PAULINE FREDERICK in "ONE WEEK OF LIFE"	<b>VICTORIA</b> MARKET ST. AB 9TH 8 A. M. to 11:15 P. M. STAR CART in "TOURNBUR'S 'EYES OF YOUR MOTHER'"
<b>FAMILY THEATRE</b> —1811 Market St. 10 A. M. to Midnight GEORGE WALSH in "THE BEAST"	<b>THE NIXON-NIRPLINGER THEATRES</b>
<b>FAIRMOUNT</b> 28th & GIRARD AV. MATINEE DAILY "THE MIRACLE MAN"	<b>BELMONT</b> 62D ABOVE MARKET VIOLA DANA in "PLEASE GET MARRIED"
<b>56TH ST. THEATRE</b> —Below Spruce. MATINEE DAILY BERT LYELL in "LOMBARDI, LTD."	<b>CEDAR</b> 60TH AND CEDAR AVENUE ENID BENNETT in "WHAT EVERY WOMAN LEARNS"
<b>FRANKLIN</b> THIRD & FITZWATER ORGAN MUSIC SYLVIA BREMER in "DAWN"	<b>COLISEUM</b> MARKET BETWEEN 59TH AND 60TH ROBERT WARWICK in "AN ADVENTURE IN HEARTS"
<b>GREAT NORTHERN</b> Broad at Erie ANITA STEWART in "MIND THE PAINT GIRL"	<b>FRANKFORD</b> 4715 Frankford Ave. CONSTANCE TALMADGE in "THE VEILED MANIC" CHAPLIN in "A DAY'S PLEASURE"
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<b>LIBERTY</b> BROAD & COLUMBIA AV. MATINEE DAILY DOROTHY DALTON in "THE FLAME OF THE YUKON"	<b>NIXON</b> 52D AND MARKET STS. 2:15, 7 and 9. AL ST. JOHN in "SPED"
<b>333 MARKET</b> STREET THEATRE WALLACE REID in "HAWTHORNE, U. S. A."	<b>RIVOLI</b> 52D AND SANBORN STS. NADIMOVA in "THE BEAST"
<b>MODEL</b> 425 South St. Orchestra. Continuous 1 to 11. "THE SPEED MANIAC"	<b>STRAND</b> GERMANTOWN AVE. AT VERNANO STAR CART in "MIND THE PAINT GIRL"
<b>OVERBROOK</b> 52D AND EVERFORD AVE. ALBERT RAY in "A DAY'S PLEASURE"	<b>WEST ALLEGHENY</b> 28th and Allegheny BRVANT WASHINGTON in "IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE"
<b>BROAD ST. AUDITORIUM</b> Broad & Rockland CHAPLIN in "A DAY'S PLEASURE"	<b>JEFFERSON</b> 29th & Dauphin Sts. MATINEE DAILY ANITA STEWART in "HER KINGDOM OF DREAMS"
<b>EUREKA</b> 40TH & MARKET STS. MATINEE DAILY GERALDINE FARRAR in "THE WORLD AND ITS WOMAN"	<b>PARK</b> RIDGE AVE. & DAUPHIN ST. Mat. 2:15. Evng. 8:45 to 11:15 P. M. TOM MIX in "THE SPEED MANIAC"

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