

THE BELGIAN EXODUS TO HOLLAND AND DISSENSIONS AMONG THE BELGIAN EXILES

By A. J. BARNOW in the Nation.

On October 8, the anniversary of the fall of Antwerp, an exhibition was opened at The Hague of sixty-three drawings by the Dutch painter, Leo Gestel, all illustrating the miseries of the Belgian exodus into Holland. Leo Gestel has lived through various episodes of that eventful time, and has recorded them with brush and pencil in scenes so throbbing with woe and speechless agony as to haunt the mind for days after. The most impressive are these in which the artist shows the interminable, wave-like processions of the wearily tramping crowd; young, thin-faced mothers with deep-sunk eyes, dragging their children along and bending under the burden of all their belongings tied up in bundles; old women wheeling a perambulator turned into a removal van; street-walkers in showy furs and painted faces; young fellows with lowering looks, carrying heavy bags slung over their shoulders, or pushing a wheelbarrow in which an old paralyzed father is propped up against a pillow; dirty patriarchal Jews and dangerous-looking hoodlums; tottering omnibuses packed on the top with an indistinct mass in which nothing but heads and arms and fists and dangling legs can be discerned; and over this sea of tearless despair a dark sky looms, lit up in the far distance by the lurid glare of a town on fire. Pictures like these are mighty epics in black and white. But the artist has also observed these poor exiles in their higgledy-piggledy makeshift camps, improvised on sodden fields by the roadside, in the shelter of a haystack, and in drenching rain with only a straggling tent or the tilt of a cart to cover them. Still, after the former, these restful scenes are pleasant to behold, and the artist, who drew the flight in black only, has painted these camping episodes in bright transparent water-colors. The collection reveals the powers of a great artist, and is a lasting monument both to his own fame and to that terror-stricken flight of half a nation.

The Belgians, at that time fraternized by affliction, have, in their exile, resumed the old political quarrels by which the nation was sadly divided before the war. In a letter to the "Nation," published in its issue of April 22, I considered it possible that the danger from abroad would eventually prove a means of consolidating the Walloon and Flemish elements. But when the first terror of the invasion and flight had subsided, and the war dragged on with hardly a change to stir their flagging hope of

would not hear of such a compromise so long as home rule was not guaranteed to Flanders. Either group had its adherents among Mr. de Swarte's staff. Mr. Rene de Clercq, his co-editor from the beginning, stood up in opposition to him, and succeeded in persuading Mr. de Swarte to resign, leaving "De Vlaamsche Stem" in the hands of the extremists.

The other group, the "Flanders next to Belgium" men, have at once started a new paper, a weekly called "Vrij België" (Free Belgium), by the choice of this title asserting their devotion to King Albert's country. "Vrij België" accuses Mr. de Clercq of bringing grist to the German mill by starting his anti-Government action while this Government is still in exile: Mr. de Clercq, in his turn, reproaches the "Vrij België" leaders with faintheartedness and betrayal of the Flemish cause. "It need not concern us whether a Flemish Flanders is to the interest of Germany, it suffices us to know that it is of the highest importance to our people," writes Mr. de Clercq's co-editor, Dr. Jacob. And while this leader, in happy unconcern of Germany interests, is dictating to his followers the tenets of true Flemish nationalism, the anything but disinterested German conqueror at Ghent dictates to a few Germanophile Flemish journalists the tenets of true Pan-Germanism for the edification and instruction of the subscribers to "De Vlaamsche Post." In this paper, the agitation for an autonomous Flanders has lately, under German auspices, gone to the extent of summoning Flemish to open rebellion against their exiled rulers. "Thus far," writes one of these hotheads, "we Flemings have been satisfied with begging and talking—we had better smash windows and preach revolt against our Frenchified Government when it returns to Brussels." And while such irresponsible penmen are compromising the Flemish cause, branding it with the suspicion of apostasy, Flemish soldiers are daily shedding their blood in defence of that country for whose unity their writing leaders pretend not to care!

Which must we take as the truer reflex of the Flemish people's mind: the journalist's word or the soldier's deed? No doubt the latter. The average Fleming cares not for the nice distinctions which cause schism between intellectual Flemings. He feels one craving: an undisturbed possession of his native soil; he knows one truth: that his enemy, who denies him that peace, is the German. And he expresses that conviction with laconic eloquence by calling "De Vlaamsche Post," which dickers with the enemy, "De Vlaamsche Pest" (The Flemish Pestilence).

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WEDNESDAY—"EXPLOITS OF ELAINE."

FRIDAY—"CHARLIE CHAPLIN."

A German Ode to Pres. Wilson

LONDON, Dec. 27.—In an illustrated supplement of the Government controlled Berlin Lokal-Anzeiger on last Friday is the following bit of verse entitled "Ode to Wilson," of which the following is a rough translation:

How wildly you roar forth your speeches,
How furiously and blindly you curse,
How you thunder out rage and damnation,
And words which the winds but disperse.
To cast loving eyes towards the Fatherland
Is treason for Germany's clan.
To take thought of the soil of his fathers
Is the right of every free-born man.
Like an idiot you've blandly suggested
That the Germans' right role is reserve,
And meekly while' homeland is bleeding
Like deaf, dumb and blind should observe.
Shamed deep in both cheeks you would have him
Stand by looking on and not stir;
None but a fool would demand it,
None so craven to obey but a cur.

Britain Needs Many Doctors

NEW YORK, Dec. 21.—"Nothing brings more vividly before us the effects of the war than the recent announcement of the Director-General of the Royal Army Medical Corps of Great Britain that before the close of the current year at least 2,500 additional doctors will be required, ready to take commissions and to be sent where needed.

"This means that, at the very least, one-third of the members of the profession in Great Britain who are within the military age will be called."

So states The New York Medical Journal, editorially, under the caption "Doctors and War." The editorial adds:

"Without competent medical advice it would be impossible to maintain in the field such huge aggregations of men as go to make the modern army. Without proper sanitary precautions they would be swept away by epidemics more deadly than the shells and bullets of the enemy.

"To supply the needed quota of medical men Great Britain has been divided into districts, and local meetings of the members of the professional in these districts have been summoned to meet the representatives of the Government and learn the needs of the army in the matter of medical service.

"The doctors who remain at home are likewise serving their country, for arrangements are being made on a business basis, which will, so far as practicable, assure the preservation of the practice of those men who go to the front, so that on their return they will not find themselves shouldered out of the profession.

"All this furnishes an impressive lesson for the medical profession in the United States, for our social, professional and military organization is along much the same lines as that which obtains in Great Britain.

MAKING IT HARDER FOR TRAVELLERS

PARIS, Dec. 27.—Passenger traffic between England and France will be confined to the Dieppe route, or by way of ports farther west, after December 25. Only soldiers and bearers of diplomatic passports or special permits, which are granted only for the most serious reasons will be allowed to travel by way of Calais and Boulogne.

READ THE MAIL & ADVOCATE

Refutes Bryan's Charges About India's Loyalty

A year or two ago one William Jennings Bryan, of Nebraska, politician and peace advocate, spent three short weeks in India making a thorough study of India's three hundred million people and their condition under British rule. One of the after-effects of that trip was an interview in which Bryan condemned British administration in India.

Mr. Bryan may not have been quite frank in saying what he really thought about British government in the ancient empire, but last week Mr. Rustomjee, editor the American Club, did not mince words in saying what he thought of Mr. Bryan.

"Lies, abominable lies," was the distinguished Parsee's description of Bryan's statements that India was suffering under British rule, was paying tribute to Britain and furnished Britain's younger sons with easy and lucrative positions.

Mr. Rustomjee told of the rapid growth of India's population under British administration, of the increase in the wealth of the people and the tremendous development in trade. With a trade of a billion and a half of dollars India contributed only £100,000 a year for the protection given by the British navy. Not one dollar of tribute was paid by India, and not a dollar went out of the country but for India's good. Less than one per cent. of the positions of the civil service of India was in the hands of Englishmen, and these were mostly technical positions Indians could not yet fill.

Speaking of the reasons lying behind India's wholehearted support of Britain in this war, Mr. Rustomjee declared that Britain's championship of Belgium, her determination to stand by her pledged word, no matter what the cost, had been a guarantee to the princes of India that the integrity and liberty of their states would be maintained. The people of India realized also that the war was one between two great forces, the forces of autocracy and freedom. Those who had preached sedition—and there were a few—had buried the hatchet to unite against the common enemy, and all the people had united in defence of the Empire.

Major Minard, president of the American Club, thanked Mr. Rustomjee. He dealt briefly with the organization of an American legion who were going to fight side by side with Canadians, Australians, Indians and the men from the Isles of the sea. The American legion would be fighting, not for the British flag, but for the principles of freedom, truth and justice for which that flag to-day was standing, and on the side on which every lover of justice and liberty had ranged himself.

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