

cut down; prisoners could not be treated as prisoners of war according to the laws of war, but according to the usage of war as murderers. All the same, the forms of judicial procedure were maintained so far as the necessities of war did not stand in the way; the prisoners were, so far as the circumstances permitted, not shot till after a hearing in accordance with regulations, or after sentence by a military court. (Appendices 48, D 19, 20, 37, 40, 41, 43, 44, 48.) Old men, women and children were spared to the widest extent, even when there were urgent grounds of suspicion (Appendices 49; C 5, 6, 25, 26, 28, 35, 41, 47, 79); indeed, the German soldiers often looked after such persons so far as was in any way possible in the most self-sacrificing manner by taking helpless people who were in danger under their protection, sharing their bread with them and taking charge of the weak and sick, although their patience had been subjected to an extraordinarily difficult test by the treacherous attacks (Appendices C 45, 47, 51-53, 55, 58, 80-86).

There can be no doubt that the Belgian Government was essentially to blame for the illegal attitude of their population towards the German Army. For apart from the fact that a Government has, under all circumstances, to bear the responsibility for deeds of this kind which give a general expression of the popular will, the serious charge must at least be made against them that they did not stop this guerilla war, although they could have done so (Appendices 33, 51-53; D 42, 43, 48). It would certainly have been easy for them to provide their officials, such as the Burgomasters, the soldiers, members of the "Garde Civique," with the necessary instructions to check the violent excitement of the people which had been artificially aroused. Full responsibility, therefore, for the terrible blood-guiltiness which rests upon Belgium attaches to the Belgian Government.

The Belgian Government has made an attempt to free itself from this responsibility by attributing the blame for the events to the rage of destruction of the German troops, who are said to have taken to deeds of violence without any reason. They