

### An Incident of the War.

The following are the facts connected with the death of the Rev. John Munro Mackenzie, an annuitant of the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada.

Mr. Mackenzie was formerly pastor of the Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, Liverpool, but for several years had been living in retirement in London. When the war broke out he was travelling as an invalid on the Continent. The last word heard from him was a post card to his sister from Bonn, dated 27th July, in which he said that he was going to Aix-la-Chapelle, and thence home. The "London Times" gives an account supplied by Mr. Geo. Bonar, of Low & Bonar, Ltd., Dundee, and 53 New Broad St., London, of the tragic manner in which Mr. Mackenzie met his death.

Mr. Bonar's narrative is as follows: "My wife, two children (boys) and a nurse were returning from Bad Ems. On Monday, August 3, the party travelled by the 4 p.m. train on the assurance that it would take them through to Brussels. At Herbestal, the last town in Germany, they were peremptorily ordered to get out, as there was no longer a connection with Belgium. The only thing for them to do was to walk over the frontier to the nearest Belgian town, which was Welkenraad. The party was composed of my wife and two children, the nurse, three American ladies, and an English gentleman named Mackenzie, about 70 years of age. Mr. Mackenzie was a man of wide culture, and I believe was well known in London.

"It was a miserable night, and rain fell heavily. At Welkenraad hundreds of people of all nationalities were walking about the streets in the pouring rain, unable to get accommodation. A woman took pity on the plight of my children and put them up for the night. My wife had no money, but gave her some jewellery. It was thought that if they could get to Verviers, they would be able to reach Ostend. A cart was obtained, and a hood was put over it to protect them from the rain.

"On the road from the German town of Eupen, they met the first German troops marching on Belgium. They were stopped, and the waggon was commandeered. The whole party walked to the little village of Baelen-Dolhain, where a Belgian Customs-House Officer, M. Michel Blaise, gave them shelter. On Tuesday, August 4, the three Americans and two young men from the Chilean Legation in Berlin, realising the impossibility of making their way through Belgium, decided to return to

Germany. My wife could not move because, owing to exposure, the elder boy had developed a severe attack of bronchitis; and Mr. Mackenzie was too old and lame to undertake a long walk. On the night of Sunday, August 9, firing was heard in the village. My wife took fright, and with the little boy who was ill, the other, and the nurse, went down into the cellar. Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Blaise accompanied them. As they ran downstairs, my wife noticed that a similar house on one side of them was ablaze. Almost immediately after they had reached the cellar they heard firing through all the windows overhead. After some time the doors and windows were broken in, and they were horrified to find that the soldiers were setting fire to the house.

"With one of the boys in her arms and followed by the other, my wife ran into the street in front of the troops, who were facing the house. 'Are we to be shot?' she cried, speaking in German, and for answer, she was ordered to stand on one side. They were followed by M. and Mme. Blaise. The moment M. Blaise appeared he was shot down and killed. Three bullets entered his body. Mr. Mackenzie was then seen coming along the passage. My wife ran up to the officer in charge of the troops, who was on horseback, and clutching him by the leg, cried, 'For God's sake don't shoot that man. He is an Englishman merely taking refuge here.' 'Das macht nichts aus' (that does not matter), the officer replied. He gave the order to shoot, and Mr. Mackenzie fell, with a bullet in his chest. One shot killed him. My wife is perfectly certain the officer heard what she said.

"The ground floor of the house was by this time burning fiercely. My children were standing in the street in pyjamas and with bare feet, and my wife asked permission to go into the house to rescue some clothes for them. At first the officer refused, but at last he consented, and allowed two soldiers to go with her. Three times my wife entered the burning house, and reached the first floor, and threw down clothing to the soldiers. Her hair, eyelids and eyebrows were singed, and my children are now wearing scorched clothing. My wife afterwards searched Mr. Mackenzie's body and took about 100 marks and his watch, which she gave to the poor Belgian woman, who had lost both home and husband. She retained his rings, which she has brought home to give to his relatives when they can be found."

Mrs. Bonar and her children, we understand, reached England by way of Holland.