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Belgium Under German Rule

Interesting Story of Liege by Madame Matrioje, one of the Belgian Refugees lately arrived in Canada

Interesting stories of Belgium under German rule and the history of the vicissitudes of, at least, one Belgian family, were told in Halifax by the Matriojes, of Liege, father, mother and son, who were in Halifax yesterday, having arrived here on Sunday by the Allan liner Scandinavian from Liverpool. They were met at Halifax by M. Matrioje's brother, who is employed at Stoddarton, and came to this city to take them to his home in the Picou County town. German atrocities, the siege of Liege, and the dramatic escape into Holland, of a party of Belgians, of whom Madame Jeanette Matrioje was a member, were the travellers chief topic of conversation during their stay on Sunday and Monday at the Victoria House, near Deep Water. Madame Matrioje was the chief conversationalist, and her hearers were thrilled with her tales.

She was in Liege during the siege of that place last August. When, on August 17th the Germans entered that city and all Belgian soldiers there were made prisoners. A number of Belgian women, who attempted to take provisions to the prisoners, were roughly handled by the Germans and struck down. A young nephew of Madame Matrioje, who was a member of the Belgian garrison of Liege met

his death in a tragic manner. Mme. Matrioje says that when it was decided to surrender the fortress lots were drawn by certain of the Belgian soldiers as to who should erect the flag of truce. The task fell to a married man, but Mme. Matrioje's relative at once insisted upon being allowed to place the white flag in position. He did so and the flag stood firm, but he was blown to pieces by a German shell.

Many Were Wounded.

"After some time," said Mme. Matrioje, "myself and fifty other Belgians, mostly women and children; set out for the Dutch frontier. Only nineteen of us crossed into Holland. The remainder were shot down by the Germans. Our party had scattered so as to make escape easier but most of them were killed in the attempt."

M. Matrioje himself was not in Liege when the war broke out and for six months his wife searched vainly for him. When, after some time spent in Holland, she arrived in England accompanied by her fifteen year old son Frank, she found him and he decided to come out to his brother in Canada.

"In Belgium today," said Mme. Matrioje, "it is dangerous to speak to anybody on the streets. The Germans are crafty. They speak French well and some disguise themselves so as to worm their way into the confidence of the natives and then when they have secured sufficient evidence for their purpose they burn down the houses of the patriotic Belgians whom they have beguiled."

The eldest son of M. and Mme. Matrioje is in the Belgian army. Young Frank volunteered but was too young to be accepted. —Halifax Chronicle.

Why Irishmen Answer England's Call

Though Ireland has been more completely drained of her young men in military age by emigration during the past century than any other country in Europe, yet her youth have nobly responded to the call for all that, and today a quarter of a million Irishmen are at the front, while possibly as many more are among those who are training for future fights. That the men at the front have done their duty it is not necessary to say. That they have been in the hottest corners is evidenced by their losses. The Dublin Fusiliers and the Connaught Rangers were first to reach the theatre of war, and their losses have been terrible. One writer says:

Owing to their severe losses these units were returned home to recruit. Of the Connaught Rangers, two hundred and fifty remained; of the Dublin Fusiliers, but seventy-eight remained. We would expect no other story from a brigade with a history of the Indian Mutiny, Waterloo, the Crimea and South Africa. We would expect no other story from men of the "fighting race." In looking over the official records it can be seen that up to the present, upward of eighty thousand from Nationalist Ireland have enlisted, of whom the greater portion is already at the front fighting in the trenches. We have already mentioned the names of two historic regiments whose deeds of valor have brought them everlasting renown. But the same might be said of the Royal Irish Rifles, the Leinster Regiment, the Irish Guards and other units. In addressing the Cork Battalion of the Irish Guards recently Lord Kitchener said "he was proud to have been honored by being appointed Colonel-in-Chief of the Irish Guards, who upheld the most glorious

traditions of their race in the present war, and were making an honorable name for themselves. Those who were going to join their comrades should remember their race and their country; those who were in training should be ready and fit to carry on the great example.

Ireland's heart is completely in the struggle against the iron handed Prussian Military Oligarchy, against the despoilers of Belgium. William Redmond, brother of the Irish leader, had put the matter in few and eloquent words:

"I am firmly convinced that the best interests of Ireland are bound up with the Allies. There may be a few who think Germany would not injure Ireland, and that they would even benefit us. I truly hope the Clare people will not rely on such statements."

If the Germans were here and they will if they reach Great Britain, they will be our masters, and we shall be at their mercy. What that mercy is, likely to be judge by the treatment given to Belgium. The Belgians never did the Germans any harm, and yet Belgium was invaded, and the Belgian people were massacred, and their homes and churches destroyed. A niece of my own, a nun, has been a victim—driven from her convent home by shot and shell. It is in the time to come we in Ireland could not show we had struck a blow for Belgium then, indeed, I believe that our name would be disgraced. Apart from all this I regard the Act which restored our Parliament as a Treaty of Peace with the people of Great Britain. The British democracy have shown us help and sympathy. Ever since our return now we enjoy the best of their loyal help and constant support. Everyone in Clare who feels better off than 30 years ago must

Had Bismarck Lived Would Have Sought Russia's Neutrality

London, April 1.—Sidney Whitman, one of the greatest authorities on Bismarck, in an article apropos in The Daily Chronicle, says:

"Should Russia be instated at Constantinople there will be an end to German economical as well as political preponderance. There will be no more room for Germans in Turkey except in their old quality of hewers of wood and drawers of water. Verily, if anybody in the world had a strong interest in keeping Turkey out of this war, it was Germany, for she had already got the key to the Bosphorus in her pocket." No wonder Bismarck implored his successors not to quarrel with Russia.

"Only no war with Russia," he said. "You cannot even reconquer yourself for your out-of-pocket expenses."

Saw Future For Russia.

"Bismarck's marvellous gift of intuitive prescience enabled him to appreciate the menace which the Slav constituted to the Teuton, and he was at one with his colleagues, Field Marshal Moltke. As I gleaned from the latter's own lips, there was no topic upon which Bismarck was more ready to dilate than Russia. He believed that the Russian race had a great future before it and, like Moltke was anxious that it should not develop unduly at the expense of Germany. He even frankly admitted that without the benevolent neutrality of Russia, in 1866-70, largely his own work, the political rise of Germany might have been impossible.

Pay for Sultan's Harem

"One day I ventured to ask him whether he deemed it consonant with Russian interests to have allowed Germany to become so powerful, and his reply convinced me that there was indeed a doubt about the matter in his mind. To my question whether Great Britain need feel aggrieved or suffer in her interests in case Russia went to Constantinople, Bismarck replied in April, 1891, that he did not see any weighty reason why Great Britain should suffer harm if such was the case. As for the Turks, the Russians might appease them by guaranteeing the expenses of the Sultan's harem, so little importance did Bismarck attach to German political ambitions in Turkey as late as 1891."

Germans Abandon Hopeless Struggle

Petrograd, April 4.—via London.—The German bombardment of the Russian positions at Ossowetz, in Russian Poland, has been definitely abandoned, according to semi-official despatches published here today.

For some days past the German artillery fire on Ossowetz has been weakened, and on March 30 it was discontinued. The cessation of these operations is regarded in Petrograd as an indication of the end of the German offensive movement in the north. The argument is advanced that in abandoning the siege of Ossowetz the Germans will appear to have given up the hope of establishing conditions between their forces to the west of the Niemen and those north of the Narew. Without the possession of Ossowetz to protect their flanks the advance of either one of these German armies is regarded here as practically impossible.

The fortifications of Ossowetz are reported to have suffered little from the protracted German bombardment.

know that it is largely due to our British friends. Without their aid the Irish Party could have done nothing. Apart from our interests, which I have said I believe are with the Allies, we should be ungrateful and inhuman if we stood by while the English, Scotch and Welsh people were in danger, and their women and children killed in cold blood, as happened in Scarborough.

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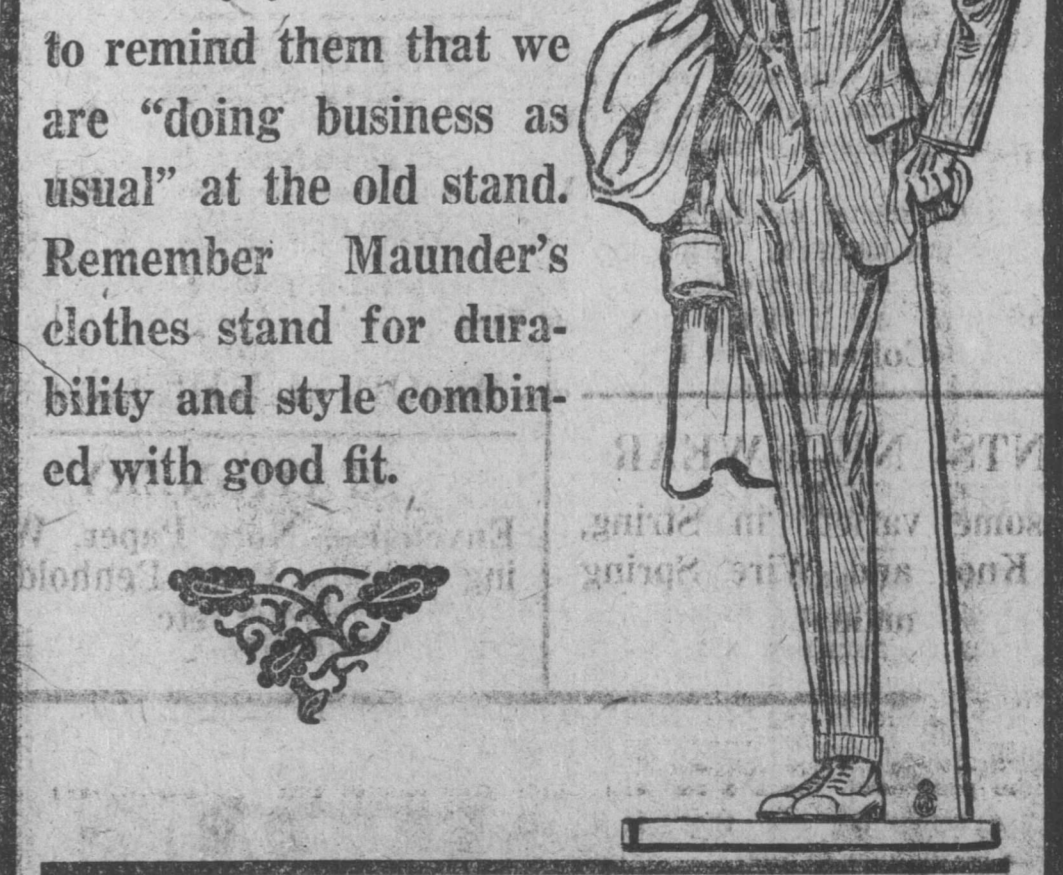
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