

DRIVEN TO ATROCITIES, GERMAN COMMANDER TELLS CORRESPONDENT

By E. ALEXANDER POWELL.

[By Cable to The Chicago Tribune.]

Headquarters in the Field of the Ninth Imperial Army, Chateau Lafers, near Renaix, Belgium.—Three weeks ago the government of Belgium requested me to place before the American people a list of specific and authenticated atrocities committed by the German armies upon Belgian non-combatants.

Today General von Boehn, commanding the Ninth Imperial field army, acting mouthpiece of the German general staff, has asked me to place before the American people the German version of the incidents in question.

So far as I am aware I am the only correspondent in the present war who has motored for an entire day through the ranks of the advancing German army, who has dined as a guest of the German army commander and his staff, and who has had the progress of the army on the march arrested in order to obtain photographs of the German troops.

This unusual experience came about in a curious and roundabout way.

Invited by General Von Boehn.

After an encounter in the streets of Ghent last Tuesday between a German military automobile and a Belgian armored car, in which two German soldiers were wounded, American Vice Consul Van Hee persuaded the burgomaster to accompany him immediately to the headquarters of General von Boehn to explain the circumstances and ask that the city should not be held responsible for the unfortunate affair.

In the course of the conversation with Mr. Van Hee General von Boehn remarked that copies of papers containing articles written by Alexander Powell criticizing the German treatment of the Belgian civil population had come to his attention and said he regretted he could not have an opportunity to talk with Powell and give him the German version.

Mr. Van Hee said by a fortunate coincidence I happened to be in Ghent, whereupon the general asked him to bring me out to dinner the following day, and issued a safe conduct through the German lines.

Though nothing was said about a photographer, I took with me Photographer Donald Thompson. As there was some doubt regarding the propriety of taking a Belgian driver into the German lines, I drove the car myself.

In Midst of Kaiser's Men.

Half a mile out of Sotthem our road debouched into the great highway which leads through Lille to Paris. We suddenly found ourselves in the midst of the German army. It was a sight never to be forgotten. Far as the eye could see stretched solid columns of marching men, pressing westward, ever westward.

The army was advancing in three mighty columns along three parallel roads. These dense masses of moving men in their elusive blue gray uniforms looked for all the world like three monstrous serpents crawling across the countryside.

American flags which fluttered from our windshield proved a passport in themselves and as we approached the close locked ranks they parted to let us through.

For five solid hours, traveling always at express train speed, we motored between the walls of the marching men. In time the constant shuffle of boots and the rhythmic swing of gray-clad arms and shoulders grew maddening and I became obsessed with the fear that I would send the car plowing into the human wedge on either side.

Miles of German Soldiers.

It seemed that the ranks never would end, and as far as we were concerned they never did, for we never saw or heard the end of that mighty column.

We passed regiment after regiment, brigade after brigade of infantry, and after them Hussars, uhlans, cuirassiers, field batteries, more infantry, more field guns, ambulances, then steeple gasses, each drawn by 30 horses, engineers, telephone corps, pontoon wagons, armored motor cars, more uhlans, the sunlight gleaming on their forest of lances, more infantry in spiked helmets, all sweeping by as irresistible as a mighty river, with their faces turned toward France.

This was the Ninth field army and composed the very flower of the empire, including the magnificent troops of the Imperial guard. It was first and last a fighting army. The men were all young. They struck me as being keen as razors and as hard as nails. The horses were magnificent. They could not have been better. The field guns of the Imperial guard were almost twice the size of any used by our army.

Thirty-two Horses Draw Howitzer.

But the most interesting of all, of course, were the five gigantic howitzers, each drawn by 16 pairs of horses. These howitzers can tear a city to pieces at a distance of a dozen miles. Every contingency seems to have been foreseen. Nothing was left to chance or overlooked. Maps of Belgium, with which every soldier is provided, are the finest examples of topography I have ever seen. Every path, every farm building, every clump of trees, and every twig is shown.

At one place a huge army wagon containing a complete printing press was drawn up beside the road and a

morning edition of Deutsche Kreiger Zeitung was being printed and distributed to the passing men. It contained nothing but accounts of German victories, of which I never had heard, but it seemed greatly to cheer the men.

Field kitchens with smoke pouring from their stovepipe funnels rumbled down the lines, serving steaming soup and coffee to the marching men, who held out tin cups and had them filled without once breaking step.

Covered Wagons Hide Machine Guns. There were wagons filled with army cobbles, sitting cross-legged on the floor, who were mending soldiers' shoes just as if they were back in their little shops in the fatherland. Other wagons, to all appearances ordinary two wheeled farm carts, hid under their arched canvas covers nine machine guns which could instantly be brought into action.

The medical corps was as magnificent as businesslike. It was as perfectly equipped and as efficient as a great city hospital.

Men on bicycles with a coil of insulated wire slung between them strung a field telephone from tree to tree so the general commanding could converse with any part of the 50 miles long column.

The whole army never sleeps. When half is resting the other half is advancing. The soldiers are treated as if they were valuable machines which must be speeded up to the highest possible efficiency. Therefore, they are well fed, well shod, well clothed, and worked as a negro teamster works mules.

Only men who are well cared for can march 35 miles a day week in and week out. Only once did I see a man mistreated. A sentry on duty in front of the general headquarters failed to salute an officer with sufficient promptness, whereupon the officer lashed him again and again across the face with a riding whip. Though welts rose with every blow, the soldier stood rigidly at attention and never quivered.

Finally Reaches Von Boehn.

It was considerably past midday and we were within a few miles of the French frontier when we saw a guidon, which signifies the presence of the head of the army, planted at the entrance of a splendid old chateau. As we passed through the iron gates and whirled up the stately tree-lined drive and drew up in front of the terrace a dozen officers in staff uniform came running out to meet us. For a few minutes it felt as if we were being welcomed at a country house in America instead of at the headquarters of the German army in the field. So perfect was the field telephone service that the staff had been able to keep in touch with our progress along the lines and were waiting dinner for us.

After dinner we grouped ourselves on the terrace in the self-conscious attitude people always assume when having their pictures taken, and Thompson made some photographs. They probably are the only ones of this war, at least of a German general and an American war correspondent who was not under arrest.

Then we gathered about the table, on which was spread a staff map of the war area, and got down to serious business. The general began by asserting that the stories of atrocities perpetrated on Belgian non-combatants were a tissue of lies.

"Look at these officers about you," he said. "They are gentlemen like yourself. Look at the soldiers marching past in the road out there. Most of them are fathers of families. Surely you don't believe they would do the things they have been accused of."

Explains Aerschot Crimes.

"Three days ago, general," I said, "I was in Aerschot. The whole town now is but a ghastly, blackened, blood-stained ruin."

"When we entered Aerschot the son of the burgomaster came into the room, drew a revolver, and assassinated my chief of staff," the general said. "What followed was only retribution. The townspeople only got what they deserved."

"But why wreak your vengeance on women and children?"

"None has been killed," the general asserted positively.

"I am sorry to contradict you, general," I asserted with equal positiveness, "but I have myself seen their mutilated bodies. So has Mr. Ginson, secretary of the American legation at Brussels, who was present during the destruction of Louvain."

"Of course, there always is danger of women and children being killed during street fighting," said General von Boehn, "if they insist on coming into the street. It is unfortunate, but it is war."

Data Startles General.

"But how about a woman's body I saw, with her hands and feet cut off? How about a white-haired man and his son whom I helped bury outside Semprad, who had been killed merely because a retreating Belgian had shot a German soldier outside their house? There were 22 bayonet wounds on the old man's face. I counted them. How about the little girl two years old who was shot while in her mother's arms by a uhlans, and whose funeral I attended at Beystopdenberg? How about the old man who was hung from the rafters in his house by his hands and roasted to death by a bonfire being built under him?"

The general seemed somewhat

taken aback by the amount and exactness of my data.

"Such things are horrible, if true," he said. "Of course, our soldiers, like soldiers of all armies, sometimes get out of hand and do things which we would never tolerate if we knew it. At Louvain, for example, I sentenced two soldiers to 12 years' penal servitude apiece for assaulting a woman."

Louvain Library Incident.

"Apropos of Louvain," I remarked, "why did you destroy the library? It was one of the literary storehouses of the world."

"We regretted that as much as any one else," answered the general. "I caught fire from burning houses and we could not save it."

"But why did you burn Louvain at all?" I asked.

"Because the townspeople fired on our troops. We actually found machine guns in some of the houses." And smashing his fist down on the table, he continued: "Whenever civilians fire upon our troops we will teach them a lasting lesson. If women and children insist on getting in the way of bullets, so much the worse for the women and children."

"How do you explain the bombardment of Antwerp by Zeppelins?" queried.

Explains Zeppelin Bombs.

"Zeppelins have orders to drop their bombs only on fortifications and soldiers," he answered.

"As a matter of fact," I remarked, "they only destroyed private houses and civilians, several of them women. If one of those bombs had dropped 200 yards nearer my hotel I wouldn't be smoking one of your excellent cigars today."

"This is a calamity which I thank God didn't happen."

"If you feel for my safety as deeply as that, general," I said earnestly, "you can make quite sure of my coming to no harm by sending no more Zeppelins."

"Well," he said, laughing, "we will think about it." He continued gravely:

"I trust you will tell the American people through your paper what I have told you today. Let them hear our side of this atrocity business. It is only justice that they should be made familiar with both sides of the question."

I have quoted my conversation with the general as nearly verbatim as I can remember it. I have no comments to make. I will leave it to my readers to decide for themselves just how convincing are the answers of the German general staff to the Belgian accusations.

Photographs German Army.

Before we began our conversation I asked the general if Mr. Thompson might be permitted to take photographs of the great army passing. Five minutes later Thompson was whirled away in a military motor car piloted by an army officer who had attended the army school at Fort Riley. It seems they stopped the car beside the road in a place where the light was good, and when Thompson saw approaching a regiment or battery of which he wished a picture he would tell the officer, whereupon the officer would blow his whistle, and the whole column would halt.

"Just wait a few minutes until the dust settles," Thompson would remark, nonchalantly lighting a cigarette, and the Ninth Imperial army, whose columns stretched over the countryside as far as the eye could see would stand in its tracks until the air was sufficiently clear to get a picture. Thus far the only one who has succeeded in halting the German army is this little photographer from Kansas.

Show Thompson Gunnery.

As a field battery of the Imperial guard rumbled past, Thompson made some remark about the accuracy of the American gunners at Vera Cruz.

"Let us show you what our gunners can do," said the officer, and gave an order. There were more orders, a perfect volley of them, a bugle shrilled harshly, the eight horses strained against their collars, the drivers cracked their whips, and the gun left the road, bounded across a ditch, and swung into position in an adjacent field.

On a knoll three miles away an ancient windmill was beating the air with its huge wings. The shell hit the windmill fair and square and tore it into splinters.

"Good work," Thompson observed critically; "if those fellows of yours keep on they'll be able to get a job in the American navy after the war."

In all the annals of modern war I do not believe there is a parallel to this American war photographer halting the advancing army, leisurely photographing regiment after regiment, and then having a field gun of the Imperial guard go into action solely to gratify his curiosity.

Find English Leaders.

According to a dispatch from a Daily Mail correspondent at Rouen the Germans have been able, with seemingly uncanny precision, to locate the headquarters of the British general staff, no matter where it moves.

Throughout ten days, beginning when the fighting was about Mons, the invaders poured shells close to the meeting point of the king's generals.

It was the same thing when headquarters were at Donal and Landreles, whereupon Sir John French withdrew his position to Le Cateau. There it was the target of a terrific bombardment, which set fire to the town and burned it. The next move was to St. Quentin, where again the British headquarters were a mark for the German fire.

BRIEF NEWS OF NEBRASKA

Lancaster county has 21,118 children of school age.

York will hold her fall festival October 13 to 17.

Platte county has made great preparations for the fair this week.

A 678-foot well has been sunk at the David Foltz farm east of Weeping Water.

The fall festival of Ak-Sar-Ben will be held at Omaha, September 30 to October 10.

Despondent over domestic affairs, Charles Richardson suicided at Valley by shooting.

Howard Van Deusen, a well known former Fremont man, is dead at Rock Springs, Wyo.

German will be taught in the seventh and eighth grades of the Sutton school this year.

Greenwood school patrons tendered a reception to the teachers of that place last week.

Dean Fordyce of the state university has returned from a "hike" through Glacier park.

Three hundred Indians are camped on a 160-acre tract near the Dawes county fair grounds at Chadron.

An Omaha woman borrowed \$40 of a loan shark, has paid \$44 interest and still owes \$42 on the loan.

F. W. Brown, former mayor of Lincoln, has been nominated by the president for postmaster at that place.

Seven inches of rain in a very short time flooded the streets and caused considerable damage at Falls City.

Josie Lahoda had her hand caught in a mangle at the Plattsmouth laundry, and may lose that member.

Corn sold on the Hastings market one day last week at the same price as wheat, for the first time in history.

The contract for Weston's new \$160,000 high school building has been awarded to S. P. Wahl of Wahoo.

Will Grimm was instantly killed in a Lincoln machine shop when a revolving steel shaft struck him on the head.

A number of horses were killed by lightning in the vicinity of Shubert during a violent electrical storm last week.

Burglars secured \$1,000 worth of goods when they broke into the jewelry store of Frank Waller at Dorchester.

Herbert Crosby of Beatrice may lose an arm as the result of the accidental discharge of a shotgun he was handling.

Paul Good of Lincoln has left for Oxford university, England, where he will enroll as a Rhodes scholar from this state.

Mr. and Mrs. Lorenz Schreiner last week celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary at their home near Tecumseh.

Several people were hurt, some of them seriously, when a runaway horse dashed into a crowd at the county fair at Geneva.

Prof. Lloyd Alexander of Wayne, Neb., has been chosen head of the department of music at Hanover college, Indiana.

Earl Johnson is dead at Kearney as the result of a wound inflicted by a bullet thought to have been fired by careless hunters.

The Nebraska Bankers' association was in session at Omaha last week, there being nearly eight hundred members present.

While boring a well on the William Gress farm, near Tecumseh, workmen found eight feet of clay that bore traces of oil and gas.

Constant Hotchkiss of Beatrice celebrated his 92d birthday last week. He is spry as a man of much less age and enjoys good health.

John Meester, a Glenville farmer, was thrown from a plow, under the discs, and so badly injured that small hopes are held for his recovery.

A record breaking crowd of over 10,000 attended the Norfolk fall festival Tuesday. Several state auto records were made in the races on that day.

Lincoln police are making a determined fight on opium smoking dens at that place, several of which have been raided in the last few days.

Earl Brannon, for some time past sporting editor of the Lincoln Daily Star, will coach athletics at the Arkansas state agricultural college.

H. J. McCracken, secretary of the Hastings Y. M. C. A., has tendered his resignation and Carl Heartwell has been chosen to fill the vacancy.

Electric lights will be installed at Elmwood in the near future, a franchise having been granted to the Elmwood Mill and Elevator company.

So far this season the Union Pacific railroad has handled more than 1,000 cars of Nebraska wheat than it did during the corresponding period last year.

German residents of Hooper have formed an organization to raise funds for the aid of the Red Cross society in Europe during the war. To date the association has raised \$500.

Charles and William Karbach of Omaha were hurled to the pavement uninjured when the automobile in which they were riding was caught between two street cars and demolished.

Henri Toussel, a Frenchman at Lincoln, with a patriotic spirit, has gone to Chicago to interview the French consul in regard to offering his services to France.

J. W. Tannehill, secretary of the Norfolk Commercial club, had a narrow escape from death when a big racing car in which he was riding with Louis Disbrow, was capsized while "tuning up" for a race.

One of the worst rain and electric storms of the season visited Beatrice and vicinity last week. Rain fell in torrents for more than an hour, flooding the streets and lowlands.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director Sunday School Course, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

LESSON FOR SEPTEMBER 27

REVIEW.

READING LESSON—John 3:14-21.
GOLDEN TEXT—I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown. Rev. 3:11.

The lessons of the first quarter of this year's cycle chiefly present Jesus as the great teacher. Those of the second quarter principally concern the aspect of his saviorhood, whereas during this present quarter we see him mainly as the great judge. These lessons have dealt with matters which occurred during the last months, we may almost say the last weeks, of his life. During that "year of opposition" he is met with the most determined hostility and persecution. Nevertheless he proceeds against it all with calm assurance, in strict justice and without a shadow of faltering.

This reading lesson contains the most celebrated and familiar verse in the bible. In it we see:

A mighty God—"For God?"

A mighty motive—"So loved?"

A mighty scope—"The world?"

A mighty sacrifice—"So gave His only begotten Son?"

A mighty escape—"Not perish?"

A mighty gift—"Eternal life."

We here see Jesus set forth in grace and while it does not declare that he came to judge, yet, in the passage are set forth those principles upon which he is constantly the judge, and where by he will eventually act in the last and final judgment.

God's Right.

In the first lesson, that of the laborers, Jesus taught his disciples the sovereignty of God. God has a right to do as seemeth best to himself. In this parable we see the true motive in service, viz., fidelity and not for hope of reward. Jesus thus prepared the way for his denunciation and judgment, of the rulers.

Lesson two, which deals with the self-seeking disciples and the self-sacrificing Savior, is intended to teach that there is but one path to true and lasting greatness, and that is the path of sacrifice and service.

The story of Bartimaeus, lesson three, is a beautiful and touching exhibition of his activity of mercy even in the midst of the approaching judgment.

In the fourth lesson is presented the parable of the pounds and the talents. Both are spoken to the disciples and both deal with their responsibilities to himself in the coming days. Our eternal reward depends upon our acts and attitudes in the life that now is.

Lesson five presents Jesus as the Messiah prophesied of in the Old Testament. It deals with the story of his coming into Jerusalem. Entering thus in such a manner demands our attention for it foreshadows the time of his judicial activity with reference to the people and the nation.

The next five lessons may be said to deal with this ministry of judgment. In lesson six we see some of the preparatory signs and teaching. The blasting of the fig tree and his cleansing of the house of God are both symbolic.

Lesson seven teaches us that if we fall to be faithful in the kingdom which has been entrusted to us it will certainly be taken from us.

Lesson eight presents the parable of the marriage feast in which Jesus unfolds the plan of God's invitation and its human rejection in three stages.

God's Kinship.

The ninth lesson is a political inquiry which our Lord answered by setting forth all of the important state relationships according to the fundamental fact of the kingship of God. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that be God's." No other answer of his better reveals the infinite wisdom, skill and tact of our Lord.

In lesson eleven, the parable of the virgins, we are taught that the Lord Jesus is coming again and we must watch and be ready against that imminent event. This lesson also suggests the responsibilities of his people during his absence.

The twelfth lesson is a prediction of the judgment of the nations and reveals the way by which he is to begin the administration which will ensue when that kingdom is established.

There is a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world for the righteous and a punishment prepared for the devil and those who willfully choose to do his will. Those who cast their lot with his must go with him to spend eternity. They themselves sit in judgment upon themselves, judge themselves not worthy.

The chief value of these lessons during this quarter is in the revelation which they give us of the fact that when our Lord made that last journey to Jerusalem it was not to the death of a victim, one who was mastered by circumstances, who could not escape; but as a king. As he marched along that pathway "setting his face steadfastly," he perfectly understood, and resolutely faced a passion by means of which he was accomplishing the purposes of God and beyond the darkness of which he saw the brightness of ultimate victory and glory for mankind.

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WILL BE EXPENDED WISELY

Statement Showing How the Proceeds of Sale of Red Cross Seals Are to Be Spent.

For the benefit of the numerous organizations who helped to sell nearly forty-five million Red Cross seals last year and for the general public, the American Red Cross and the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis have framed a definition of anti-tuberculosis work showing how the proceeds from these holiday stickers are to be used. The definition limits the expenditure of money only for the year ending April 30, 1915.

The definition was framed at a recent meeting of the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis and states that the term "anti-tuberculosis work" as it relates to the expenditure of Red Cross seal money shall include the following activities:

1. The construction of hospitals or sanatoria for the care of the tuberculous.
2. The maintenance of the tuberculous.
3. The provision of day or night camps for the tuberculous; the provision and maintenance of dispensaries, visiting nurses, open air schools, fresh air classes, or preventoria for the care or treatment of tuberculous cases or for the prevention of the spread of tuberculosis.
4. The maintenance of educational or legislative activities which have for their object the prevention of infection with tuberculosis.

Too Ambiguous. Thornton—When Willie Wimpus wanted a new motor car he thought he would throw out a broad hint to his father.

Rosemary—Did the scheme work? Thornton—Not exactly. He told the old man he would like something he could start and stop, and his father bought him a dollar watch.

Its Tendency. "Mayne has a very open countenance, hasn't she?" "Yes, and one that is very hard to shut up."

SICK DOCTOR Proper Food Put Him Right.

The food experience of a physician in his own case when worn and weak from sickness and when needing nourishment the worst way, is valuable:

"An attack of grip, so severe it came near making an end of me, left my stomach in such condition I could not retain any ordinary food. I knew of course that I must have food nourishment or I could never recover.

"I began to take four teaspoonfuls of Grape-Nuts and cream three times a day and for 2 weeks this was almost my only food. It tasted so delicious that I enjoyed it immensely and my stomach handled it perfectly from the first mouthful. It was so nourishing I was quickly built back to normal health and strength.

"Grape-Nuts is of great value as food to sustain life during serious attacks in which the stomach is so deranged it cannot digest and assimilate other foods.

"I am convinced that were Grape-Nuts more widely used by physicians, it would save many lives that are otherwise lost from lack of nourishment." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

The most perfect food in the world. Trial of Grape-Nuts and cream 10 days proves. "There's a Reason."

Look in pkgs. for the little book, "The Road to Wellville."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.