

GERMAN WAR PRACTICES

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IV. DEPORTATIONS AND FORCED LABOR.

Advance in Humanity—Until August 1914.

Until the present war the whole civilized world has boasted of its advance in humanity. This advance has been marked in many fields, and in none had greater progress been made than in the protection to be given to the private citizen in an invaded country. As far back as 1863, in the Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field, the United States declared:

United States Treatment of Civilians, 1863.

"22. Nevertheless, as civilization has advanced during the last centuries, so has likewise steadily advanced, especially in war on land, the distinction between the private individual belonging to a hostile country and the hostile country itself, with its men in arms. The principle has been more and more acknowledged that the unarmed citizen is to be spared in person, property, and honor, as much as the exigencies of war will admit.

"23. Private citizens are no longer murdered, enslaved, or carried off to distant parts, and the inoffensive individual is as little disturbed in his private relations as the commander of the hostile troops can afford to grant in the overruling demands of a vigorous war.

"24. The almost universal rule in remote times was, and continues to be with barbarous armies, that the private individual of the hostile country is destined to suffer every privation of liberty and protection, and every disruption of family ties. Protection was, and still is with uncivilized people, the exception."

German Government's Reversion to Barbarism.

These declarations were made in the midst of our Civil War—one of the world's fiercest conflicts. A half-

century later, after more than 50 years of progress, the German Government has gone back to the methods used by "barbarous armies" and "uncivilized people." It has deliberately adopted the policy of deporting men and women, boys and girls, and of forcing them to work for their captors, it has even compelled them to make arms and munitions for use against their allies and their own flesh and blood.

No other act of the German Government has aroused such horror and detestation throughout the civilized world. Thousands of helpless men and women, boys and girls, have been enslaved. Families have been broken up. Girls have been carried off to work—or worse—in a strange land, and their relatives have not known where they have been taken, or what their fate has been.

The system of forced labor and deportation embraced the whole of Belgium, Poland, and the occupied lands of France.

The plan for setting forth the essential facts of the deportations and forced labor is as follows: the documents, that is to say, a small fraction of those which could be cited, will be allowed to tell the story, and only such comments will be added as are needed to enable the reader easily to grasp the connection of events.

BELGIUM.

"The deportations * * * were the most vivid, shocking, convincing, single happening in all our enforced observation and experience of German disregard of human suffering and human rights in Belgium." Vernon Kellogg in Atlantic Monthly, October, 1917.

A summary of the whole situation, down to January, 1917, can be obtained by reading continuously the report of Minister Whitlock, taken from the files of the State Department, which is given in italics on pages 49-50, 54, 55-56, 69-70, 76-77, 80-81. The insertion of his report at appropriate points has made it

possible to avoid all but a minimum of repetition.

Legation of the United States of America, Brussels, January 16th, 1917. The Honorable, the Secretary of State, Washington.

Horrifying Behavior of the Germans in Belgium.

"Sir: I have had it in mind, and I might say, on my conscience, since the Germans began to deport Belgian workmen early in November, to prepare for the Department a detailed report on this latest instance of brutality, but there have been so many obstacles in the way of obtaining evidence on which a calm and judicious opinion could be based, and one is so overwhelmed with the horror of the thing itself, that it has been, and even now is, difficult to write calmly and justly about it. I have had to content myself with the fragmentary despatches I have from time to time sent to the Department and with doing what I could, little as that can be, to alleviate the distress that this gratuitous cruelty has caused the population of this unhappy land.

"In order to understand fully the situation it is necessary to go back to the autumn of 1914. At the time we were organizing the relief work, the Comite National—the Belgian relief organization that collaborates with the Commission for Relief in

Belgium—proposed an arrangement by which the Belgian Government should pay to its own employees left in Belgium, and other unemployed men besides, the wages they had been accustomed to receive. The Belgians wished to do this both for humanitarian and patriotic purposes; they wished to provide the unemployed with the means of livelihood, and, at the same time, to prevent their working for the Germans. I refused to be connected in any way with this plan, and told the Belgian committee that it had many possibilities of danger, that not only would it place a premium on idleness, but that it would ultimately exasperate the Germans. However, the policy was adopted, and has been continued in practice, and on the rolls of the Comite National have been borne the names of hundreds of thousands—some 700,000, I believe—of idle men receiving this dole, distributed through the communes.

German Cupidity Excited.

"The presence of these unemployed, however, was a constant temptation to German cupidity. Many times they sought to obtain the lists of the chomeueurs but were always foiled by the claim that under the guarantees covering the relief work, the records of the Comite National and its various suborganizations were immune. Rather than risk any inter-

ruption of the ravitailment, for which, while loath to own any obligation to America, the Germans have always been grateful, since it has had the effect of keeping the population calm, the authorities never pressed the point, other than with the burgo-masters of the communes. Finally, however, the military party, always brutal, and with an astounding ignorance of public opinion and of moral sentiment, determined to put these idle men to work.

"General von Bissing and the civil portion of his entourage had always been and even now are opposed to this policy and I think have sincerely done what they could, first, to prevent its adoption, and secondly, to lighten the rigors of its application."

In the early days of the German advance into Belgium, the people had learned to fear the worst. This was particularly true in Antwerp. In order to alleviate their fears and to obtain guarantees which might hasten the restoration of settled conditions, Cardinal Mercier secured from the German governor of Antwerp promises, and in a circular letter dated October 16th, 1914, asked the clergy of the Province of Antwerp to communicate them to the people:

Solemn Promises of Germans Not to Exploit Belgians.

"The governor of Antwerp, Baron

von Hoiningen, General von Huene, has authorized me to inform you in his name and to communicate by your obliging intermediary to our populations the following declarations:

"(1) The young men need not fear being taken to Germany, either to be enrolled into the army or to be employed at forced labors.

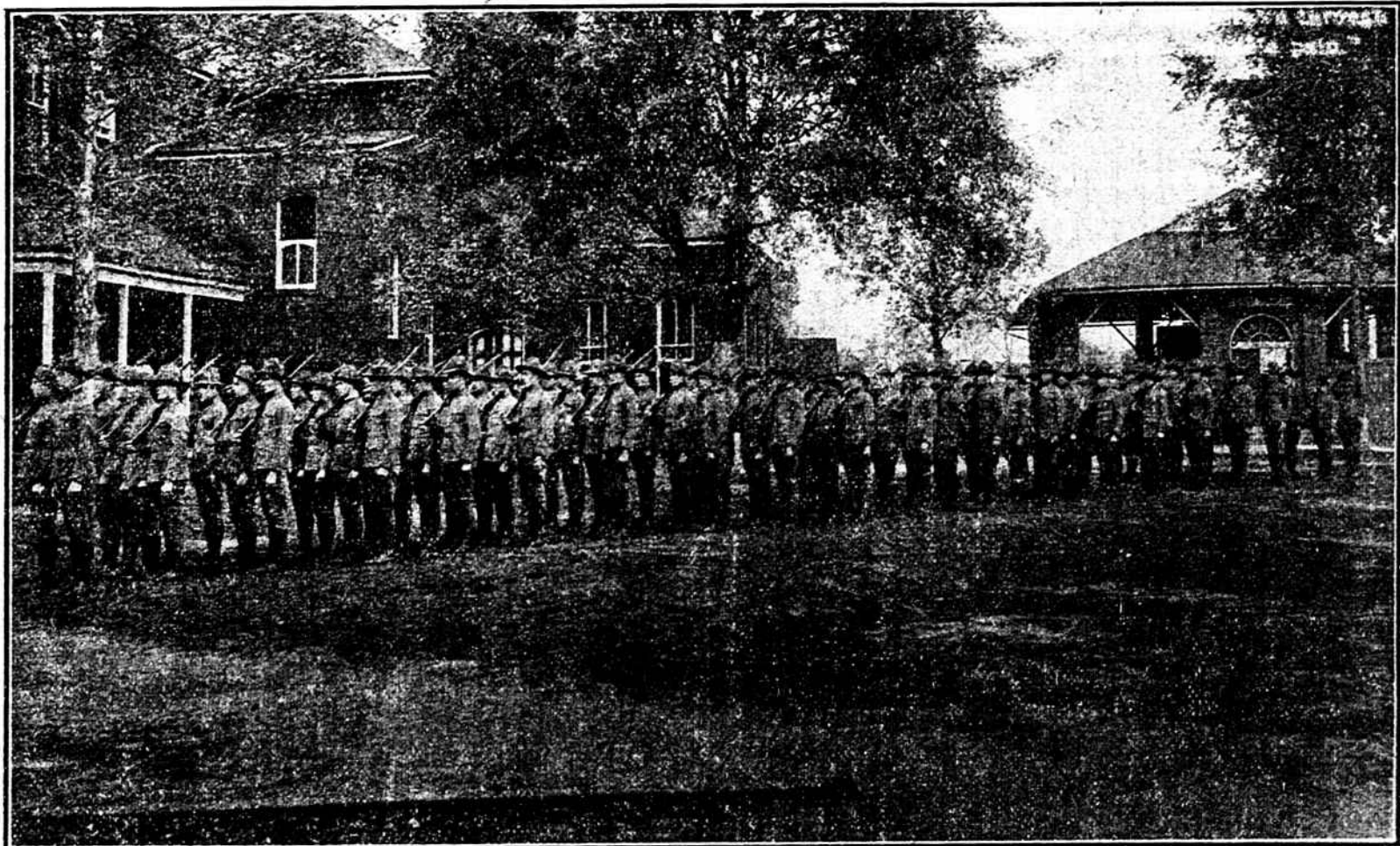
"(2) If individual infractions of police regulations are committed, the authorities will institute a search for the responsible authors and will punish them, without placing the responsibility on the entire population.

"(3) The German and Belgian authorities will neglect nothing to see that food is assured to the population."

These promises were not kept, as Cardinal Mercier and his colleagues show by abundant evidence in the Appeal to Truth.

"On March 23rd, 1915, at the arsenal at Luttre the German authority posted a notice demanding return to work. On April 21st, 200 workmen were called for. On April 27th soldiers went to fetch the workmen from their homes and take them to the arsenal. In the absence of a workman, a member of the family was arrested.

(To be continued next week)



CARLISLE BOYS AT DRILL.

SHIPMENT OF MULES

I have just received a shipment of the finest mules that ever come to Bamberg. These mules were personally selected in the Western markets, and range from 1,000 to 1,500 pounds. They are in the pink of condition, and there is not a cheap mule in the lot. I want you to see them, whether you want to buy or not. It will do you good just to look at them.

BUGGIES, WAGONS, HARNESS

I have also received a shipment of the best buggies and wagons on the market, and my stock of harness, whips, lap robes, etc., is always complete. My prices are always reasonable.

G. FRANK BAMBERG

BAMBERG, S. C.