

February 13, 1917.—Saw von der Lancken at 4:30. Told him that in case of war, I should leave at once. That I was willing to remain here until the transfer of delegates was effected, and to

render any service I could in the relief work; he asked if I would go when the transfer was effected. I told him that would depend on the situation at that time, that I reserved the right to depart any day, with my household, Legation staff, servant, and so on, with all the honors and consideration due my rank. He agreed, and said, "I give you my assurance now, officially, as I told Villalobar yesterday (or the other day)." He then explained that it might require a few days to obtain the passports, and so on, and I said that that was understandable. I told him that I should like a special train, or at least a special car, and to go direct through Cologne to Basle. He said that because of the scarcity of men, and of the military requirements in the matter of railroad equipment, it would be difficult to promise a special train, but that first-class accommodations, sleepers, and so on, would be reserved, for us "and for your valet and Madame Whitlock's maid."

He reiterated it all, to make sure, and said, "You will leave when you wish, whether it is tomorrow, next week, or six months from now, just as if you had left on the same day that Gerard quit Berlin."

Then, taking the pencil with which he had been making notes on a large sheet of paper, he said:

"And now, what shall we say to the newspapers?"

I had forgotten that there were still newspapers in the world. I dictated this simple statement:

"The American Minister will stay provisionally in Brussels to render service during the process of changing the personnel of the C.R.B."

As to the details of transferring the representation of interests to Villalobar, I said I'd come later with Villalobar. Von der Lancken, with the insatiable German passion for work, suggested that we come at 7:30. I said I'd see, determined *not to*, and didn't.

Villalobar came in afterwards and I told him.

I am blue, and disappointed. I had allowed myself, I now find, to dream of France in spring, and of rest. Ah me! That dream recedes! I cannot leave the Belgians hungry if I can help it, and I cannot go away at once and leave the men of the C.R.B. behind.