

February 28, 1917.—Climbing the Montagne de la Cour at noon, I met Brohn, Reith, von Schlubach and the first time, von Gersky, a fine, big German—fine-looking at least—with a monocle, very English, after his twelve years as head of the Hamburg-American line in London. He was very pleasant, asked if we were to have war, and so on; about the revictualing, said that if it failed, the people in the north of France would be left to starve, since the Germans had only enough for themselves.

Late this afternoon, Vincent brought over the pouch from Villalobar. Four telegrams, chief among which one with long instructions, telling me to remain here until *all* Americans in Belgium, who will go, have gone. The larger part of the telegram was, of course, of Hoover's inspiration, showing his hatred of Villalobar and of Francqui, and proposing that the whole C.R.B. be turned over to the Dutch Government. Gregory here at the time—tea-time—as the dispatches were being deciphered. He thinks we may adopt, at least in part, Hoover's suggestion, though it will be difficult to manage Villalobar. The telegrams are not wholly deciphered as yet, but they are wobbly—instructions impossible to carry out, and rather weak, save that they are so drawn that, no matter what I may do, I may be put in the wrong.