

*Sunday, March 25, 1917.*—At last! At tea-time this afternoon Villalobar came, with a long face; he had a telegram from the Spanish Minister at The Hague, transmitting this dispatch; it was in Spanish, and translated, reads:

The United States representation begs that Your Excellency transmit to the Minister of the United States in that capital the following cablegram dated in Washington yesterday the 23rd and coming from the Secretary of State: "At the request of the President I transmit instructions to you to leave Belgium immediately accompanied by the personnel of the Legation, by the American consular officers and by the American members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium stop The Department begs you to telegraph the probable date of your departure from Belgium as well as the route and your plans stop Your official residence should be in Havre with the personnel of Legation stop Before leaving you should fulfil instructions No. 242 of February 3rd from this Department."

Gregory was here at the time, and to both of us these explicit instructions came as a distinct relief. We talked them over a moment, and Gregory said he would send the Spanish and Dutch delegates to the provinces at once. I shall see von der Lancken tomorrow, and ask for our passports. Gregory left, and Villalobar stayed for a moment's chat. He thinks that the end of the war can not now be far off, and he thought, he said, that America might not have to fire a shot. God grant that it may be so! Much as I dislike the thought of my dear, dear country being in war, it is better to have a clear situation, well defined, than this demoralizing and enervating uncertainty in which we have lived so long.