

July 30, 1917.—I had a charming walk this morning with the dogs, up...charming streets that climb the slopes of the hills behind us, amid old grey houses, to the fine old residences and quiet shady avenues of the hill, a really fine quarter. One goodly spot in Havre at any rate, but the only one, so far as I know. The streets generally are filled or strewn with garbage, which the inhabitants fling from their doors for the street cleaning department to pick up, which it does, sometimes, though the people do not take the trouble to put it in cans!

The crisis in France seems to be tending toward Caillaux, who has come out of his retreat. The other day he made a speech in the Chamber, a day or so later, on a Sunday, he made another, a highly moral address, full of edifying advice to the young to lead moral lives—his own life having afforded a beautiful example to them! The London *Times* published a long editorial of warning

the other day; Revere... says that if there are not more arrests in France within a fortnight, of well-known agitators who are at large—like the so-called Belgian millionaire Margulies, who is not Belgian as he pretended to be, but Austrian, and was interned the other day after a violent attack on Clemenceau—Caillaux will come to power, and that that will make a German peace. There is no doubt that these summer days of 1917, the situation is rather dark; what with Russia going to the devil, and the German brutes stronger than ever, and making furious attacks on the French lines. And the English offensive, so far as we know, does not as yet amount to much, though it may....

Revere told me that, on landing at Nantes, an American officer with many ships of materials found the quay too small, and wished some old houses standing there removed. But there was much red tape—the Prefect would have to ask the consent of the Government at Paris—and that would take time. “How long?” “Oh, three weeks.” “Three weeks!” said the American. “Think I can wait three weeks?” The Prefect shrugged his shoulders. That day the American officer set his men to work and tore the buildings down without waiting for permission! The same at Brest. There is a rock in the harbour there that Brest has wanted to blast out for years, but politics and jealousy on the part of Havre have prevented: the Americans are blasting it out!

The new gas invented by the German fiends, they say, gives the men nausea, so that they vomit, and *have* to drop their masks; that thereupon the gas blinds them! Van der Elst here just back from the front says that 300 Englishmen thus blinded were brought over to the hospital yesterday....

The Belgian Cabinet held two councils today, one this morning, another this afternoon, and came away, so *le grand* Joseph reports, very red of face. Hymans, who as leader of the Liberals had insisted on having the portfolio of foreign affairs, was not present, but a letter from him was read, which may account for the red faces. It seems settled that de Broqueville will be minister of foreign affairs, and a general minister of war, with Vandervelde the Socialist minister of munitions.