

Sunday, August 2, 1914.—It has been a day of exciting and terrible rumors, to which, however, we pay little attention, for we have been kept busy every minute by the Americans, of all sorts and conditions, who are pouring into Brussels from all over the Continent, in panic, demanding to know how they are to get home, many of them utterly helpless, so frightened are they: in many instances the women are calmer, braver than the men. It has been a strain, listening to so many tales of hardship—their money suddenly useless, and no one knows about the ships—but I have tried to smile, to reassure them all, and to get as many as will to go to Ostend and thence to England, for the boats are still running across the Channel.

This afternoon Nell and I...drove to Forêt to see Mademoiselle Polinet, who arrived home from Paris last night, having by the merest lucky chance caught the last train. She had a terrible experience; Paris in turmoil, no porters or commissionaires at the station, and she, poor girl, lugging her bags. The train was crowded, and people in panic; a man fainted and a woman died from fright. She was glad to be home, and we were glad to see her.

Von Below delivered the ultimatum of Germany to Davignon¹ at seven o'clock this evening, and from his Legation there is a formal denial that Germany has declared war on Russia.

The mobilization of the Belgian army has been effected amid scenes of enthusiasm, and today prayers for peace have been said in all the churches. The requisitioning of motors goes on; the Minister of the Interior has issued a proclamation forbidding

¹ Von Below was the German Minister; Davignon the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

cinema representations that might inflame the populace; a Socialist demonstration to have been held tomorrow has been voluntarily renounced—the Socialists are all patriots now—and the King has issued several decrees, one putting the army on a war footing, another convoking the chambers in extraordinary session for Tuesday, and another regarding the issue of five-franc notes—the silver pieces having crept into hiding. Telephone communication with France and Germany has been cut off.

Up very late tonight, sending despatches to Washington. The room is so hot, the night so still, the tension is so great—it reminds me somehow of those long gone days when I was a newspaper man, and sat up late at night sending other despatches, but never such a big story as this!