

May 12, 1915.—We heard today that the President has called a meeting of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and that he has asked the people to be calm until he can exchange notes with Germany. This news we have from Colonel Listoe, Consul-General at Rotterdam, who was in today. We can only await developments.

We had for luncheon today Miss Hamilton, Miss Lewis, Miss Abbott, and Miss Kittredge, who were attending the peace conference at The Hague¹ and who came into Belgium to see the sights. Very intelligent women, and yet there is something naïve in these good souls coming in here to bring about peace and settle these confused troubles of the war when all the statesmanship, what little there is of it left in the world, has failed to do that. I found a letter from Richard Harding Davis today with a good story about van Dyke. He telegraphed the Red Cross in America that "I visited the hospitals in the rain," and that some of "our best people" were interested in them. And to my surprise a letter from Nock, who is in London and wants me to come there to see him. Of course I can't leave. I can't even go over to van Dyke's diocese under these conditions and I don't want Nock to risk coming here now.

Working all afternoon in the office.

¹ An International Congress of Women met at The Hague on April 30–May 1, 1915, to discuss problems growing out of the war, and made a number of proposals, including one for a permanent international court of justice and a permanent council of arbitration or conciliation.

Belgian people are exceedingly depressed and many are beginning to lose hope since the long expected advance of the Allies' lines has not occurred; and meanwhile, little by little, the Germans still further depress and humiliate them by announcing victories here and there. This is a part of the system; first, to terrorize people by foul atrocities, then by unconscionable oppression, and now finally to complete the task by crushing out their spirit, a little bit of discouragement at a time. It is all too sad for words. There is no news about Italy. When I see her in the war I shall believe she is in it, not before.

Countess d'Arschot told me last night of a friend of hers, a woman who is in her château down in Flanders. Her château has been taken by the Germans and transformed into an ambulance for neurasthenic German officers. They come out of the trenches entirely neurasthenic and are brought to her château—a delightful vacation!

Villalobar informs me today that he had a call from Dr. Reith, who told him finally that it has been arranged that Heineman and Hulse, I think, should make the investigation of the books of the Comité National. I am exceedingly glad to have this news, for it seems to dispose of the trouble we were having with the department of relief. It is an amusing instance, however, of the petty spirit of the Germans that they should have informed Villalobar and not me.

A letter from Hoover in the pouch today with a note he has written to Gerard and a note he has had from Lord Eustace Percy of the British Foreign Office, who looks after revictualing matters there. From the tone of this letter it seems that August 15th is placed as a period when the revictualing under the present arrangement, at least, will come to an end, for the English Government will not consent to food coming in if the Germans here seize the forthcoming harvest. The Germans have refused to give assurances that they will not do this, and of course they fully intend doing so and that is the reason for all their interest in agriculture this year. Hoover had of course already spoken of August 15th as the limit of the present arrangement, and yet the note of Lord Eustace Percy seems to indicate that there is no other prospect than that the war will go on all summer and winter, and it contains no indication whatever that England will have an army to relieve Belgium at that time.

Miss Larner had a letter from the Embassy at Rome or a friend

in the Embassy at Rome saying that they were never so sure before that Italy was coming into the war as they are now and asking her to go there. I have sent a telegram saying we can't spare her.

Mme. Lemonnier has been fined fifty francs for having applied the term "boch" to the German in the Dairy that Sunday afternoon weeks ago. Von Bissing was not satisfied with this fine and ordered that it be placarded on all the walls of the city of Brussels that the wife of the Burgomaster had been fined.