

BELGIAN TEACHERS THWARTED HUNS

ORDERS OF GERMAN GOVERNOR WERE IGNORED

Attempt to Teutonize the School's Was Foiled by the Loyalty of the Professors.

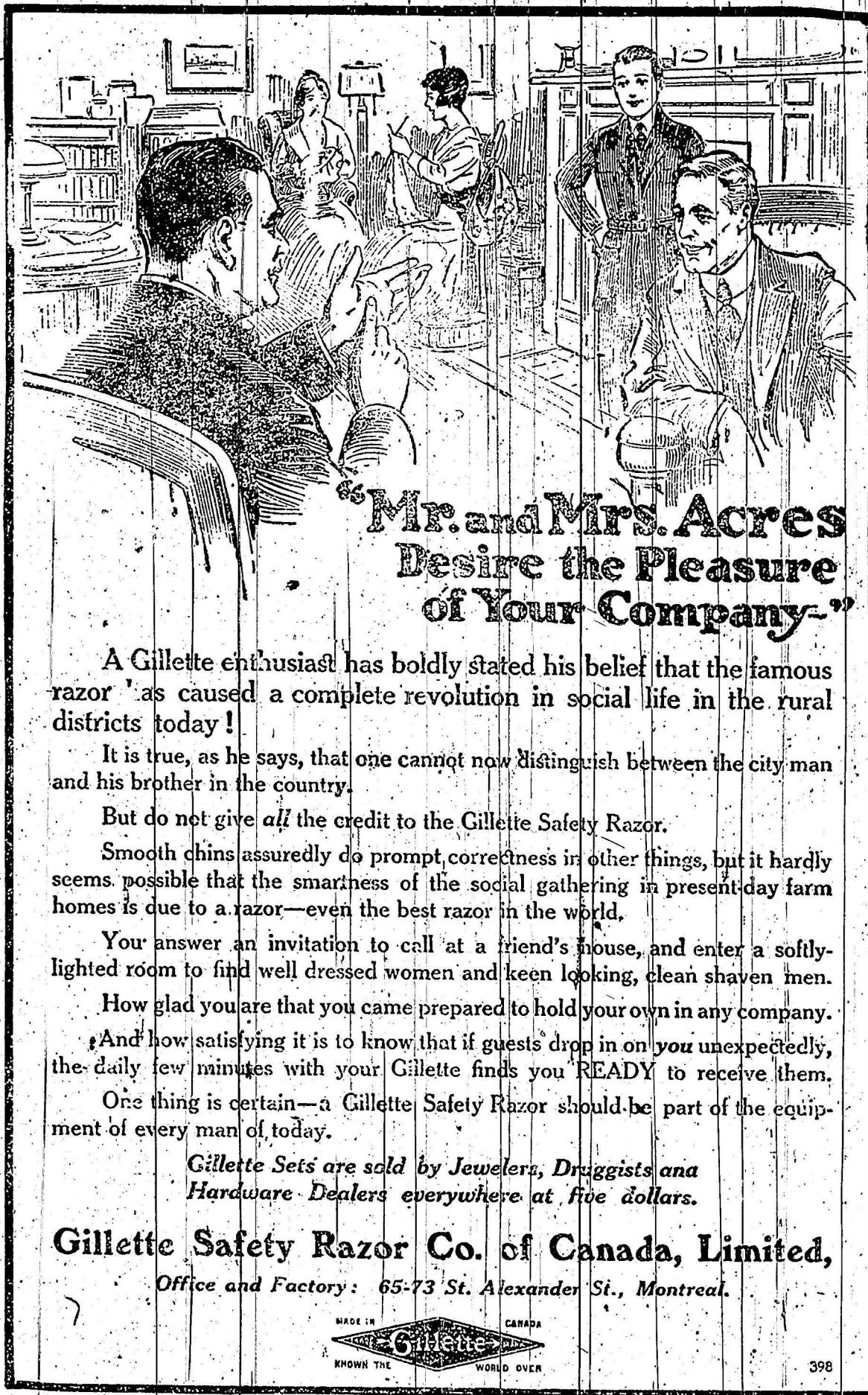
The German whites in Belgium left no more unmet in their endeavor to possess themselves permanently of the country, by force or by fraud. Force, illustrated by terrorism, was first used, with the immediate effect that the country was almost entirely overrun, and, for the time being, stampeded into apparent submission.

As months and years went on seeing that the population, contrary to expectations, remained obstinately optimistic of deliverance and steadily hostile to the occupier, a new kind of oppression was begun, and this in spite of the fact that any interference with the internal laws of occupied countries is in direct contradiction to the provisions of The Hague Convention, signed by Germany with the other Powers. It did not replace the old method, the militarists were too powerful to allow any relaxation of tyranny, but it came in addition to it. The new plan was to sow distrust of each other and of their allies among the Belgians, and to prepare for the future by working on the minds of the young.

In Belgium two languages are spoken, French and Flemish; but French has been largely predominant, especially in high education. In recent times the champions of the Flemish language, called Flemings, have displayed considerable activity in demanding the practice and recognition of their language apart from French. One of the main points of their program was the establishment of a purely Flemish State university. French was the only language used for teaching at all the universities except Ghent where, in 1911, twenty out of 248 courses of lectures were given in Flemish. The Flemings, disgusted with this proportion, demanded either (a) an entirely new Flemish university, at Antwerp; (b) the immediate transformation of the existing Ghent State university; (c) the duplication of all courses at Ghent, and an equal number being given in each language; (d) the gradual transformation of the Ghent university. Suggestions (a) and (b) fell through for lack of funds; (b) was considered too drastic; but the last proposition seemed likely to be adopted by the Belgian Parliament, when its success was interrupted by the outbreak of war.

Von Bissing's Decree Ignored. Baron von Bissing, from September, 1914, to April, 1916, governor-general of occupied Belgium, endeavored throughout the whole course of his administration to sow disunion among the people he was set to govern and whose patriotic feelings, as well as laws and institutions, he had promised to protect. The Flemish university question was his first instrument, and as early as December 31, 1915, he issued a decree providing that Flemish should be the language used for teaching there. But a decree does not in a moment change a university. Professors would not teach, nor students learn, according to the will of a foreign governor. Further steps were taken to secure the adherence of the professors, and suddenly two of them, Professor Pirenne, the world-renowned historian, and Professor Frederick, himself a pre-war Flemishman, were deported to Germany. Popular legend says that Professor Pirenne was personally offered the position of rector of the new university by the governor-general, to whom he replied that he could only accept if his appointment were signed by King Albert, and that his deportation was the consequence of his patriotic answer. Von Bissing in denying the story states that the two professors were deported "because they influenced their colleagues in a prohibited manner with the object of preventing them from carrying out their official duties." The fact is, the institution of the university under German patronage has raised a storm of protest from all classes and societies of Flemings, who announced that, whatever their aspirations toward a seat of Flemish learning might be, they would accept no gift from their enemy. The Germans, therefore, were determined to crush opposition in the university itself. Professor Pirenne was particularly well known in Germany, his portrait being published in the 1913 number of the Minerva, a learned German review, as "the great Belgian savant" and German honors heaped upon him. Since his refusal to co-operate in a German-Flemish university the German scientific papers no longer write of him as "a historian," but a "comanticist," and the only portrait given is a snapshot of him in his prison camp. Something more than German spite will be necessary to crush Prof. Pirenne's reputation, which is only enhanced, in neutral as well as in allied countries, by his firm attitude.

The Alberta Department of Agriculture acting in conjunction with the Dominion authorities have taken steps to equalize fodder and cattle conditions in Alberta by arranging to winter cattle from the southern drought-affected districts in the north where early frosts have increased the supply of fodder.



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To welcome children.

Across the many

The memory comes of

Of their own infant

In little Bethlehem.

So they greet the Angels

Of Armenia, Scythia,

The manzled Abes of Ham,

With loving arms, and

They soothe away the

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Gentlemen, I am

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