

MASSACRE AT LIEGE.

Here is a description of what happened at Liege:— Entries in a German diary show that on the 19th the German soldiers gave themselves up to debauchery in the streets of Liege, and on the night of the 20th (Thursday) a massacre took place in the streets, beginning near the Cafe Carpentier, at which there is said to have been a dinner attended by Russian and other students. . . . Though the cause of the massacre is in dispute, the results are known with certainty. The Rue des Pitteurs and houses in the Place de l'Universite and the Quai des Pecheurs were systematically fired with benzine, and many inhabitants were burnt alive in their houses, their efforts to escape being prevented by rifle fire. Twenty people were shot, while trying to escape, before the eyes of one of the witnesses. The Liege Fire Brigade turned out but was not allowed to extinguish the fire. Its carts, however, were usefully employed in removing heaps of civilian corpses to the Town Hall. The fire burnt on through the night and the murders continued on the following day, the 21st. Thirty-two civilians were killed on that day in the Place de l'Universite alone.

SHOOTING AT NAMUR.

Similar barbarity was practised at Namur, which was entered on August 24. Says the report:—

The troops signalled their entry by firing on a crowd of 150 unarmed unresisting civilians, ten alone of whom escaped. A witness of good standing who was in Namur describes how the town was set on fire systematically in six different places. As the inhabitants fled from the burning houses they were shot by the German troops. Not less than 140 houses were burnt. On the 25th, the hospital at Namur was set on fire with inflammable pastilles, the pretext being that soldiers in the hospital had fired upon the Germans.

A FUNERAL PYRE.

As an instance of depraved cruelty the following may be cited:—

At Monceau-sur-Sambre, on the 21st August, a young man of eighteen was shot in his garden. His father and brother were seized in their house and shot in the courtyard of a neighboring country house. The son was shot first. The father was compelled to stand close to the feet of his son's corpse and to fix his eyes upon him while he himself was shot. The corpse of the young man shot in the garden was carried into the house and put on a bed. The next morning the Germans asked where the corpse was. When they found it was in the house, they fetched straw, packed it round the bed on which the corpse was lying and set fire to it and burnt the house down. A great many houses were burnt in Monceau.

MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.

The murder of civilians seems to have been frequently indiscriminate. Sometimes some sort of selection was made, but too frequently neither age nor sex was spared. Here are examples of the way in which children were done to death:—

At Eppeghem the dead body of a child of two was seen pinned to the ground with a German lance.

One witness describes how she saw a Belgian boy of fifteen shot on the village green at Tamines, and a day or two later, on the same green, a little girl and her two brothers (name given) who were looking at the German soldiers, were killed before her eyes for no apparent reason. The principal massacre at Tamines took place about August 23. A witness describes how he saw the public square littered with corpses, and after a search found those of his wife and child, a little girl of seven.

A hairdresser at Ardenne was murdered in his kitchen where he was sitting with a child on each knee.

On a side road at Hofstade the corpse of a civilian was seen on his doorstep with a bayonet wound in his stomach, and by his side the dead body of a boy of five with his hands nearly severed. The corpses of a woman and boy were seen at the blacksmith's. They had been killed with the bayonet.

At Boort Meerbeek a German soldier was seen to fire three times at a little girl of five years old. Having failed to hit her, he subsequently bayoneted her. He was killed with the butt end of a rifle by a Belgian soldier who had seen him commit this murder from a distance.

Another witness saw a little girl of seven, at Dinant, one of whose legs was broken and the other injured by a bayonet.

ILL-TREATMENT AND MURDER OF PRIESTS.

Though the report contains no special division dealing with attacks on and murders of the clergy, mention of such things are scattered over its pages. We may take the following as examples:—

German soldiers had arrived on the 15th at Blegny Trembleu and seized a quantity of wine. On the 16th prisoners were taken; four, including the priest and the burgomaster, were shot. . . .

The second occasion on which large numbers of prisoners were put there was shortly after the battle of Malines, and it was then that the priest of Gelrode was brought to Aerschot church, treated abominably and finally murdered. One witness describes the scene graphically: 'The whole of the prisoners—men, women, and children—were placed in the church. Nobody was allowed to go outside the church to obey the calls of nature. The church had to be used for that purpose.



SAPPER FRANCIS GEORGE PEARSON,
DUNEDIN

(Killed in action at the Dardanelles).

We were afterwards allowed to go outside the church for this purpose, and then I saw the clergyman of Gelrode standing by the wall of the church with his hands above his head, being guarded by soldiers.' The actual details of the murder of the priest are as follows: The priest was struck several times by the soldiers on the head. He was pushed up against the wall of the church. . . . An hour after the same witness saw the priest still standing there. He was then led away by the Germans a distance of about fifty yards. There, with his face against the wall of a house, he was shot by five soldiers.

A priest was taken on the Friday morning, August 28, and placed at the head of a number of refugees from Wygmael. He was led through Louvain, abused and ill-treated, and placed with some thousands of other people in the riding school in the Rue du Manege. The glass roof broke in the night from the heat of burning buildings round. Next day the prisoners were marched through the country with an armed guard.