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THE SIEGE OF PARIS.

HOW LONDON FIRST LEARNED THAT IT HAD ENDED.

Story of the Reporter Who Got the "Scrap" and Who Then Induced Bismarck to Allow Him to Send Out the News Over His Private Wire.

During the Franco-German war, from Oct. 18, 1870, to March 1, 1871, I was attached to the headquarters of the crown prince, who occupied an unassuming little villa called Les Ombrages, in an outskirts of Versailles, his august father residing throughout the investment and siege of Paris in the prefecture of the willom "royal bugh," and Count Bismarck, with his staff of councillors and secretaries, in a detached house of the Rue de Provence. I often met the chancellor out of doors, walking or riding, during that long and bitter winter, but sedulously refrained from soliciting audiences, being well aware that the visits of a war correspondent, who had everything to ask and nothing to tell, could not possibly be welcome to so desperately overworked a statesman as Bismarck.

By what means I need not explain in this place, I had been made acquainted with the precise terms of the capitulation of Paris at an early hour of the morning after the conclusion of the armistice, and had, moreover, good reason to believe that the conditions of the surrender had not been communicated to any other correspondent of an English or even a German newspaper at headquarters. Having obtained the supremely important item of news, what was I to do with it? Unless it could be forthwith transmitted to The Daily Telegraph office by telegraph, my chances of forestalling my fellow correspondents would be annihilated, and there was no time to lose. Before 8 a. m. I had taken down the articles of capitulation from the lips of my informant, within half an hour I had copied them out, "large, bold and handsome," on two pages of foolscap and had made myself presentable.

The situation appeared an utterly hopeless one, until suddenly the happiest of "happy thoughts" flashed through my mind. Perhaps the all-powerful chancellor, newly created a prince of the young German empire, would authorize the transmission to London of my dispatch over his own official wire, by means of which he was "en rapport" with every European capital except beleaguered Paris. There was no time to lose. Before 8 a. m. I had taken down the articles of capitulation from the lips of my informant, within half an hour I had copied them out, "large, bold and handsome," on two pages of foolscap and had made myself presentable.

At 9 o'clock I presented myself at the street door of the house in the Rue de Provence and sent up my card to Councillor Lothar Bucher, with a pencilled request that he would allow me to speak to him in private. Almost immediately he came down to the waiting room on the ground floor, into which I had been shown, and asked me what he could do for me. "Can you procure me a five minutes' audience of the prince?" I replied, "I don't know," was the rejoinder, "but I'll try. The chancellor is extremely busy, but perhaps he'll see you if you can assure me that the matter is really urgent." I declared that for me it could not possibly be more so, whereupon Bucher left me—I confess, in a fever of anxiety—and was absent for about a quarter of an hour, at the expiration of which he reappeared and beckoned to me to follow him up stairs.

In an ex-boudoir on the first floor converted into a sort of office I found the chancellor awaiting me. After the briefest of greetings he said, "Pray, tell me what you want in the fewest possible words, for I have not a moment to lose." I produced my dispatch, handed it to him and asked him if it was substantially correct.

After looking through it he answered: "Yes, it is. I don't know how you got your information, and I don't intend to ask, but these are the terms on which Paris surrenders. What then?" When I besought his permission to forward the message over his wire, he laughed rather grimly, saying, "You must be mad to ask such a thing!"

I urged upon him that the tension of public feeling in England with respect to the fate of Paris was very painful—many people's sympathy being temporarily averted from Germany by harrowing accounts of the sufferings undergone by the population of the French capital. "That tension would be considerably relieved, sir," I replied, "by the knowledge that the siege of Paris is come to an end and that the victors have accorded merciful terms to the vanquished." Prince Bismarck held out against my importunity for about a couple of minutes, but he yielded at last, only stipulating that I should efface my name at the end of the dispatch.

"On no account can I allow you to sign a message sent over my wire. If your people in London do not believe it to be authentic when it reaches them, that is their affair. But it must go unsigned or not at all." It did go unsigned; it was accepted as authentic, and its publication that very afternoon in a special edition of The Daily Telegraph proved to be one of the greatest journalistic coups effected by any London newspaper during the Franco-German war.—London Telegraph.

Bagpipe Music.

A Glasgow paper thus analyzes the music of the bagpipe: "Big flies on window, 72 per cent; cats on midnight tiles, 11½ per cent; voices of infant puppies, 6 per cent; grunting hungry pigs in the morning, 6½ per cent; steam whistles, 8 per cent; chant of oricket, 2 per cent."

In Japan a very useful accomplishment taught children is the use of both hands in writing and other work; hence there are no right or left handed people, as a rule, but both hands are used indiscriminately.

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