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UNCLE SAM'S EUROPEAN GATEWAY

ALL ABOUT THE PORT OF ANTWERP, THROUGH WHICH OUR GOODS GO TO NORTH EUROPE.

Its Enormous Trade and How it is Handled—The New Docks and The American Shipping—Little Elephants in Horse Hides or The Belgian Draft Animals—A Land Where the Dogs Work—A Look at Ghent and its Cotton Mills—Our American Consul and His "Judas-Mirrors."

(*Special Correspondence of the Deseret News by Frank G. Carpenter.*)

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ANTWERP, Jan. 10.—I am standing in the chief American gateway to the continent of Europe. This city, situated 60 miles inland on the deep river Scheldt, is connected by canal and rail with every part of Germany, France, Holland and Belgium and our American traders are making it a basis of their commercial campaigns. Six great lines of steamers connect it with New York and other American ports, and it is the headquarters of the Red Star line, one of the chief arteries of our great ship building trust. Wheat by the 10,000 bushels and cotton, by the thousands of bales are unloaded here to be sent to other countries of Europe. Cargoes of our lumber travel through the canals far into the interior, and tank steamers filled with American coal oil come in such numbers that special docks have been set aside for them known as the Bassin America.

A MILLIONAIRE CITY OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

Antwerp has now 300,000 people. It is rapidly growing, and it is reaching the position it had during the middle ages as the richest commercial city of Europe. It had then not half as many people as now, but its trade was the wonder of the world. Five hundred wagons daily came into the city, bringing in and carrying out goods. Five hundred ships sailed up the Scheldt every day, and it is said that 2,500 vessels were often at anchor there at one time.

This was shortly after the discovery of America. Before that time the Mediterranean cities such as Venice and Genoa, led in the commerce of the world, but Columbus turned the tide another way. The route to Asia about the Cape of Good Hope was discovered and the cities of the Atlantic began to boom. Lisbon was one of the most thriving of them, and the Portuguese ships called there and then came on to Antwerp. Indeed Antwerp had then almost as much trade as London, England annually buying about $2,000,000 worth of Antwerp goods. At that time money was worth 10 times what it is now, and in comparison the trade was greater. Antwerp bought spices and sugar of the Portuguese to the amount of almost $4,000,000 a year, and its silk and gold wares from Italy were worth twice as much.

There were then 1,000 foreign commercial firms doing business in Antwerp, and among them were the Fuggers of Augsburg, who were the Pierpont Morgans of the sixteenth century. The Fuggers were famous as bankers and business men and for their wealth, one of them dying at Antwerp and leaving a fortune of $5,000,000, an enormous sum for that time.

THE SPANIARDS RUINED IT.

Such was the condition of Antwerp when the Spaniards tried to rule the Netherlands. They ruined the country as they have ruined everything they have put their hands on. In less than a generation the population fell off more than 50 per cent and the business and people steadily dwindled until in 1790 the city had only 40,000 souls.

Later on Napoleon Bonaparte saw the fitness of Antwerp for a great commercial port. He built docks at a cost of something like $10,000,000, and was fast making the city the commercial capital of northern Europe, when it got another black eye through the revolutions which followed his death. A generation or so later, Belgium having separated from Holland, Antwerp again began to grow, and it is now bigger than it has ever been before.

THE ANTWERP OF TODAY.

The Antwerp of today is one of the busiest places of continental Europe. It booms like the fast-growing cities of the United States. Its new streets are lined with buildings which would do credit to New York, and it has docks which surpass anything on our Atlantic coast. The river Scheldt has been walled in and deepened, so that at high tide the biggest ocean steamers sail right to the edge of the city and anchor there. All along the river iron and glass sheds have been erected for storing goods, and transferring them from the ships to the railroads. Four lines of railway tracks run outside these sheds, and next to the river are long lines of hydraulic cranes which lift the goods from the ships to the cars. On the average 2,500 cars leave the city every day. Both cranes and cars are worked by a subterranean acqueduct operated by engines.

Above the warehouse sheds are long promenades paved with asphalt, so wide that two-horse wagon loads of hay could be driven side by side upon them. These promenades look out over the river and the green fields on the opposite side; they form the favorite promenade of the Antwerpers Sundays and evenings. At such times bareheaded women and girls and capped and hatted men and boys may be seen here strolling along or leaning over the railings enjoying the cool breezes of the Scheldt. Some of the boys wear wooden clogs, and even the little ones of the better classes have their legs bare from the tops of their shoes to the knees.

The Scheldt is about a furlong wide. It is over 25 feet deep, and it streams with shipping. A North German Lloyd steamer came puffing in while I was on the promenade this afternoon, while a Red Star liner from New York, which had just been discharged, was starting out.

WHERE AMERICAN GOODS ARE HANDLED.

I wish I could show you the docks which these Belgians have built for handling our imports. They are among the finest of Europe. The ones which Napoleon constructed are still in use. They are two in number, one holding about 250 ships and the other perhaps half that number.

It took me several hours to drive about the new docks. I went by miles of iron warehouses and sheds filled with all sorts of goods. At times I was in a thicket of masts and at others I could hardly see through the network of rigging. The docks and canals were filled with boats and barges wedged in among the great steamers, and cars were moving this way and that carrying the goods out and in. I could not get the exact area of the docks, but I am sure there are more than 1,000 acres. The Bassin du Kattendyk alone has 230 acres and the Bassin Lefebvre has 320 acres. I stopped and made some photographs about the Bassin America, where our petroleum is landed. Barrels marked "Standard Oil company" were piled high on the banks, and across the way was an enormous brick elevator which was being filled with the wheat from our great northwest.

I visited the Red Star quay, where there are warehouses filled with American wood pulp, cotton and machinery. I saw Chicago meats in cans, boxes marked Philadelphia pickles and every sort of Yankee notions in various packages. Two steamers were unloading cargoes of corn, oil cake and agricultural machinery, and a team of Belgian horses was dragging away about six tons of Minneapolis flour at one load. I did not count the bags, but there must have been hundreds of them.

LITTLE ELEPHANTS IN HORSE-HIDE.

And just here I want to speak about the Belgian horses used about the wharves. They are little elephants in horsehides, and they will haul bigger loads than even the horses of Liverpool or Havre. I have never seen anything like them. Two of them pull a load of eight or ten tons with ease, and single horses drag five tons. The wagons used about the docks weigh about a ton and a half each, and when you load one of them with sixty big bags of sulphur or several hundred bags of wheat you have a load which an American team could not budge, but which these Belgian draft horses pull along like so many feathers.

Each wagon has a tongue, and when one horse is used it is hitched up on one side of the tongue instead of changing to shafts. I have seen single horses pulling three or four tons and the wagon, or, altogether about five tons, over these Belgian block pavements. This is done without trouble, and you will concede it is a big load for one horse. The best horses of this kind weigh about three thousand pounds, and each is expected to pull from three to five tons. The horses are well cared for and bring good prices.

AMERICAN LUMBER.

I went from the Red Star docks to the lumber yards. They cover acres and contain enormous piles of American pine and other woods. Ships were loading and unloading at the docks and it seemed to me that the glass-roofed warehouses held enough of our lumber to floor the half of Belgium. The boards are brought chiefly from the southern states and shipped by rail and canals to other parts of the country. Much of the lumber used in Antwerp is carried about on these big wagons. I watched some men loading one of them. Each had a leather pad on his shoulder upon which he carried at least half a dozen boards at one time, handling the lumber more rapidly than is done in America.

QUEER AMERICAN IMPORTS.

I have made some inquiries concerning our imports to Belgium, but find it difficult to learn just what they are. Much of them come through England and Germany. We ship them most of the staples we send to other countries, and also a great deal of crushed corn, corn oil and notions. The agents of the Swift Packing company tell me that they sell canned meats of all kinds, and also bones and hogs' hair. The bones are shipped to Germany and Russia for buttons, tooth brush handles and other such things, and the hair is used to stuff furniture. Belgium buys a great deal of beef ham, which is much like our dried beef, and is sent over in barrels. American canned meats are seldom used except for picnic and excursion lunches, but our lard and pork hams are part of the regular Belgian diet. Much of the goods which comes to Antwerp is transshipped to other countries. It goes into the government warehouses, and then passes on to its destination without paying tariff duties.

"A vast deal of American cotton comes to Antwerp for the spinning mills of Ghent and other factories. Ghent is the Manchester of Belgium. It is situated on the Scheldt, on the way to Ostend, a short distance from Antwerp, and an hour and a half by rail from Brussels.

Ghent has 160,000 inhabitants and it is upward of six miles in circumference, a large part of it being taken up in bleaching grounds. Several small rivers flow through the city and there are bridges everywhere. There is a wide canal which connects it with the Scheldt and another which connects it with the Lei river. Many of the buildings are old and with its canals the town is exceedingly picturesque.

Ghent is a business city. Its people have always been noted as weavers, and in the middle ages their cloths were famous all over Europe. There are now about 500,000 spindles in the city itself, and as many more in the country about. Our American cotton comes here in bales, and is spun and woven into cloths for export, a vast amount of it going to the Belgian Congo.

Ghent is also noted for its linens. It has one of the largest linen mills of the world, employing about 3,000 hands. It is the center of a rich farming region and in the country nearby some of the beautiful laces for which Belgium is noted are made. A great part of the lace is still made by hand, the women doing the work with numerous needles on cushions.

JUDAS MIRRORS.

We have a consul general at Antwerp. I called upon him at 11 o'clock this morning, and I have no doubt that he knew just how I looked before I got inside his door, and this without peeping out of the window. I have written of the brass peep holes which the French have in the front doors of their apartments so that they can peep through and without being seen size up the person who knocks before opening the door. The Belgians, including the American consul, have an arrangement which keeps pace with that of the French and goes them one better. It is a combination of little mirrors fastened on an iron arm or bracket to the wall just outside the window, so that the person within can see all that goes on up or down the street. Himself unseen, he can recognize the passerby, and can spot every caller as he approaches his dwelling. Our consul general at Antwerp as he sits in the easy chair by his window looking out on the street has three such mirrors covering both directions, and also the street immediately below, and the front door. I would not pretend to insinuate that a great man like him wastes his business hours in watching the fair passerby; but I doubt not he thus spots the stranded Americans and gives directions to his clerk to tell obnoxious callers he is not in. Such Judas mirrors are common in the Netherlands.

ODD THINGS IN BELGIUM.

This country, however, has many queer things. The horses, for instance, wear straw hats in the summer, while the women go bareheaded. The horses cost money and their heads need protection. The women are cheaper, and the men tell me they can be had for the asking.

This is a country of uniforms. There are men everywhere wearing gold-laced coats and gold-braided caps. Every other servant has a cap and brass buttons. This is so with the street car conductors, the railroad men and the servants of the stores. There are soldiers or officers on every street corner dressed up to the nines. There are very few beggars, for begging is against the law, but the people are poor, and it is only the officials, their so-called servants, who are as spick and span as the red poppies which spot the summer fields.

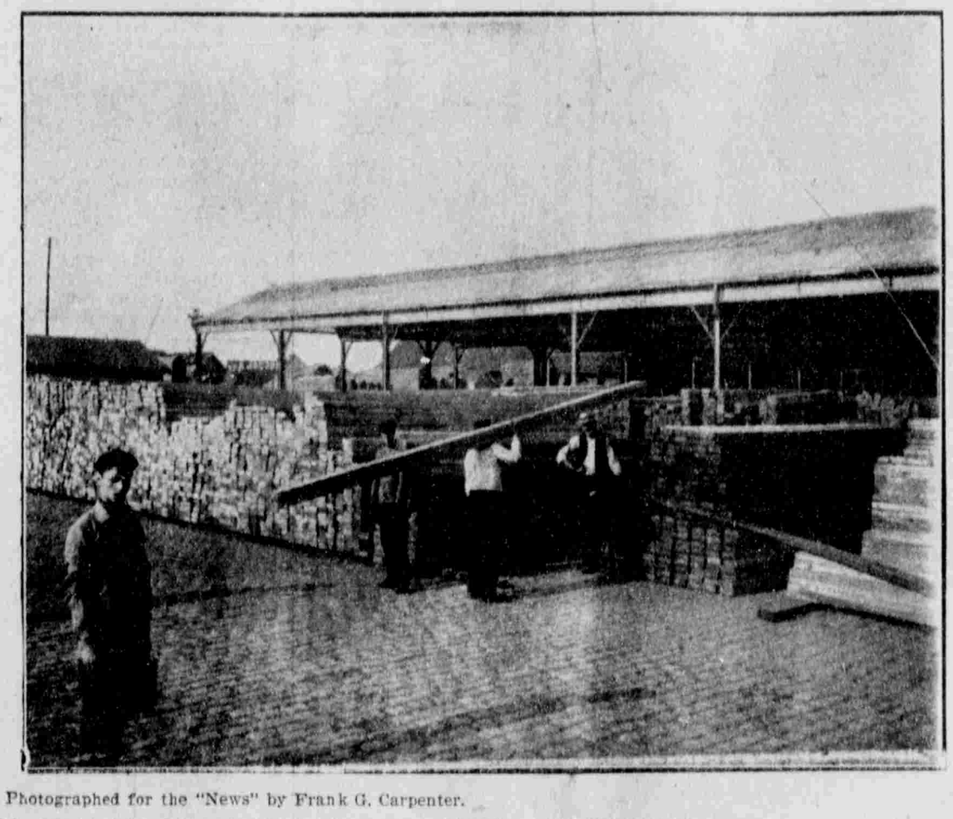
It is odd to see women scrubbing the streets as our women scrub their kitchens. That is what they do here. Every man must keep his own sidewalk clean, and it is his wife or hired girl who does it. The servant gets down on her knees and washes the pavement.

It is odd to see a Belgian business street in the evening. All the store windows have shutters of iron and wood which roll up and down. When the store closes the shutters are dropped and the whole street is lined with blank walls.

WHERE DOGS REALLY WORK.

One of the oddest things, however, is the Belgian dog. The expression "work like a dog" must have originated here, for the dogs are worked harder than any other animal. You see them hauling vegetable carts, pulling in the shafts or hitched to the axle. Sometimes they toil along side by side with a woman, and sometimes they do all the pulling themselves. Every man who runs a push cart has a dog to help him, and the milk cart is always pulled by one or more dogs. It is wonderful what the dogs pull and how well they work. I tested one at a dog market in Brussels. The owner wanted to sell him to me for 40 francs, $8; and upon my asking a trial he loaded 1,500 pounds upon the wagon and the dog dragged it through the cobbled streets without overexertion. He told me it could pull a ton, and that $8 was dirt cheap. At this same market I saw draft dogs selling for $20, and other fairly good ones brought all the way from $2 up. The Belgian dogs are usually fat. They are too valuable to starve, and they are often fed when their mistresses go hungry.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.



Photographed for the "News" by Frank G. Carpenter.

ENORMOUS PILES OF AMERICAN PINE.

TALLEST BUILDING IN NEW YORK.

This picture shows the famous Park Row building, in New York City, 30 stories high. It is on the eleventh floor of this building that the eastern office of the Deseret News is located. Here is transacted all the business that comes to the "News" from eastern advertisers, the office being in charge of Mr. H. F. Cummings.

Mr. Cummings has had a success almost unique in the history of advertising men, and it is doubtful whether any New York representative of a western paper can equal it. He left Salt Lake in September last on a special errand to notify eastern advertisers of a heavy advance in the advertising rates of this paper, due to its increased circulation. The expectation was that some of them might refuse to pay the advance and decide to remain out of the paper. The exact contrary was the case. Not only did every advertiser renew his contract at advances ranging from 25 to 100 per cent, but a big volume of new business was secured, the total amount of advertising orders received by Mr. Cummings within three months from the date of his departure from Salt Lake reaching $18,000, an average of $200 for each working day. Nothing could better illustrate the value of the Deseret News as an advertising medium in the eyes of the eastern trade.

BARON VON STERNBURG.

Baron von Sternburg is stated to succeed Dr. von Holleben as German minister to Washington. This is his latest photograph. Also that of his charming wife who will rule over the German embassy at Washington.

A DESERT SAND STORM.

Strange Phenomena Peculiar to the Southwest.

The storms of the desert, from the cloudbursts of August to the snows of December, are totally unlike the elementary disturbances of any other part of the world. In the vast sinks of the Mojave desert, the proverb-maker might truly have said: "It never rains, but it pours." There is none of the soft, steady downpour known to less strenuous climates; the floodgates of heaven simply open wide, the bottom falls out of a cloud, and where once was a respectable hill is in five minutes a sanday plain. But the storms of midsummer—and that is the rainy season in the larger part of the Great Basin—are as nothing to the sandstorms of October and November. The waterspout breaks against the wall of the surrounding mountains, and so does very little damage, but the sandstorm sweeps the level plain, blinding, engulfing, stifling every living thing that crosses its path. Even the gaunt cacti, fingerboards on the broad highway to a desert death, seem to shrink and shrivel up as the dull gray cloud of shifting sand bursts over them. The lizards and chipmunks and tortoises, wary creatures of this lonely world, bury themselves in the close-packed sand of the desert floor, and so escape the fury of the storm, while the coyotes and antelope and wild burros flee from it like things possessed. Man and the horses which he controls, face it out, because they have neither the foreknowledge to avoid, nor the speed to escape, which the lower forms of life possess.

The general idea of a desert sandstorm is gathered from rather heroic pictures of bands of Bedouin Arabs endeavoring to escape from rapidly-advancing pillars of sand—supposedly on the Great Sahara. At least this was my idea of it until I went into the desert a year ago. In the American desert a sandstorm, while not less dangerous than the Saharan or Arabian variety, is totally different in form and in the manifestation of its power.

The first intimation one has of an impending sandstorm on our desert is a general deadening of the colors of the sky in the direction from which the storm is to come. The atmosphere, usually so clear and transparent, becomes silvery gray—if it be evening, the glorious glow which flushes the western sky just at eventide, is lost, and the air becomes oppressive with the premonition of unknown danger. This condition persists sometimes for many days, but usually only for a few. Then comes the wind.

"With far-heard whisper," as Coleridge would have said, an impalpable presence is upon us. The world is shut out with a curtain of thick deadly dust. The whisper has become a roar—the dust cloud a seething, curling wave, whose solid front fills the whole landscape. It moves slowly but irresistibly. What it cannot carry before it it buries under a white mantle of sand. Men have gone to sleep on the lee side of a little sand ridge never to awake. The wind-blown sand has covered them silently, relentlessly, remorselessly, yet lovingly, as a mother would cover her babes from all the world.

Sometimes the contour of a whole valley is changed by one such storm, while the effect of the eroding, sand-laden wind on the lava walls of the hills is astonishing. Weird shapes loom up at every turn of the low ridges which have been thrown up by volcanic action in ages past, and these effigies have one and all been carved by the action of wind and sand. Such an example may be seen at a point midway between Death valley and the Nevada line. It is a perfect chair carved from conglomerate of an adamantine hardness, solely by the winds, which here blow through a narrow valley at a terrific rate of speed.

On the afternoon of the day on which I made the acquaintance of a desert sandstorm, the party of which I was a member was passing slowly through a valley a few miles east of Blackwater Wells. Walls of black lava surround this valley on all sides, and it bears every evidence of being the burned-out crater of a long-dead volcano. It was 4 o'clock of a December afternoon, and the climate was of that peculiar perfection which the desert region of California alone can furnish. The sky was turquoise, the mountains ruby red from the reflected rays of a topaz sun, while the myriad hues of old Pilot Butte, fit gatepost to the Valley of Death, brightened the trail behind.

Then the wind came with a rush, and the black lava butte toward which we were traveling was blotted out as suddenly as if some Titan had let down a curtain to protect his world from mortal ken. Even the horses staggered, as the drifting cloud struck them, but desertwise as they were, continued to pull us straight toward the shelter of the little mountain. By this time the wind had stiffened into a gale and gigantic sand spouts were beginning to form along the edges of the valley, where jagged hills broke the direct current of the storm. Towering hundreds of feet into the air, these spiral monsters move with a rapidity incomprehensible to one who has not seen them in operation. They are all-consuming, too, burying whatever the power of the wind which drives them cannot move.

Well, to proceed, after half an hour's hard work, we reached the lee side of the mountain and made camp. Uncomfortable as we were, we were fairly jolly and having secured the wagons by means of stone anchors, proceeded to prepare dinner. While the teamsters took care of the beasts, which were, of course, without water, the remainder of the party built an impromptu cookstove out of chunks of lava, and gathered brush for firewood. On this the cook, after many trials, and a considerable waste of valuable adjectives, managed to prepare an excellent stew. This we ate from small graniteware pans with large spoons, all lying flat on our stomachs, with out feet toward the wind and keeping our faces as close as possible to the dishes, so that the wind might not blow the savory liquid out of the spoons before they could reach our lips. The amount of sand each man swallowed was in inverse proportion to his dexterity. The cook was not uncomfortable as to temperature, but it was all-powerful. It would scoop up a ton of sand in a wavering cloud, carry it for half a mile, and bury some inoffensive greasewood or cactus with it. The effects of its eroding power were visible all around; in fact, it has greatly aided in cutting the canons in the hills of this desert.

We loafed around this poor shelter for a couple of hours, vainly hoping that the wind would go down, but toward evening pulled out toward the ominious, blood-red bank of clouds that hung just at the rim of the hazy western horizon. At the first "waterhole" we camped, rolling up in our blankets with the warm wind blowing a gale above us, and awoke next morning beneath such a clear summer sky as only the deserts of California can furnish.

At the southern end of the Furnace Creek section of the Funeral Mountain (not far from Corpse City, Death Valley) a level, sandy plain bordering the Amargossa river, leads up to the base of the mountains. Here the wind, forever sweeping in a gigantic draught through a gap in the hills, has piled up a huge row of sand mounds, the summit of the highest of which is a good hundred feet above the surrounding plain. They extend in a nearly straight line for a distance of some two miles, and are composed of a fine sand, so white as to dazzle the eye of the observer. The slightest breeze puts this sand in motion, blowing it in a cataract over the ridge, which latter is always as sharp as a knife blade in consequence. When a strong wind blows, a perfect moving wave of sand is formed, resembling nothing so much as one of the huge combers which follow fast on the track of a storm at sea. Sometimes this state of affairs continues for several days. Then, indeed, occurs one of the most beautiful, as well as unique, sights of the desert—and one which cannot be duplicated in any other desert of the world. In fact in many ways North American deserts generally are quite different from the deserts of Africa or Asia.—Harvey H. Dunn in Los Angeles.