



Class □ 515

Book .3784

GERMANY HER·OWN ✠ JUDGE ✠

BY H. J. SUTER-LERCH



707

1110

GERMANY HER OWN JUDGE



GERMANY HER OWN JUDGE

REPLY OF
A COSMOPOLITAN SWISS
TO GERMAN PROPAGANDA

BY
H. J. SUTER-LERCH

Translated from the German



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

The Riverside Press Cambridge

1918

II 515
3784

Printed in the United States of America

Small edition



10

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND GERMAN EDITION

THE present second edition can appear at a considerably reduced price, since it has undergone no vital alteration and the type of the earlier edition is therefore mostly available.

It is important for the majority of the Swiss living abroad that the opinion which they hold in overwhelming proportion on the subject of the responsibility for the world war should become known in a form accessible if possible to all classes at home. Even to-day a section of the German-Swiss press is treating the question of responsibility, which is so preëminently important in any peace negotiations, far too superficially; to this section it appears advantageous, for financial and professional reasons, to serve the German side. This unjust, and therefore damaging, procedure is awakening in foreign countries an intelligible disgust with everything that is German-Swiss, and from this not only the Swiss abroad, but also the Motherland may suffer. A strict control of the press on the part of the public is therefore desirable. The present cheaper edition is intended to play its part in making the control stricter.

In order to meet the accusation of prejudice, the second edition excludes every documentary proof which is not acknowledged as accurate by both

sides, and therefore by the accused parties. Naturally all unsubstantiated attempts at exoneration to be found in war propaganda must be disregarded, for it is the duty of all impartial historical students to use only authentic material.

We emphatically defend our point of view about the responsibility for the war, because the comfortable but inaccurate subterfuge according to which "all the States willed the war" favours the rise of an universal anarchistic Babel after the war. And that is a result which would in the end benefit no class of society, but would harm the whole of humanity.

THE AUTHOR

ABBREVIATIONS

N.Z.Z. = *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*

B.N. = *Basler Nachrichten*

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	ix
I. THE "BELGIAN STATE PAPERS"	3
II. GERMAN AND ENGLISH INTERNATIONAL POLICY	9
III. THE RUSSIAN AND THE PRUSSIAN "DANGERS"	24
IV. ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE ENTENTE POLICY	35
V. BREAKDOWN OF THE ENTENTE POLICY	48
VI. POLICY IN THE BALKANS	65
VII. HOW AUSTRIA ANNEXED BOSNIA	79
VIII. SERBIA BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR	93
IX. THE OUTBREAK OF WAR: PART I—THE AUSTRO-SERBIAN DISPUTE	100
X. THE OUTBREAK OF WAR: PART II—THE RUSSO- GERMAN DISPUTE	120

INTRODUCTION

To Neutrals:
"Logic, not race sympathy!"

HERR AVENARIUS, the German, disapproves of reserve! Still, following the hint of Spitteler, I intended to keep silent till the end of the war and only to publish my notes after the conclusion of peace. I had a feeling that a neutral who has no intention of taking an active part in a struggle must remain dumb till the war is ended, from simple tact—from tact towards his neighbours as well as from respect for his own Government! But the loud tone and the aberrations of writers in the German camp ("Stimmen im Sturm," etc.) force me to immediate speech.

So let Herr Avenarius listen!

First of all, to avoid mistakes, let me introduce myself to the reader.

I am a German-Swiss, or, more accurately, a cosmopolitan who has seen too much to back any race or people without reason. My earliest youth was spent in Russia. "A pro-Russian in disguise, I suppose." Not at all. Although we Germans (from Germany and Switzerland) met with a hospitality in Russia which deserves our fullest gratitude, we mostly kept the strongest attachment to our Western homes. And this was nowhere more apparent

than in my own family, as we had a Swiss tutor for our early education instead of going to a Russian school. Our social intercourse at that time was confined to a small circle of German and Swiss residents. Then I went to school at Zürich. And nearly ten years' stay in Zürich made me completely Swiss. It was not till my return to Russia for some years' stay that I came in closer contact with the Russian character. Although I came to value much in it highly, I felt more at home in German surroundings in consequence of my education. I have very often taken Germany's part against Germans born and educated in Russia! My inadequate knowledge of the Russian language and my strong feeling for the West alienated my sympathies from Russia in no small degree. *So I chose Germany for my permanent home as it was thoroughly sympathetic to me in many respects, not least politically.* The new German "*Kultur*," indeed, which I met in Berlin, did not wholly fulfill my expectations; for the old comfort, charming simplicity, and honesty were more and more being ousted by ostentation, cold shoddy glitter, and the last thing in materialism.¹ Yet I still continued to defend Germany as often and as well as I could.

I used to say that elsewhere too the growth of the moral cancer was to be noticed, that the Empire, and especially the Southern States, should not be

¹ Cf. *inter alia* Sudermann's poem "Was wir waren" (*Berliner Tageblatt*, August, 1914); also the opinions of Th. Oehler, director of German Missions (B.N. 21 supplement); and the Crown Prince (*Deutschland in Waffen*), etc.

measured by the standard of Berlin; I would praise German order in contrast to the Apache licence of Paris, to the unrest in the French vineyards, and so forth. I lived nearly ten years in Germany with the firm intention of remaining there; at most I should have exchanged the capital for Munich and the Starnbergersee, as those districts are more congenial to a German-Swiss. What bound me to Germany was the conservative spirit, which establishes order for the present and brings security for the future by its system of entails and family trusts — and these are growing more and more common even among the middle classes. This feeling of security is weaker in democracies from the fear of vague and extravagant desires on the part of an often improvident proletariat. I noted, too, that the general tone of the people grows more refined under a monarchy — which agreeably impresses a foreigner.

The war broke out. The German method of opening the war, the violation of Belgian neutrality, and even more the white robes which German propaganda assumed, disgusted me utterly. My unusual position made me too impartial to believe the legend of foreign attack (cf. chs. ix and x). I left Germany, which I had held so high in my estimation, in disgust, in spite of friendly relations and many other pleasant recollections.¹

I went to my own country. The impression which

¹ I read lately, in a correspondence from the United States, a passage which pictured the experiences I had had myself (B.N. 445): "Those classes which before the war had the greatest feeling for German culture mostly declare themselves against Germany."

I got there was a depressing one. It was as if the German war wave had advanced the frontier of the Empire from the Rhine to the St. Gothard. I will not attempt to hold up a true mirror to Switzerland, for her to see the picture which she then presented to a newly returned Swiss of cosmopolitan sympathies like myself. I will only call to remembrance that an exaggerated, almost blind, belief in "German truth" reigned among the German-Swiss, and among the Latins an overloud declaration for right and freedom. Even though (as I believe) the war had been staged and opened by certain Prussian circles in order finally to establish German predominance, noisy partisanship by small States would have been useless to the group of Powers attacked and actually dangerous for the small States themselves. For the issue of the war appeared likely at the beginning to be preëminently in favour of the attacking side. As the neutrals had failed to intervene on the lines of the Anglo-American pacifism when Austria sent her ultimatum to Serbia, any later pronouncement was futile.

Many Swiss fall to-day into the opposite error; they hold that true neutrality precludes all free judgment. That is obviously wrong; it is precisely the neutral who can deliver an impartial verdict — a verdict based solely on logic and free from all race sympathy. *The longer the war lasts, the less can we suspend judgment.* There are, indeed, many who hold the opinion that the division of our people into two camps to some extent insures our neutrality. That would be a sign of intellectual

poverty; our neutrality should spring from a *reasonable will* and not from internal division. This division is no help to our political unity! The only real neutral is the man who can deliver an impartial judgment in spite of his national sympathies, and who — even though this judgment must recognize right to be disconcertingly stronger on the one side — shows his weapons equally to both groups and behaves as tactfully to one side as to the other.

GERMANY HER OWN JUDGE

GERMANY HER OWN JUDGE

CHAPTER I

THE "BELGIAN STATE PAPERS"

THE world war was originally represented on the German side as a purely defensive war. German propaganda, however, gradually shifted its ground from "a hostile attack" to a war "forced upon us." And now it is attempting to justify this preventive war, for which purpose it relies extensively on the so-called "Belgian State Papers." As these documents will also play a prominent part in my argument, I think it relevant to begin with a short commentary on them.

The "Belgian State Papers" are a collection of letters from Belgian diplomatists, which the German Foreign Office *selected* for publication from among the correspondence discovered in Brussels. The object, as Herr von Bethmann says, is "to show the world that even neutral statesmen in Berlin, Paris, and London saw preëminent danger in the policy of the Entente." The documents prove, indeed, that up to the German declaration of war the Belgians were no friends of the policy of the Entente, which confirms Herr von Bethmann's earlier confession that "a wrong had been done to Belgium by Germany." But they further prove to us, as I will show in detail in the fifth chapter, that

Edward the Seventh's preventive policy, which met with a very varied reception in neutral countries, was shipwrecked on the obstructively democratic mentality of the English people; and that therefore there is no excuse whatever for the German preventive war. Hence the publication of the "Belgian State Papers" is the greatest blunder of the whole German propaganda.

Doubtless the reader is favourably impressed by the German side at first, owing to the very careful selection of the letters and also to the fact that certain passages, which favour Germany, are emphasized by heavy type. But the more closely he examines the documents, the more he is convinced that the publication of the "State Papers" completely misses its mark. In the first place, students of the most recent European history will find gaps, incriminating Germany, in the selection and sequence of the letters. Secondly, it will make an unfavourable impression on any impartial neutral that the collection includes such a disproportionate number of letters from the Belgian representative in Berlin, Baron Greindl, whose sympathies were Pan-German. These are in sharp contrast with the utterances of the other representatives (which are naturally not in heavy type). Baron Greindl, who chose as his favourite paper the Pan-German *Kreuzzeitung*, who untiringly forwarded to his Government with approval the weekly reports of the well-known Pan-German Professor Schiemann, produces an absolutely repellent effect by his exaggerated German racial sympathy. He writes, for instance:—

Behind the agreements, concluded or contemplated, there is always in evidence the hatred of Germany, which is kept alive in Paris by the perpetual memory of the humiliation of 1870, in London by jealousy of the development of Germany's trade, industry, and navy, and in St. Petersburg by nothing but prejudice and the boundless Slav pride which feels injured by the contrast between German civilization and Muscovite barbarism. (No. 26.)

What unworthy language for a diplomat! The words might come straight from the lips of the Pan-German professor Schiemann. A true neutral thirsts for documentary proof and nothing else; provocative outbursts rouse his disgust! But Herr von Greindl feeds us up with unproved assertions, and these are emphasized in the German collection by heavy type, although they contradict statements of his Belgian colleagues. As an instance I may cite his remarks on the French idea of *revanche*: —

When has the peace of Europe been threatened, except by the French idea of *revanche*? (No. 39.)

A real and lasting *rapprochement* between Berlin and Paris would presuppose the elimination of the idea of *revanche*; but there is no Frenchman, even among the most sensible and peace-loving, who does not cherish the hope of *revanche* in his heart of hearts. (No. 36.)

So writes Herr von Greindl from Berlin. But the contrary views of the Ambassador in Paris, Herr A. Leghait, — the man on the spot, — are not in heavy type: —

If France after long years of slumbering peace is thinking of sharpening her sword again, we must not assume that she is urged to do so by lust of conquest. (No. 11.)

Her readiness for defence is under consideration and

comparisons are being made with the powerful organization of her Eastern neighbour (Germany). (No. 11.)

It is certain that French policy is conducted with the idea of peace. (No. 51.)

Herr von Greindl makes great play, too, — unfortunately also without documentary proof, — with the ostensible objects of the policy of the Entente: —

I do not question Sir Edward Grey's sincerity; but it is nevertheless true that, with or without written or verbal commitments, every one in England or France regards the Entente Cordiale as a defensive and offensive alliance against Germany. This corresponds exactly to the character which the late King of England wanted to give it. The Entente Cordiale was not founded on the positive basis of defence of common interests, but on the negative basis of hatred of the German Empire! (No. 85.)

Yet this is answered in modest ordinary type by the remarks of his Belgian colleagues from London and Paris: —

France, who sincerely desires the preservation of peace and the improvement of her relations with Germany, will have to make great diplomatic efforts to prove in Berlin that the Entente Cordiale need not alarm Germany and was not concluded to prevent German expansion. (Leghait, Paris, No. 24.)

Certain Jingo organs of the London press declare that Great Britain will have to support the French Cabinet, if the Imperial German Government shows signs of exercising pressure. It hardly appears as if this would be in conformity with the attitude of so peace-loving a Government as that of Mr. Asquith. (Lalaing, London, the Morocco Question, No. 69.)

Grey's position is not free from difficulties; on the one hand he would naturally like to conserve his relations with Germany, which have improved recently, while on the other

hand he would not like to give the impression of not supporting France. (*Ibid.*, No. 74.)

Thus an attentive reader finds a large number of the crudest contradictions in the "Belgian State Papers," as might be expected in the publication of *personal opinions*, even from the pens of active diplomats. Only such statements, therefore, have a historical value, which describe events, or which are, at any rate, to some extent supported by proofs.

On the whole, on the strength of many of these "State Papers," the reader gets the firm conviction that the Belgians, even in London and Paris, had little sympathy with the policy of the Entente. This is intelligible. The former grouping of the Powers, which separated France and Germany into two camps, renewed the danger of invasion for Belgium with each European conflict. Therefore the Belgians favoured a *rapprochement* between France and Germany, which would have removed all danger for Belgium. The growing preponderance of Germany was regarded with calm resignation as inevitable: —

In a few years a balance of power between France and her neighbour (Germany) will be no longer possible. Germany need only have patience, need only continuously increase her economic and financial strength in peace, need only await the effect of her superior birth-rate, in order to dominate all Central Europe without contradiction and without a struggle. (Beyens, No. 118.)

Every attempt of the Franco-Russian alliance to preserve the European balance of power — whether by increasing their own armies or by the

accession of the British Fleet (the Entente policy) — was, as is intelligible, condemned by Belgium, as she imagined that her painful position between the hammer and the anvil was thereby protracted. The possibility of seeing their country entangled in a foreign war naturally disturbed the Belgians more than the fear of a German hegemony.

Hence the heavy-type extracts in the "State Papers."

But France, Russia, and England had other views about the balance of power in Europe and about the preservation of the *status quo ante* on the Continent and on the sea.

CHAPTER II

GERMAN AND ENGLISH INTERNATIONAL POLICY

1. *The Origins of German Colonial Policy*

THE origin of the hankering after colonial power dates from the concluding years of Emperor William the First's reign. The desire of the commercial circles of Bremen and Hamburg for colonies of their own found a willing ear in the son of the Crown Prince, the present Emperor. Troubles with natives and difficulties raised by foreign nations afforded this desire certain justification. At that time, however, it encountered opposition from the bulk of the German people, as far-seeing circles feared future complications and dangers. Indeed, there was a great danger that appetite might grow with success and that the next generation might blossom out from colonial desires to desire for world-power. To satisfy such wishes, Germany would inevitably have to cross the path of other States. For in consequence of the late awakening of her colonial policy (England began in 1602, Germany in 1883), the youthful Germany found the world more or less divided up, with the exception of a few districts (containing points of vital strategic importance) under Moslem rule. And on two of these points England had already laid her hand, namely, Gibraltar and the Suez Canal (the purchase of the

shares took place in 1875), in order to secure her direct sea route to India.

2. *Naval Rivalry*

The Emperor William II realized that a larger fleet was requisite for the entry of Germany into the ranks of the World Powers. Unfortunately he went too far in his efforts in this direction, for he aimed at outstripping the English fleet. With this object Germany refused every programme of proportionate armaments which England proposed. (Proportion of 10 to 16; also, the so-called "Naval Holiday." Cf. German pacifist literature.)

But as soon as any fleet is greater than the British one, the danger of encirclement would exist permanently and in its sharpest form for the island empire, whose fleet is the equivalent of the land army of a Continental State. While it is exceedingly difficult effectively to encircle a Continental State on account of its many neighbours, England is at the mercy of any State with a more powerful fleet. So the State which aims at outstripping the English fleet is pursuing against England nothing else than a policy of encirclement, and from the modern German point of view would give England the moral right to set the world ablaze.

3. *The Balance of Power in Europe*

The consequence of this special position of England is that she cannot permit the marked predominance of any country on the Continent. The more powerful a Continental Power is, the more

greedily does it look at England's possessions in the world; but little England cannot by herself deal with too strong a Continental Power.¹ It must therefore be England's aim to maintain the balance of power in Europe as equal as possible, but to retain so free a hand in her Continental alliances that she can offer her friendship to either group of Powers according to circumstances.²

In any case England must actively associate herself with the weaker side as soon as an ambitious group becomes aggressive.

This "police supervision" of Europe by England is especially beneficial to the small Continental States. For it is obvious that a predominant large State only considers the interests of a small State, if the latter finds a backing in the balance of power which provides the best possible guarantee for the *status quo ante*.

On the other hand, an attempt by England to abuse her position as a World Power as regards the Continent in times of peace would bring upon her an Anglophobe coalition, which might easily be her destruction.

¹ How necessary it is for England to support the weaker military group on the Continent was neatly put in a popular form by a German acquaintance of mine. We were discussing at the beginning of the war the probable enormous French and Russian war indemnities (one hundred milliard marks), and the Berliner said: "We will build a fleet with the money, and then England had better arm herself!"

² Cf. Sir Edward Grey's words at the time of the German-English *rapprochement*: "Old friends do not exclude new friendships."

4. *The Hegemony of the World*

England, the greatest European sea Power, would only become a danger to the world if she were to unite with the strongest Continental Power. There is no possible doubt now that Germany, the mightiest State on land, had been working for this, for Herr von Bethmann opposed the English principle of a balance of power "which kept Europe nervous" in order, as he confesses in his speech of the 2d of December, 1914, to force England into a British-German agreement.

He hoped to achieve this object by the military predominance of Germany: —

. . . England was comparatively the least entangled. An attempt at an understanding could most easily be made with her, which would have absolutely guaranteed the peace of the world . . . I never hoped to break down this old English principle [of the balance of power] by persuasion. But I thought it possible that the growing power of Germany and the increasing risk of war might force England to realize that this ancient principle was untenable and impracticable and that a peaceful compact with Germany was preferable.¹

The Chancellor's paper, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, commented on this (B.N. 172): —

Supposing a firm and loyal understanding were to be established between Germany and England, the danger of a European war would be removed so far as human foresight can reach. France would not dare to provoke a war, and other European dangers of war would be nipped in the

¹ The later speeches of the German Chancellor also clearly revealed this effort to achieve predominant power on the part of German policy.

bud by the weight of an Anglo-German agreement. As is well known, England did not assent to these proposals.

It is obvious that this over-powerful Anglo-German hegemony would have meant danger for all other States. When, therefore, these intentions on Germany's part were revealed for the first time by England in this war, the Chancellor hastened to calm the fears of the most powerful neutral, America, by the following statement to one of her press representatives: —

. . . I reminded the English Ambassador of my long-continued efforts to bring about an understanding between England and Germany, efforts which, as I suggested to him, would have made a general European war impossible and fully guaranteed the peace of Europe. Such an understanding would have formed the basis on which we should have approached the United States as a third partner. But England did not accept these views, and by entering the war destroyed for ever the hope of their fulfilment.

England certainly did not refuse Germany's enticing offer from sheer love of justice. The far-seeing Briton saw clearly that even the greatest naval Power would be bound to sink into vassalage to her all-powerful Continental friend, as soon as the latter had achieved assured predominance on the Continent.

The Chancellor failed to enforce this definite agreement with England; on the contrary, his policy of "the growing power of Germany and the increasing risk of war" spurred on the fatal competition of armaments in Europe.

5. *Chancellor, Crown Prince, and People*

We should be wronging Herr von Bethmann if we ascribed to him alone and to his epoch the origin of the German lust for predominance and the responsibility for it. Prince Bülow, who claims for himself the honour of being the founder of German world-policy, proclaimed in a sitting of the Herrenhaus as early as 1904: "The King at the head of Prussia, Prussia at the head of Germany, Germany at the head of the world!"¹

Herr von Bethmann's actions are, indeed, worse than such words as those. It is true that the Anglo-Russian proposals as to the extension of international law, arbitration, and the limitation of armaments came to nothing owing to Germany's opposition even in Herr von Bülow's time (as can be shown from German pacifist literature); still, the universal competition in armament did not reach fever heat till Herr von Bethmann's régime. It was Herr von Bethmann who tried to secure German predominance for generations to come by means of a world catastrophe. The starting of the world conflagration and the fiction of a foreign attack (for

¹ This phrase of Bülow's forms a significant background for German policy from 1904 to 1907, which was trying to checkmate the English fleet by means of an overwhelming Continental coalition. (Burzev's *Revelations*.)

It is comprehensible that such words influenced the present Crown Prince — at that time twenty-two years old. A well-known Swiss paper comments very justly: "*At home* this had a very good reception, but *abroad*, e.g., by attentive listeners such as Edward VII, it might well be maintained that Germany, the mischief-maker, was aiming at the domination of the world."

proofs, see chs. IX and X) are such momentous actions that they can only be explained by the presupposition of a vast increase of power after the war, great enough to crush the idea of revenge.

While the last two Chancellors show us the clear determination to place Germany "at the head of the world," there is a third character who also gives us an insight into German aims—the Crown Prince William! He is, of course, not yet a responsible director, but is all the more dangerous as a propagandist. How does he write in his famous book "Germany in Arms"? Among other gems we read:

The German Empire above all other nations of our old earth has the sacred duty of keeping its army and fleet at the highest point of readiness. It is only so, supported by our good sword, that we can attain to the place in the sun which is our right, but which is not willingly conceded to us.

The much-read Pan-German propagandist Dr. Paul Liman comments justly on this in his well-known book "The Crown Prince":—

We find here the realization that a people must not rest content with the goods which the past created for it, unless it means to surrender itself, that Germany, too, is entitled to claim the right of free movement, but that she will attain to the place which is her due only by making sure of her power to take it by force.

The comment is absolutely to the point: the Crown Prince's words are, indeed, fundamentally aggressive; it is not a question of protecting existing possessions, but of acquiring new possessions.

The thirst for increased power and greatness in certain circles in Germany before the outbreak of

war and the envy of England's world possessions are depicted for us in an interesting way by Liman among other authors: ¹ —

And when the Crown Prince saw the fatal effects of perpetual famine in India, when he noted the fierce hatred which lay so near the surface, did he not get the impression that even the edifice of English power, in spite of its apparent stability, might yet one day collapse? . . .

For the Crown Prince knows that we stand at a turning-point of history. We all have the feeling that the dawn of a new world is beginning to appear, and that the content of the history of the coming decades, in which the Crown Prince will be our leader, must be different from the past. A universal monarchy like that of the early Middle Ages will certainly never arise again, and if, nevertheless, we were to talk nowadays of a world-domination in the narrower sense, we should have to point to England, whose flag rules the seas, whose colonies form a mightier empire than the Cæsars ever united beneath their sway. . . .

The German people is thirsting for a new period of action, for the possibility of winning new rights over new territories. It is not "saturated," as the Philistines say, quoting a phrase of Bismarck's which was coined for the moment, for a limited European purpose. Germany does not want a policy of peace, but of power. The traditions of the heroic age are not so utterly extinct, the ancient pride is not so utterly dead, that we should be content to retire to the dower house. . . .

We need more egoism and more determination such as springs from a sure self-consciousness. The lotus flower does not float on the dark pond in our country, nor will the

¹ From the overwhelming mass of material I pick out Liman's work, because a personal friend of his drew my attention, whilst I was still living in Berlin, to his successful book. This book, which has, I may add, a semi-official character, because it defends the Crown Prince himself and his militarist-imperialist tendencies, appeared in a large edition some months before the outbreak of war, and is therefore served up "piping hot."

miracle of Frau Nora ever appear there, if we do not break open the door for it with our own hand. Can the future possibly make good the neglect of the last twenty-five years? Shall we be told again: The world has been given away; the vintage, the markets, the sporting-rights are no longer mine to give? . . .

That is how Liman incited the Germans, and the Crown Prince encouraged them and a crowd of other authors fanned the flame in books, pamphlets, lectures, etc.

And success crowned their efforts. Any one who watched popular feeling in Germany carefully, became aware of a remarkable change towards imperialism in educated circles, especially since the Morocco crisis. It was not for nothing that German lust for power burst out directly after the outbreak of war with a suddenness and an inevitability that amazed the outside world and shocked many a pro-German neutral. Examples: The editor of the semi-official *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* wrote on the day of the outbreak of war:—

We are fighting to-day the final struggle to consolidate for ever our position in the world, which we have never abused; and when the German sword is sheathed again, all our hopes and wishes will have been accomplished. We shall stand out as the strongest nation in the world.

And again on the same day:—

We shall be victorious, we shall become the strongest nation on earth.

We may state emphatically that neither the *Temps*, *The Times*, nor the *Novoe Vremya* would presume to employ language like that of the semi-

official *Lokal-Anzeiger*. Nor, on the outbreak of war, did learned men go off the rails in any Entente country as often as in Germany. Examples: —

. . . And if it appears necessary for us to extend our borders in order that the greater body of the people may gain space to develop, we will take as much territory as seems necessary to us. We will plant our foot where it seems strategically important to do so, in order to preserve our inviolable strength: if therefore it helps our position in the world, we will establish naval bases at Dover, Malta, and Suez. (Professor Werner Sombart, Berlin, B.N. 407.)

Every nation has its day in history. But the day of the German nation shall be the harvest of the whole world. (Professor v. Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, Berlin, B.N. 431.)

Such words should not be used by the nation which stage-managed and began the war (cf. chs. IX and X), for they brand the so-called preventive war from the outset as essentially a war of conquest — especially when the proofs of the necessity of a preventive war cannot be produced (cf. chs. III and IV), and when, after the first successes of their arms, the people are told of their “world-mission” not only by professors, but both semi-officially and officially.

This tide of imperialism which flooded Germany so carried away our Swiss poet Jakob Schaffner, who lived in Berlin, that he urges even Switzerland to adopt his confession of faith, “Health lies in growth alone.” (B.N. 442.)

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the war, the great mass of the German people did not approve of the lust for increased power and greatness. Liman, for instance, tells us — naturally in a reproachful

tone—that some fiery speeches of the Crown Prince had a bad reception among part of the people:—

People not only declared scoffingly that stress of feeling even shook the speaker's mastery over his words and made him forget the most elementary grammatical rules, but that an outburst of lust for war was clearly visible. And with a glance at the past they added that the father, of course, could give his son useful lessons as to the difficulty of wiping out the impressions made by such speeches in Europe. So extremely warlike a German Emperor would be regarded as a danger in all Europe and would provoke a coalition of all States against the German Empire. For an almost absolute master of the formidable German armies, who professed such warlike views, must necessarily appear as a personal threat to peace to all States, even to his allies, etc.

We see in these words of Liman that there were some far-sighted people even among the Germans who, in view of the late entry of Germany into the field of world-policy, would rather have seen small but secure progress than the hazardous advance of a "whole-hog" policy.

6. *Political Anarchy*

Pan-German circles are offended because neutrals regard the vast territorial possessions of the Entente Powers as natural, while they look with mistrust at the German desire for expansion. They forget that Germany's colonial policy began far too late to enable her to compete on equal terms with her rivals. For all expansion — whether by economic and political predominance or by annexation — is immoral, when it absolutely disregards existing foreign interests.

It is obvious that Russia cannot allow the pre-

dominance of any other European Great Power in the Dardanelles (the outlet for South Russian exports), and that France and England would be bound, for strategic reasons, to oppose any foreign invader of the domain of Gibraltar. But the policy of Germany and Austria makes it clear that these Powers, especially since 1913, have been aiming at predominance in the Dardanelles and the Balkans. (Cf. ch. vi.)

The campaign of slander in the press (the *Post*, the *Grenzboten*, *Rheinisch-Westfälische*) proves in the same way that Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter was intending to establish for Germany a political position in Morocco by the side of France and Spain before he decided, in view of the superiority of the English fleet, to put up with compensations in the French Congo. Clearly the alteration of the *status quo ante* in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar did not originally appear to him as a threat to the European Powers already in possession.

Further, the Pan-Germans were more and more openly casting covetous glances at the Portuguese and Belgian colonies. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, for example, had to admit that, in order to improve Franco-German relations, Herr von Jagow proposed to M. Cambon a special agreement as to the Belgian Congo, especially on the question of its railways, and stated that "the administration of such large colonies as the Congo was beyond the financial strength of Belgium."¹

¹ The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* represented Herr von Jagow's remark as his "personal opinion." Without doubting the

This policy of push — whether it aims at direct interference in neighbouring economic spheres or at predominance with disregard of existing foreign strategic and economic interests — becomes in any case “political anarchy” as soon as it tries to reach its end by force of arms. The effort to restore “balance of power and justice” by force is as Utopian in political as in social life. For a “just distribution” of territory among nations is as impossible as a just distribution of capital among individuals. We can only very vaguely estimate beforehand the development of colonies, and therefore their value as markets, and the wealth of the unworked treasures of the land. But it would run counter to all morality to adjust the equilibrium by periodical European massacres.

In proportion to population Switzerland is one of the richest countries, although she has not a single colony. And her Latin citizens do not feel the slightest desire to be disloyal to their country in order to attach themselves to France, which is so rich in territory. The argument that Germany as a Great Power may put forward claims other than those of little Switzerland is illogical: it is economic pressure, not the size of the country, that is the deciding factor! In the former respect we Swiss were not in a more favourable position than our German

truth of this, we must remark that Germany's recent Foreign Secretaries have approached very near to Pan-German ideas in their “personal opinions.” It is also interesting to mention in passing that the German Foreign Minister and the High Command held very different views of Belgium's financial strength, as is shown by the tremendous war levies on the country.

neighbours. Still, so long as our neighbours do not refuse to allow us to employ our capital and our workmen abroad, we are not justified in attacking them for gain.

Was this policy of expansion at all costs really needed by the German Empire? The German people of to-day, in its present mood, answers this question in the affirmative:—

It is impossible and also immoral to refuse a great nation, with an annual increase of nearly 900,000 souls, the space in the world outside its borders which it needs for its citizens and its superfluous energy. With all due recognition of the ability of the English, a people of forty-six millions has no moral right to appropriate in perpetuity two thirds of the earth and only to give other nations what it likes, while barring the world to a rising energetic people of seventy millions and strangling them. ("Address" from South Germany, B.N. 112.)

But this view is absolutely inconsistent with the official speech made by Herr von Mühlberg, as representative of the Chancellor, in 1907, in order to allay English uneasiness at German armaments:—

Sceptics might perhaps reply that the German Army and Navy were dangerous instruments, which might be employed one day to find room for the ever-increasing population. But Germany has no need of new territory. Although her population increases annually by from 800,000 to 900,000 souls, emigration has become insignificant; there is a general scarcity of workers in agriculture and industry. ("Belgian State Papers," No. 31.)

As a matter of fact, before the war Germany had made poor use of her quite considerable colonial possessions. Interest in colonization had to be

fostered in the German people by organized propaganda. In the main, and broadly speaking, the chief concern of German industry was to secure good markets among her civilized neighbours. Her colonial policy, on the other hand, only benefited a relatively small part of the population, whether by increasing the number of military and civil appointments or by securing certain commercial concessions from which a safe return could be derived.

So German propaganda contains amusing paradoxes: when it is a question of justifying new territorial acquisitions, there are complaints of "unfair pressure" and "strangling"; when, on the other hand, proof is needed of England's jealousy, stress is laid on German prosperity. Now the cry is "overpopulation," now the Russian neighbour is reproached for preventing the immigration of cheap labour from Poland! The impartial neutral has every right to put the question whether it would not have been a more profitable policy — for Germany especially — to come to an understanding such as the Czar had proposed as early as 1898.

Regard for the general interest is the essential condition of a peaceful life: the State which tries to place itself "at the head" of its neighbours makes enemies.

CHAPTER III

THE RUSSIAN AND THE PRUSSIAN "DANGERS"

NEUTRALS used often to read of the "Russian danger" in German propaganda. Serious students used to set the Germans up as the saviours of Europe and surprise people who knew Russia with a strange new bogey.

1. The Development of Russia

It was pointed out that Russia, with her vast territory, must in the course of her development gradually become the most powerful State in Europe. Many a Russian patriot may certainly have hoped that a very long period of peace would develop Russia to such an extent that she might one day, as Count Witte said, play the first violin in the concert of the world without striking a blow. But between the first utterance of this pious wish and its fulfilment there lies so vast a space full of obstacles that preventive measures on the part of Europe seem unnecessary. Let us consider the many obstacles to development:—

1. Internal crises which may weaken or even shatter the greatest States; the seeds of revolution had never quite died out in Russia since 1905.
2. Stagnation due to satiety (China).
3. Democratization of the nations, which aims

less at growth of power than at the peaceful settlement of European conflicts (Liberalism has been growing fast in Russia since the Japanese War).¹

It is to be remembered that coalitions of threatened neighbours can always be formed effectively against the danger of a peacefully growing Power. England (which would feel itself threatened in India by a too powerful Russia), Japan, Germany, Austria, Sweden, the Balkan States, Italy, and Turkey—it is to the interest of all of them that there should be an adequate counterpoise to an overpowerful Russia, and they would all be ready to form a coalition at the necessary moment.

It is certainly contrary to all morality for a great and powerful State, from fear that its neighbour may develop too far during a long period of peace, to knock that neighbour on the head on the naïve pretext: "If I do not destroy him today, he might perhaps destroy me to-morrow!" The logical consequence of such a doctrine in the present war would be the immediate intervention of the whole world against Germany, for the Chancellor makes no secret of the fact that he wanted to disturb the European balance of power in order to secure his "lasting peace." It would mean an endless series of wars based on mere hypotheses!

2. *Russian Greed*

"They want Galicia . . . Constantinople . . . !"

German propaganda has talked a great deal about the liberation of the Baltic provinces al-

¹ Written before the revolution.

though their original inhabitants, the Letts and Esthonians, are outspokenly anti-German.¹ Germany would like to relieve the later German immigrants, who are naturally greatly inferior in numbers, from Russian rule. And a good part of these, too, are no longer friendly to Germany. Still, no one will believe that Germany would have set the world ablaze, unless greater aims than the acquisition of these districts had floated before her eyes. Galicia stands in a similar relation to Russia.

It may wound the pride of many Russian patriots that a section of their Slav brothers are under German rule; especially as "we Germans carry our swords in our mouths," as Herr von Bethmann himself admitted: for every Russian knows that the Slavs under German rule are mostly unwilling to take the field against Russia. And yet no one who knows Russia could honestly maintain that she would have declared war on account of Galicia.

It was the same with Constantinople. Up till the war Russian diplomacy was accustomed to the thought that the hope which certain Russians entertained of the possession of Constantinople would always be shattered by the veto of almost all Europe, especially by that of England. (Cf. ch. vi.) If circumstances have altered since 1915, the concessions of England and Italy were forced from them by necessity (Russian lack of munitions and the fear of a separate peace). Enver Pasha, whose over-confidence was derived from the Pan-German and military salons in Berlin, which he

¹ Even the Emperor recently spoke of the "liberation" of Riga!

frequented, could not have done Russia greater service than he did by his war-policy. For the closing of the Dardanelles showed Western Europe that the defensive forces of Russia could not be employed to the full without securing the Straits. But where does Russia's greed come in, if the new conditions were brought about only by Germany's making war and by the intervention of Turkey?

3. *Russian and Prussian Militarism*

There is probably more misconception on this subject than on any other: while German propaganda paints an exaggerated picture of Russian militarism to excuse its own, neutrals, even Englishmen, often regard the militarism of all States alike as tarred with the same brush. But any one who knows both Russia and Prussia well will be amazed at such doctrines; for Russian militarism is to Prussian as the moon is to the sun. Naturally Russia endeavoured, as far as possible, to advance her military power to the requisite point both in quantity and quality; moreover, she was urged to do so by France. But what to the Prussian, owing to his education and political institutions, is a joy and pride is to the Russian a necessary evil.

The German Chancellor hoped that "the growing risk of war" would force England into coalition with Germany, in order, as he said, to preserve peace; but even German officers admitted that the rivalry in armaments, if it continued at the pace set by Germany, must lead to war, as neither Germany nor other countries could bear

the huge burdens permanently. Such utterances were not isolated. One can only explain the openness with which the Chancellor admitted that Germany led the way in the race of armaments, on the assumption that he was here faced with a solid fact, which could not permanently be concealed and must sooner or later be justified.

A statement of the military expert of the *Berliner Tageblatt* which was published in No. 386 on the day war began seems to me to throw an interesting light on German militarism:—

It is quite natural that the numbers which the Russian High Command can put into the field should cause a certain anxiety in Germany. This anxiety is fostered by all sorts of press notices, which were published continually in the past in the interests of armament. The military strength of Russia available against the Triple Alliance was enormously exaggerated, while the obstacles which stand in the way of the full use of it were not mentioned.

Similarly, the *Deutsche Militär-Wochenblatt* wrote shortly before the outbreak of war:—

We may here remark parenthetically that the statement which has recently appeared in the [German] press about the raising of five new Russian army corps is untrue. These army corps do not exist.

All these attempts to mislead public opinion for the purpose of spurring on armament are quite in keeping with Prussian militarism and its longing for a fresh decision and with the Chancellor's "peace policy." The Pan-German press (*Kreuzzeitung*, *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, etc.) venomously represented every precautionary measure of neighbouring States as a challenge, while Germany's

preparations were described as necessary for self-defence, in spite of the fact that they led the way. And yet it was the Pan-German party which was most conspicuous even before the war for its lust of predominance and conquest.

Less spitefully, but all the more effectively owing to its wide circulation, the Jewish press egged its readers on. The same paper, which at the outbreak of war published the reassuring article by its military expert quoted above, had recommended a preventive war five months earlier "in view of Russia being superior in power and armed to the teeth," "in order not to leave to the enemy the choice of the most favourable moment for the death-blow."

As a matter of fact, at the time of the outbreak of war Russia was about to reduce the start which Germany had won in material armaments. Both camps were fully aware of the technical superiority of the Central Powers over the Franco-Russian alliance in the summer of 1914.¹ The official organ of the military party in Vienna, the *Militärische Rundschau*, wrote a few days before the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia: —

The moment is still favourable for us. If we do not decide on war, the war which we shall have to wage in two

¹ Only our military "expert," Colonel Egli, thinks himself entitled to assert a balance of material power at the outbreak of war. Colonel Egli, who is wholly ignorant of Russian circumstances, admittedly draws his knowledge only from German and Austrian military attachés. But in Berlin and Vienna Russia was at one moment a giant armed to the teeth, and at the next a dwarf with empty pockets — just as the picture happened to suit.

or three years at latest will be begun under far less favourable circumstances. At present the initiative is in our hands: Russia is not armed; the moral factors and right are on our side as well as might.

We shall deal with the questions whether the Central Powers "would have to fight in two or three years," and whether "the moral factors and right" were on their side in 1914, in detail in the following chapters; here we merely wish to establish that, at the time war broke out, the Central Powers knew that the technical superiority lay with them.

The theory of the inadequacy of Russian preparations is not invalidated by contrary assertions on the part of Sukhomlinov in the winter of 1913-14. At that time there awoke in Russia, for reasons which we will explain later, an increased fear of the Eastern policy of Germany. The Minister of War had to describe the situation as more rosy than it was, if he was not to fall from his post. He was all the more entitled to do so, as Russia was making feverish efforts to recover the ground lost by the German start.

Germany's fear that in a few years Russia would have caused the balance of power to tend in the direction of the Franco-Russian alliance was an unintelligible mistake, or merely a pretext for establishing Germany's own predominance. One does not need an expert knowledge of the Russian and Prussian situation to realize that in two or three years the Central Powers would still have been relatively stronger in striking power than

their adversaries. We must not forget that at the outbreak of war Germany was armed and prepared to the smallest detail, although only one third of the milliard-mark tax had been collected and two thirds was still outstanding. The remaining 666 millions would have found their way to the munition works.

We must also not forget that an extensive, thinly populated country needs vast wealth, if it is to keep its striking force up to a high level. While Germany can in peace time easily get a return from her loans for roads and railways, owing to the great volume of her internal traffic, the huge development of her industry and her dense population, Russia is compelled to cover her corresponding outlay through her military department. It is absurd, therefore, to compare the figures for German and Russian military expenditure, especially as the exchange value of a given sum of gold is very different in the two countries. This is the case, for instance, in the making of roads, as in Russia the land is most unfavourable and the material has often to be brought from a considerable distance. The Pan-Germans have no right to compare the Franco-Russian loan of several milliard francs with the German milliard tax: the former was distributed over very many years and helped to pay for urgently necessary but costly economic development; the latter, on the contrary, was nothing but a war tax in peace-time.

Russia would presumably have brought her artillery, flying corps, etc., up to the German stand-

ard by 1917-18; but her lines of communication (railways and rolling stock) would have remained a weak spot in her war preparations. Comparatively poor returns necessitate cheaply built railways, and these render quick transit impossible. Moreover, Russia's use of her relatively meagre supply of rolling stock is further hampered by special delays between loadings in consequence of the great distances. Owing to these disadvantages, Russia cannot move and concentrate her troops so easily as Germany.

Russia would have been able to make good these disadvantages by having a considerable superiority in number of troops, in order to keep reserves in readiness at all points of her territory against hostile attack in case of war. What the Russian army lacked in mobility, it must make up in numbers. But as Germany would not endure this numerical superiority in spite of Russia's obvious disadvantages, and as she anticipated any increase of the army, — to the length even of spreading false reports of the strength of her opponent in order to keep the *risk* of war alive on her side, — the Russian Government cannot be blamed for ill-preparedness. Industrial Germany was in a better position to carry on her shoulders her excessive armament throughout the years of peace; on the Russian side the cultivation of unopened territories demanded huge expenditure, the fruits of which seemed richer than mere armaments.

Although the *Lokal-Anzeiger* wrote, "The war has been wantonly evoked by France and Russia, trusting to their superior power"; and although

Herr Bassermann cried later in the Reichstag, "We look in admiration at the achievements of our army in face of Russian superiority in strength": — yet at the outbreak of the war no fear of this superiority could be perceived in Berlin in either military or civil circles. On the contrary, it was pointed out that Russia had not shown herself efficient either in the last Turkish War or in the Japanese War. No regard was paid to the fact that the latter war was fought at the end of a single railway line of many thousands of miles, with few sidings. And no one took into account that since 1905 Russia had made great progress in European culture in all directions.¹

It is certain that Russia has vast natural reserves, especially in men. But economically she is too little developed to concentrate these forces in time of peace or to bear the necessary expense by increasing her debt. The suggestion of a Russian danger, therefore, was mere talk.

4. *The German Danger*

German propaganda tried so frequently to win over neutrals by the suggestion of a Slav danger, that it is permissible for us to ask: Is there no danger from you Germans, if even the Slavs, who have always been represented to us by foreigners living

¹ It was not till later that some recognition of the quality of the Russian troops was to be heard in Germany. A Swiss, for instance, reported in his "War Impressions in Munich" (B.N., S.Bl. 46): "I have heard on trustworthy authority that military circles are astonished at the military prowess of the Russians and positively alarmed at the progress Russia has made in organization, drill, tactics, and strategy since the Manchurian War."

in the East as especially kindly and peace-loving, are a danger? Was not your militarism notorious before there was any question of a Triple Entente to balance your Triple Alliance? Did not Bismarck long ago admit that he caused the Franco-Prussian War by altering a despatch? Are not you likewise the stage-managers and originators of the present world war? (Cf. chs. IX and X.) Did not Bismarck, a German, assert that the policy of princes was obviously imperialist? Did he not say? —

The main object of these lords of the earth is to extend their dominions and widen their frontiers. I am of opinion that we shall live to see a time when the kingdom of Prussia will increase considerably. (R. von Thadden-Trieglaff, *Deutsche Revue*, B.N. 125.)

Such efforts are justified when they do not meet with opposition, i.e., do not lead to fratricide war between Christian peoples. Yet Bismarck tells us that even in recent times the German people was actually prepared to attack its own flesh and blood for no intelligible reason: —

Whatever may be the origin of this cohesion of the members in each small State, its result is that the individual German readily obeys the command of a dynasty to harry his German neighbours and kinsfolk with fire and sword and to slaughter them with his own hands, as a result of quarrels unintelligible to himself. (Bismarck, "Gedanken und Erinnerungen.")

Do not these words remind us of the credulity with which the German people accepted the fiction of a foreign attack in 1914?

Is there not danger there?

CHAPTER IV

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE ENTENTE POLICY

1. *Triple Alliance and Dual Alliance*

A WAR party in Prussia wanted to hinder the unexpectedly quick recovery of France by a fresh campaign in 1875, and at the same time to undertake further conquests in Eastern France. The necessary propaganda was begun in the Press. But the Emperor William I and the Prussian Government opposed a new Franco-Prussian War, and Bismarck had to call a halt.¹

So the dreaded Prussian war party gave occasion to a fleeting and temporary *rapprochement* between the two fundamentally different nations France and Russia as early as 1875.

The alliance between Germany and Austria came into being in 1879. It was a purely defensive alliance and a precaution against Russian attacks. For the Slavs felt themselves outraged by the Congress of Berlin, which Bismarck had summoned shortly before at Austria's instigation. Austria had secured control of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Congress, although she had refused to give her help in the

¹ This episode, by the way, is generally passed over in silence in German history books; but it is historical and is recognized by avowedly pro-German neutrals. It is idle to discuss whether most credit should be given to the personal influence of the Emperor or to Russian intervention. (B.N. 88.)

previous Turkish War when asked for it. (For proofs, see ch. VII.)

The two defensive alliances, Germany and Italy and Austria and Italy, followed at the beginning of the eighties as a protection against France — burning to avenge her defeat and to restore a Clerical State. Thus arose the Triple Alliance as a natural consequence of the annexations of Lorraine and Bosnia.

Bismarck soothed Russia's uneasiness at this new coalition by the so-called "reinsurance treaty" of Skjernevize in 1884. This, however, was not renewed after Bismarck's retirement. The definitive Franco-Russian *rapprochement* was the logical consequence — the Entente Cordiale in 1891, the Franco-Russian Alliance in 1894. Thus the balance of power in Europe was more or less restored without England's intervention.

2. Unequal Development

This position of affairs, which was so favourable for the peace of Europe, was based unfortunately on preliminary conditions which were unfavourable to its permanence: the growth in strength of the two groups was unequal.

Germany, owing to the rise of her industries, increased out of all proportion in population and financial strength. Her emigration decreased strikingly. At the same time she made every effort to exploit these advantages to the full from a military point of view.

France, on the other hand, was not increasing in population. The inevitable consequence was, that

it fell chiefly to Russia to act as counterpoise to the German increase in strength. But there money was the difficulty. Not that Russia is a poor country; quite the contrary. But undeveloped districts soak up money as a sponge soaks up water. All expenditure for drainage, railways, roads, etc., certainly is a good investment, only the enormous extent of Russia demands correspondingly great investments, while the inadequate population and the relatively backward state of Russian industries make quick returns impossible. Russia was in the position of a great merchant whose capital is deeply involved. (Foreign loans do not alter the situation, inasmuch as they are not free gifts.) But where there is urgent necessity for remunerative outlay, no State willingly wastes its money on armies — above all, when it has no intention of using them to force a decision.

In view of these unfavourable conditions in the Dual Alliance — on one side in money, on the other side in men — the preservation of the balance of power seemed impossible in the long run, unless Germany had been willing to agree to a scheme of proportionate armaments. These are the motives, apart from his universally recognized personal love of peace, which induced the Czar to make his famous peace proposals in 1898 (court of arbitration and disarmament).

3. *Origin of German World-Policy*

England had no need to be uneasy at the menace to the balance of power so long as Bismarck was

at the helm. This statesman took no interest in colonization, and seemed really "sated" since the creation of the Triple Alliance (for the protection of Alsace and Bosnia). Circumstances altered, however, under Prince Bülow—"the founder of German world-policy." The year of Bismarck's death—1898—may be taken as the turning-point.

In that notable year 1898—Bülow had been Foreign Minister since 1897—three events took place which attracted attention in England:—

1. The Emperor undertook his journey to Syria.
2. Germany officially discouraged Russia's proposals of disarmament (August, 1898).
3. Germany founded her Navy League (April, 1898).

No doubt, the Emperor's journey to Syria was merely a symptom of the *rapprochement* between Germany and Turkey. The Turkish army had already been reorganized on a German pattern by the mission of Von der Goltz Pasha in 1884, immediately after the creation of the Triple Alliance. The Emperor, however, made the famous speech in Damascus in which he assured the Mohammedan world of his lasting friendship—an assurance which was bound to cause misgiving in all States which possessed Mohammedan subjects (England, France, and Russia).

The second point I regard as even more significant. The unfavourable attitude which official Germany adopted towards the Czar's efforts disappointed peace-loving circles even in Germany. The negative result of the Peace Conference which

was summoned for the following year was only to be expected. A good Austrian patriot, Dr. A. H. Fried, the German pacifist leader, writes on the subject: —

German complaints about the Delcassés and the Lansdownes are unjustifiable. She herself created the situation from which she suffers. She put into the hands of her enemies the moral weapon of distrust in 1899 at The Hague: she thereby missed her great opportunity of gaining credit for being a Power which wanted to insure peace by modern methods.

This fact is extremely important, since the attitude of the German Government caused "King Edward's policy," which in its turn served the German war party as a pretext for starting the present world war (a "preventive" war).

The third event, namely, the foundation of the Navy League, was the most dangerous of all for the peace of the world. Here they worked at high pressure. In a relatively short time the League had already a round million members, one third individual and two thirds corporate members. That is to say, the influence of the League's propaganda (lectures and pamphlets) extended over many millions of people — indeed, almost over the whole of Germany. It was naturally not suggested that, for instance, for Germany to get a footing in Morocco meant a dangerous alteration of the *status quo* for France and England, that German predominance in Constantinople was bound to bring Russia on to the scene, because of South Russian trade. Of course the nation was not warned to exercise moder-

ation (as it should have been, in view of Germany's late awakening to colonization), whilst it was shown how deeply it had worked its way by its industry into foreign economic spheres, from which it could not now be driven. On the contrary, a new bogey — the danger of foreign aggression — was created in the interests of armament, and peaceful efforts of other nations were often concealed or distorted. Instead of being grateful for the friendly reception which was given everywhere to us Germans, our Government produced fear and hatred of Germany by encouraging over-armament, self-confidence, and greed.¹

Quickly and surely the nation was educated up, if not to the desire for an aggressive war (that was not necessary, as a war can always be "forced on" a nation), at any rate to imperialism, and so thoroughly that the tide of instructions even flowed beyond the frontiers of the Empire.²

¹ I base the word "greed" on a witness cited on the German side. In 1913 the *Post* published an article which spoke of the voluntary or compulsory cession of the Belgian colonies to Germany as a quite natural event and of England's possible consent to this transaction. Baron Beyens, the Belgian Ambassador in Berlin, wrote to his Government on this subject (*Belgian State Papers*, No. 106): "However great the greed of German colonial circles and the Pan-Germans may be, it is not to be assumed that England will be prepared to create for herself in the heart of Africa a rival whose expansive force and economic strength would threaten the English colonies."

² Cf. Swiss remarks at the beginning of the war: "Why did not the Entente give Germany her due share in Morocco?" "This comes of trying to hinder German development in the Balkans." A naturalized Swiss (Austrian): "Why should England have *everything* in India?"

So the ground was prepared for the coming world war, which was to raise Germany from her position as a Great Power to the first place in the world.¹ So, too, the moment had come when the ancient Mediterranean Powers had to see to the partition of North African territories, before a new partner, as ambitious as he was strong, joined the company. Must France and England endure a foreign intruder in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar? Is Italy to be blamed for annexing the piece of Africa which lies opposite to her, and is therefore strategically important, before the power of Germany laid its hand on the free territory? Everybody could see that Germany's desire for expansion was growing after 1898 with increasing force, till in 1911 Herr von Bethmann declared openly: "Germany's expansion is a fact with which other nations must reckon. Nothing can stop it."²

4. *Origin of the Entente*

Such was the natural cause of the Franco-Italian treaty as to Morocco and Libya in the year 1902. It has not been proved that England was the Power

¹ Cf. the propaganda before the battle of the Marne, in which reference was made to the map of the Hohenstaufen period, etc.

² *Belgian State Papers*, No. 85.

"Preventive acquisition" is defended by the friends of Germany where it is a question of measures taken by the Central Powers. Professor Hünerwadel, in his pamphlet "The Historical Antecedents of the European War" (published by Orell Füssli), tries to defend the annexation of Bosnia by arguing that "the junction of Bosnia with Serbia would make the Austrian position in Istria and Dalmatia almost untenable."

behind the agreement, nor was this necessarily the fact.¹

The famous treaty of the 8th of April between England and France about Morocco and Egypt was not concluded till two years later, and in October of the same year there followed the Franco-Spanish agreement on the Morocco question. On the recommendation of Count Bülow — Chancellor since 1900 — the Emperor replied to these agreements concluded without German assent by his journey to Tangier. This decisive policy won, indeed, for the Chancellor his title of Prince, but it increased the uneasiness of the Mediterranean Powers, which had existed since 1898, and drew them still closer together. Above all, the Morocco question was the logical and direct cause of the *rapprochement* between France and England, and that again led to a certain *rapprochement* between England and Russia (the ancient defensive ally of France). Russia at that time (1904) was still in the background, and only came to the front at the time of the Balkan crisis.²

¹ On the contrary, one of the best known Pan-German publicists, Professor Schiemann, names as the authors M. Camille Barrère and M. Delcassé, "whom we herewith designate as the first organizer of the world war." Of course, that does not prevent King Edward being the scapegoat and France the unhappy lamb of sacrifice — according to the version usually put before the patient German people.

² The revelations of Burzev (Superintendent of the Department of Russian Archives, 1917), which have been published since the first edition of the present work, confirm our assertion. They prove that from 1904 to 1907 the German Emperor made stubborn efforts to persuade the Russian Government to a Continental alliance against England and that the Czar took a favourable view of this proposal. (B.N. 448.)

5. *Defensive Character of the Entente*

Pro-German publicists are fond of writing of the "spearhead" of the new grouping of Powers against Germany. It is absolutely untrue; the object of the Mediterranean Powers — France, Italy, England, and Spain — in their treaties was to preserve the *status quo* in the Mediterranean; they had no aggressive intentions against Germany. Mr. A. Leghait, the Belgian Ambassador in Paris, had to admit that the position of affairs showed a clearly defensive character, although he felt a certain personal uncertainty, quite unfounded, as we shall show, about England's intentions: —

Paris, June, 1907. — The friendly relations and the understandings which have existed for the last two years between France, England, and Spain have recently been strengthened in a way which clearly characterizes the grouping of the Powers and their efforts to secure themselves against other eventualities by peaceful agreements. ("Belgian State Papers," No. 33.)

Mr. Leghait leaves out Russia, as it was only through France that she was concerned in the new grouping, which was very loose and created for the defence of each country's separate interests.

6. *Menace to Russia*

The Entente, as is proved by the treaties, had its origin in common interests in the Mediterranean; these interests were the bond which held it together. They removed two danger points from European politics in 1911 (Morocco and Libya) and yet spared

us a European war. The more, however, the door to the southwest was closed to the German Empire, the more openly did German Imperialists turn to the Southern Orient. (For details, see ch. VI.) While the menace to Gibraltar from the rising power of Germany had brought England and France together, the fear of German predominance in Turkey (the Dardanelles and the Suez Canal) brought Russia and England together to a more limited extent.

Many readers who have considered the matter from one side only will probably maintain that this fear was unfounded. That may appear true if the German side only is considered, but not from the standpoint of threatened Russia. She might regard the mission of Von der Goltz Pasha in 1884 and the German reorganization of the Turkish army as an attempt at encirclement. She was by no means bound to believe in the defensive character of the mission, for in any case Germany had at that time a superiority in strength: the Triple Alliance had just been established, the Franco-Russian Alliance had not yet been concluded, and there was then no trace of friendship with England. Russian uneasiness in the eighties was not merely a consequence of the Congress of Berlin (the forcible annexation of Bosnia); it was rather the result of her distrust of the establishment of the Triple Alliance in the west and the encirclement in the south. This threat to her seemed all the more unjustifiable, as Russia had not shown herself at all a military lion in the Turkish War. The position of affairs created

by Bismarck forced essentially reactionary Russia to a formal *rapprochement* with democratic France — which was naturally bound to put certain reactionary circles in Russia in an ill-humour with Prussia (Kotkoff, *Moskow Wjedomosty*, etc.). The distrust was fostered afresh in 1898; for the foundation of the Defence and Navy Leagues and the refusal of proportional reduction of armaments increased the danger for Russia in the west, while the Kaiser's Eastern journey and his Damascus speech seemed to confirm the attempt at encirclement in the south. Obviously no true neutral would approve of a Franco-Russian preventive war on the ground of this Russian uneasiness; on the other hand, every impartial judge must realize that German policy from 1878 onwards was driving Russia into the arms of England. There was no need of Bülow's irresponsible words (see p. 14) or Bethmann's outspokenness to make Russia apprehensive; there was no need of the Morocco crisis either, when Germany's growing desire for expansion showed itself so unmistakably. The mistrust was intelligible from 1878¹ onwards, fully justified ever since Bismarck's death in 1898,² and bound

¹ Cf. the Congress of Berlin; the formation of the Triple Alliance; the mission of Von der Goltz Pasha; the refusal to renew the treaty of Skjernevize. These events gave rise to the Franco-Russian Alliance.

² Cf. the Kaiser's speech at Damascus; the foundation of the Defence and Navy Leagues; the rise of Tirpitz; rejection of proposals for restriction of armaments and for a court of arbitration, etc. Under the influence of these events, various far-seeing statesmen formed the desire to develop the Franco-Russian Alliance into a Triple Alliance.

to increase in intensity with the annexation of Bosnia in 1908. This upset the compromise effected at the Berlin Congress — a compromise sufficiently painful to Slav feelings already — and also meant an effective step forward in German and Austrian Eastern policy.

No one who follows European politics impartially will be surprised that some circles in Russia were glad after 1904 to see the *rapprochement* between England and France on the basis of the Mediterranean agreements, and that they kept pleading for a direct approach to England, especially after the annexation of Bosnia: —

1. On the one hand, it seemed necessary that the menace to the balance of power in Europe caused by the rapid rise and the full exploitation of German power should be met by the equivalent counterpoise of the English fleet.

2. On the other hand, the development of German Imperialism implied that Germany would sooner or later secure for herself economic and consequently also political predominance in Turkey — which would be equivalent to a menace to Russia in the Dardanelles. (See ch. vi.)

7. *Natural Logic*

The fresh grouping of the European States which now resulted arose of its own accord: on the one side were Latins, Britons, and Slavs, rich in territory because they were situated on the periphery, but lacking the corresponding military spirit; ready to protect their advantage in colonization, by estab-

lishing strategic points (such as Libya and Morocco) so as to maintain the old relations of the Powers as far as possible, and also by defensive agreements; animated by a growing pacifism which tried to check armaments as much as possible, and which aimed at avoiding bloodshed in Christian Europe. . . .

On the other side was Germany (with some foreign and generally discontented dependants) hemmed in, energetic, highly industrialized, rich, thickly populated, yet anxious for the immigration of cheap labour; militarized through and through, from Alpha Moltke to Omega Häselser, able to deliver a blow at any moment because of her abnormal supply of railway material; self-confident, disappointed with her diplomatic successes and her territorial possessions. Whether the King of England intervened or not, the Delcassés, Lansdownes, and Isvolskys were bound to appear on the scene.

CHAPTER V

BREAKDOWN OF THE ENTENTE POLICY

As formerly Bismarck had hung a Damocles sword over Russia's head by the creation of the Triple Alliance and the militarization of Turkey, so now Germany was alarmed at the question of the Triple Entente. But whereas the Iron Chancellor was able to attain his end owing to the rise of German prestige since 1866 and 1870, the Governments of the Entente Powers, as we shall show immediately, were very soon obliged to call a halt owing to the democratic and pacifist mentality of the English people.

1. *Hostile Tendencies*

The Entente policy had enemies in every country, partly owing to the danger just mentioned, namely, the fear of exciting uneasiness in a powerful Germany, partly because of the extreme racial differences in the various Entente States.

There were Russians who could not conceive why their conservative country should run any risks for democratic countries like France and England. Surely it would be more sensible to let Germany fill her hands in Morocco and so divert her from the Dardanelles! The champions of this theory disregarded the fact that the appetite of a healthy stomach cannot be determined in advance;

they forgot, too, that a settlement of the Morocco crisis which satisfied Germany would have filled the maw of that one Empire alone and only for a time (by altering the maritime *status quo*), but would not have satisfied the Austrian Empire, too. The Balkan danger would not be got rid of by satisfying German claims in Morocco. Later, indeed, when the Balkan danger became acute in 1913, even Russia begged most eagerly for England's help (see ch. VI).

Then there were Frenchmen who, with their democratic and pacifist ideas, could not realize why a new sea power should not be allowed to establish itself near Gibraltar; why a neighbour should not be given a finger provided the hand was withheld. And others again would willingly have adopted a benevolent attitude to the Eastern policy of the German Imperialists, so long as Germany would guarantee the maintenance of the *status quo* in the west (Caillaux and an alliance with Germany). The Entente idea had its enemies in France. Mr. Leghait, the Belgian Ambassador in Paris, testifies on the 24th October, 1905, that "a return to the universally condemned policy of Delcassé is impossible." ("Belgian State Papers," No. 11.) Later, on the 4th February, 1907 ("Belgian State Papers," No. 21), the Ambassador reports: "We may conclude from a number of indications that French public opinion doubts the advantage of the Entente Cordiale, and is beginning to wish to free France from British interference." The new position aroused the wrath of the German mailed

fist, while England only offered in compensation her mighty fleet, which could not protect Paris from destruction! French diplomacy, indeed, had achieved an advantageous settlement of the Morocco crisis with England's help, but still the idea of a new Triple Alliance remained unpopular in many circles.

Then there were the neutral States. First of all I will take Switzerland. When I was at school in Zürich, the balance of power in Europe was taught us as the only salvation for small countries. It is only reasonable to think that an over-powerful great State can swallow one mouthful after another, and will have consideration for a small State only if it is afraid of the veto of the other great Powers. Gradually this theory was discredited: German nationalism, which had been rising so high since 1898, coloured our way of thinking, too. It produced a certain feeling of brotherhood with Germany and obscured our judgment of the character and intentions of the Entente Powers. Antipathy to their policy of alliance was strengthened by a general dislike for England, which began with the Boer War.¹

Next, let me cite Belgium. Here the case was different. I must repeat that Belgium lies on the direct road from the heart of France to the heart of

¹ In this we failed to consider that the idea of intervention in favour of the Boers, which France and Russia urged, came to nothing owing to the opposition of the German Government; we learnt also too late that the German Emperor had sent England a plan of campaign against the Boers.

Germany. The machiavellian theories of German war literature, occasional individual speeches, as well as the network of strategic railways which Germany thrust forward towards Belgium, meant uneasiness for that country as soon as relations between Germany and France became strained. Hence it is obvious that Belgian patriots were bound to favour a policy which aimed at a Franco-German Alliance — i.e., the policy of Caillaux. Even the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1894 could not expect a friendly reception in Belgium, because it added chances of disagreement between Russia and Germany to those between France and Germany. Every step which might serve to strengthen this alliance — the proposed accession of England, the three-year military service in France, etc. — increased Belgian uneasiness. The Belgians knew the growing strength of Germany in wealth and population; they knew, too, the impulse of their German neighbours to expansion, of which the Chancellor had said that “nothing could stop it.” If the Entente policy ended in an alliance, *all* the consequent local conflicts would become European conflicts, and so would *all* have involved the Belgian buffer State in danger. I repeat: this was the reason why Germany could publish a number of Belgian diplomatists’ letters proving that the Belgians, in contrast to the German assertion about Belgium’s violation of her neutrality, had been decided opponents of the policy of alliance favoured by certain diplomats of the Entente. That is how I interpret, among other statements in the “Belgian

State Papers," the words of the Belgian Ambassador in Paris, Baron Guillaume ("Belgian State Papers," No. 110): —

If I were a Frenchman, I quite think that my sympathies would be with the grouping of the Powers advocated by Briand, which would represent a step forward from the present conditions; but I am a Belgian and therefore compelled to look at the play of events from a different point of view. It seems certain to me that it would be more to our interest if the policy of M. Caillaux and the Radicals and Radical Socialists were successful.

The attitude adopted by other neutral States towards the Entente policy is unknown to me; but I may assume with certainty that "King Edward" must have had opponents everywhere.

2. *Retreat*

Even Englishmen took the field, not insignificant in numbers or importance — Lord Courtney of Penrith, Lord Newton, Lord Weardale, Lord Rosebery, and many other men of distinction. Moreover, there was a great body of opponents among the people. We learn from the pen of the Belgian Ambassador in London, Count Lalaing, "it is interesting to note how unpopular Sir Edward Grey has become with the extreme left wing of his party." (February, 1912; "Belgian State Papers," No. 89.) The Ambassador refers in the same letter to the opposition of the *Daily News*: —

To-day, the paper takes a speech of Lord Rosebery in Glasgow as a text for further attacks on Sir Edward Grey. In his speech Lord Rosebery criticizes British foreign policy with its complicated system of Ententes, involving heavy

responsibilities. The paper deplors the result of the Foreign Minister's policy, which opposes the Triple Entente to the Triple Alliance, hinders German development, and in the previous summer brought the country to the very brink of war in the Morocco crisis.¹

On the other hand, the British pacifists tried to reassure the people as to the German desire for expansion, which, last, owing to Germany's late awakening, would necessarily involve a menace to certain vital points. On the German side, too, there were attempts to lull the English to sleep. As an instance I may again refer to the speech which Herr von Mühlberg made to English journalists as a representative of the Chancellor ("The Belgian State Papers," No. 31):—

Sceptics might perhaps reply that the German Army and Navy were dangerous instruments which might be employed one day to find room for the ever-increasing population. But Germany has no need of new territory. Although her population increases annually by from 800,000 to 900,000 souls, emigration has become insignificant; there is a general scarcity of workers in agriculture and industry.

The English people were glad to hear such speeches; they found widespread echo, although they were in contradiction with other no less valuable disclosures. They were well calculated to strengthen the current of public feeling in England against a policy of the strong hand, especially as the people became convinced by a crisis, which was

¹ I may here repeat my opinion that the foundation of defensive alliances on a great scale is only possible when the founder can base his action on superior fighting power, as was the case with Bismarck and Moltke.

successfully surmounted, that under certain circumstances a strict preventive policy may actually increase the danger of war. For though the Morocco crisis had finally established the European *status quo ante* at Gibraltar, Europe had come very close to war. The English people did not want to take upon itself the responsibility for a so-called "forced war" on the part of Germany; it was utterly tired of the false suspicions to which England is so often exposed on the Continent. And so, as Herr von Bethmann confesses, "popular opinion forced the English Government towards a *rapprochement* with Germany." Thus the idea of far-seeing statesmen of a new Triple Alliance became an ideal dream, and even the shadow of it, the Triple Entente, threatened to vanish. The vitality of the Triple Entente grew visibly less, and fell to zero in June, 1914. England protected her second cause for anxiety, the Suez Canal, not by Franco-Russian backing, but by direct arrangement with Germany in respect of Western Asia and Africa.

Russian calls for help after the milliard war tax, after the *rapprochement* between certain Bulgarian circles and Austria during the Balkan War, and after the mission of Liman von Sanders, remained unanswered by England, except in so far as the Anglo-German arrangement may be regarded as a negative answer.

In spite of the one-sided selection made by the German Foreign Office, an attentive reader can find in the "Belgian State Papers" sufficient evidence to make him realize that the bogey of an encircling

policy was steadily losing ground in Germany from 1911 onwards. The following examples may be noted:—

The very pro-German Belgian representative in Berlin, Baron Greindl, writes as follows in March, 1911, in reference to a speech of Sir Edward Grey which can be described as the first move towards an Anglo-German *rapprochement*:—

The disappointment of the *Temps* proves that public opinion in Paris reads considerably more into the speech than in Berlin. Judging from the expressions in the French paper, one might suppose that French public opinion now regards the Triple Entente as nothing but an empty formula without meaning. ("Belgian State Papers," No. 65.)

Count Lalaing, the Belgian Ambassador in London, writes in January, 1912 ("Belgian State Papers," No. 87):—

These events will be exploited by those English publicists who doubt the value of the Entente Cordiale. Their number is now greater than it was. Articles appeared to this effect in the last numbers of the *Fortnightly* and of the *Contemporary Review*. They will provide new material for the small group of writers who are trying to prove that it would be advantageous for England to maintain more friendly relations with Berlin without breaking with France.

A month later the same writer says ("Belgian State Papers," No. 88):—

It is clear that England's purpose is a peaceful one. It is to diminish at any price the tension which exists between the two countries [England and Germany]. This is the Cabinet's present policy, and the War Minister is the most friendly to Germany of them all.

In the next letter the Ambassador notes how unpopular Sir Edward Grey had become in his own party, and refers to press articles to that effect.

3. *Collapse*

Then the complete disruption of the Entente, which had been so triumphant at the time of the Morocco crisis, became more apparent.

Baron Beyens, Belgian Ambassador in Berlin (formerly in Bukarest), wrote on the 26th May, 1913 ("Belgian State Papers," No. 106): —

Undoubtedly one can say without fear of error that the visit of the English King and Queen to Berlin appears in the eyes of Europe as confirmation and ratification of the *rapprochement* which was quite certainly achieved between Germany and England during the Balkan War, when the two States worked together to preserve peace.¹

The same Ambassador wrote on the 24th April, 1914 ("Belgian State Papers," No. 113): —

Isvolsky will be able to convince himself in England that public opinion has no inclination to see England give up her freedom of action through a formal treaty which would link her fate to that of France and Russia. It is strange to have to state that it is the English Radical party which is most strongly opposed to alliance with France. Its intransigent tendencies and its programme of social reform ought on the contrary to bring it nearer to the French Radicals, who are pursuing the same political course on the other side of the Channel. Its sympathies, however, lie principally with the Germans in spite of their conservative, even reactionary, Government.

¹ This coöperation kept the peace at the time, but at the expense of the Slavs, and especially of Serbia. (Cf. ch. vi.)

And finally we find a significant remark by Baron Guillaume, the Ambassador in Paris, of the 8th May, 1914 ("Belgian State Papers," No. 115):—

King George's toast was clearly less hearty than that of M. Poincaré. What is the nature of the engagements which bind the two nations? Have they concluded a military convention? I do not know, but I do not forget that thoughtful and serious minds are doubtful whether France would find assistance in England at the outbreak of a European conflagration. There are even people who do not believe in serious support by England at sea.

Could Baron Guillaume have sent his Government better preparation for the Anglo-German Treaty which was concluded a month later in June, 1914? Did not the events at the outbreak of war show that the military convention had never in fact existed, since M. Poincaré was seriously anxious about English support after Germany had declared war? Thus, things were going very badly with the Triple Entente in the summer of 1914, as the German collection of "Belgian State Papers" proves; the conclusion of this chapter will show whose was the master hand which forged the new alliance in spite of these difficulties, and how this was accomplished.

4. *A Silent Witness*

First of all I will draw the reader's attention to the fact that besides the above positive documentary evidence of the Anglo-German *rapprochement*, the "Belgian State Papers" also contain a silent witness. In order to create the impression of completeness the letters were published in full; yet

in places there are great gaps in the sequence. Naturally the letters of the Ambassador in London would give us the best insight into the actual state of the Entente policy, since its centre of gravity lay in the relation of England to the Dual Alliance. But in proportion as the collapse of the Entente policy becomes more obvious from the correspondence from Paris and Berlin, the London letters become fewer in the collection.

In 1912 there are ten letters, five from London. In 1913 there are thirteen letters, three from London. In 1914 there are ten letters, one from London. In fact, the "State Papers" leave out of account in increasing degree the position taken by England towards the encircling policy, and confine themselves after the Balkan crisis almost exclusively to France. In France, as in Russia, the milliard war tax and the mission of Liman von Sanders called forth self-sacrificing counter-measures and called forth, therefore, an increased tendency to an alliance with England. Whilst, therefore, the idea of a new Triple Alliance seems to have had more supporters in England than in the Dual Alliance before the solution of the Morocco crisis and during Edward the Seventh's reign, the proportion was definitely the other way during the last years before the war. England was putting on the brake with all her strength.

5. *Further Proofs*

The "Belgian State Papers" are abundantly sufficient to show impartial neutrals that the politi-

cal situation before the outbreak of war was in no way menacing to the German Empire, and that therefore the present war is not a preventive war on Germany's part.

But any one who is accustomed to read documents carefully will find in the German propaganda further evidence that the ostensible apprehensions of the German Government as to the menace of the Entente policy could not and did not exist. The following is from the Chancellor's paper, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (B.N., 6th August, 1915):—

When negotiations were being conducted in the spring of 1914 between Germany and England about an African colonial agreement, the Ambassador Cambon inquired of Jagow whether French interests would be prejudiced by it. Jagow replied that if there was any question of French interests, Germany would obtain the assent of France. In consequence of repeated suggestions by Cambon for a special Franco-German agreement with a view to improving the general relations between the two countries, Jagow proceeded to point out . . .

This passage in the German propaganda shows us that the French Ambassador in the spring of 1914 thought it possible that French interests might be prejudiced in consequence of Anglo-German negotiations. From that the German Government must have known that the Anglo-French friendship was very shaky and in no way threatening, a fact which had certainly been noted by most diplomats, and especially by the German representatives in London, Paris, and Petrograd.

The so-called "Revelations of Count Pourtalès,"

the German Ambassador in Petrograd, show that the German ambassadorial reports sometimes disagreed with German propaganda and also with the words of the Chancellor.

I will deal with these extraordinary reports in detail in a later work. Their publication in the middle of the war was obviously designed to smooth the way for a separate peace with Russia. Here I would only state shortly that these reports of the German Ambassador represent the political situation at the time of the annexation of Bosnia in 1909 as if Russia had assented cheerfully to the Austrian annexation of Bosnia, whilst England had "even then" pressed for war. M. Isvolsky, who is known in German propaganda as the "international incendiary," suddenly appears as an innocent lamb. And Russian Court circles show themselves to be indisputably pro-German and anti-English. For example: —

The words of the English Ambassador about Serbian claims were described as "provocative" by the Russians and their diplomats. After a dinner at the German Embassy Nicholson expressed himself in such terms that a member of the Czar's *entourage* remarked that Nicholson seemed almost to regret a peaceful solution of the crisis, etc.

In the same way the reports assert that Russia made up her mind to a peaceful solution of the all-important question of the year 1909 — the annexation of Bosnia — "without coming to an understanding beforehand with France and England." These assertions would be all very fine, if they were not unfortunately in contradiction with the earlier

words of Herr von Bethmann. For the Chancellor had expressed himself as follows, with regard to the same period, in his speech of the 2d December, 1914: "When I was summoned to this position five years ago, the Triple Entente stood firmly cemented over against the Triple Alliance."

Which of these two contradictory pieces of German evidence is a neutral to believe? Any conscientious student of the history of those years knows that neither of them is absolutely accurate. The Entente was not firmly cemented in 1909, and Russia did not cheerfully consent to the annexation of Bosnia. The truth is that the danger from the Entente policy was set up as a bogey in the eyes of the German people and neutrals when it was a case of excusing Germany's declaration of war; it disappeared as soon as victory, and with it predominance in Europe, seemed attainable by a separate peace with one of the enemy Powers.

6. *German Mistakes*

In spite of all, the new Triple Alliance stands firmly cemented to-day beyond the wildest dreams of its most zealous supporters. How did this miracle occur?

We know that on the 15th June, 1914, England concluded a treaty with Germany for the protection of her interests in Western Asia and Africa (especially the Suez Canal). By this act England withdrew from her position as an interested party in events in the Balkans, assuming that she could build securely on this treaty with Germany. Six weeks later

Germany and Austria opened the world war. Germany broke a treaty of the greatest importance to England by violating the neutrality of the Anglo-German buffer State of Belgium. Naturally, after this breach of a treaty, England could not reckon any longer on Germany keeping the agreement of the 15th June, 1914, and had to return while there was yet time to the old and well-tried principle of the European balance of power. This was the only way to secure Germany's respect for this "scrap of paper" and to guarantee England that Germany would not destroy the *status quo* in Southern Turkey when occasion arose.

And again, when the German Government tried to make sure of England's neutrality before the outbreak of war, Herr von Bethmann asked the English Ambassador to call on him and guaranteed the integrity of France provided England remained neutral. When the Ambassador asked whether this integrity applied also to the French colonies, the Chancellor replied that he could not give such an assurance. Thus Herr von Bethmann opened up again the old Morocco conflict; he touched England's most sensitive spot and forced her to active participation in the war. Certainly England might perhaps have intervened even without these occurrences — for the preservation of the balance of power is a matter of life and death for her; still Germany's procedure spared the Government in London an unpleasant and very doubtful struggle with the all-powerful English Parliament. It remains too very questionable whether this purely theoretical

political argument (England's interest in the balance of power) would have been sufficiently powerful to win Parliament over to active intervention in time.

So the circle was closed round Germany. Germany, who now is labouring to justify her world war by the bogey of an "encirclement policy," herself forged the circle from beginning to end; Herr von Bülow did the preliminary work in 1898, 1899, 1905, and 1908, and Herr von Bethmann completed the circle in 1914. Any serious and impartial student of recent history must inevitably come to this conclusion.

7. *Final Result*

The world war, which Germany began in 1914 and which is designated in official German propaganda as a defensive war, is, in spite of the assertions of German Intellectuals, not a preventive war, because at the moment of its outbreak there were no forces threatening Germany. Although Germany's neighbours would have had precisely the same right to extend the old Dual Alliance which Bismarck had to create the Triple Alliance, yet this perfectly justifiable extension did not in fact exist in any binding form which might menace Germany: nor would it have assumed a menacing form, owing to England's opposition.

This fact is not affected by the contention that, in consequence of the common Anglo-French interest in the maintenance of the *status quo* at sea, a *rapprochement* between France and England had naturally taken place at the time of the Morocco crisis, and that this *rapprochement* was established

for the future in an absolutely unbinding form, which was far from reaching the force of the Bismarckian alliances. Equally irrelevant is the fact that the far-seeing King Edward was himself probably in favour of a policy of alliance. It is demonstrable that Germany began the world war at a time when she thought she could reckon with great certainty on England's neutrality. It was only Germany's greed for the French colonies, and her hopes of drawing military advantage from the violation of Belgian neutrality, that drove England to action.

CHAPTER VI

POLICY IN THE BALKANS

I. "*Berlin to Bagdad*"

AFTER the defeat of the Russians in the Carpathians in 1915 and the consequent open adhesion of Bulgaria to the Central Powers, the "Berlin to Bagdad Coalition" became the intellectual stock in trade of all German publicists. Yet the German-Austrian idea of an economic and political union with Turkey across the Balkans was far older than the world war. The well-known pro-German historian Dr. Bächtold, Professor at the University of Bâle, made the following admission in a defence of Germany which appeared at the beginning of the war: —

The rise of Germany to the position of a World Power in the nineties produced the most disturbing impression in England, apart from her naval policy, owing to her attitude to Mohammedan countries in general and to Turkey in particular. This attitude was announced to the world by the Emperor's journey to the East. Turkey, and especially Asiatic Turkey, was eyed by Germany not as an object of political occupation, but as the great sphere of future activity for economic and civilizing colonization. It is a question of consolidating and regenerating the Turkish State and territory from a military, administrative, economic, and financial point of view, and essentially with German means. The details of these political aims and the method of carrying them out vary with different German politicians. (B.N.)

Bächtold then specifies special large features, e.g., the railway problem (the Bagdad and the Anatolian railways) and the colonization of Mesopotamia, and continues: —

These aims are closely connected geographically and politically. The establishment of a zone stretching from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean has formed more and more clearly an essential object of political and economic activity for Germany and Austria. The aim is the union of the Central European Empires with Turkey *across friendly Balkan States*, to form a vast sphere in which the two halves would supplement each other economically, *and would perhaps be economically united, have through lines of communication (from Berlin to Bagdad), and constitute a political confederation from the Elbe to the Euphrates.*

Those are the words of the champion of Germany's policy about her aims before the war — published at a time when the pro-Russian party of Genadiev in Bulgaria was still making the accomplishment of German ideas doubtful, when Bulgaria was still neutral. And he had to use such language, for his statements were confirmed even before the war by articles in the German press and in books. For example, Liman wrote in his sensational book "The Crown Prince" in the winter of 1913-1914, referring to the changes arising from the Balkan wars: "Southeastern Europe, too [the Balkans], to which our eyes turn to-day in perpetual hope, is gaining a new form," etc.

Confirmation of the German and Austrian tendency towards the Near East — before the outbreak of war — is important, although the latest

propaganda of the Central Powers is silent on the subject; for this tendency determined the underlying note of all international Balkan politics from 1898 onwards.

2. *South Russia — the Mediterranean*

The closing of the Dardanelles by Turkey awoke to new life in Russia the old longing for the possession of the Straits. The Russians realized, by the disadvantages they now suffered, how right those old politicians were who had laid stress on the strategic value of the Dardanelles in war-time. Their warnings had always come to nothing in face of the firm and decided veto of almost all Europe and so had finally been neglected as incitements to aggression. Confirmation of this is that in the whole of the vast German propaganda we do not find one single proof brought forward that the "ardent longing" of Russia for the possession of the Dardanelles had found especial expression in the last decades — up till the German mission of Liman von Sanders.

The statement of the Pan-Germans and their partisans that "Russia had willed the war for the sake of Constantinople" is simply ridiculous, since the Czar was a zealous supporter of the Hague Arbitration Tribunal. Similarly Russia did her utmost in the present war to insure the neutrality of Turkey, and that she would hardly have done, if her object had been the occupation of Constantinople. The reference, too, to imperialistic expressions of the Russian Minister, Mili-

koff, is beside the point, as the Minister expressly characterizes the fulfilment of Peter the Great's legacy as the consequence of the German desire for expansion — and that, so far as we know, only after the outbreak of war.

Certainly, the German Eastern policy which began in the nineties was not calculated to weaken the Russian "longing" for Byzantium. The political and economic predominance of Germany in Turkey was bound eventually to lead to Turkish political dependency. Russia was therefore compelled so to direct her policy that she should have her hand near Constantinople at the critical moment. The Agreement of Müritz in 1903 stands out as a change in Russian policy by which Russia "stepped athwart the path." Outwardly, no doubt, it only regulated necessary reforms in Macedonia. But in its secret essence it was a recognition by Russia of the necessity, in the event of the collapse of Turkey, of coming to an understanding with Austria as to the "sick man's" inheritance. Every ground of quarrel with Austria was to be removed beforehand for all eventualities. Why should Russia in particular, which in contradistinction to Germany had natural interests in the Dardanelles, come empty-handed out of these preventive agreements?

For the cradle of Russian religion, St. Sophia, is in Constantinople; it is as precious to the Russians as St. Peter's to Catholics. Further, the main export route from South Russia goes through Constantinople. If we consider that a vast network

of railways, all the harbours of the Black Sea, and the Russian mercantile marine can be more or less locked up at any time with the key of the Straits, and that therefore many hundreds of million roubles and the material prosperity of millions of people are at the mercy of foreigners, the old longings of the Russians appear intelligible. A powerful possessor of the Straits is in a position to cut one of the most important nerves in the Russian body.¹ Hence, even the younger generation of Russian politicians, who up to the beginning of the war used to regard the occupation of Constantinople as beyond their reach, still had to keep a keen watch on any shifting of power at the Dardanelles. They had to see to it that the Straits should be, if not in their own hands, at least in the hands of as weak a foreign Power as possible. The greatest danger for them lay in the German and Austrian Eastern policy, which would make the trade of South Russia dependent on the powerful Berlin-Bagdad Coalition. And so the Russians were deeply interested in events in the Balkans and had to try to the very best of their ability to prevent any alteration in the *status quo* in favour of the Central Powers, such as the crushing of Serbia in 1914.

3. *England*

England, too, saw with concern the growth of German influence in Turkey. She felt herself threat-

¹ When, for example, the Dardanelles were closed in the Italian-Turkish War in 1911, a great part of the Russian grain harvest was spoiled owing to the high freights.

ened in her interests on the Persian Gulf and the Suez Canal by the policy of a Central European coalition. Whilst, however, the intersection of German and Russian interests at one and the same point (Constantinople) rendered the political situation between these two countries critical, German aspirations at first turned more to the Northern, and English aspirations to the Southern Turkish territories. And so Germany and England arrived at an understanding about their respective spheres of influence in Africa and Asia Minor six weeks before the outbreak of war.

4. *The Balkan League*

In 1912 the Balkan States united into a league and thrust the frontiers of Turkey in Europe back towards Constantinople. The propaganda of the Central Powers hinted at the Entente policy being behind this league. The *Agence Ottomane* said: —

England paved the way for the union of the Balkan States through the brothers Buxton and others, and after the end of the war used every effort to secure the cession of all the territory of Turkey in Europe to the Balkan States

Professor Bächtold wrote: —

There is no doubt that the Entente, and especially Russia, was behind the Balkan League.

It is not impossible that previously, in the time of Edward VII, the English Government had thought of making the Suez Canal secure by strengthening the Balkans. Still, the reported agitation of the brothers Buxton is, so far as we

know, not proved. On the contrary, in view of the subsequent attitude of the English Government, it appears doubtful whether England instigated the foundation of the league.

Russia, however, which had an even more vital interest than England in establishing a bulwark against the German and Austrian Eastern policy, might well have supported the league. For a league of the Balkan States would have been bound to nip any idea of a Berlin-Bagdad coalition in the bud. And even though Russia had induced Serbia to recognize the annexation of Bosnia in 1909, it must have felt the necessity of bolting the door against further invasion of Slav territory by Germany. Austria certainly declared herself "saturated" after the annexation of Bosnia; but Pan-German propaganda constantly maintained that such statements are "confined to the moment" (e.g., Liman).¹

Russian instigation was, however, unnecessary. For Germany's desire for expansion, which showed itself with growing self-confidence during and after the Morocco crisis; the close union of Germany and Austria, which forced through the annexation of Bosnia; and finally the sword-rattling of the German war party, constituted an open menace to the Balkan States.²

¹ In contrast to Bismarck's statements about saturation, Bethmann-Hollweg expressed himself quite definitely in 1911: "Germany's expansion is a fact with which other nations must reckon. Nothing can stop it."

² As to the "sword-rattling," cf. Professor Hans Delbrück: "If we had started a preventive war, whether in 1908, or 1911, or at

The idea of economic expansion as well as preventive strategic insurance pointed to the "only sally port still open," the road to Bagdad. Is it surprising that the small Balkan States tried to protect themselves by a league?

5. *Unfounded Apprehensions*

There were good reasons for establishing the league, and yet it collapsed — not without Austrian intervention, as the pro-German Dr. Bächtold admits. Bächtold tries to justify Austria's proceedings by stating that "after the severance of the Balkan States from Turkey had been successfully achieved, these States were logically bound to turn against Austria." Austria's own propaganda goes even further: "Russia tried to

any date, for our Hotspurs have demanded it for who knows how long . . ." (*Voss. Zeitung*, August, 1914; also *Das Grössere Deutschland*, 19th September, 1914.) Striking proof of the existence of a German war party is afforded among many other books by the work of the Swiss jurist Professor Nippold, *Der deutsche Chauvinismus*, published at Leipsic in 1913. Compare also the Emperor's views, about which the Pan-Germanistic Baron Greindl wrote as early as 1905: "I learn from a good source that His Majesty recently expressed views in a private conversation in the strongest contrast to the peaceful ideas which have hitherto been ascribed to him." (*Belgian State Papers*, No. 9.)

That war did not come in 1905 after the Emperor's journey to Tangier is due to four causes: (1) the German people did not yet show sufficiently pronounced imperialist views; (2) the slow return of the Russian armies after the Japanese War and the weakening of Russia by the revolution made it impossible for the German war party to popularize a war by the fiction of foreign attack; (3) Germany had achieved a complete diplomatic success at the ensuing Algeciras Conference without military action; (4) the Emperor William was endeavouring at that time to persuade the Russian Government into a Continental alliance against England.

incite all the Balkan States against us; she had hoped to be able to embroil all the Southeastern States, including Roumania, with Austria"; and so on.

No proofs of these assertions are produced anywhere. The German White Book, too, sets out the following argument, without any attempt to prove Russia's aggressive intentions:—

The Russian idea was that Serbia should cede to Bulgaria those parts of Macedonia which it had received during the last Balkan war, in exchange for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which were to be taken from Austria. To oblige Bulgaria to fall in with this plan, it was to be isolated; Roumania was to be attached to Russia with the aid of French propaganda; Serbia was to be promised Bosnia and Herzegovina, etc.

Possibly this idea was to be found among Russian statesmen in 1913 as a defensive policy. There was no lack of menacing signs for Russia, as we shall see in the next section. On the other hand, the Serbian and Roumanian territories in Austria were, from the Russian point of view, a good pledge for the restoration of the dead Balkan League, in the event of the Central Powers trying to put their Eastern policy through by force. We look in vain in pro-German propaganda for proof that Russia had any intention of abusing this "good pledge" by aggressive action. On the contrary, an official Austrian memorandum of the 29th July, 1914, expresses astonishment at the Russian protest against the brutal Austrian ultimatum to Serbia and refers to the good relations with Russia up till then. (B.N. 61.) That the

memorandum proceeds to accuse Russia of subversive propaganda in Serbia, merely on the ground of this protest, is an indirect but indisputable admission that there was no real evidence.

The German argument that "by the *rapprochement* between the Balkan States and the Entente King Edward's circle would be closed up and the aggressive spirit of the Entente Powers increased owing to Germany's isolation" is wrong, inasmuch as the isolating force lay not in the Balkans, but in the English fleet. Now the Balkan League did not come into visible action till October, 1912, when the collapse of the Entente policy in England might long have been noted (cf. p. 55; Grey's speech of March, 1911). Hence, at the time when the Balkan League was formed, the Dual Alliance was so doubtful about the English fleet — the main instrument of isolation — that it was quite justified in seeking new shoulders to help bear the ever-increasing burden of armaments.

6. *The Austro-German "Coalition" Policy comes to a Head*

The year 1913 brought undreamed-of successes to the German and Austrian Eastern policy. Austria succeeded temporarily in erecting two friendly strongholds behind Serbia's back — Bulgaria and Albania. Further, German-Turkish relations became more friendly and more firmly established than ever before, owing to the mission of Liman von Sanders. Finally the German milliard war tax put the Central Powers in a position to achieve

their ardently desired aims by force at the first suitable opportunity.

Albania: At the instigation of the Central Powers an autonomous Albania with a German ruling house was established. To this end Serbia and Greece had to surrender newly conquered territory. Austrian expectations, indeed, were not entirely fulfilled in Albania, as the Prince soon had to abdicate.

Bulgaria: The Central Powers were more fortunate in Bulgaria. It is well known that Russia championed the national unity of this State when she founded it in 1878. But Austria at that time regarded the creation of a Greater Bulgaria as dangerous, and the territory of the new State was therefore considerably reduced.

It is most striking that in 1913 it was Austria who supported Bulgarian aspirations for national unity, while Russia, who was appointed arbitrator, declared herself at the Peace Congress of Bukarest in favour of a balance of power in the Balkans. She found the application of the principle of nationality in the case of Bulgaria unjust, so long as the same principle could not be applied to Roumania and Serbia. As there are seven million Serbs under Austrian sway, the arbitrator held it to be just to apportion one million Bulgarians to Serbia. Similarly Russia was of the opinion that, in the case of coalitions, the booty need not correspond precisely to the military successes of the individual members; and that Bulgaria, by putting forward exaggerated claims (presumably at Austrian in-

stigation), was herself partly responsible for the diminution of the booty, e.g., for the fact that Turkey had regained Adrianople.¹ So disagreements arose between Bulgaria and Russia, which Austria knew how to put to clever use in order to create a friend for herself in the centre of the Balkans, as an adjunct to Turkey. Hence the visits of the Austrian successor to the throne to Bulgarian Headquarters and of King Ferdinand to Vienna in 1913.

Turkey: While Von der Goltz's mission had served only instructional purposes, the mission of Liman von Sanders in the autumn of 1913 was intended to secure the highest Turkish military posts for German officers. The extraordinary character of this step, which in itself suggests a state of war, was bound to disturb Russia profoundly. Consequently there appeared in Petrograd an increased tendency towards a *rapprochement* with England, and Russia took precautionary measures, as if she had a presentiment of the coming war. In the winter of 1913-14 she strengthened the Polish fortresses, moved some of her military depots for the "active" army towards the west, etc.

She was the more justified in these steps, as the German milliard war tax, voted in the summer of 1913, put the Central Powers into a position of extraordinary readiness for war, whereas Russia was at a disadvantage owing to her very slow mobiliza-

¹ It ought also to be mentioned that Serbia, contrary to the original agreement, had to supply Bulgaria during the war with reinforcements 50,000 strong to win Adrianople.

tion. Every peace-lover would describe this enormous loan as over-hasty, unnecessary, and dangerous, although it appeared to be motivated by the birth of the Balkan League.¹

7. *Russia's Cry of Alarm*

The alteration of the political situation in the Balkans in 1913, as we have said, most naturally gave rise in Russia to anxiety, which found clear expression in the press. The semi-official *Novoe Vremya* wrote: —

Is it desirable for Russia that our traditional friend Germany, who stands on our western frontier armed to the teeth, should extend that frontier to the Black Sea by transforming her diplomatic influence on the Bosphorus into real power over the Straits? What does the "Sänger-Brücke" mean? How does France regard this new change in Constantinople? And why does England keep silence now that the fate of the whole Turkish Empire is at stake, while in 1878 she watched over the Turkish capital so jealously?

¹ It was over-hasty, because at the moment when it was voted the Balkan League broke up; almost simultaneously Russia showed her readiness to meet the Powers over the Albanian question and the rift appeared between her and her protégée Bulgaria.

It was unnecessary, since the aggressive character of the Balkan League was extremely improbable and in no way proved. Germany was far in advance of the opposing group in point of armament, for, though only one third of the loan had been paid shortly before war began, German equipment proved itself perfectly complete and far superior to that of her opponents. The loan had no object, unless it was to help on a speedy decision, because the opposing group could, in their turn, make a corresponding increase in their equipment.

It was dangerous, because it was bound to be provocative, owing to its unprecedented size, and because it strengthened nationalist feeling all over Europe and inflamed the hatred of the opposing Powers.

Germany proves indirectly by her publication of the "Belgian State Papers" that this Russian cry of alarm was not unfounded. It is extraordinarily suspicious that the German Foreign Office should publish parts of the Belgian correspondence from Berlin, London, and Paris to justify the world war, and should entirely omit the letters from Vienna and Petrograd which could have given us an insight into events in the Balkans. This omission is the more striking, since a clear understanding of the Balkan political situation is of the utmost importance, if we wish to determine the guilt for the war, and since, on the other hand, the letters from Petrograd would have the same value as those from Paris in helping us to form a judgment about the Entente policy. Was the neutral Belgian judgment about events in the Balkans inconvenient for Germany?

CHAPTER VII

HOW AUSTRIA ANNEXED BOSNIA

1. *Turkish Oppression*

SERBIAN struggles for national unity go very far back. Long before Bosnia and Herzegovina were handed over to Austrian administration in 1878, there existed in Buda-Pesth a Serbian national society of which Brockhaus gives the following details: —

Omladina (the Serbian for “youth” or “the rising generation”) is a Serbian society founded by Serbian students in Buda-Pesth, in order to inaugurate a cultural, literary, and political movement for the unity of the Serbian people. The society, which holds congresses annually at various places, was reorganized in 1866 at the Assembly in Neusatz; it included members in the principality of Serbia and was supported by Prince Michael himself. He soon resigned his membership, however, as the society was pursuing impracticable ideals without regard to the actual circumstances and needs of the time and eventually supported the opposition in Serbia. The Omladina stood at the head of Serbian opposition to Dualism in Hungary and was consequently dissolved by the Hungarian Government in 1871.

The weak side of the Omladina was its pursuit of “impracticable ideals without regard to the actual circumstances and needs of the time.” If we consider these ideals from the national standpoint, however, they were no less essentially justifiable than Bismarck’s efforts for the union of the German people or the present Bulgarian aims. If Bismarck

was justified in reconquering certain German districts which had been taken by Louis XIV, and incidentally in seizing 373 purely French parishes, the old Serbian effort to recover Serbian national territory cannot be condemned. But the Serbian Prince had to repudiate the Omladina, for the forces at his disposal were too small to accomplish the wishes of his Hotspurs. Nevertheless, Turkey, by her barbarous measures, took care that the flame of national feeling among the Serbs should be perpetually fanned; and in 1875-76 Turkish misgovernment provoked them to attempt the liberation of districts which had originally formed part of genuine Serbian territory. A revolt against Turkish domination broke out in these districts, of which we find the following account in Becker's "Weltgeschichte"¹ (vol. 12, p. 195):—

The inhabitants of Herzegovina and of some districts of Bosnia took up arms on the 6th July, 1875, in desperation at the extortions, robbery, and massacre of Christians which went unpunished by the Government. They received secret support from their neighbouring kindred in Serbia and Montenegro. The Turks failed to crush the revolt in these mountainous districts.

In the next year Bulgaria, which at that time belonged to Turkey, also revolted. Becker (vol. 12, p. 195) describes the course of events as follows:—

Bulgaria, which revolted on the 1st May, 1876, was laid waste by the cannibal Bashibazouks and Circassians to the

¹ This is a popular work, written from a point of view very friendly to Prussia, which I read with avidity in my school-days. (*Note by the Author.*)

accompaniment of the most horrible atrocities to men, women, and children. About fifteen thousand people, mostly women and children, were murdered. The massacres at Batak on the 12th May, at Klissura and other places are some of the most dreadful in history. Hundreds of Bulgarian girls were exposed for sale in the streets of Philippopolis and other towns, young women were carried off to the Turkish harems, wealthy merchants, priests, and teachers were arrested in great numbers and immediately murdered or thrown into prison. And the Government in Constantinople rewarded the leaders of these robbers and murderers with decorations and high official positions.

Two months later Serbia and Montenegro declared war on Turkey, whilst the Great Christian Powers would not risk a single drop of blood. The only support came from Russian volunteers: —

While the revolt was still going on in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro declared war on the Porte on the 2d July, 1876. These two States could no longer avoid open support of the rebels; they demanded the union of Bosnia with Serbia and of Herzegovina with Montenegro, and took the field in the hope of rousing by their military action all the Christian provinces and the kingdom of Greece to fight against the Turkish domination. (Becker, vol. 12, p. 195.)

2. The Russo-Turkish War

The Serbians found no support on any side, and were defeated. In vain the Russian Government endeavoured to turn the eyes of Europe to the appalling situation of the Southern Slavs. There was, indeed, a party in England under Gladstone which initiated violent propaganda by meetings and pamphlets in favour of the Southern Slavs. But Disraeli's Cabinet feared a too great weakening of

Turkey as a result of "more effective measures," and clung to England's old policy of protecting the Ottoman Empire as much as possible. England had secured her direct sea route to India a year before by the purchase of the Suez Canal shares; in this new order of things she felt herself more threatened by an intervention of the Powers than if nothing was done. Germany, too, could not be moved to active interference. Bismarck thought the Balkan question "not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian Grenadier." Even Austria refused the Russian proposal of common action: —

In vain the Emperor Alexander proposed to make his pacific efforts effective by the common occupation of the Balkans by Austria and Russia and a simultaneous naval demonstration by England before Constantinople; neither Andrassy in Austria nor Lord Beaconsfield in England would go beyond diplomatic intervention. But could the Czar calmly watch Serbia being crushed, Bosnia and Herzegovina being turned into a shambles, and the Bulgarian Christians being massacred? Was he to turn a deaf ear to the cry of misery which reached him from the Danube, to the appeal for help which Milan, in his terror and despair, addressed to him?¹ (Dr. Georg Weber, "Weltgeschichte," vol. 15, part 2, p. 1251.)

Russia intervened and won for Serbia a comparatively favourable peace. Meanwhile the Montenegrin mountaineers, who had gained some successes over the Turks, continued to struggle, and Turkey persevered in her evasive policy as far as carrying out the promised reforms was concerned.

¹ Cf. e.g., Weber, p. 1265, for an account of the farce of the "constitution" granted at Constantinople.

Russia then determined to act alone, after assuring herself of the neutrality of the other Great Powers. Even Austria was prepared to remain neutral in accordance with the Agreement of Reichstadt (1877), but she reserved the right of occupying Bosnia and Herzegovina under certain circumstances.¹

In the Russo-Turkish war which followed in 1877-78 the Roumanians gave the Slavs notable assistance later on. But it was only after very heavy and costly fighting and by calling up considerable reinforcements that the Russians succeeded in conquering the Turks. When Russia at last stood before the gates of Constantinople, England thought the expedition had accomplished its purpose, and intervened. As she exposed herself to a certain risk by this intervention, she received the island of Cyprus from Turkey by a special agreement — not at the Berlin Congress.² There followed the peace of San Stefano with the following conditions: —

Turkey recognized the complete independence of Roumania, Serbia, and Montenegro, agreed to the establishment of an autonomous though tributary principality of Bulgaria to comprise five million inhabitants and to extend from the Danube to the Ægean Sea, and resigned the Armenian fortresses of Ardahan, Kars, and Bajazid, and the port of Batum. Roumania was to restore the part of Bessarabia which had been ceded to her by Russia in 1856

¹ Even now Austrian and Russian historians differ as to the interpretation of the "back-door treaty" in question; but it is certain that there was no unconditional promise on Russia's part to hand over Bosnia to Austria.

² Cf. Weber's *Weltgeschichte*, vol. 15, part 2, p. 1268.

and in return was to receive the Lower Dobrudja. (Becker, vol. 12, p. 202.)

Further:—

Serbia was to be increased by Old Serbia with Nish and Sjenica, while Roumania was to receive an indemnity from Turkey for the costs of the war. Crete, Thessaly, Epirus, Bosnia, and Herzegovina were to receive the necessary administrative reforms through a European Commission, and the carrying out of these reforms was to be permanently supervised by the Powers. (Brockhaus, "San Stefano.")¹

Our present interest is first of all in Serbia's gains, which, as we have shown, were no small ones, in spite of the premature conclusion of peace in consequence of England's intervention: in addition to the notable territorial gain of historic districts, the victors enforced guarantees for the protection of the Bosnian population against Turkish encroachments by means of the permanent supervision by the Powers.

Bosnia and Herzegovina were to receive a reformed autonomous administration under guarantee of the Powers. (Weber, vol. 15, part 2, p. 1264.)

The settlement of San Stefano, however, called forth protests from England and Austria.

While the Russo-Turkish negotiations, which led to the Treaty of San Stefano, were still going

¹ Most German histories, especially the popular ones, unfairly reduce the Serbian gains under the Treaty of San Stefano by simply omitting important acquisitions in their account of the "preliminaries" — for instance, Nish and Old Serbia and the settlement of the Bosnian question — and by representing these latter as a gift of the Berlin Congress. I add this in order to explain why I supplemented Becker's account by the above extract from Brockhaus.

on, England raised an armaments loan in order to exercise pressure in Turkey's favour on the course of the settlement. But "as neither Russia nor England showed a great desire to resort to warlike action against each other" (Weber), Count Schuvaloff succeeded in coming to terms with Disraeli. England recognized Russian territorial expansion at the cost of Turkey. Turkey, being too weak financially to meet the whole costs of the unexpectedly long war, was allowed by the Treaty of San Stefano to cover part of the debt by cession of territory in Asia Minor. Russia, on the other hand, had to consent to a territorial reduction of Greater Bulgaria in favour of her enemy. Thus Anglo-Russian antagonism was allayed by the separate Agreement of London in May, 1878, about a fortnight before the beginning of the Berlin Congress.

Russia was less fortunate with Austria. Outwardly, indeed, Count Andrassy declared the Bulgarian question, which only involved the *defence* of Austrian interests, to be the essential point in his protest: —

Austria, whose trade was principally towards the East, saw her interests endangered if Russia, by creating a vassal State in Greater Bulgaria, made herself master of the Balkan peninsula and extended her ports to the Ægean Sea. (Becker, vol. 12, p. 202.)

3. *Quarrel about Bosnia*

Unfortunately, even before the outbreak of Russo-Turkish hostilities, Andrassy had been secretly cherishing *aggressive* plans which were bound

to arouse the indignation of all Slavs: *he wanted to get Slav districts conquered for him by Slav blood.* Hence, his rejection of the Emperor Alexander's proposal of common action. Serbia, Montenegro, and Russia were to defeat Turkey without outside help, and he proposed afterwards calmly to appropriate Bosnia and Herzegovina, for whose sake the War of Liberation began. He meant to "liberate" territories already liberated!

Andrassy refused to let his policy be affected either by the pro-Turkish demonstrations of the Magyars or by the sympathy expressed for Russia in Prague, Agram, and other Slav towns. He made all preparations to secure Austria's interests if a Russo-Turkish War should break out, to keep open his communications by the Danube, and to acquire Bosnia for the Hapsburg Empire. (Weber, vol. 15, part 2, p. 1254.)

This statement of Weber's that even before the Russo-Turkish War Austria intended to annex Bosnia on the conclusion of peace is entirely and coolly admitted by the latest Austrian historians.¹

At first, indeed, Austrian public opinion did not permit Andrassy's policy to be carried through openly. Interpellations in Parliament and press articles show us that the people, except for a small party, was disturbed by a mobilization loan and would stand no forcible action. So on the subject of his annexation aims Count Andrassy had recourse as long as possible to obstinate denial: —

¹ Cf. *The Life of Andrassy*, by Dr. E. von Wertheimer, A. Fournier's *Wie wir zu Bosnien kamen*, and Theodor von Sososky's, *Die Balkanpolitik Oesterreich-Ungarns seit 1866*. These writers see absolutely nothing immoral in Andrassy's policy.

General though the belief in imminent annexation already was and, from what happened, was bound to be, Count Andrassy thought he must still continue his denials. On an interpellation in Parliament by Herr von Grocholsky as late as the 14th May the Premier declared that there was absolutely no foundation for the stories of imminent annexation. It was only on the 31st May that Andrassy determined at length to drop the mask he had worn so obstinately: he answered the question whether the Monarchy proposed to support its interests by force of arms, if the Berlin Congress did not protect them sufficiently, with an emphatic Yes. It was the first open word which he had spoken on the subject. (Sosnosky, *op. cit.*, p. 178.)

The cunning Hungarian went further; he tried to find sympathetic intermediaries for his plans on to whose shoulders, if necessary, some of the moral responsibility could have been shifted, Bismarck and Disraeli! Then he "cited Russia before an international tribunal," as Herr von Bethmann would put it to-day. Russia consented, but objected to Vienna as the meeting-place. The Powers agreed upon Berlin, no doubt on Austria's suggestion: —

Austria proposed the summoning of a European Congress, to which England declared herself ready to send delegates, having previously come to an agreement with Russia as to the main points at issue. Prince Bismarck invited the signatories of the treaties of 1856 and 1871 to send plenipotentiaries to Berlin, where the Congress was opened on the 13th June, 1878, in the Chancellor's palace. (Brockhaus' "Lexikon.")

The Congress of Berlin, an assembly of the representatives of the Great Powers, Germany, Austria, France, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, and Turkey, which on the suggestion of Austria met in Berlin by invitation of the German Government on the 13th June, 1878, under the presidency of Prince Bismarck. (Meyer's "Lexikon.")

Greater Bulgaria was severely cut about, and Serbia had to put up with a reduction of territory. England was to open the most delicate question, the annexation of Bosnia. Her Jewish Premier was regarded as not pro-Russian, though she had arranged the points at issue between herself and Russia and stood in correct relations with the Empire of the Czar: —

Andrassy thought it rather unsuitable to propose Austria as the Power to take charge of this transaction (the introduction of orderly conditions into Bosnia and Herzegovina). The suggestion that Austria should take charge was to come from a friendly party, and he had decided upon England because he wished to avoid any reproach from his own countrymen that he had received Bosnia, so to speak, from Bismarck's hand — a very clever move. (Sosnosky, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 182.)

That is written in black and white in one of the latest and most detailed German works on Austrian policy in the Balkans. In earlier years, indeed, the German and Austrian conscience had to be soothed by active propaganda, according to which Austria received the new territories "so to speak from England's hand" — a version which is still sometimes brought out by older pro-Germans to blacken England.¹

¹ The German-Swiss Professor Hünerwadel takes the prize when he definitely states in his pamphlet "Die geschichtlichen Vorbedingungen des europäischen Krieges," p. 9, that "Russia requested Bismarck to summon a Congress." The German encyclopædias, in spite of their shortness, are more thorough and honest about this question. The Bâle Professor Bächtold clings to the old version that England organized the Congress; this is contradicted by the latest and most authentic Austrian sources

Nevertheless, England came forward as a genuine "intermediary," for although she did not flatly refuse Austria's pretensions to Bosnia, she yet turned "annexation" into "occupation and administration" in Serbia's interests. Recently we have learnt that Austria felt herself obliged to sign a secret protocol with Turkey, according to which the "sovereign rights of the Sultan over the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina were in no way to be affected by the occupation" and "the occupation was to be regarded as provisional." (Cf. Sosnosky and the Austrian writer A. Fournier.)

England demanded no *quid pro quo* from either Austria or Turkey for her mediation at the Congress, or, rather, she had already received Cyprus by treaty from Turkey before the Congress, for her active intervention and naval demonstration, which had brought the military operations to an end. England thought she was acting in her own interest at the Berlin Congress, when she would not allow either the Southern Slavs or Austria to become too strong in the Balkans at the expense of Turkey.

Germany, who, like Austria, had stood aside from all the actual fighting, also demanded no *quid pro quo* for her mediation, which consisted in summoning the Congress and supporting Austria, and there-

as to the Balkan policy of that date. It is amusing to play these two pro-German savants against one another. In personal opinion savants may be allowed to differ, but they should stick to the truth in narrating mere matters of fact, in order not to expose themselves to laymen.

fore Bismarck called himself "an honest broker." Did he really act disinterestedly? Not at all. We know that he bound a heavy weight to Germany's leg in 1871 by repeating Louis XIV's mistake and by stretching his hand too far in Alsace and Lorraine, annexing in part purely Latin territory. Naturally France's rapid recovery lay like a nightmare on Bismarck. His attempt to strike France again in 1875 failed owing to the protest of Russia and the Emperor William I. So Bismarck had to look for an ally who had the greatest fellow feeling for his anxieties. What could be more welcome to him than Andrassy's policy, which must embitter the relations of Austria and Russia for a long time to come, and which provided the predominantly pro-German Austria with a similar weight to the one Bismarck had affixed to Germany? A year after the Congress the German-Austrian Alliance was signed; the bond of brotherhood between two such congenial races as the world has never before seen. But the evil deed — the annexation of Slav territory by means of Slav and Latin blood — was bound to make enemies for us Germans, and could only bear evil fruit.

The fact that immediately after the Berlin Congress German Liberal circles in Austria sharply condemned Andrassy's policy of annexation is interesting. A Polish deputy (Hausner), however, published the following explanation: —

This occupation, carried out without conquest, without title, without any *casus belli*, and without provocation, involves a heavy wrong, a theft of territory of which as an

Austrian citizen I should have to disapprove, but which as a Pole I abominate. In the same way, without title, without *casus belli*, and without provocation, my own country was partitioned and destroyed. . . . (Sosnosky, vol. 2, p. 9.)

4. Serbian Complaints

To return to Serbia. Quite apart from the question of Bosnia, Serbia rightly regarded herself as outrageously treated by the Congress of Berlin. Doubtless she received Pirot and Vranja, districts which were to have fallen to Bulgaria before.¹ But the Novibazar was taken from her, which was the ancient "Rassia, the origin of the later Serbian Empire." (Brockhaus, "Novibazar.") Further, she had to give up "the old historic home of the Serbs, the Amselfeld, Prizren, etc." (Brockhaus, "Serbia.") Moreover, Bosnia, which Austria was annexing, was originally Serbian land, as it belonged to the territory which was called the Kingdom of Serbia from 1377 till its conquest by Mohammed II (Brockhaus, "Bosnia"), and lies in the middle of the Serbian-Croatian national district (cf. the ethnographical map of Austria in Brockhaus.²)

¹ To-day — such is the irony of fate — Bulgaria has recovered these same districts from Serbia by the sword, and that with the approval of Austria, who originally took them from Bulgaria and allotted them to Serbia.

² And yet Professor Schieman in *Ein Verleumder*, his answer to *J'accuse*, asserts: "It is well known that Bosnia and Herzegovina formed part of Turkey and never belonged to Serbia, still less to Russia." (No one ever said they belonged to Russia.) German savants seem to have forgotten that Bosnia was an original part of Old Serbia. It is a pity, because German scientific prestige is bound to suffer from such open sophistry.

The supervision of this territory by rival Powers, as arranged in the Treaty of San Stefano, would naturally have afforded greater national guarantees than its administration by a single foreign State. Austrian propaganda emphasizes to-day that the established national liberties are untouched in Bosnia, and that is undoubtedly true so far as the laws are concerned. But we read in Brockhaus under "Bosnia": —

An attempt at colonization by Italian Tyrolese in 1885 was unsuccessful; similar later experiments, however, with Württemberg and Austrian peasants are prospering exceedingly.

I ask myself as a Swiss what the Italians would say if we tried the same experiment with Zürich peasants in the Ticino districts. In any case, the artificial grafting of a foreign civilization is the best way to produce hatred and to stir up the national counter-currents to fresh struggles.

An impartial neutral will realize that the readjustment of the situation by the Congress of Berlin was bound to press hardly on Serbia. Regarded from the purely national standpoint, the Tell-like spirit of the Serbs inspires us with the same respect which we pay to it in the unification of Germany. From the point of view of reason and order, however, all Serbian hopes of acquiring Bosnia must be condemned; for in 1909 the Serbian Government, on the advice of Russia, declared itself ready to recognize the annexation of Bosnia as final.

CHAPTER VIII

SERBIA BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

IT is strange that neutrals who came from Serbia described the nation as humane and on the whole kindly, while we used to believe, on the strength of Austrian propaganda, that we must ascribe to the Serbs an especially bloodthirsty and grasping character. The contradiction can be explained by the fact that Serbia — an outpost of Constantinople — became in a still more vital sense the pivot of European politics after the recent open fusion of the German Eastern policy (Berlin to Bagdad) with the Austrian Balkan policy (Bosnia-Sandjak Novibazar-Salonica).

1. *Aggressive Policy of Austria*

The threatening character of Austrian policy towards Serbia is clear enough. The Dalmatian wedge, which is driven between Serbian territory and the Adriatic and cuts off even little Montenegro almost completely from the sea, was broadened in 1878 by Andrassy's policy, and this policy was consolidated in 1908 in spite of what Andrassy called a reverse (cf. p. 89).

Recently, in 1912-13, the small agrarian State of Serbia, in great difficulties owing to Hungary's policy of tariffs, was finally thrust back from the sea, as if it was to be forced to join the economic

and political coalition of the ambitious German Imperialists. Even a commercial port was refused to it. At the same time, according to Serbian accounts, Austria carried on a subversive propaganda in favour of a triple monarchy (Austria, Hungary, Greater Serbia). The gains of the Serbian struggle in the Balkan War were embittered for the victor as they had been in 1878 and were eventually again reduced. And not content with that, Austria tried, as we have said, to set up two friendly strongholds in Bulgaria and Albania behind the back of her small neighbour.

Though one of them collapsed, the menacing interference of Austria still remained. The extraordinary mission of Liman von Sanders and the milliard war tax increased Serbia's apprehensions, especially as her counter-protection, the Balkan League, broke up owing to Austrian intervention. As the pro-German Giolitti, and Tittoni too, revealed later, Austria made several efforts from 1912 onwards to invade Serbia or to crush her in other ways. All this was bound to arouse anxiety and hatred in her small neighbour.

2. The Narodna Odbrana

In view of these circumstances it was impossible for the Serbian Government entirely to suppress the activity of the patriotic union "Narodna Odbrana." Austria's attempt to ascribe to this union the intention of separating Serbian territories from Austria was a failure. Similarly the Austrian "Memorandum on Serbian Propaganda"

lapses into gross misrepresentations. What impartial neutral, for instance, will find fault when he reads in the "Memorandum" that the Narodna Odbrana had made military preparations for the desired (?!) war against Austria in so far that Serbian emissaries or spies were entrusted with the destruction of enemy communications, etc., in the event of war breaking out? The Central Powers also kept such emissaries. One of these gentlemen, a German by birth, was arrested in Geneva and condemned because, as he lived on the frontier, he had undertaken to carry out these functions in France on the outbreak of hostilities between Germany and France.

Also the charge in the "Memorandum" that "the Comitadjis were instructed in shooting and bombing, in mine-laying and the blowing up of railway bridges," etc., has no force, seeing that even mighty Germany tried to make the fullest use of her national forces by means of the "Jugendwehr" and similar organizations. All honour to the small threatened State, which did not abandon itself like a coward to its powerful neighbour under the excuse of its weakness. Certainly various individuals of the Narodna Odbrana went too far in their not unreasonable hatred of Austria; their action was disapproved of generally, even by the Serbian Government. But could that Government be expected to stifle every national movement among the Serbs, whilst imperialist tendencies in Germany were in full blast, and even the more moderate amongst the Germans, in view

of the possible blockade of Germany at sea, had been glancing covetously towards the East ever since the Morocco affair — at a time, too, when Austrian policy was openly anti-Serbian and the situation in the Balkans was assuming a form which was threatening to Serbia?

3. *Austrian Propaganda in Russia*

Austria kept up a subversive propaganda in Russia too. For the "Polish Legions" were established before the outbreak of war with an eye to its possibility. Again a pro-Austrian Pole published the following admission in a neutral paper (*Basler Nachrichten*, 1916, No. 304): —

Among her schemes of defence against Russia in Eastern Galicia, Austria created a centre of Ruthenian Irredenta in order if necessary to cause a revolt in the richest Russian provinces through the political ideal of a free Ukraine. The Ukrainian natives of Galicia were to set fire to Russia's granaries, carry the torch of a national movement through all Southern Russia, and strike at the Russian Empire at its most vulnerable spot, the Black Sea districts.

The well-known Pan-German publicist Dr. Paul Rohrbach also admits the fact of Austrian agitation before the outbreak of war: "And the Ukraine movement also received increased power and stimulus from Austrian Galicia." ("*Russische Selbstzeugnisse*," p. 8.)

We may recognize that this Austrian propaganda produced no outbreak of violence in Russia, as the Serbian propaganda did in Bosnia: but we must also bear in mind that Russia never gave Austria the slightest excuse for it. Her policy towards

Austria was always one of yielding (the Congress of Berlin, 1878; Annexation of Bosnia, 1909; Albania with a German Prince, 1913), until in 1914 Austria's attempt to crush Serbia filled up the cup.

4. *Serajevo*

We can assume that it was only hatred, and in no way the desire to separate Bosnia from Austria, that induced some Serbians to support the deplorable murder. For no State yields up territory on the ground of mere attempts at murder. Moreover, the "Memorandum" says that the murderers carried cyanide of potassium on them to take their own lives after carrying out their attack. As the tracks which led back to Serbia were to have been obliterated by this means, the object of the crime cannot possibly have been to throw a spark into the international powder barrel and separate Bosnia by the "desired (!)" world war.

Besides, Serbia was surprised by the war, for we read, for instance, on the 26th July, 1914, in the *Basler Nachrichten*: —

The Serbian Chief of Staff Putnik, who was on his way back from a Styrian cure, was arrested in Hungary.¹

And later again a student of Serbian affairs wrote in a Swiss paper (B.N. 168): —

¹ The Austrian Government subsequently had the wisdom to release Putnik. Fortunately! For to arrest the enemy's Chief of Staff two days before the declaration of war is a breach of international law most dishonouring to the nation which is guilty of it. Such an action is distressingly like theft.

The medical stores were almost exhausted in the two wars in 1912-1913, and new stores were just being collected when the staff were surprised by the war of 1914. There was great lack of medical stores, etc.

Many similar statements appeared in the neutral press.

Must a political assassination be stamped as murder under all circumstances, and can it only be atoned for by the crushing of a whole people? We will go more fully into the question; here we will only note that two attempts were made on the life of the Emperor William I and two on Bismarck. Though these four cases did not end fatally, the intention to kill was there all the same. Are we therefore to pass sentence of death on the German people? By no means, any more than on the Serbs! For just as political crimes diminished in Germany when more orderly times arrived, so also Serbian political passions would have quieted down.

5. *Kragujevatz*

At the beginning of the war the private propaganda of the Central Powers tried very naïvely to incriminate the Serbian Government in the Serajevo crime by referring to the use of bombs from Kragujevatz. But it is these bombs that exonerate the Government. "The tracks which led back to Serbia were to have been obliterated," as the "Memorandum" says; and if so, it would have been easy for the Serbian Government to prepare special bombs differing from the standard products of the arsenal. The case is different with

individuals, who, in so far as they had connections with a State munition factory, could more easily get possession of Government bombs than manufacture their own.

6. *Idea of a Triple Monarchy*

Before I close the Serbian case, I should like to mention shortly a remarkable despatch. When the Central Powers thought they had won, when they were pushing the Russians back after the inroad into the Carpathians, and when Bulgaria was on the point of attacking Serbia, readers of the papers found the following unofficial despatch from Sofia (B.N. 454): —

It is reported from Nish that the Serbian National Party, which on the outbreak of war dissolved more or less voluntarily, has reconstituted itself with the old programme, viz., the realization of its greater Serbian ideals in the framework of a triple monarchy with Austria-Hungary. The party is publishing a new organ with the title of "Greater Serbia."

It is quite impossible that the idea of a triple monarchy (Austria, Hungary, Serbia), which according to the despatch existed before the war on Serbian soil, was really the fruit of Serbian minds. We are therefore driven to conjecture that it was a case of outside inspiration by Austria in order to complete her Eastern policy, which even before the war was in active preparation. Such inspiration might have been logically justified at the time of the weak and thoroughly rotten Obrenovitch, but not since the patriotic Karageorgevitch dynasty stood at the head of the modest, but heroic and glorious peasant population of Serbia.

CHAPTER IX

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

PART I. THE AUSTRO-SERBIAN DISPUTE

I. *The Official Documents of the Belligerent Nations*

IN various good books — among which I regard that of the distinguished American jurist Dr. James M. Beck as the best ¹ — it has been proved in detail, on the strength of the official documents published by the various belligerents, that not only did Germany and Austria desire and initiate the world war in 1914, but that the Entente Powers made the most desperate efforts up to the last minute to keep the peace. We are given a detailed and unprejudiced picture of how Austria made it impossible for the Powers who were interested in maintaining the *status quo* in the Balkans to discuss her ultimatum to Serbia, until the time limit for Serbia's answer was past. It is further shown how afterwards Austria, in union with Germany, evaded any discussion of the subject until Russia mobilized, provoked by the previous Aus-

¹ *The Evidence in the Case*. An examination into moral responsibility for the war of 1914 on the basis of the diplomatic documents of England, Germany, Russia, France, and Belgium, by James M. Beck, Doctor of Laws, formerly Assistant to the Public Prosecutor in the United States of America; with an introduction by Joseph Choate, formerly American Ambassador to Great Britain. The author has German, German-Swiss, and British forebears, knows Germany well, and greatly admires her.

trian mobilization — not only against Serbia, but also against Russia — as well as by the extremely intransigent attitude of the Central Powers, which threatened vital Russian interests. Thereupon Germany declared herself justified in declaring war on Russia, and the world was in flames. That, in the fewest words, was the beginning of the world war, as is already established by the investigation of international history.

It is also shown how Austria, shortly before the outbreak of hostilities, lulled Russia and France into security by false statements; just as Germany, half an hour before her violation of Belgian neutrality, made the most soothing declarations in Brussels by the mouth of her military attaché. Every one again agrees, on the strength of these diplomatic documents, that the representatives of Germany repeatedly refused to leave behind any copy of the text of certain important notes which they had delivered on the instructions of their Government — a step which, to say the least, does not inspire confidence.

It is proved that Russia was prepared to offer guarantees to Austria for Serbian tranquillity, if Austria would renounce military operations against Serbia. Unfortunately German and Austrian propaganda ignores these guarantees.

It is further shown that Russia bound herself to stop her military preparations (without a corresponding assurance from Germany and Austria) provided Austria would declare herself ready to "omit those claims in her ultimatum which were

inconsistent with the principle of Serbia's sovereign rights." This is another guarantee of which German and Austrian propaganda apparently knows nothing.

Further, we see how the Entente Powers still worked for peace after Austria had already declared war on Serbia: England proposed that Austria should occupy Northern Serbia and Belgrade and regard them as a pledge for a favourable issue to the negotiations. The Serbian army was to retire without fighting, until the Powers had agreed as to the guarantees which were necessary to satisfy Austria on the one side and Russia and Italy on the other. This is another proof of the Entente's love of peace about the important details of which the German White Book is entirely silent.

In the matter of Belgium we are shown the absurd inconsistency of Germany. In 1911, at the time of the Morocco crisis, she refused to give a public declaration of neutrality on the ground that such a declaration would in case of war divert the French troops from the Belgian frontier and concentrate them on the German front. Three years later she made use of this very diffusion of the French armies on the Belgian frontier, which she had desired, to excuse her criminal violation of Belgian neutrality. How is one to satisfy such an evil neighbour?

Much more of the greatest historical importance is proved on the strength of these diplomatic documents. In no previous war were the

official data, on which history must be based, published so quickly or in such quantity. The proof of guilt has long been sufficiently established, firmly and incontestably.

Nevertheless it is not yet universally acknowledged even now; the evidence is drawn from the documents of *all* the nations, and in the opinion of narrow Pan-Germans most of these lack the quickening spirit — German truth.

In what follows, therefore, we shall rely wholly on German documents and show shortly that German propaganda leads us to the same result as the writer of "J'accuse" and other authors who base their reasoning on the documents of all the belligerents.

2. The Austrian Ultimatum

Although Austria knew that "military action against Serbia might bring Russia on to the scene" (White Book), she sent an ultimatum to Serbia which was equivalent to a declaration of war as regards the notorious points 4, 5, and 6. The acceptance of these three points would have laid Serbia defenceless at the feet of Austria. Serbia answered in the humblest way, but permitted herself certain reservations in those three demands.

We may show the outrageous character of the three points shortly as follows: —

Point 4. The ultimatum: —

The Serbian Government shall undertake to eliminate from the military service, and from the administration in general, all officers and functionaries guilty of propaganda

against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, whose names and deeds the Austro-Hungarian Government reserve to themselves the right of communicating to the Royal Government.

Serbia's answer: —

The Royal Government is ready to dismiss those officers and officials from the military and civil services in regard to whom it has been proved by judicial investigation that they have been guilty of actions against the territorial integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy; it expects that the Imperial and Royal Government will communicate to it for the purpose of starting the investigation the names of these officers and officials and the acts with which they have been charged.

Austrian conclusion: —

By promising the dismissal from the military and civil services of those officers and officials who are found guilty by judicial procedure, the Serbian Government limits its assent to those cases in which these persons have been charged with a crime according to the statutory code. As, however, we demand the removal of such officers and officials as indulge in a propaganda hostile to the Monarchy, which is generally not punishable in Serbia, our demands have not been fulfilled in this point.

Here the Austrian Government is practising a deception, as it wilfully ignores Serbia's willingness, expressed elsewhere, to undertake a revision of the Press laws, whereby "the incitement to hatred of, and contempt for, the Monarchy is to be most severely punished, as well as every publication whose general tendency is directed against the territorial integrity of Austria-Hungary." (White Book, Annex I.)

Serbia even bound herself, according to the

White Book, without any demand from Austria, to carry out a corresponding revision of the Constitution and declared herself ready to enter into further negotiations. Where a State shows so openly its readiness to amend its Constitution and laws, its neighbour has no right to put forward gaps in the laws, which may possibly remain, as a reason for immediate action. By her proposed medieval procedure Austria would have been in a position to substitute a more pliable individual for every patriotic official who might have opposed her Eastern policy. Serbia would have had to accept, without question or criticism, the evidence furnished by Austria and the guilt of the accused. Verily a black reactionary demand which shows unmistakably what Austria was aiming at.

Point 5. The ultimatum demanded that the Serbian Government should bind itself "to accept the coöperation in Serbia of officials of the Austro-Hungarian Government for the suppression of the subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the Monarchy."

Serbia answered that she was willing to accept every coöperation of officials of the Austrian Government on Serbian territory "which is consistent with international law and criminal law, as well as with friendly and neighbourly relations."

Austria concluded: "International law and criminal law have nothing to do with the question; it is purely a question of the supervision of political offences within the state (*'rein staatspolizeilicher*

Natur'), to be solved by way of a special agreement."

Whilst Austria here admitted that her note needed further negotiations on this point at least, she at the same time made them impossible by breaking off diplomatic relations without explanation and by declaring war immediately afterwards, although Serbia declared herself ready for any and every form of further negotiation. (White Book.) An ultimatum which must be accepted without reservation, to which, however, *after acceptance*, special agreements are to be attached, is like the proverbial pig in a poke. It is equivalent to a declaration of war.

Point 6. The ultimatum demanded that the Serbian Government should bind itself "to take judicial proceedings against accessories to the plot of the 28th June who are on Serbian territory. Delegates of the Austrian Government will take part in the investigation relating thereto."

Serbia "cannot accept, as this is a violation of the Constitution and of the law of criminal procedure."

Austria concluded: "It did not occur to us to demand that Austrian officials should participate in the procedure of the Serbian courts: they were to coöperate only in the preliminary investigations by the Serbian police." She then points to the difference between "*recherches*" and "*enquête judiciaire*."

Here again, therefore, Austria had expressed her-

self too shortly and inexactly for so serious a *dé-marche*; this demand could not be answered by a simple Yes or No, and was not, therefore, compatible with the form of an ultimatum. Serbia accepted all the other points — correctly, even humbly! Austria cannot deny that, from the first, the real object of her ultimatum was to produce war with Serbia. *For she sent a note which could not possibly be accepted without further negotiations, but precluded negotiations by breaking off diplomatic relations and declaring war.* Count Tisza prepared the mass of the people for the rigour of coming events; for even before the Serbian answer arrived, he declared that there was only one alternative between Serbia and Austria; further negotiations were out of the question. (B.N., 25th July, 1914.) The “either” was the complete and absolute crushing of Serbia (that can be seen from the contents of the note and Austria’s efforts to avoid a conference); this was the keystone of German Eastern policy. And the “or” was war — that is to say, the same thing.

That this “short shrift to Serbia” was the Austrian plan, is confirmed by the German White Book: “Serbia,” it explains, “though complying in some points with the conditions of Austria-Hungary, yet showed in all essentials an unmistakable endeavour to evade the just demands of the Monarchy by procrastination and by suggesting fresh negotiations.”

It establishes, too, with approval that Austria, after receipt of the answer, immediately broke

off diplomatic relations with Serbia. And then, obviously embarrassed, after some loose talk, it curtly describes the giant's declaration of war on the dwarf as a *fait accompli*: "From this moment [the breaking-off of diplomatic relations] Austria was in fact in a state of war with Serbia, which it proclaimed officially on the 28th July by declaring war."

How the absolute crushing of Serbia, which necessarily involved a menace to the Powers interested in maintaining the *status quo* in the Balkans, can be described as a "just demand," remains unintelligible to neutrals — all the more as Austria was not without responsibility for Serbian hatred of her.

3. *Refusal of a Conference*

Serbia, as we read in the White Book, offered to submit to the decisions of the Peace Conference at The Hague — a proposal which met with assent from all the Powers except Germany and Austria. Russia especially supported the idea.¹

England, too, repeatedly supported the idea of international mediation. Germany and Austria, however, declared the Austro-Serbian quarrel to be local, in spite of its exceptional and international character, and regarded it as beneath the dignity of Austria to admit any intervention by a third party.

¹ The Czar's telegram on this subject is missing in the White Book, but Herr von Bethmann felt compelled afterwards to admit its existence.

“From the very beginning of the conflict we took up the attitude that it was a question for Austria, who would have to settle the matter with Serbia alone. We used every effort, therefore, to localize the war. . . . [Observe: to “localize,” not to “avoid.”] We emphatically took the position that no civilized country possessed the right to stay the arm of Austria in this struggle with barbarism and political crime, and to shield the Serbians [i.e., the whole nation!] against their just punishment. . . .” Germany would have done better to take the position that a great Power — Austria — should refrain from a policy of suppression towards a small neighbour, since a policy based on hostility is bound to produce resentment and disagreeable incidents, which in a small State are the more likely to degenerate into assassination, as weakness causes fury.

“In answer to our declaration that the German Government desired and aimed at a localization of the conflict . . .” That is, with a view to the achievement of the Berlin-Bagdad scheme, of which German Imperialists were dreaming even before the outbreak of war. Austria’s plan after 1913 — not 1914 — for a friendly Greater Bulgaria as an adjunct to a friendly Turkey presupposes that the autonomy of the intervening Serbian territory should sooner or later be outraged. That this was so, is confirmed by the behaviour of the Central Powers in 1914, when they avoided all open expression of their intentions.

“Meanwhile we had endeavoured to localize

the conflict by the most emphatic steps . . ." instead of allaying the uneasiness of the neighbouring States Russia and Italy by an explanation of the pressing question to what extent and for what period Austria intended to occupy Serbia. The explanation was absolutely necessary in consequence of the menace to the *status quo*.

"Austria-Hungary having promised to consider the Russian interests by disclaiming any territorial aspirations — a great concession on the part of a State engaged in war — should therefore be permitted to settle its affairs with Serbia alone." The German Government knew perfectly well that independence was not guaranteed by the assurance of territorial integrity, for in the case of Belgium she definitely guaranteed "territorial integrity and independence." (Cf. the Chancellor's speech of the 4th August.) The independence of Serbia was as important for Russia and Italy as her territorial integrity.

"We could not, however, in view of the vital interests which were at stake, advise Austria-Hungary to take up a yielding attitude not compatible with her dignity nor deny her our assistance in this serious crisis." Austria's interests were vital and legitimate — Russia and Italy admitted that; but the route on which the Central States embarked was definitely imperialistic and therefore reprehensible. It is incomprehensible how German propaganda can declare that a yielding attitude on the part of Austria in the interests of European peace would have been incompatible

with Austrian dignity. One would suppose it to be far more undignified to embark upon so adventurous a course.

“We declared in regard to this proposal that we could not, however much we approved the idea, participate in such a conference, as we could not call Austria in her dispute with Serbia before a European tribunal.” Again this false Austro-Prussian idea of the dignity of a great Power, or rather the concealment of imperialist aims under an untenable idea.

Only absolute confidence in a quick and decisive victory and in the speedy attainment of world-dominion — the confidence which manifested itself at the outbreak of war in the leading German papers and in the innumerable lucubrations of divers German pompous nonentities — could start a world conflagration and then defend it by such feeble catchwords as “Austrian dignity” and “localization of the conflict.” The well-known pretence of foreign aggression served at first to force the natural opposition to the war into the background: and later on, it was confidently anticipated, the intoxication of victory and the achievement of world-dominion would conceal the lack of reasons for war.

What is meant by “localization”?

Did England and Belgium describe their Congo Agreement of 1894 as “local,” when Germany and France intervened? Not at all; they gave way; and yet the Agreement was a private deal. Did Russia describe the apportionment of the fruits

of her victory over Turkey in 1878 as of only "local import," when Austria called Russia before the Berlin Tribunal? Certainly not! And, what is more, the victor did not think it incompatible with his dignity to appear before the Congress, although the Powers had, from the first, refused to participate in liberating the Balkan peoples from the Turkish yoke, and had watched the Russian sacrifices with folded arms. Russia would have been far better justified in refusing the Conference in 1878, on the strength of those burdens which she had borne alone, than Austria was in 1914. Correctly and impartially speaking, every conflict between two States loses its local character as soon as the neighbours, especially if they are great Powers, announce their interest in the issue. If, nevertheless, one of the disputants forbids the interference of a third party, he clearly shows a presumptuous and bellicose spirit. It is especially so if, as in the case of the Central Powers in this incident, no relevant evidence can be produced of the evil intentions of their neighbours (cf. pp. 43-64), while they on their part manifest an extreme imperialism (cf. pp. 12-23).

What is meant by "dignity"?

Was it "dignified" for Austria-Hungary to let the Russians, Serbs, and Roumanians defeat the Turks in 1877, and then to snatch Bosnia and Herzegovina from the weakened conquerors — that is to say, to frustrate the most essential purpose of the war, which was the liberation of those territories? Again, where is the dignity of a civil-

ized great Power, when it dare not summon its Parliament at a critical time owing to its aggressive policy, when it sees itself obliged in a time of crisis to condemn a considerable number of its members of Parliament to the gallows, as Austria has executed Czech, Bosnian, and Italian patriots and representatives of the people? Again, is it "dignified," when the plenipotentiary of a great Power in a neutral country tries by bribery to produce acts of violence and is turned out by his hosts, as Dr. Dumba was? And finally was it compatible with Austrian dignity to make even neutrals suffer under the burden of a world war, when she could have hoped, with far greater confidence, to realize *legitimate* aims through the Conference? The justice of these aims was universally recognized. The Red Book has to admit that Sazonov stated: "Austria's object is an entirely legitimate one, but the method, by appeal to arms, is not the surest way of attaining it."

As no State had taken preparatory steps for mobilization at that time, it would have been possible quietly to carry on negotiations. The Powers which felt themselves threatened by Austria's action would have learnt at the Conference how far Austria would go, and Germany's signature — the essential point of the whole business — would have given them a guarantee that the military pressure on Serbia, in so far as it had to be applied at all, would be limited in point of time. If Serbia had on the present occasion escaped the threatened "criminal trial" owing to

the Conference, the Serbian Government, in its own interest, would have done its utmost to convert Austria's hostility into friendship, in order to avoid the possibility of a later military attack. For the Powers would have fixed the conditions and the date on which, if necessary, such an attack might take place.

On the other hand, the Austrian Government could scarcely seriously assume that its murderous "punitive expedition," the indefinite character of which was bound inevitably to increase Serbian hatred, would improve the situation. It knew that its plan for the indiscriminate punishment of a whole nation for the crime of individuals would meet with the disapproval of neutrals, and must rouse the Serbs to blind fury. A virile race, whose temper has been roused by two wars and the menacing policy of a powerful neighbour, may show heroism under such gross injustice, but certainly not calm reason. For the thirst for revenge is added as a fresh incentive to increased political hatred: when a man knows that his nearest and dearest have been miserably lost or killed in what was obviously a war of conquest, he will readily find weapons to avenge them on the guilty authors of their misery. Every war has been followed by attempts at assassination; why should the Austro-Serbian War have the opposite effect?

A conference, therefore, would have been far more likely to bring Austria peace and quiet than an appeal to arms.

But Austria clearly did not want peace and

quiet, but increased power — the realization of her Eastern policy.

4. *The First Falsification of History*

The German White Book showed some embarrassment in reproducing the Austrian declaration of war on Serbia. Austria herself went further: she actually thought it necessary to misrepresent the facts, as if the declaration of war had only occurred after Serbia had begun hostilities. When England made an attempt at mediation, the German Ambassador in Vienna replied to the Chancellor: —

Count Berchtold requests me to express to Your Excellency his thanks for the communication of the English mediation proposal. He states, however, that after the opening of hostilities by Serbia and the subsequent declaration of war, England's step appears belated.

Count Berchtold did not dare to refuse the English proposal point blank without putting the responsibility on Serbia.¹ He obviously hoped to keep England neutral by arousing feeling against Serbia; similarly he wanted to reconcile peace-loving circles in Austria to the declaration of war on Serbia. But as a matter of fact the opening of hostilities proceeded from Austria herself, as we discovered from the neutral press at the time: —

¹ The reasons given by Austria for the opening of hostilities were inadequate. For Austria had not submitted the incriminating documents either to the Serbian or to a neutral Government; the documents incriminated Serbian individuals, but not the Government, and Austria's attempt to prove that these individuals were aiming at the separation of Bosnia was unsuccessful.

Hostilities on the Austro-Serbian frontier have been opened by Austrian troops invading Serbia at Mitrovitz on the Save. The Serbians are retreating. (B.N. of the 28th July, 1914.)

The analogous Austrian assertion that Serbia had already ordered mobilization before delivering the answer to the Austrian ultimatum has never been proved either. According to the neutral press, Austrian as well as Serbian mobilization took place after the rupture of relations: no doubt, it is nevertheless possible that preparations were made on both sides after the delivery of the Austrian note.¹

This assertion on the part of Austria, too, must be regarded as a misrepresentation, for Austria gave as her reason for breaking off diplomatic relations not the supposed mobilization, but merely the "procrastinating" answer of the Serbian Government. The question of premature mobilization is in any case unimportant (especially as it was a case of the gnat, in fear of the coming blow, turning its sting against the elephant's hide), for mobilization does not mean a state of war, as Austria herself declared later in the announcement of her general mobilization.

¹ The Berlin *Lokal-Anzeiger* at the outbreak of the war reported the arrival of Austrian and German men of military age from America, who reached Germany before the closing of the harbours. "Among the arrivals are merchants who have given up good positions. . . . Many of them, who have their own establishments across the Atlantic, have left wife and children." It is obvious that these men of military age would not have determined on this step without definite direction from the Consuls, whence we see that the Central Powers had made all necessary preparations beforehand.

5. *Further Misrepresentations*

We know from the press, and from individual expressions of opinion, that by far the greater part of the population of German territories struggled to prevent Austro-Serbian hostilities developing into a world war before they became acute. Intelligent members of the public foresaw that Austria's open attempt to crush Serbia, and so break up the *status quo* in the Balkans must inevitably lead to protest from the other Powers, especially from Russia. Even the White Book admits that the Governments of the Central Powers had looked for Russian intervention: —

We were well aware that a possible warlike attitude of Austria-Hungary against Serbia might bring Russia upon the field and that it might therefore involve us in war in accordance with our duty as allies.

It was to the interest of the Central Powers to represent the Russian protest as unjustified, and so it was necessary to represent Russian opinion as isolated. Accordingly Herr von Bethmann declared in his speech of the 4th August: —

From the first moment of the Austro-Serbian conflict we declared that this question must be limited to Austria-Hungary and Serbia and we worked with this end in view. All Governments, especially that of Great Britain, took the same attitude. Russia alone asserted that she had a right to be heard in the settlement of the matter.

But in fact Herr von Bethmann deviated from the truth; for the protest of Russia, who was most directly threatened (in the Dardanelles) by the

realization of German Eastern policy, was supported by France, as she too objected to any further strengthening of the Central Powers at the expense of the East.

Even on the 25th July, 1914, we read in the neutral press: —

Viviani and Sazonov publish a *communiqué* which confirms the complete agreement of their political views on the subject of the European balance of power and Eastern questions. (B.N.)

Moreover, Italy protested simultaneously with Russia. The Chancellor and his organs concealed this fact most carefully, for Italy was certainly not pro-Serbian, and so her condemnation of Austria's action must have carried special weight.

It was not till the Austrian Red Book appeared six months after the outbreak of war that the fact had to be stated in consequence of Italian revelations: —

As early as the 25th July the Duke of Avarna (the Italian Ambassador in Vienna) explained that the Italian Government reserved the right to claim compensation on the ground of their treaty of alliance, and demanded that Austria-Hungary should come to an agreement with them before occupying Serbian territory. (Summary of the new Red Book, N.Z.Z., 966.)

From the same source we learn further: —

There follows the first concession by the Austro-Hungarian Government. On the 1st August Count Berchtold, on the suggestion of the German Government, declares himself ready to negotiate about concessions to Italy — of course such concessions are not to be made out of the possessions of Austria-Hungary.

So we find that Herr von Bethmann's statement that "only Russia asserted that she had a right to be heard in the settlement of the matter" was utterly false. But why did the Chancellor conceal the truth?

The answer is that it would look bad if Germany herself, on the very first day of war, began the bartering of foreign territory of which it might eventually wish to accuse the enemy.

Subsequently, the Entente, and especially the English "nation of shopkeepers," was freely charged with such bartering by the German Press, and also, unfortunately, by a part of the Swiss Press. They did not know that Germany had been the first to recommend this contemptible "shopkeeper policy" to her ally, just before she began the war by the bombardment of Libau!

Moreover, Russia's standpoint appears justifiable as soon as Serbia's antagonist Italy — for whom an advance of Slav power in the Balkans might be as dangerous as for Austria — associated herself, in her judgment of the ultimatum, with Russian distrust of Austria.

CHAPTER X

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

PART II. THE RUSSO-GERMAN DISPUTE

I. *Questionable Mediation*

“No State could have made more honest and energetic efforts to preserve the peace of the world than Germany.”

If these words of the Chancellor are true, Germany must have undertaken some kind of pacific action. This could only have been a mediating activity between Austria, who was aiming at Serbia's destruction, and Russia, who was openly opposing it. German propaganda, therefore, repeatedly asserts that mediation was initiated by Germany for the preservation of peace, and especially that the Emperor undertook the part of mediator.

About the same time and before receipt of this telegram, the Czar asked the Emperor to come to his aid and to induce Vienna to moderate her demands. The Emperor accepted the rôle of mediator. . . .

In spite of this we continued our task of mediation in Vienna and carried it to the utmost point which was compatible with our position as ally. . . .

While we were mediating in Vienna in compliance with Russia's request . . . (Chancellor's Speech of the 4th August, 1914.)

The Austro-Hungarian Government remarked that it fully appreciated our mediating activity, but that the proposal had come too late, hostilities having already been opened. In spite of this we continued to make all possible

efforts at mediation, and we advised Vienna to adopt a conciliatory attitude, wherever it was compatible with the dignity of the Monarchy. . . .

Shoulder to shoulder with England we laboured incessantly at mediation, and supported every proposal in Vienna which seemed to us to promise a peaceful solution of the conflict . . . Whilst these endeavours of ours for mediation were being continued from July 29th to 31st with increasing energy, supported by English diplomacy, etc. (White Book.)

Similar references to Germany's serious efforts at mediation are frequent in the White Book; impartial readers, however, are struck by the fact that there is no single document which might give an insight into the method of mediation. In other words, the German despatches to the Austrian Government on the subject, which would be of such immense importance, are not in the White Book. Their absence is extraordinarily suspicious.

The request for mediation came from Russia, as we learn from the telegrams from the Czar to the Emperor: —

To prevent such a calamity as a European war would be, I urge you in the name of our old friendship to do all in your power to restrain your ally from going too far. (White Book, Exhibit 21.)

We need your strong pressure upon Austria, to induce her to come to an understanding with us. (White Book, Exhibit 23a.)

The Emperor undertook the mediation, but carried it out in a way which does not justify the word "mediation" at all. The Czar wished to have guarantees that Serbia should not be crushed, and Russia should not be threatened by an alteration

of the *status quo*; but the Emperor took up the Austrian point of view entirely, and pretended to mediate while in fact he only acted as transmitter. The following passage in the White Book shows clearly that the Central Powers thought they might regard transmission as mediation: —

We further declared ourselves ready, after failure of the conference idea, to transmit a second proposal of Sir Edward Grey's to Vienna, in which he suggested that Austria-Hungary should decide either to regard the Serbian reply as sufficient or to use it as a basis for further negotiations. The Austro-Hungarian Government remarked that it fully appreciated our mediating action, but that the proposal had come too late, hostilities having already been opened.

When a person only transmits, he has no right to claim the rôle of mediator. A famous German author calls this sort of service "postman service."

All the Great Powers were convinced that Austria could protect her vital interests against Serbian aggression without endangering outsiders by alterations of the *status quo*; Germany, however, shared the Austrian view that it was urgently necessary to crush Serbia. Here is the evidence from the White Book: —

We found ourselves in the most hearty agreement with our ally's estimate of the situation, and were able to assure him that any action which he considered necessary to end the movement in Serbia directed against the conservation of the monarchy would meet with our approval. . . .

We, therefore, permitted Austria a completely free hand in her action against Serbia.

Those are certainly not the words of a mediator. On the contrary, these sentences in the White Book

agree absolutely with the definition of Germany's attitude which was published before the war, e.g., in the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* (No. 17932): —

Berlin, 27th July. As to the attitude of the German Government to efforts at mediation, your correspondent is told by an authoritative source that efforts at mediation are not, of course, absolutely precluded, but the decisive questions for the German Government are: Does Austria desire mediation? And if so, to what extent? The German Government would only participate in mediation if it knew that it was desired in Vienna. Germany decisively repudiates participation in any mediation that is unwelcome in Vienna, as such participation would be equivalent to bringing pressure to bear on an ally.

As your correspondent learns further, the diplomatic action which various Powers are planning is directed in the first instance to mediation between Austria and Russia, but it is to take the form of mitigating the harshness of some of the Austrian claims against Serbia.

As we discover from the official propaganda of the Central Powers, Austria did not desire this "mitigation"; on the contrary, this propaganda describes the steps taken by Austria as merely "defensive measures against Serbian agitation," explains "that Austria-Hungary must of necessity demand guarantees for the friendly behaviour of Serbia in the future" (White Book), and does not go into the question of the possibility of other methods.¹ As Austria did not wish for mitigation, she could not welcome any mediating action; and that again, according to "the authoritative source," obliged Germany to stand aloof from genuine and effective

¹ For a detailed elucidation of why Austria's way was wrong, see pp. 93-115.

mediation. If German propaganda nevertheless is at such great pains to speak of mediation, it certainly confirms the view that the assassination of Serajevo cannot seriously be regarded as a sufficiently convincing excuse for the war; but it does not prove that Germany made energetic and honest efforts at mediation. The Emperor's Speech from the Throne in August speaks for the opposite view: —

The Russian Empire has crossed the path of Austria-Hungary whilst the latter was pursuing her legitimate interests. Not only our duty as ally calls us to Austria's side; we are faced with the Herculean task of protecting our own position with the help of the ancient common civilization of the two Empires against the assault of hostile forces.

When a speaker, a few days after assuming the rôle of mediator, asserts so decidedly the absolute right of one of the parties and even adds that he is called to the side of that party by his own interests, he admits that he never could have been reckoned as a mediator at all.

Germany's efforts at mediation are best summarized as follows: "You, Russia, will gain nothing from me, Germany; but I will gladly look on while you negotiate with my friend Austria, because your chances in that quarter are even smaller."

We can learn from the White Book that, according to the German point of view, Russia was to get nothing out of Austria. A despatch of the 28th July, 1914, from the German Chancellor to the German Ambassador in Petrograd shows beyond dispute that Germany consented to induce Austria

to enter upon explanations which should satisfy Russia, but not to think of negotiations, moderation of her claims, the acceptance of Russian or inter-State guarantees of future peace for Austria, or the abandonment of the crushing of Serbia, and, least of all, of Germany's Eastern policy. Austria's iniquitous and high-handed policy was to be pursued without let or hindrance.

We do not relax our efforts to induce Vienna to give convincing explanations at Petrograd, which we trust will be satisfactory to Russia, with regard to the object and scope of Austrian action in Serbia. The declaration of war (against Serbia) which has meanwhile ensued alters nothing in this matter. (White Book, Exhibit 14.)

There was no need of German interference for these "convincing explanations," for the explanation of external actions is a most elementary necessity as soon as a neighbouring State intervenes. To withhold it is equivalent to a gross insult — even to a declaration of war. The preservation of peace did not demand "explanations," but a discussion between the two parties (Austria on one side and Russia and Italy on the other) of the most suitable method for dealing with the common menace. Consequently the German assertion of her attempts at mediation is a pure invention.

2. Austria provokes the Russian Mobilization

Austria mobilized directly after breaking off relations with Serbia, i.e., on the 26th July; according to the White Book, against Serbia, but, as Herr von Bethmann has to admit, she also mobil-

ized two army corps in Bohemia, that is to say against Russia (Poland). Russia answered this partial mobilization at first merely by preparatory steps:—

On July 27th the Russian Secretary of War, M. Sukhomlinov, gave the German military attaché his word of honour that no order to mobilize had been issued; preparatory measures only were being taken, but not a horse had been mustered nor reserves called up. (White Book.)

On the same date (27th July) Russia issued the following warning:—

If Austria-Hungary crosses the Serbian frontier, the military districts directed towards Austria, i.e., Kiev, Odessa, Moscow, Kazan, will be mobilized. (White Book.)

We learnt through the neutral press on the following day that, in spite of this warning, hostilities had been begun by the invasion of Serbia by Austria.

The logical consequence was the Russian decision of the 29th July to mobilize partially, which was published in an official *communiqué* on the 30th July at 4 A.M. (according to a letter of the Belgian Ambassador in Petrograd, which was seized in Germany). The decision was communicated to the German Government on the 29th July (White Book), after the Chief of the Russian General Staff, Janushkevitch, had offered the German military attaché at 3 P.M. on the same day his word of honour in writing, according to which no mobilization had taken place at that time. On his word as an officer he declared that all news to the contrary was false, though here and there there might have been a

false alarm.¹ (White Book, and Wolff's reports on Sukhomlinov's trial.)

All the reports of the White Book which put the Russian mobilization on the 26th and 27th July are to be rejected as untrue, for the Chief of the General Staff could never have given his word of honour *in writing*, unless he had known that no witness would appear against him later. Again, there is not a single neutral in Russia who doubted his word of honour.²

Thus it is established that Russia only proceeded to mobilize three to four days later than Austria. This fact proves beyond dispute how much Russia desired peace. On the other hand, it is obvious that, in view of the slowness of her mobilization, she was bound to take preparatory steps; even Germany, which in Moltke's words can be regarded as "permanently mobilized," did not omit preparatory measures. We need only point out here that the

¹ Any one who knows Russia will regard it as very possible that the (admitted) preparatory steps on the Russian side may have caused false alarms. A rumour of mobilization was current in Riga — merely on the strength of the recall of officers on leave in the neighbouring health resort, Majorenhof; nothing was known of the rumour in Riga itself. Mobilization was not so drilled into the people in Russia as in Germany, and so in a crisis the smallest preparatory measures might give rise to false rumours.

² German propaganda has recently tried to represent the word of honour of the Chief of the General Staff as a "deception" on the strength of Sukhomlinov's trial, because the former declared that he "still" (or as the Germans say "already") had the ukase in his pocket. This is a question of malicious misrepresentation, for the Chief of Staff expressly added that he could give no assurance for the future. Similarly the Russian Government informed the German Government *en règle* on the same day of their partial mobilization. The action of Janushkevitch was merely intended to correct the false German accusations.

German proclamation of "imminent danger of war" involves a concentration of forces, i.e., mobilization. (Cf. the note, p.116.)

Our insight into the development of mobilization after the 29th July is less clear. The White Book utterly ignores the Austrian *general* mobilization and merely states that Russia interrupted the strenuous efforts of Germany for peace by her general mobilization on the morning of the 31st July.

Before this telegram (of 2. P.M. on the 31st July) reached its destination, the mobilization of all the Russian forces, obviously directed against us and already ordered during the morning of that day, was in full swing.

Two years later Herr von Bethmann gave the same morning (July 31) as the date of the Austrian general mobilization, while he assigned the Russian mobilization to the night of the 30th-31st. These extremely inaccurate, unsubstantiated, and self-contradictory statements are not cleared up by the recent revelations in the *Vossische Zeitung* about Sukhomlinov's trial; these latest unofficial reports are even more confused and self-contradictory than anything hitherto published.

On the other hand, two documents which went the round of the press in August, 1914, are clear enough to give the student an idea of the course of events: —

I. *Vienna*, the 1st August (Official): —

The official papers in Vienna and Buda-Pesth make the following announcement to-day: "According to an official communication of the 31st July the Emperor has ordered the general mobilization of the army and navy and of both

classes of the Landwehr, as well as the summoning and enrolment of the Landsturm. This step is due to the mobilization ordered by Russia. The measure ordered by the Emperor has no aggressive aim of any sort, but it is merely a question of precautionary measures for the necessary defence of the monarchy. (*Berliner Tageblatt*, No. 386.)

The wording of this Austrian *communiqué* is extraordinarily suggestive and is therefore of historical importance. We see, above all, *that Austria knew nothing of a Russian general mobilization when she promulgated her own*; for it would be an unpardonable sin of omission to know of the Russian general mobilization and not base her own action on it. The Central Powers knew no more than the rest of the world — namely, merely that on the 29th July Russia had decided on partial mobilization and published her decision on the 30th July. Therefore, the White Book, too, is silent, as we have shown, about the Austrian general mobilization and fixes the Russian on the 31st July, i.e., on the same day on which the Austrian was proclaimed very early in the morning. The Emperor, too, telegraphed at 2 P M. on that day, that is to say, long after the proclamation of Austrian general mobilization, to the Czar: “Now I receive reliable news that serious preparations for war are going on on my Eastern frontier also.” That means that the news before was not reliable and that the Russian preparations were not serious, although France had already raised a protest two days before against infringements of her frontier by German patrols. A splendid testimony to Russian forbearance!

Similarly the same Austrian document expressly draws attention to the fact that her general mobilization had no aggressive aim, an assurance which Germany recognizes as accurate in Austria's case, but which later she strangely refuses to accept in the case of her Russian neighbour.

· II. In the middle of August the German press felt called upon to publish an exchange of telegrams between King George and the Czar, which had previously filtered into Germany through the Dutch press. The genuineness of the telegrams was not doubted. The Czar's communication throws light on the Russian view of the mobilization: —

The object of Austria's action was to crush Serbia and make her a vassal of Austria. The effect of this would have been to upset the balance of power in the Balkans, which is of such vital interest to my Empire. Every proposal, including that of your Government, was rejected by Germany and Austria. . . . Austria's declaration of war on Serbia forced me to order a partial mobilization, though, in view of the threatening situation, my military advisers strongly advised a general mobilization owing to the quickness with which Germany can mobilize in comparison with Russia. I was eventually compelled to take this course in consequence of the complete Austrian mobilization,¹ of the bombardment of Belgrade, of the concentration of Austrian

¹ It is well known that Austria is accused by Russia of having overstepped the limits of partial mobilization as early as the 28th July, and no clear Austrian *démenti* has appeared against this assertion. It is true that the promulgation of the Austrian general mobilization only took place on the 31st July at about 1 A.M., i.e., in the very early morning; still it must be taken as obvious that the order for it was signed by the aged Emperor at the latest on the previous day. On the other hand, it may be assumed on the strength of Sukhomlinov's trial that the corresponding Russian ukase was also signed on the evening of the 30th July.

troops in Galicia, and of secret military preparations being made in Germany. . . .

Here we see, in contradiction to the statement in the Austrian document, that the Russian general mobilization was based on the Austrian. This evidence, drawn from the Czar's telegram, retains its force so long as German propaganda leaves us in the dark about the progress of the Austrian mobilization. But the document cites even more cogent reasons for quickening the mobilization. The Czar says quite truly that the maintenance of the balance of power in the Balkans is a vital interest for his Empire; he speaks further of threatening military measures undertaken by the Central Powers. These phrases indicate the real reasons which forced the slowly mobilizing Russians to defensive measures. These were absolutely inevitable, after Count Pourtalès had threatened war on the 29th July on the mere hypothesis that Russia was mobilizing also against Germany,¹ and when no answer was returned to Sazonov's proposal on the 30th July, according to which Russia bound herself to stop her military preparations provided Austria would mitigate the notoriously harsh points in her ultimatum.² After these occurrences war seemed inevitable and it was only a question of keeping the precautionary measures

¹ This event, reported in the Russian Orange Book, was only recently confirmed in a German interview and was therefore not mentioned in our first edition.

² The corresponding document is missing in the original German propaganda. On the other hand, it is confirmed in the German Rainbow Book, p. 262, and so can be referred to here.

secret as long as possible in order not to make the situation still more acute.

Austria, by the intransigent attitude of her diplomacy and by her premature mobilization against Russia, set the military machine in motion. Europe experienced one of its most tense political moments. The obvious intention of crushing Serbia appeared as the natural consequence of the previous Balkan policy of the Germanic Powers. "Berlin-Bagdad" was not only demanded by the Pan-Germans, but in the last few years had been the aim of both Imperial Governments. The championing of a Greater Bulgaria, the unfriendly policy of Austria towards Serbia, the mission of Liman von Sanders, the milliard-mark loan . . .

A Russian capitulation was impossible on this occasion, for in 1918 even "completed preparations" would be no match for "the completed coalition." Of two evils Russia chose the lesser, and this time did not reject the sword in spite of the wavering and the humane disposition of her ruler.

The ominous course of events, we may add, was known in Berlin. The Wilhelmstrasse prophesied to the Belgian representative, Baron Beyens: —

Austria will reply to Russian partial mobilization by a general mobilization. It is to be feared that Russia too will thereupon mobilize her full forces, which would cause Germany to do the same. (*"L'Allemagne avant la guerre,"* p. 299.)

This prophecy is confirmed in the Red Book, No. 48, where Austria openly declares that she will

reply to Russian partial mobilization by her own general mobilization.

3. *Setting the Stage for the World War*

The Central Powers could not permanently avoid the conference which all peace-loving circles demanded. So they finally resolved to agree to a sham conference; the necessary instructions, however, were not sent to M. Sazonov until the Central Powers had previously, as we have shown, provoked Russia to a general mobilization. *This was apparently taken by Germany as a reason for her own mobilization, but was actually used as a cause of war. Thus the consent even to a sham conference was illusory and war was made inevitable by the German intervention.*

The White Book tried to remove the extremely painful and incriminating impression which the belated consent of Austria to the sham conference was bound to produce, by announcing and antedating the "readiness to enter upon conversations." For it gives the date as the 29th July:—

In reply to the various enquiries concerning reasons for its threatening attitude, the Russian Government repeatedly pointed out that Austria-Hungary had commenced no conversation in Petrograd. The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador was therefore instructed on July 29th, at our suggestion, to enter into such conversation with Sazonov.

In contradiction to this we quote from the Chancellor's Speech of the 9th November, 1916, to show that this suggestion was not made in Vienna till the 30th July:—

You all know the instructions which I sent to Vienna on the 30th July. In them I suggested to the Austro-Hungarian Government an immediate understanding with Russia.

Similarly the Red Book, No. 49, shows that the instructions in question were only communicated to the Austrian Ambassador in Petrograd on the 30th July. No. 56 of the Red Book even proves that it was not till two days later, on the 1st August, that the Austrian Ambassador carried out his instructions. Moreover, the character of this "sham conference" manœuvre is clearly revealed by the documents in the Red Book; for the *discussion* of the notorious points in the Austrian ultimatum which Russia desired is again watered down to a mere "*explanation*" — a term the significance of which is sufficiently familiar to the reader (No. 49). No. 50 of the Red Book defines the instruction: —

In any case this could only take the form of subsequent explanations, as it was never our intention to allow ourselves to be induced by negotiation to depart in any way from the points contained in the note.

Thus the responsibility of Austria for the world war is incontrovertibly established: Austria rejected up to the last minute every proposal for coming to an agreement with regard to her procedure against Serbia. All Austrian attempts to prove her desire for peace sound sophistical in view of this fact. Even the White Book recognizes indirectly that Austria's action was objectionable; for it no longer speaks of an "explanation," but of a "conversa-

tion" desired and agreed to. And Herr von Bethmann actually refers to his instructions for an immediate "understanding," while Austria as a matter of fact did not depart one step from her original position.

Nevertheless, Germany's responsibility is not less than Austria's. For Germany, who had recognized the Austrian mobilization as defensive, who herself had undertaken defensive military action and in so doing had permitted herself certain infringements of the French frontier by patrols, sent the following ultimatum to Russia — even before the Austrian Ambassador produced his instructions for a sham conference: —

In spite of negotiations still pending and although we have up to this hour made no preparations for mobilization, Russia has mobilized her entire army and navy — against us, therefore, as well as against Austria. By these Russian measures we have been forced, for the safety of the country, to proclaim "the imminent danger of war," which does not yet imply mobilization. Mobilization is, however, bound to follow, unless Russia stops every measure of war against us and against Austria-Hungary within twelve hours and notifies us definitely to this effect. (White Book.)

The impropriety of this demand is obvious: Russia was to demobilize completely ("against us and against Austria-Hungary") while Austria remained mobilized. Russia could give no unqualified assent to such a challenge in spite of factors which made the conduct of war difficult, such as insufficient material preparation, drought, etc. The ultimatum will stand alone in the history of the world, not only for the insulting demand

which it makes, but also for its perfidious character; while it says, put shortly, "Either you demobilize or I mobilize too," the real underlying idea is, "or I declare war." It is true that the German Ambassador in Petrograd stated on the 26th July: "Preparatory military measures by Russia will force us to counter-measures which must consist in mobilizing the army. But mobilization means war." Doubtless a similar statement may also have been made incidentally in later conversations. But Austria issued meanwhile, on the occasion of the proclamation of her general mobilization, a contrary assurance which neutralized the effect of the German threat — more especially since the earlier German point of view found no expression, either in the ultimatum itself or in a personal communication, at the time when the ultimatum was delivered. How should the just-minded Germany approve of the defensive mobilization of her ally and refuse the like rights to her neighbour? As a matter of fact, when the German Ambassador delivered his ultimatum and Sazonov asked whether the German mobilization meant war, he answered in the negative. His comment, "We should be very near war" (Rainbow Book, p. 314), was natural in view of the circumstances and does not cancel the negative. In any case, the denial was false, though of this the Count was perhaps unconscious; for the German Government notified its Ambassador in Paris, on the 31st July, that it had delivered an ultimatum to the Russian Government, and that a rejection

of it would inevitably mean war. (White Book, Exhibit 25.) This declaration was concealed from the Russians till the time limit had expired. (White Book, Exhibits 24 and 25.) Why did "peace-loving" Germany not send Russia a more honest ultimatum, though with a shorter time limit, or give her Ambassador instructions to tell the Czar the plain truth shortly before the end of the time limit? Germany was more especially bound to correct the false impression, inasmuch as the Emperor, in reply to the Russian general mobilization, sent the Czar the following telegram on the 31st July: "Responsibility for the safety of my Empire forces me to measures of defence." (White Book.) The phrase "measures of defence" does not lead one to expect a declaration of war. The result was that, instead of the Russian Government answering the ultimatum, the Czar sent the following answer — or rather, further question — to the Emperor: —

I have received Your telegram. I comprehend that You are forced to mobilize, but I should like to have from You the same guarantee which I have given You, viz., that these measures do not mean war and that we shall continue to negotiate for the welfare of our two countries and the universal peace which is so dear to our hearts. With the aid of God it must be possible for our long-trying friendship to prevent the shedding of blood. With full confidence I urgently beg for Your reply. (White Book.)

A more favourable reply from Russia to the ultimatum was not expected in Berlin, for we read in the *Berliner Tageblatt* on the 1st August 1914:—

That the Russian answer will be favourable, is not believed even by certain high personalities of the Foreign Diplomatic Corps in Berlin who have hitherto preserved a certain optimism. At least, no one at this hour dares to express such a hope. The best that any one dares to regard as possible is that the answer might not absolutely reject the demand.

Germany could not expect any further answer, seeing that her declaration of war had crossed the Czar's question, and she had therefore herself broken off relations.

The whole method of procedure of German diplomacy reminds one of the schoolboy game of "tripping up."

4. *The Pretended Attack*

In order to increase the indignation of her own people and to win the sympathy of neutrals, German propaganda represented the course of events as if Russia had fallen upon Germany without giving an answer to the ultimatum, and as if France also had joined in the attack, in equal disregard of international law. Evidence:—

We still do not know what Russia's answer to our demand was. (Chancellor's Speech of the 4th August.)

Russia began the war. (Big-type headline in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of the 3d August, 1914.)

Before a declaration of war was made or a breach of diplomatic relations had arisen, Russian troops invaded German territory and so began war against the German people. (*Lokal-Anzeiger* of the 3d August.)

The action (the Russian occupation of Eydkuhnen on the 2d August) is only important in so far as it is a fresh proof that Russia attacked German territory and so began the war. (*Lokal-Anzeiger* of the 3d August.)

We have long known that the brutal attack on Germany which is now being carried out was being plotted in cold blood by England and her fellow conspirators of the Entente. (*Lokal-Anzeiger* of the 14th August.)

The French and the Russians, who fell upon us without a declaration of war, and in breach of their pledged word, are worthy of one another. (*Lokal-Anzeiger* of the 4th August.)

God permitted the enemy to compel us to spend Christmas here. We were attacked! (William II.)

We shall carry on this war until we have secured our Empire from a fresh attack and insured for all time a free field for the peaceful operation of the German spirit and of German hands. (William II.)

We shall not sheathe the sword till we have security that our neighbours will not fall upon us again. (President of the Herrenhaus.)

A few months later Russia, England, and France fell upon us together, in order to destroy us. A peaceful people has never been so shamefully attacked. (Finance Minister Lentze.)

Half the world has risen up to destroy us. (*Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*.)

It is officially reported from Berlin, the 6th August, that the Austrian Government informed the German Government that their Ambassador in Petrograd, Count Szapary, had been instructed to notify to the Russian Government that Austria-Hungary — in view of the threatening attitude of Russia on the Serbian question, and also in view of the state of war which exists, in consequence of the Russian attack on Germany, between these two Powers — regards herself as in a state of war with Russia. (*Berliner Tageblatt*, 395.)

It is not surprising that not only the whole German people, but neutrals also, were deceived by these positive assertions. And yet the German theory of a hostile attack is a distortion of the facts. It was not Russia that began the war by violating the frontier in the night between the 1st

and 2d of August, but Germany by the bombardment of Libau, soon after her delivery of the declaration of war. This fact was immediately reported by wireless to the German Admiralty, but delayed in publication and issued to the public under a wrong date.

It was bound to strike any impartial and attentive reader of the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* of the 3d August (*Der Montag*, No. 388) that all the Russian and French hostile acts on the frontiers were dated, and that only the German bombardment of Libau (the announcement of which was put first in the paper) was undated. The reader could see clearly that the enemies' actions had taken place on the 2d August or at earliest in the night between the 1st and 2d of August. About German action there was only the following report (put first, it is true): —

Official Report: The Commander of the small cruiser Augsburg, Captain Andreas Fischer, reports at 9 P.M. by wireless: "I am bombarding the naval harbour of Libau and am in action with an enemy cruiser. I have laid mines. The harbour of Libau is on fire.

As the report was published in the press on the 3d August, the public was sure to assume that the German bombardment had taken place the previous evening, i.e., after the beginning of hostilities by Russia. Other papers gave the wrong date, but put the report in unofficial form: —

The small cruiser Augsburg reported yesterday at 9 P.M. by wireless: "Bombarding naval harbour Libau, am in action with enemy cruiser, have laid mines. Harbour Libau on fire. (*Berliner Tageblatt* of the 3d August.)

The real state of the case was manifest to every impartial reader. For the semi-official *Lokal-Anzeiger* gave the report in official form, but undated; the *Berliner Tageblatt*, writing for a critical public, did not dare do that, but gave the presumptive date and published the report in unofficial form. Hence, it was evident that the bombardment took place on Saturday, the 1st August, and not on Sunday, the 2d.

Later the *Leipziger Tageblatt* had the misfortune to confirm this fact involuntarily. On the 21st August it published a letter from a sailor on the Augsburg to his parents, in which we read: "On Saturday at about 8 o'clock we arrived before Libau, after successfully passing the mines the Russians had laid . . ."; and there follows a description of the bombardment, etc.

The whole fiction of a "foreign assault" would have been rejected at once, as it deserved to be, by the German people as well as by neutrals; but the former were bewildered and confused, whilst the racial sympathies of the latter had been excited to fever-heat.¹

German propaganda tried to ascribe to the enemy

¹ How credulously neutrals with Pan-German sympathies swallowed the German bait is shown by a pamphlet of our Federal judge, Professor Leo Weber, of Berne. In his *Gedanken eines schweizerischen Neutralen über das Buch J'accuse*, p. 17, we read: "The ultimatum to Russia was simply left unanswered. Hostilities began at three places on the Prussian frontier on the night between the 1st and 2d of August. That is a fact which is proved by documents." Our thorough investigator ignores the fact that Germany before that wantonly bombarded Libau, because her documents do not report it!

the opening of hostilities on the Western front, as on the Russian front. For this purpose it relied on worthless rumours which were in the air and were spread, I am sorry to say, officially. We can see from the following despatch how utterly worthless these official reports were: —

It is officially reported that on the night of the 1st August an enemy airship was observed flying from Kersprich to Andernach. On the same night an hotel-keeper at Kochem and his son made an attempt to blow up the tunnel at Kochem. The attempt failed. Both were shot. Enemy flying machines were observed between Düren and Cologne. A French aeroplane was shot down near Wesel.

A fortnight later the following notice appeared in small print on a back page of the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*: —

The attempt on the railway tunnel at Kochem on the Moselle, which was reported at the beginning of our mobilization, came before the military court of the fortress Coblenz-Ehrenbreitstein yesterday, as we hear from Coblenz. The accused hotel-keeper, Nikolai of Kochem, who was reported to have been already shot, was found not guilty and set free. Compensation was allowed him.

Sunday, 2.45 P.M. Official: A military *communiqué* has just arrived to the effect that this morning French aviators dropped bombs in the neighbourhood of Nuremberg. As there has not yet been any declaration of war between France and Germany, this constitutes a breach of international law. (*Berliner Tageblatt* of Monday, the 3d August.)

We happen to know the facts about this military report, which was spread officially, from the *Friedenswarte* (1916, No. 7), a German paper which endeavours to restore the very doubtful reputation of German honesty: —

The news of the dropping of bombs on Nuremberg by French aviators before the beginning of the present war was regarded as a fact. It is still accepted as true by many people. The statement occurred in an article in the *German Medical Weekly*: "After a French aviator had dropped bombs even before the French declaration of war," etc. This caused the Medical Officer of Health, Professor J. Schwalbe, to investigate the incident. As a result, he wrote to the paper on the 18th May, 1916: "It appears from a correspondence between Geheimrat Riedel and the Mayor of Nuremberg that this statement, which has never been confirmed, but yet is generally accepted throughout Germany as a proof of a breach of international law by French aviators, is as a matter of fact unfounded. The Mayor of Nuremberg wrote on the 3d April, 1916: 'To the acting O.C. the 3d Bavarian Army Corps: Nothing is known here of any dropping of bombs by enemy aviators on the railway line Nuremberg-Kissingen and Nuremberg-Ansbach either before or after the outbreak of war. All statements and newspaper articles to this effect have turned out false.' "

It is extremely damaging to German prestige that all these false reports were sent out to the world as official; also that the Chancellor brought them into his speech of the 4th August; and most damaging of all that the "Libau" case clearly shows that the deception was intentional and deliberate.

5. Conclusion

The above narrative, which is based on German and Austrian propaganda, may be shortly summarized as follows: —

Austria delivered an ultimatum to Serbia which could not possibly be accepted without further negotiations; yet she precluded all possibility of negotiations

by her declaration of war against Serbia. At the same time she refused to allow other Great Powers, which were interested in the status quo in the Balkans, to intervene in this preëminently international affair, on the pretext that the affair was purely local. The origin and progress of Serbian hatred were represented in a one-sided and inaccurate way, and the possibility of reconciling Serbia and Austria by a conference of the Powers was peremptorily denied. Nevertheless, Austria failed to give sufficient guarantees for the preservation of the status quo in the Balkans and confined herself to an assurance that she would respect the territorial integrity of Serbia. As, however, the Central Powers could not permanently evade the conference, they finally expressed their consent to a sham conference, but only after Austria by her general mobilization had made Russian general mobilization absolutely inevitable and so had given her German ally a pretext for a declaration of war. The German theory that she is waging a "defensive war" falls, therefore, to the ground.

Similarly the Central Powers have failed to prove that an aggressive coalition directed against them existed before the outbreak of war. The fact remains that the Anglo-French friendship had not even the character of a defensive alliance adequate to maintain the European balance of power.

It is equally well established that the formation of a defensive Triple Alliance was not even in prospect, owing to opposition on many sides, and especially in England. And finally, general European politics in the last few years can be shown to

have taken an exceedingly favourable turn for Germany and Austria. Hence the idea that this is a "preventive war" on Germany's part must also be definitely rejected.

It is not likely that any of these conclusions will need to be revised, for they are based, not on foreign, but on Germany's own evidence.

It is to be hoped that in later and quieter times the German people will realize its own errors, for only so would it be in a position to help-effectively in preventing similar catastrophes in the future. To-day Germany stands alone in her opinion, and the longer the war lasts, the clearer will her isolation appear.

As the conclusion of our argument we may quote the words of the famous American jurist Dr. J. M. Beck which are to be found in his book "The Evidence in the Case" and are unfortunately only too true:—

Germany's chief weakness to-day consists in her moral isolation. She stands condemned by the whole civilized world. No physical force which she is in a position to exercise can compensate for this loss of moral weight. Even success would be too dearly bought at such a price. There are things which are more successful than success. One of them is — the truth.

THE END

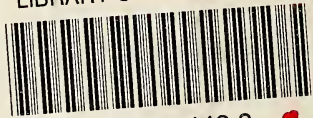
The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: MAY 2001

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 007 629 448 3

